

In her paper, the author...		Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Marginal	Unacceptable
Argumentation (45 points)	(1) Thesis Statement (5 points) <i>Please note: Though the thesis counts for relatively few points itself, having an unsatisfactory thesis statement has negative consequences that will ripple out and deleteriously affect your paper's argument and organization.</i>	... articulates a clear and precise thesis statement that is easily identifiable, placed in the introduction. (4.5 - 5 points)	... articulates a relatively clear, precise, and identifiable thesis statement early on in the paper. (4 - 4.4 points)	... articulates an identifiable thesis statement, but it may suffer from some vagueness, ambiguity or imprecision. (3.5 - 3.9 points)	... has merely an unarticulated (but still implicit) or thoroughly vague, ambiguous, or otherwise imprecise thesis statement. There may be no <i>explicit</i> thesis statement articulated. (3 - 3.4 points)	... provides no discernable, coherent thesis statement whatsoever (even a tacit one). The author's main point in the essay is either inconsistent or unintelligible. (< 3 points)
	(2) Arguments: Inferential Structure & Consistency (15 points)	... clearly and precisely spells out the premises, inferences, & argument/ inferential structure used to establish (sub-conclusions <i>en route</i> to) the overall conclusion/ thesis of the paper. The internal consistency of the author's argument is readily appreciable. (13.5 - 15 points)	...spells out with relative clarity the premises, inferences, & argument/ inferential structure used to establish (sub-conclusions <i>en route</i> to) the overall conclusion/ thesis of the paper. The argument thus presented is internally consistent. (12 - 13.4 points)	... articulates some coherent premises, inferences, & argument/ inferential structure in order to help establish the sub-conclusions and conclusions of her paper. Without making some modifications, the author's argument may not be internally consistent. (10.5 - 11.9 points)	... articulates only a minimally-recognizable argument structure with only unarticulated, vague, ambiguous, or otherwise imprecise premises and inferential relations between claims. It may take a significant reworking of the argument to render it internally consistent. (9 - 10.4 points)	... fails to articulate a minimally-coherent argument/inferential structure, intelligible premises, or inferential relations between claims. There is no intelligible or consistent line of argument presented. (< 9 points)
	(3) Arguments: Strength (15 points)	... clearly presents a highly plausible argument that is valid (if deductive) or strong (if inductive). Premises are either noncontroversial or strongly supported with sub-arguments. The author accurately and explicitly articulates the degree to which her argumentative strategy (i.e. premises and inferences) lends support to her conclusion(s) and includes appropriate qualifications as needed. (13.5 - 15 points)	... presents a somewhat plausible argument that can be readily interpreted or reconstructed such that it is valid (if deductive) or somewhat strong (if inductive). Premises are plausible or supported with sub-arguments. The author, with relative accuracy, articulates the degree to which she takes her argumentative strategy (i.e. premises and inferences) to lend support to her conclusion(s). (12 - 13.4 points)	... presents an argument that may not be readily recognized or reconstructed as valid (if deductive) or as strong (if inductive). Premises may be neither immediately plausible nor supported with sub-arguments. The author articulates but does not accurately gauge or qualify the degree to which her argumentative strategy (i.e. premises and inferences) lend support to her conclusion(s). (10.5 - 11.9 points)	... presents an argument that is clearly invalid (if deductive) or weak (if inductive). Premises, if recognizable, are neither plausible nor supported with sub-arguments. The author fails to coherently articulate the degree to which her argument lends support to her conclusion(s). (9 - 10.4 points)	... presents little to no coherent argument at all. Few if any ineligible premises or inferential relations between claims can be coherently discerned. There is no explicit attempt to gauge the degree of support the author's argument lends her conclusion(s). (< 9 points)
	(4) Consideration of Alternatives/ Counterarguments (10 points)	... precisely articulates and charitably considers and evaluates a number of viable, alternative positions & counter-arguments (both obvious & novel ones) vis-à-vis her own position and arguments; responds to these alternatives adeptly & insightfully. (9 - 10 points)	... articulates and charitably considers and evaluates some viable, alternative positions and counterarguments (perhaps only obvious ones) vis-à-vis the author's own position and argument; provides a plausible response to them. (8 - 8.9 points)	... considers and evaluates some alternative positions and counterarguments vis-à-vis her own position, though these opposing views are not really plausible or viable, and they may not be fully articulated; provides some coherent response to them. (7 - 7.9 points)	... barely considers or recognizes the possibility of alternative positions or counterarguments at all (whether viable or not); responses to such alternatives and counterarguments are largely imprecise, vague, ambiguous, inconsistent, or incoherent. (6 - 6.9 points)	... does not consider, evaluate, or respond to any alternative, opposing positions or counterarguments. (< 6 points)
Understanding, Explanation, Analysis, & Evaluation (35 points)	(5) Insightfulness, Creativity, and Novelty/ Originality of one's own thesis, argumentation, & exposition (5 points)	... presents a remarkably creative, novel thesis and/or argument for her position that demonstrates genuine, philosophical insight. Explanation/analysis in (6) & (7) is highly creative. (4.5 - 5 points)	... presents creative arguments or new examples for an already extant position/thesis about the subject matter. Explanation/analysis in (6) & (7) also somewhat creative. (4 - 4.4 points)	... clearly and coherently articulates existing arguments and exposition for an extant position/thesis on the subject matter, but phrases them in the author's own words. (3.5 - 3.9 points)	... articulates existing arguments/ exposition for an extant position/thesis on the subject matter, but does so vaguely, with minimally intelligibility, and/or by merely quoting or copying others' work. (3 - 3.4 points)	... fails to present a coherent or consistent thesis or intelligible argument at all; any semblance thereof resorts to heavily copying or quoting existing work of others. (< 3 points)
	(6) Explanation and Analysis of Topic/ Question/Problem and Related Ideas at Issue (15 points)	... articulates & explains the topic/question at issue, breaking down the problem into constituent parts & their interrelations, all with great clarity, insight, & exactitude. Clearly, precisely, & compellingly analyzes the ideas and concepts involved therein. (13.5-15 points)	... articulates and explains the topic/question at issue with relative clarity, precision, and accuracy, and to some extent, breaks down the issue into intelligible parts and their interrelations. Provides an accurate analysis of the ideas and concepts involved therein. (12-13.4 points)	... minimally, inaccurately, or vaguely articulates and explains the topic/question at issue as well as its component parts. Provides a minimal, inaccurate or imprecise analysis of the ideas and concepts involved therein. (10.5-11.9 points)	... attempts but fails to coherently articulate the topic/question at issue or intelligibly identify its component parts and their interrelations. Analysis of the underlying concepts and ideas is unintelligible, incoherent and/or grossly inaccurate. (9 - 10.4 points)	... does not recognizably attempt (and thus fails) to articulate the issue/topic/ question to be addressed by the paper, and does not recognizably attempt to analyze the underlying concepts/ideas that would be involved therein to any coherent degree. (< 9 points)
	(7) Exposition, Analysis, and Evaluation of Others' Arguments & Positions (with regard to (6)) (15 points) <i>Note: evaluation of others' arguments should be for internal consistency, relative strength of argument, & comparative plausibility versus other positions.</i>	... clearly, charitably, and accurately characterizes, explains, analyzes, & evaluates other authors' positions, breaking down & thoughtfully reconstructing their arguments with precision & an eye for nuance. (13.5 - 15 points)	... characterizes, explains, analyzes, & evaluates other authors' positions (even those in opposition to her own view) with a significant degree of charity, clarity, and accuracy. (12 - 13.4 points)	... characterizes, explains, analyzes, & evaluates others' positions with only a minimal degree of charity, & not in their best terms. The reconstruction of others views suffers from inaccuracy and/or a lack of precision & clarity. (10.5-11.9 points)	... attempts but fails to articulate, explain, or evaluate others' positions with even minimal charity or coherence. The discussion of others views is either unintelligible or grossly inaccurate, unclear, or imprecise. (9 - 10.4 points)	... does not even attempt to seriously engage with other authors' views. The author does not attempt to describe, analyze, or evaluate other authors' positions in any sustained, significant, appreciable, or intelligible way. (< 9 points)
Synthesis (5 points)	(8) Integration of Background Explanation (i.e. (6) and (7)) and one's own position (i.e. (1)-(5)) into an overarching understanding. (5 points)	... clearly, compellingly, and precisely weaves an understanding of the topic/question and ideas at issue (6) and the positions of others thereabout (7), with a gripping argument/case for her own position ((1) -(5)) into an integrative, overarching framework or picture that insightfully casts/captures the subject matter as a whole. Connections drawn between elements therein are accurate and edifying. (4.5 - 5 points)	... with some clarity, insight, and precision weaves an understanding of the topic/question and ideas at issue (6) and the positions of others thereabout (7), with the argument/case for her own position ((1) - (5)) into an integrative picture that accurately captures the subject matter as a coherent whole. Connections drawn between elements are largely accurate. (4 - 4.4 points)	... without much clarity, accuracy, depth, or precision—and/or only to a minimal degree—integrates an understanding of the topic/question at issue (6), others' views on the matter (7), with her own argument and position ((1) - (5)). The resulting view of the subject matter and connections drawn between elements therein is merely partial, inaccurate, imprecise, or unedifying/uninsightful. (3.5-3.9 points)	... attempts but fails to integrate a background understanding of the topic/question at issue (6), others' views on the matter (7), and her own argument and viewpoint ((1) - (5)) to a minimally accurate or coherent degree. Either no intelligible overarching view of the subject matter as a whole & connections between elements can be discerned, or the picture thus presented is grossly inaccurate and imprecise. (3- 3.4 points)	... does not even attempt to integrate a background understanding of the topic/question (6), others' views on the matter (7), and her own argument and viewpoint on the issue ((1)-(5)) into a coherent whole. Connections between these elements are left undrawn to any appreciable or intelligible degree. (< 3 points)
Organization (15 points)	(9) Roadmapping (2.5 points) <i>Please note: Though Roadmapping counts for relatively few points itself, having an unsatisfactory roadmap will likely also negatively affect your score for (11). "Structure," which counts for five additional points.</i>	... includes, with her thesis, a clear and precise plan—a roadmap—for how the author will establish this thesis, and sticks to this roadmap in an easy to follow way throughout the paper. (2.25 - 2.5 points)	... includes, with her thesis, some sort of relatively clear plan—a roadmap—for how the author will establish this thesis. The author largely sticks to this roadmap in the paper. (2 - 2.24 points)	...includes, at some point early on in the paper, only a minimal plan— a roadmap—of argumentation to establish her thesis. It may suffer from some vagueness or imprecision. The author, perhaps with some noticeable lapses, can be seen as attempting to faithfully follow this roadmap in her paper. (1.75 - 1.99 points)	... has merely an unarticulated/implicit or thoroughly vague, unclear, or otherwise imprecise plan of argumentation for her thesis. There may be no <i>explicit</i> argumentative roadmap articulated. If some sort of roadmap is articulated explicitly, the author may not faithfully follow it in her paper. (1.5 - 1.74 points)	... provides no discernable, coherent plan (roadmap) of argumentation whatsoever (even a tacit one). The author's argumentative plan for the essay is unappreciable or unintelligible. (< 1.5 points)
	(10) Guide-posting (2.5 points) <i>Please note: Though Guide-posting counts for relatively few points itself, having unsatisfactory guide-posts will likely also negatively affect your score for (11), "Structure," which counts for five additional points.</i>	... includes a good number of clear & helpful "guide-posts" or transition/ organizational guiding phrases throughout the paper, indicating where the reader is within the author's argument structure and plan thereof (roadmap). (2.25 - 2.5 points)	... includes several relatively helpful and clear guideposts, or transition/ organizational guiding phrases throughout the paper, indicating where the reader is within the author's argument structure and plan thereof (roadmap). (2 - 2.24 points)	...includes a few guideposts, or transition/ organizational guiding phrases to indicate where the reader is within the author's argument or plan thereof (roadmap). These may not be particularly clear, precise, or helpful. (1.75 - 1.99 points)	... includes barely any or minimal guideposts, or transition/organizational guiding phrases. These are not clear, precise, and/or are likely too few and far between to be helpful in guiding the reader through the author's argument. (1.5-1.74 points)	... includes no discernable, coherent, or explicit guideposts—or transition/organizational guiding phrases used to help navigate the author's argument or plan thereof (roadmap)— whatsoever. (< 1.5 points)
	(11) Structure (5 points) <i>Remember: The point of your introduction is to concisely introduce the topic, thesis, and plan (roadmap) for your essay, and the conclusion is used to complete, tidy-up or address unfinished business, e.g., by raising and responding (or acknowledging one's inability to respond in this paper) to certain, pertinent objections, or e.g., by concisely considering relevant further implications of one's thesis for matters outside the scope of the paper.</i>	... crafts a very well-organized essay, with a perspicuous, easy-to-follow structure that allows the author's line of thought to come through clearly and powerfully. The paper's introduction & conclusion are to the point & without excess frill and fluff. The body of the essay has a well-paced flow with an excellent ordering of paragraphs & sections. Topics, ideas, exposition, explanation, argument, & analysis are presented in an illuminating order and natural progression. (4.5 - 5 points)	... crafts a well-organized essay, with a structure that allows the author's line of thought to come through evidently. The paper's introduction & conclusion are relatively on point. The body of the essay has an appreciable flow with a thoughtful ordering of paragraphs & sections. Topics, ideas, exposition, explanation, argument, & analysis are presented in a thought-out order and progression. (4 - 4.4 points)	... crafts a somewhat-organized essay, with a structure that occasionally impedes the author's line of thought from being manifest. The paper's introduction & conclusion may be overly broad and thematic, incorporating needless frill & fluff. The essay's body may not flow well, and paragraphs & sections of the paper are not very thoughtfully or illuminatingly ordered. The order/progression & presentation of topics, ideas, argument, & etc. may not be helpful or well thought-out. (3.5 - 3.9 points)	... despite evident efforts, drafts an unorganized essay, with a structure that significantly hampers the perspicuity and clarity of the author's line of thought. The paper's introduction & conclusion are overly grandiose and thematic, and incorporate needless frill & fluff. The essay's body does not flow well, and paragraphs & sections of the paper are poorly ordered. The order/progression of topics, ideas, exposition, explanation, argument, & analysis is poor and not seemingly unthought-out. (3 - 3.4 points)	... without much evident effort, drafts a very unorganized essay, with a structure that altogether hampers the perspicuity, clarity, and intelligibility of the author's attempted discussion. The paper's introduction & conclusion are overly broad, verbose (chock- full-of "word filler"), missing, or off topic. The essay's body does not flow coherently, and paragraphs & sections of the paper are either not present or without an intelligible ordering or progression between topics, ideas, analysis, etc. (< 3 points)
	(12) Readability/ Understandability (5 points) <i>Please note: Though Readability/ Understandability counts for relatively few points itself, having a difficult to read paper will inescapably negatively affect your assessment for almost all other categories as it will simply be more difficult for your reader/evaluator to understand your essay and the parts thereof.</i>	... crafts prose that is at once manifestly easy-to-follow, readable, precise, clear and edifying. The reader can easily understand the author's argument, explanation, analysis and exposition with no extraneous interpretive effort. The author's writing is concise without sacrificing clarity or obfuscating important details. Words are very well chosen, & technical terminology/concepts are lucidly & perspicuously defined/explained & meticulously employed. (4.5 - 5 points)	... crafts prose that is easy-to-follow, clear, and readable. The reader can understand the author's argument, explanation, analysis and exposition with little interpretive effort. The author, to some extent, balances concision with clarity and important nuance/detail. Word choice is thoughtful, & technical terminology/ concepts are defined, explained, and employed with relative clarity and precision. (4 - 4.4 points)	... crafts prose that is somewhat readable but sometimes difficult to follow and unclear. The reader may have difficulty understanding the author's argument & text without significant interpretive effort. Despite good faith effort, the author's writing may not properly balance concision, clarity, & detail. Words may be chosen with some, minimal thoughtfulness, and technical concepts are not well-defined, explained, or precisely employed. (3.5 - 3.9 points)	... despite evident efforts, ultimately crafts prose that is too-often difficult to follow and unclear. The reader may find it very difficult to understand the author's text even with significant interpretive effort. The author's writing fails to strike a good balance between concision, clarity, & detail. Words are neither well nor thoughtfully chosen, & technical terms/ concepts are imprecisely employed and either inaccurately explained or left nearly- undefined. (3 - 3.4 points)	... crafts prose that is unclear and very difficult to follow. It is not evident that the author has put any real effort into her readers' ability to follow her writing. The reader will find it very difficult to follow a coherent line of thought in the text even with extensive, charitable interpretive effort. Words are not well selected or thoughtfully chosen, and technical terms are either not used at all or left completely undefined and employed without clarity or precision. (< 3 points)
OVERALL (100 points)		A (90-100 points)	B (80-89 points)	C (70-79 points)	D (60-69 points)	F (≤ 59 points)