

Student Name & ID:					
Paper Title:					
Exceptional	Good	Below expectations	Not acceptable	Criteria	Reviewer's Comments
RATIONAL & THESIS					
				Provides relevant background	
				States significance of topic	
				Clear statement of topic	
				Defines scope of essay	
				Topic addresses assignment	
				Overview of approach	
EVIDENCE					
				Relevance	
				Strength and balance	
				Credibility	
				Critical assessment	
ORGANIZATION					
				Arrangement of ideas	
				Coherence	
EVALUATION OF TOPIC					
				Logical	
				Feasible/Realistic	
CONCLUSION					
				Summary of ideas	
				Final conclusion	
MECHANICS					
				Spelling	
				Grammar	
				Punctuation	
				Structure	
CITATION FORMAT					
				In-text	
				Bibliography	
OVERALL					
				Overall impression	

Adapted from University of Washington Political Science/JSIS/LSJ Writing Center  
<http://depts.washington.edu/pswrite/peerrev.html>) by K Patriquin, Dalhousie Writing Centre.

Revised by A. Horn for Dalhousie University's BIOL3062, 2012-2015.

## REVIEWER'S GUIDELINES:

Consider these tips when reviewing your students' papers. Please be sensitive but thorough when providing comments.

You may find the essays have been organized in different ways, but the best essays tend to be organized as follows. They begin with a short (~1 page double-spaced) introduction where they briefly state their main topic and why it's interesting and significant, then close with a brief overview of how the essay is organized. Most of their essay (5-7 pages) reviews the topic in a logical way, with good topic sentences (and subheadings if need be) to make the organization clear. Near the end of the essay (1-2 pages) they should offer their opinion of what they think needs to be done next in the area they've reviewed – e.g., improving on weaknesses in existing studies, filling gaps in our understanding, etc. The essay should close with a brief summary of the essay and a statement of its take-home message.

Essays can be broad (e.g., reviewing hypotheses to explain the evolution of cannibalism) or narrow (e.g., costs and benefits of sexual cannibalism in black widow spiders). The depth of the essay should be matched to its breadth; e.g., a broad essay might cover the pros and cons of different hypotheses, whereas a narrow one might get into the experimental design of particular studies.

There is no penalty for the length per se of the essay. If it's too short or too long, this will be reflected in the grade anyway. Essays have to be long enough to be clear and thorough, and short enough to get to the point without rambling.

## RATIONAL & THESIS:

Provides relevant background: Are appropriate references used to provide enough information to understand the topic and put it into context?

States significance of topic: Does the information highlight why the topic is important to the field?

Clear statement of topic: Is the argument/objective of the paper easy to understand?

Defines scope of essay: Is the breadth and the depth of the essay's coverage clear?

Topic addresses assignment: Does the topic meet the assignment guidelines?

Overview of approach: Does the reader know the gameplan of the essay?

## EVIDENCE:

Relevance: Does the presented information clearly relate to the topic?

Strength and balance: Is the evidence convincing (or qualified when it isn't) and are multiple perspectives considered?

Credibility: Are appropriate sources cited?

Critical assessment: Is the validity of information discussed?

#### ORGANIZATION:

Arrangement of ideas: Do ideas flow logically from one another?

Coherence: Is it clear how ideas relate to one another and to the main thesis?

#### EVALUATION OF TOPIC:

Logical: Does the writer's evaluation of the topic follow logically from what they've presented?

Feasible/Realistic: Is the writer's suggestion of what's to be done next do-able, or at least realistic?

#### CONCLUSION:

Summary of ideas: Does the conclusion provide a summary of the main points of the essay?

Final conclusion: Is the essay's "take-home message" clearly stated?

#### GRADING:

Consider the overall # of checks in each respective rank (i.e., above average, etc).

A+ (18-20) Mostly exceptional

A (17-17.5) A roughly even mix of exceptional and good

A- (16-16.5) Mostly good with several exceptional

B+ (15.5) Mostly good with a few exceptional

B (15) All good

B- (14-14.5) Mostly good with a few below average

C+ (13-13.5) Many good with several below average

C (12-12.5) A roughly even mix of good and below average

C- (11-11.5) Mostly below average with a few good

D (10-10.5) Mostly below average with several unacceptable (i.e. missing components)

F (0-9.5) All not acceptable