

WID Teaching Portfolio - Susan-Judith Hoffmann, Humanities – Winter 2010

E. Criteria for Grading

Criteria for Essays

Annotation Symbols

- A plus indicates that your essay exceeds expectations in this area.
A tick indicates that your essay meets expectations in this area.
A squiggle indicates that your essay is shaky in this area.
A minus means that your essay needs work in this area.

1. The essay has a clear **introduction** that tells the reader what the author plans to do and how the author plans to go about it. For example:

In this paper, I propose to critically examine Plato's account of justice in *The Republic*. I will begin by examining Plato's definition of justice in the individual as corresponding to justice in the community. According to Plato, an individual is just when the three parts of the soul are balanced--desire motivates the soul, spirit animates the soul and reason rules. A community is just when each part of the citizenry performs its function--some produce goods, some defend against enemies and some govern. I will carefully examine each of these claims, paying particular attention to whether the analogy that Plato makes between the individual and the community is a strong one. I will conclude by questioning whether, as Plato claims, the philosopher is the best suited to rule as he or she cannot be corrupted. I will conclude that Plato is right when he argues that a true philosopher could not be corrupted and is the best person to safeguard justice in society.

2. There is *at least* one relevant **primary source**.
3. The **sources are appropriately used** in the body of the essay. In other words, you are actually quoting from a primary source, or paraphrasing a primary source and referencing *where* you do this *in the body of the essay*.
4. The paper **takes a clear position and develops it**. Avoid having three or four theses going in the paper. Focus on one clear position, problem or claim and develop it carefully.
5. The essay is **coherent**, that is, one section is clearly connected and follows from the previous section. When you write, make sure each sentence you write does some work in the essay. If you write something that could just as easily be left out, for example: "Throughout the ages people have wondered what justice is",

then leave it out. Each sentence you write has to make a contribution. Each section has to follow from the previous one. Make sure you indicate to the reader why you are starting a new thought or new section and how this new thought follows from the previous one.

5. **Writing style.**

6. **Grammar**

7. The essay **explains all the key terms and concepts**. Please make sure you define difficult terms and concepts. Assume that your reader is one of the students in the class.

9. The textual **sources are properly referenced** in APA or MLA style.

Avoid:

The essay contains a lot of biographical information. If you are writing about Plato's account of justice in *The Republic*, it is not necessary or advisable to include a lot of biographical information about Plato. It will stand out a mile as filler that does no work for your main thesis.

The essay contains a lot of descriptive detail that contributes little to the main thesis. Same comment as above. If you write what you take to be "filler" you can be sure that your reader will experience it as filler and will be disappointed.

Ask!

If you are unsure of how to proceed, please ask. I am available during my office hours, by appointment and by email: shoffmann@dawsoncollege.qc.ca