

Guidelines for Grading Your Papers

1. Each paper will receive its own score, 1-6. (A score of 6 is the highest.)
2. Use of the passive voice is acceptable in social science and technical writing, so long as it does not interfere with, intrude upon, or obscure the meaning of the passage. The active voice tends to read better and be more engaging.
3. I will be grading your writing, not the content. Still, the content will likely add to the strength of the essay.

4-6 Point papers are considered upper-half

A six point essay will be characterized by the following:

- Excellent organization of ideas
- Clarity and conciseness
- Be virtually error-free in grammar and usage

A five point essay will:

- Display the features of a 6-point essay, but be slightly weaker in clarity, concision, and organization.

A four point essay will be characterized by the following:

- Basic competence in grammar and usage
- Lacks the structural and organizational sophistication of a 5 or 6 point essay

1-3 Point papers are considered lower-half

A three point essay will be characterized by the following:

- Overly formulaic organization or lacking organization
- Problems with grammar and usage
- Vague and wordy construction (excessive use of passive voice, excessive nominalization)

A two point essay will compound the problems of a three point essay, and display:

- Consistent flaws in syntax, diction, grammar, or spelling
- Significant flaws in organization and a lack of overall coherence;
- Usage of terms without prior definition

A one point essay will compound the weaknesses of a two point essay.