English 100

Fall 2006
Grading Criteria for Essays

The “A” Paper

- **90-100 (superior):** The "A" paper meets the standards in all these areas and excels in one or more of them: The paper as a whole presents a fresh subject or main idea or treats it in an interesting or original manner, displaying unusual insight. The paper has a clear pattern appropriate to the audience. The paper satisfies the page length requirement and scope of the assignment. The paragraphs are fully developed with detail that supports the main idea: sentences within paragraphs are clearly linked, forming an appropriate pattern; transitions are effective. Sentences are varied and imaginative in style, concise and creative in wording. The paper has no grammar, punctuation or spelling errors.
The “B” Paper

80-89 (strong): The "B" paper meets the standards in all of these areas: The paper as a whole presents an interesting subject or main idea and approaches it in a consistent and careful manner, displaying good insight, though without the freshness or originality of the "A" paper. The pattern of the essay is appropriate to its purpose, and the writer makes use of consistent rhetorical strategies and a tone appropriate to the audience. Paragraphs are, with only a few exceptions, adequately developed and generally successful in supporting the main idea; transitions are clear, and sentences within the paragraphs are, for the most part, clearly related. Sentences are clear and correct in structure and style and are not excessively wordy. Diction is usually appropriate. The paper may not satisfy the page length requirement or the scope of the assignment. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling follow accepted conventions, except for a few minor errors.
The “C” Paper

• **70-79 (adequate):** The "C" paper is average and contains errors in the following areas: The paper as a whole presents a clearly defined subject or main idea, but the treatment may be trivial, uninteresting, or too general and the insight adequate but not marked by independent thought. The plan and purpose are clear but inconsistently or incompletely carried out; tone may be inconsistent. Some paragraphs may lack adequate supporting detail or may be only loosely related, and some transitions may be missing. Sentences are generally correct in structure but may be excessively wordy, vague, or, at times, even incorrect. The paper may not satisfy the page length requirement or the scope of the assignment. Style and diction may be flat, inconsistent, or not entirely appropriate to the audience. The paper may display isolated errors in grammar and punctuation, or frequent minor errors that do not interfere substantially with meaning or that do not greatly distract the reader. The paper may contain a few misspellings.
The “D” Paper

- **60-69 (weak):** The "D" paper is seriously deficient in one or more of these areas: The paper as a whole presents a poorly defined or inconsistently treated subject or central idea and displays little insight. The plan and purpose are not treated consistently. To tone is inappropriate to the audience. Paragraphs contain little supporting detail. Sentences within paragraphs are often unrelated to the main idea, and transitions are lacking. Sentences are frequently incorrect in structure, vague, wordy, and distracting. The paper may not satisfy the page length requirement or the scope of the assignment. Style and word choice are inappropriate, incorrect, and/or inconsistent. The paper may contain serious and distracting errors in grammar and punctuation, as well as numerous, irritating minor errors and frequent misspellings.
The “F” Paper

50-59 (unacceptable/no credit): The "F" paper is unacceptable in one or more of these areas: The paper as a whole does not have a clear subject or main idea and has no apparent purpose or plan; or, the main idea is defined and treated in a way that clearly does not meet the requirements of the assignment. Paragraphs are not related to the main idea; sentences within paragraphs are unrelated, and transitions are missing. Sentences are so faulty in structure and style that the essay is nearly unreadable. The paper may not meet the page length requirement or scope of the assignment. Frequent, serious errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling indicate an inability to handle the written conventions; there are excessive minor errors or misspellings.