

# POLITICAL & SOCIAL THOUGHT

## Position Paper: Rubric Explanation

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Mediocre	Unacceptable
<b>General Requirements Expected Throughout</b>				
Technical Requirements	The paper follows all the “Formatting Requirements” posted on the course webpage.	The paper generally follows those formatting requirements.	The paper does not follow some of the more important formatting requirements.	The paper suggests a complete lack of awareness concerning the formatting requirements for this assignment.
Clarity	The paper follows the conventions of standard written English, with no errors hindering comprehension.  All words are chosen for their precise meanings.	The paper generally follows the conventions of standard written English, with errors not hindering comprehension.  Most words are chosen for their precise meanings	The paper generally follows the conventions of standard written English, with errors hindering comprehension.  Words are not chosen for their precise meanings.	The paper does not follow the conventions of standard written English, with major errors hindering comprehension.  The summary does not acknowledge that key words have precise meanings.
Context	The paper ensures all new or unusual terms are well-defined.  Any necessary background information (key concepts, theories, etc.) is accurately and completely explained.	The paper ensures that most new or unusual terms are well-defined.  Any necessary background information (key concepts, theories, etc.) is explained.	The paper generally fails to ensure that new or unusual terms are well-defined.  Any necessary background information (key concepts, theories, etc.) is not explained.	The paper uses new or unusual terms incorrectly or in ways that make no sense.  Any necessary background information (key concepts, theories, etc.) make no sense or are used inaccurately.
Competency	The paper displays competency and understanding of the paper’s topic.	The paper displays reasonable competency and understanding of the topic.	The paper does not display an adequate understanding of the topic.	The paper displays serious misunderstandings about the topic.
Originality	The paper’s argument is generally expressed in the student’s own words and does not waste space with unnecessary quotation.	The paper’s argument is generally expressed in the student’s own words, though there are some quotations that could have instead been cut and/or paraphrased.	The paper’s argument is mainly in the student’s own words, but it also has significant and lengthy quotations.	The paper’s argument has very little written in the student’s own words, but primarily consists of quotes from the course texts, the professor, and/or outside sources.
Academic Integrity*	The paper properly cites and/or acknowledges all its sources using APA formatting.  As relevant, the paper includes “References” and “Acknowledgments” sections.	The paper cites and/or acknowledges its sources, but with sloppy or inconsistent formatting.	The paper displays a minimal effort to cite and/or acknowledge its sources, but without any clear formatting.	The paper commits plagiarism or suffers from another academic integrity violation.

\*Depending on the severity of the circumstances, a mark of mediocre or unacceptable for academic integrity may also result in the instructor reporting a possible academic integrity violation to the Executive Director of the Georgetown University in Qatar Honor Council.

## Position Paper: Rubric Explanation (Continued)

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Mediocre	Unacceptable
<b>Introduction: Background &amp; Thesis Statement</b>				
Background	The paper and its topic is introduced with minimal fanfare in at most four sentences.	The paper and its topic is introduced with little fanfare in no more than four sentences.	The paper and its topic is introduced with too much fanfare, in more than four sentences.	The paper and its topic has no discernible introduction at all.
Thesis Statement	<p>The paper's thesis statement (or central position) in response to the paper's topic is clear, and presented in the introductory paragraph.</p> <p>(In general, the thesis statement is one sentence that clearly states the position that the body of the paper will defend. There is nothing wrong with the last sentence of your introduction simply saying, "In this paper, I will argue [thesis statement].")</p>	The paper's thesis statement is obvious, but there is no single clear statement of it in the introductory paragraph.	The paper's thesis statement is not contained in the introduction, but must be uncovered or reconstructed from what is actually written in the paper.	The paper's thesis statement is not contained in the introduction, and the paper is never clear on what that thesis might be.
<b>Body: Justification of the Thesis Statement</b>				
Organization	<p>The paper's argument defending its thesis is very easy to follow.</p> <p>It is made explicit which claims are being used as premises (assumptions, reasons, evidence, and/or other important considerations), and how these premises are supposed to support the thesis statement.</p> <p>New premises are each distinguished and introduced separately.</p>	<p>The paper's argument is generally easy to follow.</p> <p>It is clear which claims are being used as premises, and how these premises are supposed to support the thesis statement.</p> <p>Usually, new premises are distinguished and introduced separately.</p>	<p>The paper's argument is somewhat difficult to follow.</p> <p>It is somewhat unclear which claims are being used as premises, and/or how these premises are supposed to support the thesis statement.</p> <p>Separate premises are lumped together without being clearly distinguished.</p>	<p>The paper's argument is impossible to follow.</p> <p>It is completely unclear which claims are being used as premises and/or how the premises are supposed to support the thesis statement.</p> <p>Premises are presented and discussed randomly, or not at all.</p>
Premises	<p>The paper clearly presents each premise (reason, evidence, and/or other important consideration) offered in support of the thesis statement.</p> <p>As much as possible, each premise is presented in a single statement.</p>	<p>The paper is generally clear about the premises supporting the thesis.</p> <p>Each premise, however, may not be presented in a single statement.</p>	The paper is unclear about the premises supporting the thesis, and they must be uncovered or reconstructed from what is actually written in the paper.	The paper never identifies any premises—it merely repeats and restates the thesis statement.

## Position Paper: Rubric Explanation (Continued)

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Mediocre	Unacceptable
<b>Body: Justification of the Thesis Statement (Continued)</b>				
Plausibility	<p>The paper is clear about which premises (assumptions, reasons, evidence, and/or other important considerations) are controversial and which are not.</p> <p>Persuasive justification is provided for all controversial premises.</p> <p>Premises without justification are logical, reasonable, and seem obviously true.</p> <p>All information (names, facts, etc.) is accurate.</p>	<p>The paper is pretty clear about which premises are controversial and which are not.</p> <p>Persuasive justification is provided for most controversial premises.</p> <p>Premises without justification are at least plausibly true.</p> <p>Most information is accurate with only minor errors.</p>	<p>The paper is not clear about which premises are controversial and which are not.</p> <p>Persuasive justification is not provided for the controversial premises.</p> <p>The plausibility of the premises that are taken as given is questionable.</p> <p>Some information contains obvious errors and/or inaccuracies.</p>	<p>The paper makes claims that are much more likely to be false than true. Important claims seem to be fabricated or entirely made up.</p> <p>x</p> <p>Most information is incorrect or mistaken.</p>
Inferences	The paper's premises (assumptions, reasons, evidence, and/or other important considerations) clearly support the thesis statement, and the author is clearly aware of exactly the kind of support those premises provide.	The premises support the thesis statement, and the author is aware of the general kind of support those premises provide.	The premises somewhat support the thesis statement, but the author does not seem aware of the kind of support those premises actually provide.	The premises do not support the thesis statement in any meaningful way.
Counter-Arguments	The paper considers both obvious and less obvious counter-examples, counter-arguments, and/or opposing positions, and provides original and/or thoughtful responses to them.	The paper considers obvious counter-examples, counter-arguments, and/or opposing positions, and provides responses to them.	The paper may consider some obvious counter-examples, counter-arguments, and/or opposing positions, but some obvious ones are missed. Responses are non-existent or mere claims of refutation.	No counter-examples, counter-arguments, or opposing positions are considered.
Examples	The paper uses good, clear examples to illustrate important concepts and issues. They are relevant, insightful, and well-used.	The paper's examples are clear, relevant, and well-used.	The paper's examples are not clear, only somewhat relevant, and/or not well-used.	The paper's examples are confusing, irrelevant, misused and/or altogether missing.
Relevance	The paper clearly and insightfully shows the relevance of its parts for defending the thesis statement.	The paper is generally clear in showing the relevance of its parts, though some inessential details appear.	The paper is somewhat unclear in the relevance of its parts, and inessential details repeatedly appear.	The paper has significant parts that are not relevant, and there are too many inessential details.
Overall Synthesis	Overall, the paper successfully integrates all its parts into a coherent and compelling argument in defense of its thesis statement.	Overall, the paper integrates most of its parts into a fairly coherent and compelling argument in defense of its thesis statement.	Overall, the paper integrates some of its parts into a somewhat coherent and compelling argument in defense of its thesis statement.	Overall, the paper fails to come together as a coherent and compelling argument in defense of its thesis statement.

Position Paper: Rubric Explanation (Continued)

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Mediocre	Unacceptable
Conclusion				
No Conclusion	There is no conclusion. Once the argument has been made, the paper immediately ends without any further summary or discussion.	There is a brief (one- or two-sentence) conclusion, where earlier points are summarized and/or nothing new for the argument is introduced.	There is a small (three- or four-sentence) conclusion, where earlier points are summarized and/or nothing new for the argument is introduced.	There is a lengthy (more than four-sentence) conclusion paragraph, where earlier points are summarized and/or nothing new for the argument is introduced.