

EXAM GRADING CRITERIA

Purpose: The primary purpose of the exam is to evaluate your mastery of the texts, concepts, and methods developed in the course. The purpose of the exam is not to see if you are “naturally smart” or a “good test-taker,” neither is it to evaluate what you may have learned in high school, other classes, or on Wikipedia. A secondary purpose of the exam is as a learning tool. The exam represents my last chance to get you to think about the material.

Format: Therefore, you can expect the exam questions to be challenging, requiring you to demonstrate a combination of knowledge, insight, and skill in responding to the questions. The exact format of my exam varies, but they are all “free-form” in that I used a combination of the following:

ID’s: Two-sentence responses that identify an item in the first sentence and explain its significance for the course in the second sentence.

Short Answer: Three to five sentence responses that briefly describe or explain some concept.

Long Answer: Three to five paragraph responses that develop an argument in response to a question.

Essays: Three to five page responses that develop a complex argument that demonstrates a mastery of course material and the ability to think critically and independently about the material. On those exams where I use an essay question I will usually give you a limited list of potential questions in advance of the exam.

A NOTE ON EXAMS

Purpose: The primary purpose of the exam is to evaluate your mastery of the texts, concepts, and methods developed in the course. The purpose of the exam is not to see if you are “naturally smart” or a “good test-taker,” neither is it to evaluate what you may have learned in high school, other classes, or on Wikipedia.

Format: You can expect the exam questions to be challenging, requiring you to demonstrate a combination of knowledge, insight, and skill in responding to the questions. You will write a paragraph or two in response to questions that focus on material and ideas covered in class.

Evaluation:

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophisticated in statement and insight • Comprehensive; every question is answered completely • Numerous relevant details demonstrating mastery of material • Represents the best responses given to this exam
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competent, college-level response • Complete; every question is answered competently • Answers supported by details from assigned texts • Represents superior understanding of course material
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College-level response • Relatively complete. Responded to every question, but some questions are incomplete, misguided, or incorrect. • Answers tend to be vague with relatively few supporting details. • Represents minimally satisfactory understanding of course material
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not college-level discourse • Incomplete. Failed to answer some of the questions or answers are clearly incorrect, vague, or even misleading • Virtually no supporting details; mostly broad generalities • Demonstrates unsatisfactory level of understanding of course material
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not college-level discourse; incoherent, rambling, etc. • Fails to respond to several questions or response are largely wrong

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contains very few details• Represents a serious deficiency in understanding of course material• or . . . STUDENT CAUGHT CHEATING ON EXAM:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ copying from another student○ exchanging information with another student○ using electronic devices○ using notes, books, etc. that have not been approved for that exam
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