

GRADING CRITERIA FOR RESEARCH PAPERS¹

90 to 100 points (A+, A, A-):

The paper is organized around a critically-considered, original and well-documented thesis, with an introductory paragraph, a well-developed manuscript body, and an appropriate conclusion. The content of the paper is accurate. Points raised are factually grounded, and conclusions are based on the careful consideration of verifiable (empirical) examples.

The paper expands upon and applies larger thematic and methodological issues raised in class with regard to the topic discussed. It displays critical thinking and originality in examining “the thinking behind the thinking” by raising important questions beyond relying on the content of sources consulted.

The paper has a title page, a substantive manuscript body, a references section (bibliography) and an appendix.² All charts, tables, and graphs (included where appropriate or required) are created using Excel or PowerPoint, display original research, and are labeled and referenced (if they reprint existing data published elsewhere). Relevant illustrations may or may not be included. The paper is written in accordance with the appropriate style guide.

The body of the paper is 15 to 20 pages in length (*excluding* charts, graphs, tables, and illustrations), in 12 point Times Roman or Garamond font with 1 or 1¼ inch margins and ½ inch headers and footers. Pages are numbered. There are no more than 5 grammar and/or spelling errors in the paper.

The paper includes a minimum of 10 pertinent textual sources referenced more than once in the body of the paper, with at least 5 recent (past 10 years) scholarly articles from peer-reviewed professional journals. Other references should be a mix of sources: books, newspaper articles, government documents, etc., but no more than 2 appropriate web sites (if permitted for the assignment).

80 to 89 points (B+, B, B-):

The paper is organized around a coherent and well-documented thesis, with an introductory paragraph, a manuscript body and a conclusion. The content of the paper is largely accurate and the topic selected addresses the assignment.

The paper may be somewhat limited or lacking in critical thinking and original ideas or observations. The paper makes reference to anthropological or sociological concepts and principles but fails to systematically incorporate them in its hypothesis or in the overall analysis.

The paper has a cover-page, a manuscript body, a references section (bibliography) and an appendix.² All charts, tables, and graphs (included where appropriate or required) are created using Excel or PowerPoint, display original research, and are labeled and referenced (if they reprint existing data published elsewhere). Relevant illustrations may or may not be included. The paper is written in accordance with the appropriate style guide.

The body of the paper is 12 to 15 pages in length (*excluding* charts, tables, graphs, and illustrations), in 12 point Times Roman or Garamond font, with 1 or 1¼ inch margins and ½ inch headers and footers. Pages are numbered. There are no more than 8 grammar and/or spelling errors in the paper.

The paper includes a minimum of 8 pertinent sources referenced more than once in the body of the paper, with at least 4 recent (past 10 years) scholarly articles from peer reviewed journals. Other references are a mixture of sources such as books, newspaper articles, government documents, etc., but no more than 2 appropriate web sites (if permitted for the assignment).

70 to 79 points (C+, C, C-):

There is a broadly-presented thesis, which tends to be general in nature and is largely a restatement of the ideas in the articles. Too much regurgitation of source material and not enough original discussion of an explicit thesis. The paper lacks coherency or is not very well written. There is a poor selection of sources and not much use of specific examples.

The paper shows a general understanding of the issues, but is largely descriptive, relying on a summary of sources rather than on substantive analysis. The paper relies heavily on opinions and generalizations. There is no depth of discussion or consideration of subtle issues and implications. Critical thinking and original ideas are largely lacking.

There may be problems with the content and accuracy of the paper. There is little use of specific facts, and conclusions may be largely unverified opinions.

The paper has a manuscript body and a references section (bibliography), but may not have an introductory paragraph. It may also be lacking a title page or an appendix.² Charts, tables, or graphs are missing where they are appropriate or required, as are relevant illustrations. There are problems with the formatting of the paper according to the appropriate style guide.

The body of the paper is 10 to 12 pages in length (*excluding* charts, tables, graphs, and illustrations), in 12 point Times Roman or Garamond font with 1 or 1¼ inch margins and ½ inch headers and footers. Pages are numbered. There are significant (8 or more) grammar and/or spelling errors in the paper.

The paper includes a minimum of 6 pertinent sources referenced more than once in the body of the paper, with fewer than 3 recent (past 10 years) scholarly articles from peer reviewed journals. Other references are a mixture of sources such as books, newspaper articles, government documents, etc. There is an over-reliance on web sources (more than 2 appropriate web sites), or they are cited despite their required exclusion from the assignment.

60 to 69 points (D):

The paper does not address the topic and is poorly written. It is poorly organized and lacks a coherent thesis. An introductory paragraph, substantive manuscript body, and/or conclusion may be missing. The paper demonstrates a lack of understanding and/or a lack of effort in exploring the topic.

The paper has a body and a references section (bibliography). It may be missing a title page and/or an appendix.² Charts, tables, or graphs are missing where they are appropriate or required, as are relevant illustrations. There are problems with the formatting of the paper according to the appropriate style guide.

The body of the paper is about 8 to 10 pages long (*excluding* charts, tables, graphs and illustrations). It uses 12 point Times Roman or Garamond font with 1 inch margins and ½ inch headers and footers. Pages are numbered. There are significant (8 or more) grammar and/or spelling errors in the paper.

The paper includes fewer than 5 pertinent sources referenced more than once in the body of the paper, with fewer than 3 recent (past 10 years) scholarly articles from peer-reviewed journals. Other references are a mixture of sources such as books, newspaper articles, government documents, etc. There is an over-reliance on web sources (more than 2 appropriate web sites), or they are cited despite their required exclusion from the assignment.

0 to 59 points (F):

The paper is devoid of organization and content. It is very poorly written. Little understanding or effort was put into this paper. It is missing fundamental sections such as a title page, substantive manuscript body and/or appendix.² There are serious problems with the formatting of the paper according to the appropriate style guide.

The body of the paper is less than 8 pages long (*excluding* charts, tables, graphs, and illustrations) in 12 point Times Roman or Garamond font with 1 or 1¼ inch margins and ½ inch headers and footers. There are significant (8 or more) grammar and/or spelling errors in the paper.

The paper includes fewer than 5 pertinent sources referenced more than once in the body of the paper, with fewer than 3 recent (past 10 years) scholarly articles from peer reviewed journals. Other references are a mixture of sources such as books, newspaper articles, government documents, etc. There is an over-reliance on web sources (more than 5 appropriate web sites), or they are cited despite their required exclusion from the assignment.

Or, the paper is plagiarized (or otherwise in violation of the Academic Behavior Code), or not submitted at all.

¹ Criteria are based on a 15 - 20 page research paper.

² Where appropriate.