

# Final Paper

The final paper is an original piece of research. The topic must be within the parameters of the course and is chosen by the participant, and approved of by the instructor. **The paper is to be double spaced, 2500 words in length, not including footnotes or bibliography.**

**FOCUSED:** Provide all the arguments needed to support your thesis/answer your question. Do not add random facts or quirky points of interest. Unrelated or unsupported facts/arguments lower the legibility and grade.

**STRUCTURED:** You may know what you mean but you are not there when the paper is being graded. Expect to be misunderstood. Creating an outline, putting arguments in order, & rereading your paper are excellent ways of improving structure.

**DOCUMENTED:** The point of the paper is to provide strong arguments. The weakest argument is the unsupported argument. I may agree with you but its still weak. Provide support for the positions you take. For example if I was to argue that smoking is healthy you wouldn't believe me if all I said to support the argument was "because I said so". Show me the expert. Show me that you have read and understood the expert.

**WELL PRESENTED:** You are students of communication. This course is not about grading your grammar or spelling. However, turning in a badly written paper will not improve your grade.

I am looking for your ability to present analytical substance in a structured argument. I want to see you use supporting material in a clear and persuasive manner. I want you to show me that you have thought about the issue you are discussing and are able to argue in a way that does not confuse assumptions and value judgments with analysis and argument. And I want you to do all this with a high quality of writing.

## *Guidelines for essay grading*

90 – 100 %: This work fulfills all of the requirements of the assignment in an original, interesting and creative manner. The work goes beyond the basic guidelines of the assignment, showing the student took extra initiative in creating an original and creative essay in regards to content, argumentation, organization, and style.

80 – 89 %: This is good solid work that completes all of the requirements of the assignment. The work is successful in terms of content, but requires some improvement in organization, argumentation and style.

70 – 79 %: This is good work that completes most of the requirements of the assignment. Though the content, argumentation organization, and style are logical and coherent, they require revision and may not reflect a high level of originality and creativity on the part of the author.

60 – 69 %: This work either does not complete the requirements of the assignment, or meets them quite inadequately. This work requires a good deal of revision, and is largely unsuccessful in content, argumentation, organization, and style.

Below 59 %: The work does not complete the requirements of the assignment. In general, students who put forth genuine effort will not receive an essay grade this low.