

## English 102 Grading Criteria

In brief, the grade for each essay will be based on your argument, thesis, explication, and support of your thesis, development of paragraphs, sentence structure, style and grammar. You should offer original, thought-provoking ideas that show you have considered your topic carefully. *You must complete all essays to pass this course.* The grading criteria for pre-portfolio essays are as follows.

- **Outstanding paper:** Topics is addressed thoroughly and thoughtfully, with a strong argument and a clearly defined thesis. The essays shows originality and insight with a good sense of audience and purpose. Essay structure and paragraphing reflect a clear, logical and smooth development of the controlling idea, both from paragraph to paragraph and within each paragraph. Grammatically, sentences are correct and sophisticated, show distinctive command usage of standard written American English, and are free from distracting proofreading errors. Instructions are followed.
- **Extremely good paper:** There is a strong argument and a well-defined thesis with a significant point, but the essay lacks some of the insight of an “outstanding” paper. It shows independent thought, but some of the ideas need more development. Organization and sentences are clearly presented and coherent with minor mechanical, grammatical and proofreading errors. Instructions are followed.
- **Sound paper:** This is the average grade for an English 102 essay and it requires a lot of work to accomplish. This essay adequately fulfills its purpose. It has many commendable features, including an identifiable thesis with good organization. It provides support for its argument through specific examples and adequate use of text, but ideas and points of argument are predictable. Examples and quotations make the point rather than support it. There is a sense of audience and purpose, but it is not well defined. Grammatical and mechanical errors (poor grammar, sentence construction, word choice/phrasing, proofreading) are isolated. Instructions are followed. The sound paper contain the following ranges; however, a paper that falls into one of the following areas needs *significant* revision to be judged “sound” in the portfolio:
  - the thesis is too narrow or too broad, but there is good support and signs of in-depth thought
  - the thesis is not well focused, but the structure is good and an argument is presented with clear attempts at support
  - question/topic is not addressed completely, but style and arrangement are good
- **Weak paper:** This essay is seriously weak in at least one of the following categories: argument and/or thesis is weak or loosely defined; serious grammatical or mechanical problems; examples and support are too general; lack of use of text; serious misreading of the text; most summary with no explicit points made; difficult to understand; lack of paragraph unity; poor organization and development of ideas; little sense of style; consistent problems with standard written American English; instructions not followed.
- **Unacceptable paper:** There is not a recognizable argument and/or thesis, no clear plan of development or support, incoherent paragraphs, and/or major grammatical and mechanical errors throughout the paper. The assignment is not followed or completed.