

Grading Rubrics

Discussion Questions				
Discussion Questions	Approved with Commendation (A)	Good (B)	Adequate (C)	Inadequate (D-F)
Relevance of Response to question (48 %)	Strong recognition of issues present in the question; offers background information that considers alternative perspectives; expresses recognition of change of thinking as a result of readings. (40—48)	Asks questions; adds new information; comments on ideas presented by others; applies ideas to real life situations. (30—39)	Response shows general understanding without nuance. (20—29)	Demonstrates no integration of course-related theory or ideas. Little application of course ideas and theory to paper or not submitted. (0—19)
Mechanic of posting (20%)	Posts free form grammar or spelling errors. Writes in complete sentences. (15—20)	Posts rarely contain grammatical and spelling errors. (10—14)	Posts occasionally contain grammatical and spelling errors. (5—9)	Posts often contain spelling and grammatical errors. Demonstrates lack of knowledge of or neglect of basic presentation rules. (0—4)

Discussion Questions (cont)				
Discussion Questions	Approved with Commendation (A)	Good (B)	Adequate (C)	Inadequate (D-F)
Quality of comment (20%)	Response addresses main points of reading in student's own words, indicating familiarity with the content. Insights and questions are included. Contributes significantly to the level of thinking and discourse. Creative and novel insights. (15—20)	Understands the question but doesn't demonstrate application possibilities. Response is written in the student's own words and addresses some but not all of the main points in the reading. Insights and questions are partial. (10—14)	Participates in a graduate level of discourse without significant contribution. (5—9)	No indication of background understanding leaps to conclusions or expresses unsupported opinion. (0—4)
Timeline of Posts (12%)	Posts span 8-wk term at regular intervals and initiate further discussion. (10—12)	Posts are regular but not weekly. (6—9)	Posts are irregular, go beyond 10-week term. (3—5)	No response to question or if a response, Less than five posts during 20-week period. (0—3)

Papers				
Papers	Approved with Commendation (A)	Good (B)	Adequate (C)	Inadequate (D—F)
Theses (10%)	Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, clear. Connects well with paper title. (9—10)	Promising, but may be slightly unclear or lacking in insight or originality. Paper title does not connect well with thesis or is uninteresting. (8)	May be unclear (vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer nothing new; weak content to support thesis. Title and thesis do not connect well or are unimaginative (6—7)	Unidentifiable thesis. Restatement of the proven, self-evident, or banal. (0—5)
Structure (15%)	Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from points. Displays critical thinking; avoids simplistic description or summary of information. (14—15)	Generally clear and appropriate, occasional lapse from argument. Most transitions clear and topical sentences strong. (12—13)	Generally unclear, wanders, jumps around; few or weak transitions; few topical sentences. Quotes without analysis relating to the topic or quote substituted for the analysis. (9—11)	Unclear; thesis is weak or nonexistent. Transitions confusing; little effort to connect evidence to argument; unidentifiable argument; more description than critical thinking (0—8)
Uses of Sources (20%)	Primary source information supports every point. Excellent integration of quotes into sentences. Proper paraphrasing of sources. In-depth understanding of the topic. Excellent use of in-text citations, which represent all sources listed in references. (18—20)	Sources used to support most points. Some sources do not support point or appear at inappropriate places. Quotes well integrated into sentences. Proper paraphrasing of sources. In-depth understanding of the topic. Excellent use of in-text citations.	Sources used to support some points. Points often lack supporting evidence or evidence used inappropriately. Quotes poorly integrated into sentences. In-text citations used with minor errors. (12—15)	Few or weak sources. Failure to support statements. Evidence rarely supports statements. Quotes not integrated into sentences; does not use in-text citations properly. (0—11)

Papers				
Papers	Approved with Commendation (A)	Good (B)	Adequate (C)	Inadequate (D—F)
		Citations represent all sources listed in references. (17—16)		
Logic and Argumentation (15%)	Clearly analytical or argumentative. Ideas flow logically. Argument is identifiable, reasonable, well-structured. (14—15)	Clearly analytical or argumentative. Usually flows logically and makes sense. (12—13)	Logic may often fail or argument is unclear, sometimes weak. (9—11)	Ideas do not flow. (0—8)
Mechanics (10%)	Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; no run-on sentences or comma splices. (9—10)	Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong, with occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style usually correct. Some (minor) spelling errors; one run-on sentence or comma splice. (8)	Non-major problems with sentence structure, grammar, and diction; some punctuation, citation style and spelling errors; occasional run-on sentence or comma splice. (6—7)	Serious problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction; frequent major errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices. (0—5)
Reference List/Resources (15%)	Predominance of sound primary authorities, recent journals. UCMS ¹ formatted with errors, accessible references; more than five sources (14—15)	UCMS formatted with minor errors, some professional sources used. (12—13)	UCMS formatted; minor citation errors exist. Popular sources predominate, lack of professional sources, some resources over five-years old. (9—11)	Not properly formatted and inadequate information. Less than five resources. (0—8)
UCMS Style (not including in-text citations)	UCMS style is exemplary and used consistently and extensively throughout the	UCMS style is used consistently with very few errors	UCMS style is used throughout the manuscript	UCMS style is used inconsistently throughout the

¹ University of Chicago Manual of Style

Papers				
Papers	Approved with Commendation (A)	Good (B)	Adequate (C)	Inadequate (D—F)
(15%)	manuscript. Publishable in style. (14—15)	throughout the manuscript. (12—13)	but exhibits common errors. (9—11)	manuscript. (0—8)
Lack of Originality If 20% is copied, initiate inquiry.	Send a report to the Registrar if a paper is comprised of non-original work that has been pasted into the paper in blocks. A plagiarism inquiry will be made if 20% of the paper has been copied and pasted in large blocks of text from other sources.			

Exams					
Proctored Final Exam:	Approved with Commendation (A)	Acceptable (B)	Adequate (C)	Inadequate (D)	Unacceptable (F)
Evidence of Higher Critical Thinking (30)	Higher order thinking is consistently present, original, and creative. (25—30)	Higher order thinking is present and consistent. (19—24)	Higher order thinking is present but not consistent. (13—18)	Higher order thinking is questionable. (7—12)	Higher order thinking is obviously absent. (0—7)
Integration of theory and evidence (research) (20)	Responses are creatively and uniquely supported by the theory and research. (17—20)	Responses are well supported by the theory and research. (13—16)	Responses are adequately supported by the theory and research. (9—12)	Responses are questionably supported by the theory and research. (5—8)	Responses are not supported by the theory and research. (0—4)
Demonstration of original research (15)	Current research is substantial and fully covers the topic. (13—15)	Current research is present and covers the topic. (10—12)	Current research is present and generally covers the topic. Gaps may be evident. (7—9)	Current research is partially present and minimally covers the topic. (4—6)	Current research is minimal and does not cover the topic. (0—3)
Knowledge of the field (15)	Thoughtful consideration is given to others' research. (13—15)	Adequate consideration is given to others' research. (10—12)	Sketchy consideration is given to others' research. (7—9)	Minimal consideration is given to others' research. (4—6)	Little or no consideration is given to others' research. (0—3)

Exams					
Proctored Final Exam:	Approved with Commendation (A)	Acceptable (B)	Adequate (C)	Inadequate (D)	Unacceptable (F)
Idea Con - struction (10)	Clear patterns of idea formation, research by others, and support statements tie ideas to research. (8—10)	Patterns of idea formation, research by others, and support state- ments that tie ideas to research are present but with small gaps in evidence or support. (5—7)	Idea formation lacks sufficient evidence and support. (3—4)	Evidence or support for ideas is poorly developed . (2)	No attempt has been made to tie ideas to research. (0—1)
Argument con- struction (10)	Strong arguments have been formulated about theories, relationships, and concepts. (8—10)	A conscious consistent attempt has been made to develop valid argument s about theories, relation- ships, and concepts. (5—7)	Some attempt has been made to develop argument s connectin g theories, relationsh ips, and concepts. (3—4)	Little attempt has been made to develop arguments connectin g theories, relation- ships, and concepts. (2)	Arguments connecting theories, relationships , and concepts have not been developed. (0—1)