**Overview and Assessment for Application Essays**

**Overview**

Some of the work that you will be graded on for this class involves writing essays. The most important thing will be for you to show me that you that you have studied the assigned material, and can explain and apply the terminology, concepts, and theories.  Be sure to put ideas into your own words (use direct quotes sparingly) and use examples so that I know whether you understand the material, and be sure to cite your sources. Although I don’t have a specific length in mind, for the first two papers I would think that less than 800 words might be too brief, and more than 1200 words might be overdoing it, and for the last paper less than 1200 words might be too brief, and more than 1800 words might be overdoing it. This is just a very general guideline, and if you feel a longer answer would better demonstrate your knowledge, go for it (within reason).  If you ever have questions about how to structure your papers, or are wondering if you are on the right track, please send me a message.  

**Assessment of Application Essays**

You will be asked to submit three papers applying the course material to a topic. The first two papers will earn a maximum of 25 points, and the last paper will earn a maximum of 50 points. It will be important to read the specific requirements for each paper as it is assigned in the Learning Activities documents in the Course Modules folder.

Five areas are assessed for each paper. They are as follows:

* Application of concepts from the textbook
* Application of concepts from the lectures and other course materials (videos, readings)
* Depth of understanding of material
* Development of ideas and examples
* Mechanics (organization, grammar, spelling)

Each of these areas will be assigned points on a scale of 1 to5 for the first paper and second papers, and a scale of 1 to 10 for the last paper. The following rubric provides guidance as to the expectations for an A, C, or failing paper.

**Essay Rubric**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **A** | **C** | **F** |
| **Application of concepts from the textbook** | Relevant concepts, theories, or research from the textbook are presented in depth and applied to the topic appropriately. | A few concepts, theories, or research from the textbook are presented, but may be lacking in depth or not clearly applied to the topic. | Relevant concepts, theories, or research from the textbook are only superficially mentioned, or are absent. |
| **Application of concepts from the lectures and other course materials (videos, readings)** | Relevant concepts, theories, or research from the lectures and other course material are presented in depth and applied to the topic appropriately. | A few concepts, theories, or research from the lectures and other course material are presented, but may be lacking in depth or not clearly applied to the topic. | Relevant concepts, theories, or research from the lectures and other course material are only superficially mentioned, or are absent. |
| **Depth of understanding of material** | Demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the material and how it relates to the topic. | Demonstrates a basic comprehension of the course material, but may be lacking in details and depth. | The paper lacks coherence and does not demonstrate knowledge of the course material. |
| **Development of ideas and examples** | The relationship of examples used to the course material is clearly stated, and well developed. General statements are well grounded in details. | Examples are provided, but the connection to the course material may be vague or not fully developed. | The paper does not respond directly to the topic, or the ideas and examples are too brief to address the assignment. |
| **Mechanics (organization, grammar, spelling)** | The paper is well organized, with few, if any, grammatical or spelling errors. | Grammatical, spelling, and organizational errors may distract the reader. The paper will be generally grammatically correct. | Mechanical errors may significantly impair the reader’s ability to understand the paper. |

**Citing Sources**

As I pointed out, there will be times that you will need to refer to the book or lectures in a direct manner.  When you do so, you will need to cite the source. While the APA format is preferred for a social science class, if you are more comfortable using the MLA format, that will be acceptable. The SCC library has an excellent site with full instructions for why and how citations are used, including specific instructions for both formats. You can find these instructions at: **<http://libguides.scc.spokane.edu/content.php?pid=196883&sid=1647898>**

The use of quotation marks for direct quotes is **required**, not optional. If a student uses more than 4 or 5 words in a row taken directly from the text, lecture, or other source, and quotation marks are not included, the paper will not be graded, and will earn zero points.  Remember, the point of using citations is to give credit to the source of the ideas you are using in your own writing.