

Sample Holistic Scoring Guide

From the Provost's Seminar on Teaching: "The Philosophy and Practice of Grading"
Session on "Efficient and Effective Approaches to Grading Writing"
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6. A **superior** response addresses the question fully and explores the issues thoughtfully. It shows substantial depth, fullness, and complexity of thought. The response demonstrates clear, focused, unified, and coherent organization and is fully developed and detailed. The essay demonstrates superior control of diction, syntactic variety, and transition but may have minor flaws [consistent with timed, first-draft prose].
5. A **strong** response clearly addresses the question and explores the issues. It shows some depth and complexity of thought and is effectively organized. The strong essay is well developed, with supporting detail. It demonstrates control of diction syntactic variety, and transition, though it may have occasional flaws.
4. A **competent** response adequately addresses the question and explores the issues. It shows clarity of thought but may lack complexity. A competent essay is organized and adequately developed, with some detail. This response demonstrates competent writing, though it may have more frequent flaws.
3. A **weak** response may distort or neglect parts of the question. It may be simplistic or stereotyped in thought. It may demonstrate problems in organization. It may use generalizations without supporting detail or detail without generalizations; details may be undeveloped. The weak response shows patterns of error in language, syntax, and/or mechanics.
2. An **inadequate** response demonstrates serious problems in one or more of the areas specified for the weak (3) response. The inadequate response shows numerous errors in language, syntax, and/or mechanics that interfere with meaning.
1. An **incompetent** response fails in its attempt to discuss the topic, or it may be deliberately off-topic. An essay in this category provides little evidence of the ability to develop an organized response. The incompetent response shows pervasive patterns of error in language, syntax, and/or mechanics that result in incoherence.

[Adapted from Edward M. White, *Assigning, Responding, Evaluating: A Writing Teacher's Guide*, 4th ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007), 144-45, 53 and "Rubric for Holistic Scoring of Analysis of an Argument," The University Writing Center, University of Central Florida (http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~uwc/Faculty_Resources/fac_assessing_writing_pages/fac_rubric_analysis.htm), 20 March 2008.]