

# Short Papers

## Explanation & Rubric

### The Assignment

-These account for a total of 20% of your grade—10% apiece

Three prompts will be given prior to the end of each of the first three units. The papers will be due at the beginning of the next unit. Out of the three prompts, you are expected to pick **TWO** to complete, and you should submit them to the appropriate folder on Blackboard, which will scan the files for plagiarism. Each paper should be approximately four pages.

### Grading

The more you write, the more you improve. Take advantage of feedback you've received, on **all** earlier papers, other graded work, and from your peers. Below is a detailed rubric of what I expect. Please note again the University's plagiarism policy, and also be aware that, per the rubric, a missing thesis and/or conclusion will result in an automatic drop to an F.

	A-Range	B-Range	C-Range	D	F
Effort	Appears that student spent considerable time and thought	Appears that student put in a fair amount of time and thought	Appears that student put in some time and thought	Appears that student put in little time and thought	Appears that student put in little to no time or thought
Originality	Work is student's own	Work is student's own	Work is student's own	Work is student's own	Work is not student's own
Attention to detail	Paper is on time, well-developed, considers implications, and is not sloppily put together.	Paper exhibits most of the features of an A- paper, but is less developed or lacking in some places.	Paper is not polished in the way an A- or B-range paper is. Some parts appear hastily done, implications are left unexplored, etc.	Very little attention is paid to details. It looks or reads as sloppily done.	Paper is sloppily assembled. Little to no attention is paid to details.
Accuracy	Paper engages texts in a way that is relevant to the topic. Sources are correctly cited and accurately represented.	Texts are engaged but may fall short in some minor way of capturing the original author's position. Citations present but some may be improper.	Texts are engaged but fall short of capturing the original author's position in some way. Citations are present but improperly done.	Other authors' views are not well described and perhaps misleading. Citations, if present, are poorly done.	Texts, if used, are unfairly represented in a significant way. There are few to no citations and/or they conceal other sources.

	A-Range	B-Range	C-Range	D	F
Thesis and conclusion	Thesis statement is clear and at the beginning of the paper. The conclusion is equally clear, draws on the arguments in the paper, and brings the reader gracefully to the end of the paper.	Thesis statement is mostly clear and/or near the beginning of the paper. The conclusion is fairly clear, and brings the reader gracefully to the end of the paper.	There is a thesis statement and a conclusion, but they are ambiguous or lack strength. The end of the paper may be abrupt.	Thesis and/or conclusion may be present but the meaning is unclear. Paper may end abruptly.	Thesis and/or conclusion are missing. Paper may end abruptly.
Good argument(s)	Arguments advanced are clear, relevant, and logically valid.	Arguments are mostly clear and relevant. They are logically valid.	Arguments are valid, but they are not entirely clear or relevant.	Arguments lack clarity and relevance or may not be valid.	Arguments lack clarity, relevance, and validity.
Clear organization	Section breaks, if appropriate, aid in understanding the flow of the paper. Sentences and paragraphs naturally follow from what precedes.	Most of the arrangement in the paper is intuitive, but a little rearrangement would improve it.	The paper shows some effort towards organization but may cause some difficulty for the reader to understand.	There is minimal effort made towards organizing thoughts, and the reader has a difficult time understanding author's point.	Paper is nearly impossible to understand for its lack of organization.
Mechanics	Paper appears to have been carefully proofread. Grammatical errors, if any, are exceptionally few and minor, and all formatting requirements have been followed.	Paper appears to have been briefly proofread. There are a few grammatical errors, but the paper follows required format.	Grammatical errors are present but do not hinder readability. Paper mostly follows required format.	Grammatical errors result in difficulty in reading. Required formatting may or may not be followed.	Grammatical errors make the paper nearly impossible to read. Paper is incorrectly formatted.

**In short**, keep these six things in mind:

