

		Criteria					
Elements	Levels	Content & Analysis		Organization & Citations		Writing	
	Novice	F ( )	Thesis is essentially missing or indiscernible. Ideas are extremely simplistic, show signs of confusion, or demonstrate a fundamental misunderstanding of the assignment and course concepts.	F ( )	Introduction, thesis and conclusion not present or have no logical connection to the main points. Organization, if evident at all, is confusing and disjointed. Paragraph structure is weak and transitions are missing or illogical. Citations do not exist or are in incorrect style.	F ( )	Simple sentences used almost exclusively or overly complex sentences that inhibit all meaning. Pervasive sentence structure and mechanical errors. Possesses no awareness of a particular audience and tone is inappropriate or very inconsistent.
		F (12.5)		F (6)		F (12.5)	
		D (13.5)		D (13.5)			
	Developing	C- (14.5)	Thesis and ideas are noticeably simplistic and unfocused, with limited sense of purpose or control of the argument. Evidence provides insufficient, non- specific or irrelevant support for main ideas. Argument demonstrates limited knowledge of course concepts.	C (7)	Introduction and conclusion provide poor guides for the reader regarding purpose and thesis. Organization is generally unsuccessful as paragraphs are simple, disconnected and/or formulaic. Lacks all transitions or planned sequences. Citations are in the correct style, but in-text citations are improper. References do not match in-text citations.	C- (14.5)	Writing is unclear and inefficient due to poor sentence construction and regular mechanical errors. Possesses little awareness of a particular audience and lacks an appropriate tone.
		C (15)				C (15)	
		C+ (15.5)				C+ (15.5)	
	Able	B- (16)	Capable thesis, but borders on being weak, unclear or too broad. Main ideas are loosely related to one another and the thesis. They are mostly intelligible, but evidence is sometimes insufficient, unspecific, or indirectly supports the argument. Course concepts are present and capably integrated into the argument.	B (8)	Introduction and conclusion somewhat guide the reader, but lack clarity in purpose. Limited attempts to organize around thesis, with mostly stand-alone paragraphs that lack weak or non-evident transitions. Citations are formatted properly in-text, but are improperly formatted in references or vice-versa.	B- (16)	While writing is satisfactory, it is occasionally unclear and inefficient, and possesses noticeable mechanical errors. Sentence construction lacks desired variety. Possesses unrefined tone and awareness of intended audience.
		B (17)				B (17)	
		B+ (17.5)				B+ (17.5)	
	Skilled	A- (18.5)	Competent and well developed thesis, representing sound and adequate evaluation of the topic. Main ideas are adequately related to each other and thesis. Ideas are supported with sufficient evidence that is sound, valid and logically ordered. Course concepts are well integrated into the argument.	A (9)	Introduction and conclusion provide clear guides for the reader. Competent organization, but with limited sophistication. Competent paragraph structure, with suitable transitions. Citations are correctly formatted in-text and references.	A- (18.5)	Mostly clear and efficient writing that is generally free of mechanical errors. Good use of strong, positive, active language with well constructed sentences. Possesses suitable tone and awareness of intended audience.
		A (19)				A (19)	
	Masterful	A+ (20)	Clear and fully developed thesis. Supporting main ideas work as a unified whole, demonstrate critical use of course concepts, and are consistently supported with valid and specific evidence	A+ (10)	Introduction and conclusion provide excellent guides to the reader. Organization is thoughtful and supports the argument's logic. Paragraphs are consistently well developed and appropriately divided. Main ideas are linked with smooth and effective transitions. Citations are correctly formatted in-text and references.	A+ (20)	Exceptionally clear and efficient writing that is virtually free of mechanical errors. Excellent use of strong, positive, active language with powerfully constructed sentences. Possesses appropriate tone and awareness of intended audience.