

Evaluating Student Writing: Sample Rubrics

Unfortunately, some students think that the task of grading papers is too subjective, too open to “opinion.” (Think about what a statement like “She *gave* me a D” reveals about the student’s perspective.) Yes, standards will vary from class to class, but most competent, well-trained writing teachers agree upon similar evaluation criteria. What follows are two sample grading rubrics.

Diederich’s Scale

(in descending order of importance) ↓	Content	1	2	3	4	5
	Organization	1	2	3	4	5
	Style	1	2	3	4	5
	Diction	1	2	3	4	5
	Grammar	1	2	3	4	5
	Punctuation	1	2	3	4	5
	Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
	Format	1	2	3	4	5

My Usual Modification

(in descending order of importance) ↓	Content				
	claims	weak	average	strong	excellent
	data/supports	weak	average	strong	excellent
	Organization				
	paragraph-level	weak	average	strong	excellent
	overall	weak	average	strong	excellent
	Introduction	weak	average	strong	excellent
	Conclusion	weak	average	strong	excellent
	Stance/Style/Diction	weak	average	strong	excellent
	Grammar	weak	one/a few problems		fine
	Spelling & Punctuation	weak	one/a few problems		fine
	Format	wrong	one/a few problems		fine