

Grading Criteria for History Papers

The “A” history paper contains ALL of the following:

- 1) a clearly written, persuasive, and logical argument
- 2) a well-organized, structured body with discernable paragraphs and effective transitions
- 3) a direct response to the questions and issues raised by the prompt
- 4) sharp analysis that supports the argument consistently throughout the essay
- 5) a variety of examples and evidence
- 6) creativity, original thought and effective engagement with course material
- 7) a polished product with few typos, grammatical mistakes, or awkward sentences

The “B” history paper:

- 1) contains a thesis, analysis, structure, and evidence, but lacks the quality and incisive analysis of an “A” paper
- 2) demonstrates a genuine effort to think about the material, but may contain one of the following characteristics:
 - a. slips into summary at some point during the essay
 - b. lacks a conclusion that moves beyond the body and intro
 - c. uses only a few obvious examples from the course
 - d. fails to engage one of the requested sources
 - e. does not answer every portion of the prompt, either in the introduction or body
 - f. shows poor organizational skills or lack of professional presentation

The “C” history paper:

- 1) fails to articulate a clear argument
- 2) fails to maintain an analytical approach throughout the essay and becomes a recitation of facts, notes, or summary
- 3) has a repetitive quality stemming from a few facts or examples.
- 4) engages minimally with the readings, lectures, and other course material.

The “D” history paper:

- 1) fails to address the questions and issues in the prompt.
- 2) shows some effort, but has one of the following *major* flaws:
 - a. lacks clear reference to the course material
 - b. lacks coherence
 - c. includes several significant factual errors
 - d. contains glaring grammatical mistakes and/or awkward sentences

The “F” history paper:

- 1) does not meet page or word requirements
- 2) does not say anything of substance or significance
- 3) fails to connect with the prompt or course material
- 4) contains internal inconsistencies to the point of incoherence