

Expectations for Papers--Student Handout

Papers must deal with the issues explored in the class readings and discussions. Papers must answer the "So What?" question. That is, why should your projected audience care about or be bothered with your ideas? Excellent papers deal with significant issues that demonstrate maturity and critical thinking. They are thus papers worthy of consideration and time. Attempt to go beyond the obvious and to explore the implications of your issue.

Criteria for grades are as follows:

An "A" paper is characterized by the following:

- *The strengths of the "B" paper
- *An insight that goes beyond the obvious
- *Evidence of ability to critically analyze and to assess ideas
- *Specific and intriguing thesis and evidence, beyond dull and predictable
- *Sophisticated paragraph development and sentence structure
- *Professional presentation

A "B" paper is characterized by the following:

- *Coherent, well-unified paragraphs with clear topic sentences and / or purpose
- *A structure and organization that works but that is not exceptional
- *Fairly detailed evidence and support
- *A sense that the writer knows what he or she is doing and is addressing real people
- *A sharp, almost professional appearance
- *Evidence of having been proofread
- *A memorable introduction and conclusion
- *Effective use of transitions between major ideas, paragraphs, and sentences

A "C" paper is characterized by the following:

- *A sense of organization and focus, but a vague thesis
- *Inadequately stated main point
- *Lack of sufficient detail and evidence
- *Monotonous sentence structure
- *A weak introduction and / or conclusion
- *Sketchy paragraph development
- *Fulfillment of most of the major components of the assignment

A "D" paper is characterized by the following:

- *Numerous mechanical errors
- *Lack of thesis and organization
- *Lack of unity and coherence in and among paragraphs
- *Thought governed by clichés or commonplace opinions

An "F" paper is characterized by the following:

- *Problems of the "D" paper
- *Lack of thesis and organization
- *Excessive mechanical errors
- *Failure to address the particular assignment