

GC POLICIES FOR WRITTEN WORK:

Posted 8/18/08

- College-level writing is expected in all written assignments. Although the tone of our colloquium is often informal and casual, your writing must be formal. Do not use slang, contractions, or abbreviations (unless you also explain them). Your audience is professional and academic - and you should match your language to your audience.
- All papers must be typed with 1" margins on all sides.
- Remember to write a short introduction and a short conclusion to all papers. These should be thoughtful and relevant.
- Include page numbers on every page.
- Avoid basic grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes. They will count against your grade.
- In-text citations are required any time you quote another author or summarize another author's ideas. In-text citations must be formatted according to an approved set of guidelines, such as the:
 1. American Psychological Association (APA) Style Guidelines (see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>)
 2. Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guidelines (see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/02/>)
 3. Turabian Style Guidelines (see <http://www.libs.uga.edu/ref/turabian.html>), or
 4. Another recognized set of guidelines
- End references are required for every in-text citation used in your papers. You do not have to use references in some of your papers, but using your readings in a coherent and sensible manner will show a broader understanding of the topic and increase your chances of obtaining high marks. Again, remember to use an approved set of guidelines for end references.
- Always keep a backup copy of papers on your computer, and do not erase papers until your final grade has been posted on Testudo. For Global Communities, it is also recommended that you keep all written material until you have finalized all program requirements and received your transcript notation.
- If you need assistance with a paper, we strongly encourage that you visit the Writing Center (Taliaferro Hall, 0125). Visiting the Writing Center will increase your awareness of your own writing style and ability and might improve your performance in many of your courses. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you will need to plan ahead so a draft is ready to be edited well before the submission deadline.
- If working as part of a team: never allow your name to be put on a paper until you personally approve its content and format. Once your name is attached, you become responsible for the entire product - errors and all. If you are not comfortable handing in something your partner has produced, ask him/her respectfully and tactfully to rewrite it.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR GOOD WRITING AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL:

Before handing in your paper, consider whether you have accomplished the following:

- Ideas are original (rather than clichés) and claims are explicit
- First sentence grabs the reader’s attention
- Paper is clearly and logically organized and internally consistent (don’t contradict yourself)
- Information is relevant and meaningful
- Each paragraph encompasses one idea (if your paragraph is one page or longer, you probably need to reread and separate your thoughts)
- Paper has an insightful and relevant title
- Vocabulary is effective (having "good vocabulary" does not mean using big or obscure words, but using words precisely).
- “Economy of prose” – using fewer words to express yourself often improves your writing
- Use of active voice rather than passive voice
- Language is non-repetitive

GC GRADING STANDARDS:

- The A Paper

The A paper successfully integrates the assignment with relevant material covered in the colloquium. It is lively, original, and thought-provoking. The paper is fully developed, has an original and clear thesis, and includes appropriate details and examples. It is clearly organized and free of grammatical, spelling or syntax, errors, while using an appropriate format for citations and references. The paper reveals a mind deeply engaged in the subject at hand. One is convinced that the writer cares for his or her ideas, as well as for the language and forms that convey these ideas.
- The B Paper

The B paper, too, successfully integrates the assignment with relevant material covered in the colloquium. It is mechanically correct, with no spelling or grammatical errors. The paper makes sense throughout: it has a thesis that is focused and worth arguing, it does not contain unexpected digressions, and it proves the thesis. The paper is well organized and presents an interesting idea; however the evidence is not exhaustive at times and the language is not as strong as the A paper. All ideas are properly cited according recognized conventions.
- The C Paper

The C paper has a thesis, but it is vague or does not integrate relevant colloquium material. It does not advance an argument that sparks debate: for example, "Nelson Mandela gave some interesting speeches." The thesis in the C frequently paper reflects personal opinion. Opinion is often the engine that drives an argument, but factual evidence, examples, or persuasive analysis of sources must also be present. The C paper lacks organization and often has mechanical faults and errors in grammar and spelling. Some ideas are not cited or incorrectly cited. Please note that a paper without such faults may still be a C paper. A paper with such faults, however, will never be more than a C paper.
- An unsatisfactory paper

The D or F paper either has no coherent thesis or else it has one that is strikingly vague, broad, or uninteresting. The D or F paper has multiple mechanical faults, errors in grammar, and spelling mistakes. The paragraphs do not logically flow, and thoughts tend to repeat, perhaps in slightly different language but often in the same words. There is

little indication that the writer understands the material being presented, and there is little relation to colloquium material or the question at hand.