

Grading Rubric—College Writing I and II

The following shows what is expected for each level of writing. In general, level 4 corresponds to A work and level 1 corresponds to D or F work. Note: A paper need not show all characteristics of a level to be graded at that level. I grade according to where the paper seems to fit most in terms of its content, organization, style, and grammar.

4—Highest Honors/Outstanding Work

Level 4 work is original and insightful; it explores patterns and connections and it is heavily concerned with implications and significance. In addition:

- It is well argued and well organized, with a clear, argumentative thesis
- It is well developed with specific, concrete evidence that the writer uses to support and thoughtfully discuss the thesis
- It has logical and meaningful transitions that contribute to a fluent style of writing
- It has few, if any, mechanical, grammatical, spelling, or diction errors
- It demonstrates command of a mature, unpretentious diction
- It uses source material in a mature and meaningful way, and documents the source material correctly

3—Basic Honors/Good Work

Level 3 work reflects a command of the material and a strong presentation, but lacks the insight found in Level 4 work. It shares most characteristics of Level 4 work, but:

- It may have some minor weaknesses in its argumentation
- It may have some minor lapses in organization and development
- It may contain some sentence structures that are awkward or ineffective
- It may have minor mechanical, grammatical, or diction problems
- It may be less distinguished in its use of language
- It may use source material in a less mature manner, but it discusses meaning of the material, and it documents the sources correctly

2—Adequate Work

Level 2 work is of good overall quality but exhibits a lack of insight as well as either deficiencies in the student's command of the material or problems with presentation. This level work is competent and average. Compared to Level 3 work, it may have a weaker thesis and less effective development. In addition:

- It may have serious shortcomings in its argumentation
- It may contain some lapses in organization
- It may have poor or awkward transitions
- It may have less varied or monotonous sentence structures
- It may have more mechanical, grammatical, and diction problems
- It may have more serious problems with use of source material, such as relying on sources too heavily or not discussing the meaning of quotes; however, it documents the sources correctly

1—Unsuccessful Work

Level 1 work corresponds to grades of D or F. A grade of D or F indicates significant problems with the student's work, such as shallow understanding of the material or poor writing. In addition, it exhibits some of all of the following (with an F showing more examples or more problematic examples of these characteristics):

- It presents no clear thesis
- It displays major organizational problems
- It lacks adequate support for its thesis
- It includes irrelevant details
- It includes confusing transitions or lacks transitions altogether
- It fails to fulfill the assignment
- It contains ungrammatical or poorly constructed sentences and/or demonstrates problems with spelling, punctuation, diction, or syntax which impedes understanding
- It has serious problems with use and documentation of source materials, including plagiarism

0—Papers will receive a zero if they were intentionally plagiarized or if they were not handed in.