Grading rubric for term papers (100 pts total)

	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standards	Standards Not Met
Title and abstract	Clear and succinct statement of findings (10 pts)	Ventures into background information or is not clear and to the point (7 pts)	Contains too much introductory material and is not a statement of the findings (4 pts)
Introduction	Clearly motivated by Earth system processes and couplings/feedbacks between processes (10 pts)	Motivation is implied or not tightly connected to Earth system processes (7 pt)	Weak motivation, does not address system couplings and feedbacks (4 pts)
Body	Very clear, logical structure with strong arguments, factually correct (30 pts)	Some sections were disorganized, arguments don't build toward conclusions, some incorrect statements (20 pts)	Very disorganized and no clear arguments (10 pts)
Conclusions	Clearly summarized current state of knowledge, ties back to abstract and introduction, and discusses future prospects (10 pts)	Contains key observations but doesn't synthesize results, discuss uncertainty, or future prospects (7 pts)	Poor summary that doesn't pull together the various threads of the paper (4 pts)
References	Good use of primary literature, with extensive use of at least 5 peer-reviewed articles (10 pts)	Too few peer-reviewed articles or relied too heavily on non-peer-reviewed articles (7 pts)	Less than five references used (4 pts)
Overall writing	Arguments are easy to follow, smooth transitions between ideas, grammatically correct, each paragraph has a clear and distinct purpose (30 pts)	Some aspects are difficult to follow, many grammatical mistakes, or does not build toward a clear conclusion (20 pts)	Numerous grammatical mistakes, poor organization, poorly structured (10 pts)