

Standards for Grading Student Essays at Pine Manor College

TOTAL:	Excellent [A] 20 points Has all the elements of a "B" essay and:	Good [B] 17 points Has all the elements of a "C" essay and:	Average [C] 15 points	Poor [D] 13 points	Failing [F] up to 11 points
Content 20 points	Contains a complex, interesting and original thesis, stated in compelling language. Uses convincing and relevant detail to support the topic sentences and ideas in each paragraph. Fully supports all claims with relevant evidence. Takes into account alternate points of view in dealing with the complexities of its topic. Fully develops the implications of its thesis. Paragraphs are all relevant and complete. Shows complete understanding of the connection among sources and competing claims. All information is presented in context. Is thoroughly developed.	Contains a strong, clear thesis that controls the whole essay. Has a compelling introduction and conclusion. Is well developed and uses an abundance of evidence. Uses ideas, details, and evidence in supporting paragraphs that work to advance the reader's understanding of the thesis. Locates opinion or experience in a relevant context. Shows some understanding of the connection among sources and competing claims. Fulfills all requirements of the assignment.	Contains a thesis or a stated purpose appropriate to the assignment. Addresses a topic or subject that is sufficiently narrowed and focused to be discussed within the assigned length. Develops, supports, and clarifies the thesis throughout with relevant evidence and examples, statistics, testimony, quotations, or arguments. Fulfills all or nearly all of the requirements of the assignment.	Exhibits a vague, incomplete, or inappropriate thesis statement, or has no thesis. Lacks focus. Includes few, if any, appropriate supporting details and examples. May demonstrate confusion about what is and is not relevant to the argument at hand. Shows only a minimal understanding of sources.	Fails to meet major requirements (or many minor requirements) of the assignment. Contains neither focus nor statement of purpose. May be plagiarized. Is incomplete.
Style 20 points	Has a distinctive style and point of view appropriate to the subject and audience. Uses a variety of sentence structures (simple, compound, and complex sentences) as appropriate.	Maintains a consistent tone throughout. Maintains appropriate tone, and may reveal an original voice at times. Uses precise and vivid vocabulary and clear sentences.	Uses consistently clear sentences. Language is only occasionally awkward, wordy, repetitive or imprecise. Shows a reliance on basic sentence structure. Has a tone only occasionally inconsistent or inappropriate.	Tone is inappropriate to the subject and audience throughout. Uses sentence structure, syntax, and/or diction that interferes with meaning. Shows no evidence of revision, editing, or proofreading.	Commonly conveys information incoherently. Fails to use basic English structure, syntax, and/or diction effectively.

	Excellent [A]	Good [B]	Average [C]	Poor [D]	Failing [F]
Critical Thinking 20 points	<p>Exhibits consistently sound logic and original and creative thought.</p> <p>Uses complex ideas and shows evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.</p> <p>Develops ideas that are consistent, coherent, and often unique.</p>	<p>Exhibits generally sound logic, careful thought, and engagement with its subject.</p> <p>Shows evidence of close reading.</p> <p>Contains strong analysis of quotes, examples, testimony, facts or other information.</p> <p>Shows some use of synthesis and evaluation.</p>	<p>Presents information accurately and appropriately.</p> <p>Uses inferences that are generally sound.</p> <p>Employs some effective analysis.</p>	<p>Contains faulty logic.</p> <p>Exhibits no complex or creative thought.</p> <p>May exhibit misunderstanding of the text, theme or subject at hand.</p>	<p>Consistently exhibits logical fallacies</p>
Organization 20 points	<p>Is unified throughout. Every detail supports and develops the thesis.</p> <p>Clearly shows the connections between ideas, and the progression of the author's thoughts are interesting.</p> <p>Provides transitions between paragraphs gracefully and effectively.</p>	<p>Employs strong paragraph transitions to clarify the connections between ideas and make explicit the organization of the essay's argument.</p> <p>Clearly demonstrates the progression of thoughts.</p> <p>Uses an organizational structure that supports and enhances the content.</p>	<p>Shows evidence of an organizational plan.</p> <p>Has an introduction, several body paragraphs, and a conclusion.</p> <p>Contains unified body paragraphs, all of which contain topic sentences.</p> <p>Provides support and development of the thesis in body paragraphs.</p> <p>Uses transitions and transitional phrases to demonstrate the connections amongst ideas within and between paragraphs.</p>	<p>Lacks organization.</p> <p>Does not show the connections between topic sentences and thesis.</p> <p>Lacks unity within paragraphs.</p> <p>Is missing a clear progression of ideas.</p>	<p>Has no organizational plan.</p>
Grammar & Mechanics 20 points	<p>Contains virtually no mechanical or grammatical errors.</p> <p>Correctly introduces, reproduces, and documents all quotes, summaries and paraphrases according to MLA style, and integrates quotes seamlessly.</p>	<p>Is free of serious mechanical and grammatical errors such as run-on sentences, comma splices, sentence fragments, or other errors that interfere with sentence clarity.</p> <p>Correctly introduces, reproduces, and documents all quotes, summaries and paraphrases according to MLA style.</p>	<p>Uses correct grammar and mechanics more often than not.</p> <p>Accurately represents source material.</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of conventions for quotation, parenthetical documentation and Works Cited list when using outside sources.</p>	<p>Contains major mechanical and grammatical errors that interfere with meaning.</p> <p>Shows no evidence of revision, editing or proofreading.</p> <p>Does not introduce and/or cite sources.</p>	<p>May be plagiarized.</p> <p>Contains so many errors as to make the paper incomprehensible.</p>

