

The Assignments: Understanding and Meeting the Needs

At Stetson, our professors assign a range of writing **tasks and assignments**. Students may be asked to complete lab reports, research papers, summaries of readings, responses to assigned readings, self-analyses, essays, discussion board postings, proposals, and brochures. Each of these kinds or **genres** of writing has its own set of expectations, and students must meet those expectations. Students aren't expected to know the standards for each genre instinctively; therefore, most students will be asked to **revise** a couple of times strengthen their arguments and the overall flow of the assignment. A common misconception is that being asked to revise means you "did it wrong." However, this is not the case. Being asked to revise means you're being given another opportunity to "do more things right." By revising, you are practicing more with your writing and continuously improving as a writer. Reading the assignment and making sense of it is one of the first steps. Start off strong by looking for the key words:

Analyze	List	Summarize	Explain
Argue	Define	Debate	Respond
Compare	Sythesize	Discuss	Evaluate

Each of these terms gives you very specific directions about what to do. Reading the assignments carefully and noting the **guidelines** the professor gives are both essential to doing the work well. These guidelines will help you stay focused on your topic while writing, and will help you when you review your work before you turn it in to make sure you followed the parameters of the assignment. In general, the *objective elements* of an assignment are length, format, and number of required sources, and the *intellectual elements* are questions the instructor wants you to answer, problems they want you to solve, or ideas you should expand or explain.

In addition to the assignment itself, students will often be asked to help each other in **small group workshops** or "peer editing" workshops. These workshops help students see the techniques and ideas other students are working with, which benefits everyone in the process. Reading and responding to the draft of an assignment sharpens the eye for critical reading and thinking. It is also helpful to talk to others about where you are both struggling in order to improve writing for both students.

While it is often easier for students to give each other feedback on the surface elements of style, editing, and accuracy, seizing the moment to offer feedback on the quality of the idea, other

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examples to include, the depth of analysis of a source, and so forth not only sharpen the reader's eyes, it sharpens the writer's ideas.

Here are some examples of typical writing assignments in first year courses at Stetson. Please note that there are some words that are highlighted for better understanding.

Example 1: In Dr. Greg Sapp's First Year Seminar Self & World, students are asked to argue and form an opinion on another's definition:

*For your first essay, you should use Plato's Republic, Books I and IV, and **argue whether or not Plato's definition of "justice" is valid**. You will need to **carefully present his view** as found in the text, and then **determine whether or not** his view is valid. **Use the four-square hermeneutical box we discussed in class** to guide your essay. You may not use first-person singular voice in the essay.*

*The paper should be **no less than 1,200 words** as measured by Microsoft Word's word counter. Your paper should be typed, in 10- to 12-point font using a standard, formal font style such as Times New Roman or CG Times.*

*Please use **MLA's in-text citation** for citing Plato. You can search for "MLA style guide" on the web for citing a web source. You will only need to cite the web source in your List of Works Cited page. Your in-text citations should be strictly of Plato using the standard pages and sections from the web site.*

*This paper must be completely original and may not have been turned in for credit previously. **You must turn in a close-to-final draft to your preceptor one week before the paper is due that is at least 1,200 words in length.***

If you have any questions, please contact me via phone or e-mail. You may, of course, visit me in my office.

Example 2: In Dr Ranjini Thaver's FSEM, students are asked to observe, reflect, and record:

*You will be required to build an observation tower, also called an OT. The raw material required for this OT include your **assigned reading/watching/listening** each week in and out of class. You, the designer of the OT, will **observe...observe...observe...observe** the world around you: to what extent does your reading/viewing matter relate to the world around you – through personal interaction, social, economic, religious, and political action, the media, and other private and public actions? How does observation of the world differ from the readings/viewings assigned? Place yourself in the shoes of the authors you are reading/listening to, and based on your observation of the real world, **how would you change the words, ideas, and themes** that forms the core of the author's products? Most importantly, **write...write...write...** your observations down. You will notice a miraculous change over time – writing this way will allow you to not only refine your writing skills, but it will also sharpen your thinking and response techniques. These in turn prepare you for other more substantial writing assignments and final portfolio.*

Example 3: In Dr. Paul Steeves's FSEM, students often complete a research assignment that follows these steps:

*Research Paper Step 1: **Write** one paragraph describing the general topic you will deal with in your research paper. Be as **specific** as you can be at this point.*

Research Paper Step 2: Reference article: Find an article in a substantial reference work that provides detailed information about the general area that includes your proposed topic.

*Write a paper of about 250 words that **summarizes** what the article says, with particular attention to information that especially interests you and pertains to your proposed topic.*

***Identify** 2 or 3 people who were integral to the topic that interests you.*

***Identify** from the bibliography one or more sources that promise to be useful for your study.*

*Research Paper, Step 3: **Read a scholarly article** that deals with a topic that is close to your topic. Fill in the following information.*

- 1. Complete bibliographical identification of article (author, title, journal, year, pages):*
- 2. What is the thesis of this article?*
- 3. What information does the author provide to support the thesis?*
- 4. What information might be useful for your research?*
- 5. What kinds of sources does the author use?*
- 6. What sources are cited that might be useful for your research?*

*Research Paper, Step 4: **Compile a list of sources** that you will use in your research. Separate them into two categories: primary sources and secondary sources. Write a brief note about each source stating how you think the source will contribute to your research and paper.*

*Research Paper, Step 5: Choose one of your primary sources **and write an analysis** of the source (what does the source show about the 18th century? How does the source contribute to an understanding of your topic?)*

*Research Paper, Step 6: Early draft of paper. Submit as much of the text of your paper as you have written. It should reveal at least the following information: (1) your initial **thesis** statement (what the paper proves) and (2) three or four principal **points** to be developed in the **argument** of your paper.*

*Research Paper, Step 7: **Presentations**. All students must submit a hard copy of their papers at the beginning of class on this date.*

Example 4: *Writing Lab Reports for Dr. Kirsten Work and Dr. Alicia Schultheis (These scientific paper guidelines excerpted from the Biology II laboratory manual from Spring 2011):*

After completing projects in your Biology classes, you will need to write lab reports to demonstrate what you have learned during the process (how thoroughly you collected background information, how you conducted the experiment, what you found out, and what it all means). Whether you are writing a paper for an English, Sociology, or Biology class, you must always produce something that convincingly conveys information...in other words, well-written and well thought out. The formats used in each discipline, however, are very different; you must conform to certain scientific writing conventions described below.

TITLE – *The Title should convey some meaningful information about what the experiment did. For example, you can't just use the title of the chapter in the lab manual. Imagine if you were searching on the web for articles to use in a report...you initially use the titles to decide whether an article will be useful. Can you see why the second of the two titles below gives you the best information and why the first is virtually useless?*

(1) Catfish reproduction

(2) Reproduction in an invasive exotic catfish, Pterygoplichthys disjunctivus, in Volusia Blue Spring, FL, USA

ABSTRACT - *The Abstract is a summary of the report. Basically, it includes a sentence or two each of introduction, methods, results and discussion. The Abstract should start with a sentence that introduces the topic of the experiment and then a statement of the hypothesis that was tested. The next sentence or two should provide a very brief description of the methods employed to test the hypothesis. The main findings are presented in a sentence or two followed by a statement of the main conclusion.*

INTRODUCTION – *Here you are setting the stage for your experiment. Start with the big picture and work your way towards a hypothesis. You need a good reason for posing a particular hypothesis...a hypothesis is an educated guess, so show the education part! You should refer to at least two published research or review articles... Why? Because you need to show where you got your information, and that it is a reliable (scientific) source that anyone else can also look up. If, for example, you plan to look at the effects of pollutants on frog development, you need to devote a few sentences to the issue of aquatic pollution. You should devote a few sentences to frogs and their development from eggs to tadpoles to adults. At this point you are ready to point out a “problem” (something that needs to be investigated), and a “question” that you think your hypothesis answers. For example, there is a lot of water pollution in the waters where frogs lay their eggs (problem). Is frog development negatively affected by pollutants? (question). You can hypothesize that frog eggs exposed to the common yard chemical malathion will not develop normally, and these abnormalities will increase with increasing concentrations of malathion*

(hypothesis). Always be sure to state your hypothesis clearly... "We hypothesized that..." or "I hypothesized that..."; the word hypothesis must be used.

METHODS – *This section describes how you collected and analyzed the data. You need to provide enough detail so that someone else could use your report to replicate the experiment. Remember that science is all about being able to replicate another scientist's results; if you can't do that, something is wrong with their methodology or your use of it.*

Never use lists or tell the reader what had to be done or should be done; simply explain what you did. Be sure to include all relevant details: concentrations of solutions, temperatures, species names, equipment used, statistical tests used, etc. Since you did the experiment, write this in the first person.

RESULTS – *Here you present your results graphically and summarize key findings without explaining what your results mean.*

Your choice of graph type is important, as it says something about the data. Line graphs tell you that the data are continuous (e.g. the amount of oxygen produced by a plant over time), whereas bar graphs show discontinuous data (e.g. how well yeast metabolized four different food sources). Graphs may be constructed differently in different disciplines; in the sciences, the independent (manipulated) variable is on the x-axis, and the dependent variable (the result) is on the y-axis. Everything on the graph must be labeled (axis units, axis label, overall title, and sometimes a legend). Figures should never be embedded in the text; each one belongs on a separate page, and all figures should follow the Literature Cited section at the end of the report.

After generating your graphs, write a few sentences that point out the highlights and patterns of the data in the graphs. Be sure to point out anything you think is particularly interesting. You don't want to restate what is already in the graph. Don't forget to refer to your figures in the text of the results (e.g. "The higher the concentration of glucose, the more carbon dioxide was produced by yeast (Figure 1)"....not "The results are shown in Figure 1"). Be sure to mention the results of whatever statistical tests you ran, whether the results are statistically significant, and what the p-value is.

Each graph should have a short title and a caption that clarifies what is in the figure (defines symbols, explains statistics, etc.). The title and caption should be placed below the figure. The easiest way to format the figure properly is to make the graph in Excel and then copy and paste into Word. The title and caption can be written on the line below the figure.

DISCUSSION – *In this section you interpret your results. Start off by briefly summarizing your finding and how those findings relate to your hypothesis. Clearly state whether your hypothesis was supported or not (hypotheses are not proven or shown to be correct). Use the rest of the discussion to really go into detail about what you found (trends, etc.) and why you think the experiment turned out the way it did.*

Relate your findings to those of other groups in your lab, and to published work. Point out any influences that the experimental design or data analyses could have had on the results. Were there any

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sources of error? Things that went wrong? Use a few sentences at the end to summarize findings and what should be done in future studies (new questions to answer, and/or new ways to answer those questions experimentally).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS – *Thank anyone (including lab mates) who helped you complete the experiment. Never say “I would like to thank...”; that implies that you don’t actually thank them...go ahead and thank them (“I thank...”).*

USE OF REFERENCES AND LITERATURE CITED – *This is not a bibliography, so all sources listed must be cited in your report. Follow APA style or the CBE Author-Year system. When citing an article or book in the text of your report, you must include the author’s last name and date of publication (Schultheis, 2007)...never use the page number (Schultheis, 112). Why? Scientists often publish more than one paper on the same topic, so page numbers would not be very useful if you tried to find the right article in the Literature Cited section and found that Dr. Schultheis had 6 articles published on similar topics! It would be a real pain to have to look through all 6 articles to find the bit of information you wanted.*

Articles or books cited in your paper must be listed alphabetically in the literature cited section of your report using the following format:

Gibbs, M.A. (2003) A Practical Guide to Developmental Biology. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 118 pp.

King, M.S. (2006) Anatomy of the Rostral Nucleus of the Solitary Tract. In Bradley, R.M. (Ed.), The Role of the Nucleus of the Solitary Tract in Gustatory Processing, Taylor and Francis Group, Boca Raton, FL., pp. 17-38.

Work, K.A, Havens, K.E., Sharfstein, B., and T. East (2005) How important is bacterial carbon in the planktonic food web of a turbid, subtropical lake? J. Plankton Res. 27: 357-372.

Example 5: Chemistry for non-majors “editorial/public information” style writing assignment Chemistry and Everyday Life, Spring 2009:

Student name removed

Editorial

What would you say if I told you that mounting evidence has finally led to the consensus that the causes of climate change are anthropogenic? That is to say, they are the result of human activities, and, more specifically, the release of greenhouse gases into the environment is seen to have the greatest anthropogenic impact.

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Even still, many might question the fact that climate change is the result of humanity's actions. In our course this semester, we have studied the evidence firsthand, and we have seen the science behind the phenomenon. If one looks at the pure science of the issue, it is rather clear cut. It is when politics are interjected into the fray that we begin to see the emergence of debate. Within the scientific community, there is little debate anymore, and that fact seems to be glossed over all too often.

While we have witnessed the anthropogenic effects of global warming through satellite imaging, you too can observe the science for yourself by accessing several non-partisan websites. NASA's Earth Observatory provides satellite images overlaid with climate data. Also, by analyzing data collected over the last several years, the European Space Agency's SCIAMACHY satellite has recently documented anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions for the first time. Both the US and Japanese space agencies are making efforts to launch satellites dedicated solely to the task of monitoring greenhouse gas emissions. This is a global priority, and these space observations reinforce the validity of the phenomenon.

Of all of the greenhouse gases that we create, carbon dioxide is the most prevalent, and we expel approximately 5.8 billion metric tons of it a year from energy production alone. This represents over 80% of our greenhouse gas emissions. Operating at an average efficiency level of 30%, our energy plants are woefully inefficient. Combine this with the fact that we are the second highest consumer of energy in the world, and you can imagine the magnitude of the waste. Additionally, Nitrogen dioxide (NO_x), another potent greenhouse gas, is also released in the energy production process. This gas contributes to the formation of harmful lower atmosphere ozone, or smog, and it serves as a major detriment to both human and agricultural health.

There are alternatives to the current status quo, and it is time to begin embracing them. Cogeneration technology is one such solution, and it can be implemented without a huge investment. It works by capturing the thermal energy (heat) that would normally be piped out of a smokestack, and, instead, it collects and siphons the heat to serve as space and water heating for the local community. In addition, the excess low-grade steam is passed through turbines to create even more energy. Cogeneration would increase energy plant efficiency from 30% to 60-90% with minimal investment. Whether it is burning oil, coal, natural gas, or biomass, cogeneration based plants are the most carbon friendly means of combustion based energy production.

The current methods for energy production are both dangerous and inefficient. We have passed the point of lackadaisical inaction. The threat is manifest, the solution is obvious, and all we have to do is stop sitting on the fence and act. Get educated, get informed, and join the growing ranks of citizens who have looked past partisan politics to see the science behind the threat. You can easily get on the internet and check out the cold, hard facts for yourself. While you are at it, check out alternatives like cogeneration, and ask yourself why such a technology has not seen broad scale implementation. If, after doing all of the aforementioned, you find yourself concerned and outraged, then you will understand why we are writing this plea for understanding right now.

Example 6: In Dr. Eric Kurlander's FSEM, students may be asked to read and respond to each other's outlines, using these questions to guide their responses:

FSEM 100: Outline Peer Review

1. What is the “research question” that the writer wishes to answer?
2. What is the historiographical debate (e.g., the secondary source arguments) the writer would like to address?
3. What primary sources will (should) be analyzed in order to answer this question as best as possible?
4. What is the chronology of events, individuals, and ideals and what are the most important turning points?
5. How is this paper organized (list of sections/sub-sections)?
6. What is the paper’s preliminary hypothesis/argument?

Sometimes after completing a project or a section of a course, students may be assigned a **reflective essay**. While these take many forms and are sometimes less structured than a traditional paper, here’s a version of Dr. Harry Price’s reflective assignment as a relatively simple guide. (It is important to note, however, that to do quality reflection, Stetson students will need to do a considerable amount of thinking and diving deeper into the material.) Below are the question Dr. Price uses:

- 1) What did you take away from the course?
- 2) Did the course have a positive or negative impact?
- 3) How could the course be improved?

Some reflective assignments are even more deceptively simple. For example, in ENGL 101, students might be given the following assignment:

As a graduate of ENGL 101, write a letter to the next class.

These types of assignments require students to do self-reflection and give advice to future students. But don’t get bogged down by the simplicity of the assignment! These assignments are great opportunities to reflect and be creative in a collegiate writing atmosphere.

Getting Help with Writing at Stetson

Writing well at the college level requires time, care, and practice. Your writing and writing-intensive courses will provide you with the tools to improve and create personal goals in writing, but many students find that they need more than just class time to focus on certain assignments. There are many options for getting assistance outside of class, and each resource is always ready to help you:

- Visiting your Professor's Office Hours, which will be provided to you on the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester
- Visiting the [Writing Center](#) for tutoring, which is found on the first floor of the duPont-Ball library
- Visiting [Student Success](#), which is found on the second floor of the du-Pont Ball library

Many students find that they need more one on one help than their professor can provide in office hours. Because we consider the quality of your writing of paramount importance, we offer many ways to help you improve your skills. The Writing Center is the single best investment of time you can make in your writing (other than going to class and paying attention to what your professor tells you, of course). The Writing Center is a friendly, responsive place where tutors can sit with you, one on one, and go over your essays, whether they're ready for editing or you're still wondering about the best evidence to use in an argument. The writing tutors are all trained to help you identify your weaknesses, supplement and build your strengths, and sharpen your eyes for your own writing by telling you what they see.

The tutors are not, however, there to write for you. And they won't correct errors. Rather, the tutors in the Writing Center help you become a stronger writer by helping you see your own mistakes and guiding you to learn how to fix them yourself so that you may continue to do so with future writing assignments.

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And more than that, when you've gotten the help you came for, the tutor will send an e-mail to your professor, telling him or her what you two worked on, which will also be recorded in a session report through Stetson SSC. This method shows your professor that you're interested in improving your writing skills and engaged in your own process of writing. If your professor has additional comments or strategies, he or she may share them with you and your tutor in order to continue improving your writing process. This not only strengthens your writing, but also improves your relationship with your professor and increases comfort using the resources available on campus.

More about the Writing Center...



Mission Statement (written by the 2017 Writing Center Staff): Our Writing Center strives to provide an inclusive, accessible, and supportive environment where students are encouraged to strengthen their writing skills, their individual writing processes, and their ability to communicate in their own writing. The role of the peer tutor is to create a positive atmosphere and facilitate a collaborative and comprehensive educational experience at any stage of the writing process. Peer tutors come from a variety of academic backgrounds and are trained to support writing across the disciplines. Our emphasis on learning over grades ensures the future success and growth of the student.

To this end, we will provide:

- Diverse and inclusive tutoring styles to fit your unique skill set and writer voice
- An encouraging environment where students will be asked to think critically and set goals for themselves.
- A comfortable and accessible physical space

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Making an appointment: Don't wait until the last minute to make an appointment! You can sign up to work with a tutor through Stetson SSC! Though we do accept some walk-ins, we highly suggest that you make an appointment to assure that you can work with someone on the day you would to look over an assignment. Use this [link](#) to see **step-by-step** instructions on how to make an appointment.

Locations:

- First floor of the du-Pont Ball Library
- Lynn Business Center Satellite (Room 209)
- Sage Hall Satellite (Natural History Museum)

We offer accommodations!

- The Writing Center is wheelchair accessible
- We provide moveable furniture that can be set up to fit the needs of the student & tutor
- If a student requests a quiet, private space, the sessions can be held in a study room in the library
- Service animals are welcome
- Technology is allowed and encouraged during sessions
- Tutoring sessions can be held online via Skype for Business students

Other links available on our website:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Resources for Writers
- Student Employment

Contacting us:

- E-mail: writingcenter@stetson.edu
- Like our page on [Facebook!](#)
- Follow us on Twitter @SUWritingCenter & Instagram @stetsonwritingcenter

Grading, Evaluation, and Other Forms of Feedback

Your writing at Stetson is evaluated in multiple ways. When we, as instructors, give suggestions and input along the way to completing an assignment or project, we are helping you do the best job possible. Some professors will assign grades on a **point scale** or with **letter grades**. Some of your professors will provide you with **rubrics**; some will assign **“mock” grades**; some will use the **plus/check/minus system** to indicate your achievement and growth. Some of your professors will

collect drafts and return them to you with comments, or use resources such as Teacher's Assistants or [Writing Fellows](#) in the draft process. All your professors have a system they use to evaluate what you're writing. Here are a few examples of systems for evaluations:

Example 1: The Four Point Scale

A four point composition will have a meaningful *purpose*; it will shape that purpose to suit the intended audience. Its *central idea* will be interesting, significant, and clear. Instead of treating the topic simplistically, it will respond to the reservations or different viewpoints that may be present in its *audience*. Because it responds to the complexities of its subject, the writer's *structure* is supple: it remains clear without becoming a cookie-cutter. It uses single-topic *paragraphs* that develop their central ideas with adequate information or argument. Its use of detail is specific, pointed, and interesting. It uses efficient *sentences* consistently, and sometimes elegant or powerful ones; it conforms throughout to the conventions of *Edited American English*.

A three point composition has a recognizable *purpose* and a sense of its *audience's* needs. A reader will readily recognize and understand its *central idea* and its ramifications. It treats the subject matter fully, with no major omissions or digressions. The *argument* is substantial, and the writer organizes the material clearly if perhaps somewhat conventionally. The composition employs single-topic *paragraphs* developed with specific details. It uses effective *sentences* and generally conforms to the conventions of *Edited American English*.

A two point composition leaves its *purpose* somewhat cloudy, or perhaps loses track of that purpose for a while along the way. The writer may not be sufficiently attentive to the *audience's* needs or beliefs. The *central idea* is likely to be either unclear or unsurprising. The composition may need more *ideas* to make its point effectively, or it may have included irrelevant ideas. The *organization* is likely to be both predictable and not well-suited to the topic; or perhaps the writer's structure may ignore important sub-topics. The *paragraphs* and *sentences* are cookie cutters. Its use of *Edited American English* is marred by one or two consistent errors.

A one point composition has a major flaw affecting one or more of its rhetorical elements. The writer may misjudge the *audience's* needs seriously or jump the rails of the specified *purpose*. The *central idea* is probably quite vague or perhaps fragmented. There may be significant gaps in its *argument* or major flaws in the logic that organizes its *structure*. The *paragraphs* in the composition

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may consistently switch topics; the *sentences* may be cumbersome or overloaded with mechanical *errors*.

Example 2: In the Biology department, professors may use this rubric

TITLE Conveys the main findings of experiment and makes sense	POINTS RECEIVED /POINTS POSSIBLE ___ / ___
ABSTRACT Single paragraph of no more than 300 words Includes a concise description of purpose, brief description of methods, major results and overall conclusions based on experiment Written in past tense	___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___
INTRODUCTION Contains appropriate background material from acceptable sources Develops a logical argument that leads to hypothesis Includes an explicit hypothesis(-es) Sources are cited correctly and listed in literature cited	___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___
METHODS Contains a written description of how experiment was conducted and how data were analyzed in appropriate detail so that experiment can be repeated by another scientist Written in paragraph form Written in past tense	___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___
RESULTS Includes written, past tense, summary of data without repeating information in tables and figures; summarizes key findings or trends Tables and figures are explicitly referred to in text Contains appropriate tables and figures Figures and tables clearly labeled and properly configured	___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___
DISCUSSION Explains significance of data, includes clear statement of whether hypothesis was supported Compares results and conclusions to other relevant research from acceptable sources; includes alternative explanations for results where appropriate; includes ideas for additional studies or experiments that might resolve remaining questions Contains appropriately cited sources	___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___

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REFERENCES In alphabetical order, in Name-Year Format Lists only research materials utilized (cited) in finished product	___/___ ___/___
OVERALL Appropriate sections included, all of appropriate length Formatted correctly (margins, spacing, indentation etc.) Free of grammatical and spelling errors Sophistication (depth of content, clarity of exposition)	___/___ ___/___ ___/___ ___/___

Example 3: Professors of writing-enhanced courses may use a rubric similar to this to describe the work that would earn a specific letter grade

*In general, **A writing** is characterized by absolute clarity and original thought. No essay earns an A if it is not outstanding, academically challenging, and excellent. As are NOT for working hard; rather, As are awarded for rich and full detail, adroit transitions and effective arrangement, ethical and broad research, successful and vivid development and use of the individual voice, and quality of thought, expressed in high quality prose.*

*In general, **B writing** is characterized by above average achievement. An essay earning a B is one that demonstrates most of the qualities of average writing, illuminated in some spots by evidence of excellence: for instance, while organization may be sound throughout the essay, a superb introduction and conclusion might reflect "above average" skill in this area. Few mechanical errors are present. A B essay is often considered a C essay with some extra "good stuff"--style, voice, humor, and so on.*

*In general, **C writing** is average and expected writing. The essay has no particular lacks or weaknesses, but neither does it demonstrate excellence. Organization is coherent if slightly inconsistent, use of evidence is often limited to one or two kinds, and the essay sounds somewhat anonymous. Mechanical errors are present but not intrusive. A C designates average achievement.*

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*In general, **D writing** falls below the average mark in two ways: meeting the assignment and mechanical proficiency. Writing that is off topic, doesn't address the assignment, or ignores one or more elements of the assignment is below average; mechanical errors that interfere with the reading process are clearly below average. Incomplete essays, or essays that do not get revised, are often D level essays that could be raised to C essays with substantial work.*

*In general, **F writing** fails to meet the assignment, fails to show effort at passing the course, fails the ethical expectations or in some other irreparable way falls far, far short of being acceptable work.*

What Other Students Have Done

Every year, Stetson sponsors several contests to which students may submit writing. One of the most important for first year students is the duPont-Ball Library's **Evans C Johnson Research Award**, given annually to a first year student who has produced a research essay that demonstrates outstanding research skills. The **R. Neil Scott Research Prize**, also given by the duPont-Ball Library, is awarded for outstanding research skills in the area of business or economics. To take a look at what your peers are doing and see all of the winning writing assignments, click [here](#).