

Assessment Grid for Capstone Papers across the Disciplines  
Improvement of Writing Committee, March 2008

This assessment tool has been designed as a guide for discussion of student writing. Because writing is a performance-based activity that is subject to differing interpretations by readers from different fields, this grid may not lend itself to rigorous statistical analysis, and issues of reliability should be handled with care. Attached is a set of definitions that may aid readers in making decisions about how to apply each criterion.

<b>Criteria (Definition)</b>	<b>No/Limited Proficiency (1)</b>	<b>Some Proficiency (2)</b>	<b>Proficiency (3)</b>	<b>High Proficiency (4)</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Unable to determine</b>
<b>Purpose/Central Idea</b> <i>(The writer's reason for writing; what he or she wants to accomplish)</i>	The purpose and/or central idea is unclear.	The purpose and/or central idea is somewhat clear.	The purpose and/or central idea is generally clear.	The paper has a clear purpose and/or central idea.			
<b>Correct use of sources: Format</b> (where appropriate) <i>(The writer's correct use of a citation/documentation format appropriate for the discipline)</i>	No documentation or citation style is used in a paper where one would be required by the discipline or purpose.	The writer documents but the format is largely incorrect for the discipline or purpose.	The writer uses a citation format appropriately for the discipline or purpose with some errors.	The writer uses a citation format appropriately for the discipline or purpose with one or two errors.			
<b>Correct use of sources: Quality</b> (where appropriate) <i>(Sources chosen are credible for the discipline and purpose.)</i>	The writer uses no sources where they would be appropriate, or uses sources that are not at all appropriate to the discipline and purpose.	The writer uses sources, but they are not generally appropriate to the discipline and purpose.	The writer generally uses sources appropriate to the discipline and purpose, with some lapses.	The writer uses sources appropriate to the discipline and purpose.			
<b>Correct use of sources: Integration</b> (where appropriate) <i>(Sources chosen are incorporated effectively in support of the purpose.)</i>	The writer fails to incorporate sources effectively throughout.	The writer incorporates sources, but they may not be used effectively to support the paper's purpose.	The writer generally incorporates sources effectively to support the paper's purpose, with some lapses.	The writer incorporates sources effectively to support the paper's purpose.			
<b>Structure: Organization</b> <i>(The logical sequencing of information; how information is ordered and grouped)</i>	Organization is nonexistent or interferes with comprehension.	Organization somewhat aids in comprehension.	Organization generally aids in comprehension	Organization aids in comprehension			

<b>Criteria (Definition)</b>	<b>No/Limited Proficiency (0-1)</b>	<b>Some Proficiency (2)</b>	<b>Proficiency (3)</b>	<b>High Proficiency (4)</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Unable to determine</b>
<u>Structure: Development</u> ( <i>The content is correct and appropriate to the purpose; the writer treats the issue thoroughly, making connections among points and delivering on commitments</i> )	Development is inadequate throughout.	Some aspects of the paper are not adequately developed.	The paper generally develops its points well.	The paper develops its points thoroughly.			
<u>Structure: Transitions</u> ( <i>Links between elements of the paper and within paragraphs</i> )	Transitions require rereading and the reader often cannot discern the relations among points	Transitions are often problematic enough to require rereading, but the reader can usually discern the relations among points.	Transitions generally aid in comprehension so that the reader does not have to reread to understand the relations among points.	Transitions aid in comprehension so that the reader does not have to reread to understand the relations among points..			
<u>Conventions of standard written English</u>	Errors in the conventions of standard written English interfere with comprehension to the point that rereading does not usually help the reader make out the writer's meaning.	The paper contains errors in the conventions of standard written English such that the reader has to reread elements but can generally make out the writer's meaning.	The paper may contain some errors in standard written English but the reader does not have to reread elements to comprehend.	The paper follows standard conventions of written English			
<u>Sentence Structure</u>	Sentence structure problems interfere with comprehension to the point that rereading does not usually help the reader make out the writer's meaning.	Sentence structure often requires rereading, but the reader can generally make out the writer's meaning.	Paper generally uses sentence structure, appropriate to the purpose, that does not require rereading in order to understand the writer's meaning.	Paper uses sentence structure, appropriate to the purpose, that does not require rereading in order to understand the writer's meaning.			