

## **Grading Criteria as Defined by the English Department, CSUB**

### An “A” paper—unusually competent

1. Avoids the obvious and thus gains insights on an analytical level that are illuminating and stimulating to an educated reader.
2. Develops ideas effectively and purposefully with appropriate evidence, examples, and illustrations.
3. Progresses by clearly ordered and necessary stages with paragraphs that are coherent and unified.
4. Uses a variety of punctuation conventionally and purposefully.
5. Has sentences which are skillfully constructed, concise, forceful, effective, and varied.
6. Demonstrates a concern with the right words and a willingness to be inventive with words and structures in order to produce a clearly identifiable style, even though at times the efforts may be too deliberate or fall short of the writer’s intentions.

### A “B” paper—demonstrably competent

1. Usually avoids the obvious and offers interesting interpretations, but lacks the imaginative insights of the A paper.
2. Develops an idea with a clear and effective sense of order.
3. Progresses by ordered stages with paragraphs that are coherent and unified.
4. Uses mechanics and punctuation to help communicate the meaning and effect of the prose.
5. Has sentences which are correctly constructed with efficient use of coordination and subordination; demonstrates an understanding of variety.
6. Draws upon words adequate to express the writer’s own thoughts and feelings and demonstrates an understanding of alternate ways of expression as a means of making stylistic choices possible.

### A “C” paper—competent

1. Functions on the literal level, often depending on the self-evident.
2. Develops ideas minimally, often leaving the reader with unanswered questions.
3. Has a discernible, if mechanical organization.
4. Conforms to conventional grammar, mechanics, and punctuation.
5. Has sentences which are correctly constructed, though perhaps tending toward repetitious patterns with minimal or mechanical use of coordination and subordination.
6. Works with a limited range of words and thus becomes dependent on the clichés and colloquialisms most available; is also generally unaware of choices that affect style and thus is unable to control the effects a writer may seek.

### A “D” paper—lacking competence

1. Exploits the obvious either because of a lack of understanding, an inability to read, a failure to grapple with a topic, or, in many cases, a lack of interest.

2. Wanders aimlessly because of a lack of overall conception or, in some instances, has a semblance of form without the development that makes the parts a whole.
3. Has a plan or method that is characterized by irrelevancy, redundancy, or inconsistency.
4. Frequently lacks careful mechanical and grammatical distinctions although some papers contain correct (if simple) sentences.
5. Has sentences which are not correctly constructed or which are monotonous or repetitious.
6. Is characterized by convoluted sentences that are close to the rapid associations of thought or by “safe” words (ones the writer ordinarily speaks or can spell) and by excessively simple sentence structures.

An “F” paper—incompetent

1. Doesn't fulfill the assignment; is unclear overall.
2. Lacks specific development; tends to wander aimlessly
3. Lacks logical and coherent progression.
4. Consistently lacks conventional grammar and mechanics so that communication is unclear.