

## GRADING RUBRIC FOR READING ABSTRACTS, ANALYTICAL ESSAYS

Note: if you hand in “careless” work, I reserve the right to not grade the assignment. Instead, I will return it to you for revision, with a one-letter grade reduction. “Careless” work is work with 1 or more deviations from ESWE per page (if there revision is still “careless,” I will return it again, with another letter grade reduction). Be sure to use spell-check, a grammar-check program, and careful proofreading. –Prof. Markovits

1. **Clarity and Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_ (1-5)
  - a. Do you present a well-organized essay with identifiable sections (rather than a collection of related points) that flows smoothly from one section to the next?
  - b. Do you present a clear statement of your topic, central argument(s), or dominant themes?
  - c. Do you present a focused and unified argument backed up by reasons, evidence, and/or examples?
  - d. Are comparisons to contemporary politics or personal experience appropriate?
  
2. **Accuracy of content and correct citations:** \_\_\_\_\_ (1-5)
  - a. Are your claims about the text correct?
  - b. Do you provide evidence with correct citations?
  - c. Do you consider or deal with counter-evidence?
  
3. **Comprehensiveness and balance :** \_\_\_\_\_ (1-5)
  - a. Do you respond fully to the assignment?
  - b. Do you include the central points and omit secondary issues?
  - c. Do you include relevant points from lectures and class discussions, while also extending it to include your own analysis?
  
4. **Grammar:** \_\_\_\_\_ (1-5)
  - a. Does the piece exhibit clear sentence structure and good transitions?
  - b. Does it conform to standard rules of spelling, grammar, and punctuation?
  - c. Is the language appropriate for the audience?
  
5. **Critical Thinking/Creativity:** \_\_\_\_\_ (1-5)
  - a. Does the essay display originality and creativity?
  - b. Does the essay demonstrate good critical thinking?

5	10	15	20	25	(see below)
F	D	C	B	A	

If you are having trouble with any of these requirements, **please** stop by my office hours!

### **1. Clarity and Organization:**

5: The essay is well organized with identifiable sections; it flows smoothly from one section to the next. The topic, central arguments, and themes are clearly articulated. There is a focused and unified argument strongly backed up by reasons, evidence, and/or examples. The essay makes appropriate and compelling comparisons to relevant political events and/or personal experiences.

4: The essay is solidly organized with identifiable sections. Some transitions should be smoother. The topic, central arguments, and themes are articulated, but there are lapses in clarity or gaps in logic. There is a focused argument backed up by reasons, but they are not fully supported. Makes appropriate comparisons to related political events and/or personal experiences.

3: The essay is loosely organized around a set of related points. The essay has a central argument, but makes little attempt to support it. Comparisons to political events and/or personal experiences are marginally related and/or inappropriate.

2: The essay is not organized, but points are related. Almost no support for arguments and comparisons are inappropriate.

1: The essay is not organized and points seem randomly thrown together.

### **2. Accuracy of content and correct citations**

5: The argument is fully backed up by correct claims about the texts. The essay makes use of an appropriate citation style and cites all quotations, paraphrasing, and authors' original ideas. Each piece of evidence is related to others and sufficiently specific. The essay addresses all counter-evidence and answers all counter-arguments.

4: The argument is generally backed up by correct claims about the text, but there are a few mistakes or the essay is missing some linking arguments or specific pieces of evidence for argument. Notes counter-evidence or arguments, but does not fully explain or answer. Citations are generally good, with almost no missing citations.

3: The essay either lacks sufficient evidence or contains several incorrect, anachronistic, or irrelevant pieces of evidence; evidence is overly general and not specific to argument. Counter-evidence and arguments are not noted or answered. Citations are in non-standard format and/or often missing.

2: The essay contains many factual errors. Counter-evidence and argument are ignored. There is very little attempt to cite sources.

1: The essay contains very serious factual errors and does not cite sources.

### **3. Comprehensiveness and balance**

5: The essay responds fully to the assignment, focusing on important central points and omitting secondary points and tangential material. Addresses all relevant information from the readings, lectures, and class discussion in succinct and interesting way. The essay also goes beyond class discussion and lecture to include the writer's own defensible and interesting take on the material.

4: The essay responds fully to the assignment, but may include secondary points at the expense (but not neglect) of the primary arguments. Addresses most relevant information from the readings, lectures, and class discussion in solid ways. Includes writer's own defensible interpretations of material.

3: The essay neglects one part of the assignment and includes a number of secondary points to the neglect of the primary arguments. Addresses a number of points from the readings, lectures, and class discussions in a cursory way. Writer's interpretation is highly questionable.

2: The essay neglects a great deal of the assigned question and does not address obvious and primary points. Makes minimal and inadequate use of course materials. Includes little or no further interpretation by the writer.

1: The essay ignores the assigned question and makes little or no attempt to engage the course material.

**4. Grammar:**

- 5: Mature, skillful, clear, and enjoyable to read. Excellent example of college-level academic writing.
- 4: Solid and correct. Solid example of college-level academic writing.
- 3: Basic competency. Mediocre example of college-level academic writing. Several deviations from ESWE.
- 2: Distracting number of problems. Poor example of college-level academic writing.
- 1: Excessively poor. Many deviations from ESWE per page.

**5. Critical Thinking/Creativity:**

- 5: The essay demonstrates great depth and breadth of thought. Reveals deep insight and understanding through creative reflection on the materials.
- 4: The essay demonstrates solid understanding and is insightful and creative.
- 3: The essay demonstrates understanding but remains flat and/or not very interesting. Points are relatively obvious or barely developed beyond generalizations and clichés.
- 2: The essay demonstrates very little critical thought; argument is limited to the most obvious points. Makes vague and unsupported generalizations and relies on clichés.
- 1: The essay demonstrates no critical engagement with the material.