

The Academic Essay Evaluation Rubric has three sections. **The first section** describes how the five scores are used for the three criteria to evaluate your demonstration of focus on thinking. **The second section** describes how the five scores are used for the four criteria to evaluate your demonstration of focus on the mechanics for communicating ideas. **The third section** gives definitions for categories of: research, evaluation, synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, knowledge, content and focus; analysis and critical thinking; logic and flow; structure and organization; writing style; APA conventions; grammar/usage/mechanics; and plagiarism.

EVALUATION	10 (Strong)	8 (Proficient)	6 (Satisfactory)	4 (Weak)	2 (Unacceptable)	Score & Comments
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Section 1. Evaluation of Thinking
 Directions: For each of the three criteria (content and focus; analysis and critical thinking; logic and flow) select 10, 8, 6, 4, or 2 from the five possible scores (representing strong, proficient, satisfactory, weak, or unacceptable, respectively).

Focus on Thinking	Content & Focus	Essay successfully answers the question; essay thoroughly reviews the literature; essay engages Bloom's cognitive levels of evaluation, synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, and knowledge plus research (see row below and definitions at end of document)	Essay answers the question with only minor digressions; essay sufficiently reviews literature; essay engages Bloom's cognitive levels of synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, and knowledge (see row below and definitions at end of document)	Essay answers the question with some digression; essay sufficiently reviews literature; essay engages Bloom's cognitive levels of application, comprehension, and knowledge (see row below and definitions at end of document)	Essay answers the question but digresses significantly; essay insufficiently reviews literature; essay engages Bloom's cognitive levels of comprehension and knowledge (see row below and definitions at end of document)	Essay insufficiently answers question and insufficiently reviews literature; essay engages Bloom's cognitive level of knowledge (see row below and definitions at end of document)	
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EVALUATION	10 (Strong)	8 (Proficient)	6 (Satisfactory)	4 (Weak)	2 (Unacceptable)	Scores & Comments
<p>Section 1. Evaluation of Thinking (continued) Directions: For each of the three criteria (content and focus; analysis and critical thinking; logic and flow) select 10, 8, 6, 4, or 2 from the five possible scores (representing strong, proficient, satisfactory, weak, or unacceptable, respectively).</p>						
Analysis and Critical Thinking	Exhibits strong higher-order critical thinking and analysis Research Evaluation (see definitions at end of document)	Generally exhibits higher-order critical thinking and analysis Synthesis Analysis (see definitions at end of document)	Exhibits limited higher-order critical thinking and analysis Application (see definitions at end of document)	Exhibits simplistic or reductive thinking and analysis Comprehension (see definitions at end of document)	Exhibits simplistic or reductive thinking and analysis Knowledge (see definitions at end of document)	
Logic & Flow	Development is logical and clear to reader; points are addressed individually and linked appropriately	Development is logical and clear to reader; some points may be bunched together or not clearly linked	Development is unclear to reader; points may be inadequately linked	Development is flawed (reasoning isn't sound); points are insufficiently linked	Development is missing or otherwise unacceptable; points are not linked	
Strong = 30 Proficient = 24 Satisfactory = 18 Weak = 12 Unacceptable = 6						SUB-TOTAL

EVALUATION		5 (Strong)	4 (Proficient)	3 (Satisfactory)	2 (Weak)	1 (Unacceptable)	Score & Comments
<p>Section 2. Evaluation of Communicating Ideas Directions: For each of the four criteria (structure and organization; writing style; APA format; grammar/usage/mechanics) select 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1 from the five possible scores (representing strong, proficient, satisfactory, weak, or unacceptable, respectively).</p>							
Focus on Communicating	Structure & Organization	Structure and organization are strong: introduction & conclusion are effective; paragraphs are well-developed and have strong topic sentences	Structure and organization are proficient: introduction, conclusion & paragraph development are competent; paragraphs are occasionally weak and/or underdeveloped; topic sentences are generally good	Structure and organization are adequate but flawed: introduction and/or conclusion are ineffective; paragraphs are developed inadequately or inconsistently; topic sentences are present but ineffective	Flawed structure and organization: introduction or conclusion is missing; paragraphs are underdeveloped; topic sentences are missing or unfocused	Structure and organization are ineffective: introduction and conclusion are missing; paragraphs are undeveloped; topic sentences are missing	
	Writing Style	Sentences are consistently clear, concise and direct; tone is appropriately formal/ informal	Sentences are generally clear, concise, and direct; tone is appropriately formal/informal	Sentences are occasionally wordy or ambiguous; tone is too informal for academic writing	Sentences are generally wordy and/or ambiguous; tone is too informal for academic writing	Sentences are unclear enough to impair meaning; tone is inappropriate and/or inconsistent	
	APA format	Excellent use of APA format, inclusive of citations and references	Appropriate use of APA format, inclusive of citations and references; only infrequent errors (suggested: fewer than 1 errors per page)	Adequate use of APA format, inclusive of citations and references; frequency of errors detracts from strength of paper (suggested: 1-2 errors per page)	Inadequate use of APA format, inclusive of citations and references; frequency of errors obstructs clarity for reader (suggested: 3-4 errors per page)	Unacceptable use of APA format, inclusive of citations and references; (suggested: five or more errors per page)	

EVALUATION	5 (Strong)	4 (Proficient)	3 (Satisfactory)	2 (Weak)	1 (Unacceptable)	Scores & Comments
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Section 2. Evaluation of Communicating Ideas (continued)
 Directions: For each of the four criteria (structure and organization; writing style; APA format; grammar/usage/mechanics) select 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1 from the five possible scores (representing strong, proficient, satisfactory, weak, or unacceptable, respectively).

Grammar/ Usage/ Mechanics (G/U/M)	Skills with G/U/M are strong (suggested: fewer than 1 errors per page)	Skills with G/U/M are competent (suggested: 1 error per page)	Skills with G/U/M are adequate for this level (suggested: 2 errors per page)	Skills with G/U/M are inadequate; clarity and meaning are impaired (suggested: 3-5 errors per page)	Skills with G/U/M are incompetent for this level (suggested: 6 or more errors per page)	
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Strong = 20 Proficient = 16 Satisfactory = 12 Weak = 8 Unacceptable = 4						SUB-TOTAL	
COMPOSITE SCORE: Strong = 50 Proficient = 40 Satisfactory = 30 Weak = 20 Unacceptable = 10							
						TOTAL COMPOSITE SCORE	

Section 3. Definitions		
<p>Definitions are given for the categories of: research, evaluation, synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, knowledge, content and focus; analysis and critical thinking; logic and flow; structure and organization; writing style; APA conventions; grammar/usage/mechanics; and plagiarism. These definitions are helpful when using the rubrics for evaluating an academic essay.</p>		
Category	Definition	Examples
Research	<p>Level added to Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain, beyond the highest level (7th and more advanced than 6 levels of Bloom's Taxonomy)</p> <p>Puts the new arrangements into either the old context or a new one to see what happens.</p> <p>Research is the capacity for conducting observations; formulating hypotheses ("if this, then that" statements); gathering data to test hypotheses; interpreting results; and developing new hypotheses to further the exploration of ideas on a topic. Researchers describe what is and what is not part of an observation.</p>	<p>What if ...</p> <p>If (this), then (that)...</p> <p>This is present ...</p> <p>This is absent ...</p>
Evaluation	<p>Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain, highest level (6th and most advanced of Bloom's 6 levels)</p> <p>Explains the value of previous analytical arrangements and subsequent synthesized arrangements.</p>	<p>Judges internal evidence,</p> <p>Judges external criteria</p> <p>Weighs alternatives to justify a decision about the best choice</p>
Synthesis	<p>Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain, next highest level (5th and more advanced than 4th of 6 levels)</p> <p>Puts analytical components together in a new way.</p>	<p>Produces unique communication, an original plan, a set of operations, a set of abstract relations, etc.</p>
Analysis	<p>Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain, next highest level (4th and more advanced than 3rd of 6 levels)</p> <p>Breaks facts and concepts down into their components.</p>	<p>Elements, relationships, organizational principals;</p> <p>Breaking ideas into parts to see relationships; the result is a clarification of ideas. The basis for the arrangement of parts helps to convey the effects of the ideas.</p>

Section 3. Definitions (continued)		
Definitions are given for the categories of: research, evaluation, synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, knowledge, content and focus; analysis and critical thinking; logic and flow; structure and organization; writing style; APA conventions; grammar/usage/mechanics; and plagiarism. These definitions are helpful when using the rubrics for evaluating the academic essay.		
Category	Definition	Examples
Application	<p>Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain, next highest level (3rd and more advanced than 2nd of 6 levels)</p> <p>Applies factual concepts to real life, academic specialization (scholarship), professional practice (present or anticipated), case studies from the disciplinary field of study, and/or examples from the professional literature (juried journals).</p>	Using abstractions in specific situations.
Comprehension	<p>Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain, next highest level (2nd and more advanced than 5th of 6 levels)</p> <p>Puts facts from the literature into one's own words.</p>	<p>Translation: This means; in other words....</p> <p>Interpretation: One interpretation is...; this suggests that....</p> <p>Extrapolation: From this we can see that</p>
Knowledge	<p>Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain, lowest level (1st and most basic of 6 levels)</p> <p>Recognizes, recalls, and repeats the facts and related trends and practices of the topic, professional discipline, or field.</p> <p>Absence of original thinking or interpretation about those facts.</p>	<p>Specifics</p> <p>Terminology</p> <p>Facts</p> <p>Conventions</p> <p>Trends</p> <p>Sequences</p> <p>Classifications</p> <p>Categories</p> <p>Criteria</p> <p>Methodology</p> <p>Principles</p> <p>Generalizations</p> <p>Theories</p>

<p>Section 3. Definitions (continued) Definitions are given for the categories of: research, evaluation, synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, knowledge, content and focus; analysis and critical thinking; logic and flow; structure and organization; writing style; APA conventions; grammar/usage/mechanics; and plagiarism. These definitions are helpful when using the rubrics for evaluating the written portion of the comprehensive examination.</p>	
Category	Definition
Content and Focus	The essay answers the question(s) that are asked, focusing on the appropriate global and local content issues
Analysis and Critical Thinking	<p>Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness. It entails the examination of those structures or elements of thought implicit in all reasoning: purpose, problem, or question-at-issue, assumptions, concepts, empirical grounding; reasoning leading to conclusions, implications and consequences, objections from alternative viewpoints, and frame of reference. Critical thinking - in being responsive to variable subject matter, issues, and purposes - is incorporated in a family of interwoven modes of thinking, among them: scientific thinking, mathematical thinking, historical thinking, anthropological thinking, economic thinking, moral thinking, and philosophical thinking.</p> <p>Critical thinking can be seen as having two components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a set of skills to process and generate information and beliefs, and 2. the habit, based on intellectual commitment, of using those skills to guide behavior. <p>It is thus to be contrasted with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the mere acquisition and retention of information alone, (because it involves a particular way in which information is sought and treated,) 2. the mere possession of a set of skills, (because it involves the continual use of them,) and 3. the mere use of those skills ("as an exercise") without acceptance of their results. <p>Scriven, M. and Paul, R. (n.d.) <i>Defining critical thinking: A draft statement.</i> (n.d.) National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking. http://criticalthinking.org/University/univclass/Defining.html. Retrieved August 9, 2004.</p>

Section 3. Definitions (continued)	
Definitions are given for the categories of: research, evaluation, synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, knowledge, content and focus; analysis and critical thinking; logic and flow; structure and organization; writing style; APA conventions; grammar/usage/mechanics; and plagiarism. These definitions are helpful when using the rubrics for evaluating the academic essay.	
Category	Definition
Logic and Flow	<p>The argument is well-structured. Groundwork is laid, accurate conclusions are drawn from the evidence used, points are argued and linked appropriately.</p> <p>Logic and flow presents a good example of building a case by presenting evidence and arguing toward a conclusion that represents the evaluation level of Bloom's taxonomy. Lack of logic and flow would be the example of what is missing from synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, and knowledge levels.</p>
Structure and Organization	The paper is well-structured. All parts of the essay (introduction, sections, paragraphs, conclusions) do their jobs.
Writing Style	Strong, clear sentences; appropriate academic tone.
APA Conventions	Only those conventions required by Instructor, but should be consistent with APA 5 th Ed.
Grammar/Usage/Mechanics	Parts of speech; complete sentences; spelling; punctuation; typographical errors; etc.
Plagiarism	Using another person's words without giving her or him credit. Plagiarism can either be intentional or unintentional. See Capella's policy on Academic Honesty in iGuide.