

Appendix C. Grading Parameters for Research Paper

(Ordinarily, a paper receiving these grades will meet each and every condition below. Adapted from Prof. Teresa Berger.)

H Exemplary (A/A+)

- *Instructor's characterization: "Pre-publication" quality.*
- A compelling, original, well-defined task for the paper (aka "thesis").
- Exemplary command of the topic; persuasive arguments in support of the thesis; and attention to possible counterarguments.
- A highly persuasive and effective argumentative structure: e.g., an introduction that clearly defines the paper's task, consistent conversation with the thesis throughout the paper, a clear motivation for each section, etc.
- Outstanding engagement with secondary literature (comprehensive, critical).
- Outstanding fulfillment of all other requirements for the assignment (e.g., time of submission, page-length, etc.).
- Stellar writing throughout.

H- Excellent (A-)

- *Instructor's characterization: "Excellent" paper quality.*
- A well-defined vision for the paper's task (aka "thesis"), marked by a significant degree of originality.
- Exemplary command of the topic; and persuasive arguments in support of the thesis; limited attention to counterarguments.
- An effective argumentative structure: e.g., an introduction that clearly defines the paper's task, consistent conversation with that thesis, a clear motivation for each section, etc.
- Excellent engagement with secondary literature.
- Excellent fulfillment of all other requirements for the assignment (e.g., time of submission, page-length, etc.).
- Excellent or very good writing marred by few syntactical, grammatical, or spelling errors.

HP+ Very good (B+)

- *Instructor's characterization: "Solid" paper quality.*
- A well-expressed vision for the paper's task (aka "thesis") if lacking in originality or not articulated as forcefully.
- Solid argumentation that is reasonable, if lacking in nuance or complexity.

- A good argumentative structure, normally including a good introduction, and a fairly consistent argumentative structure, if somewhat unconsolidated.
- Admirable engagement with secondary literature.
- Reasonable fulfillment of all other requirements for the assignment (e.g., time of submission, page-length, etc.).
- Very good or clear writing with only a few syntactical, grammatical, or spelling errors.

HP Good (B)

- *Instructor's characterization: "Good" paper quality.*
- A well-expressed vision for the paper's task (aka "thesis") if lacking in originality or not articulated as forcefully.
- Solid argumentation that is reasonable, if lacking in nuance or complexity.
- A fair argumentative structure, if unconsolidated, and mostly descriptive.
- Good engagement with secondary literature.
- Reasonable fulfillment of all other requirements for the assignment (e.g., time of submission, page-length, etc.).
- Very good or clear writing with only a few syntactical, grammatical, or spelling errors.

HP- Satisfactory (B-)

- *Instructor's characterization: "Satisfactory" paper quality.*
- No more than adequate writing.
- No more than an adequate thesis.
- Adequate argumentation.
- Adequate engagement with secondary literature.
- Adequate fulfillment of all other requirements for the assignment.

LP Acceptable (C)

- *Instructor's characterization: "Acceptable" paper quality.*
- Significant problems in logic or flow of argument; ineffective or poor argumentative structure.
- Inadequate fulfillment or ignoring of other requirements for the assignment.
- Unclear writing marred by a significant number of syntactical, grammatical, and/or spelling errors

Credit/No Credit: *Work must be at the level of HP minus or better to earn a grade of Credit for the course. All assignments must be completed to earn credit.*