

Fall 2011
URPA 5306 The Urban Economy
Dr. Enid Arvidson
Tuesday, 3:00-5:50 p.m.
University Hall room 2
School of Urban and Public Affairs
University of Texas, Arlington

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Course Description

This course introduces students to different ways of understanding the dynamics of the growth and development of the urban system and its relation to the national economy. National and urban economic policy, urban growth and land use, market imperfections, class polarization, and other issues are considered. The concept of “paradigm,” or school of thought, is utilized to establish the notion of alternative, or contending, schools of thought within urban economics, and two alternative schools are explored in detail — the neoclassical and political economic perspectives.

In the first part of the course, we study neoclassical economic theory, including its understanding of the market system, individual rational decision-making, the role of government, and urban policy, growth and land use. In the second part of the course, in parallel fashion, we study political economic theory, including its understanding of the capitalist system, capitalist class relations, the role of the State, and urban policy, growth and land use. At the end of the course, the two paradigms are compared in terms of their underlying assumptions, conceptions of the economy, and policy implications. By the end of the semester, students are expected to have an operative understanding of these two diverse paradigms and be able to compare and contrast their different assumptions, knowledges, and policy implications in application to a particular urban issue.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, each student will:

- describe the concept of “paradigm” or school of thought, in particular how it applies to economics
- identify the underlying assumptions of the neoclassical and political economic paradigms and how these assumptions shape each paradigm’s understanding of the economy
- describe the different understandings and analyses of the economy according to the neoclassical and political economic paradigms
- describe the different understandings of the role of government and policy according to the neoclassical and political economic paradigms
- apply knowledge of the neoclassical and political economic paradigms in analyzing a particular urban issue

Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials

Required texts for this class, available from the UTA Bookstore or from online booksellers, are:

J. Levy. 1995. *Essential Microeconomics for Public Policy Analysis*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishing. ISBN: 0275943631

S.A. Resnick & R.D. Wolff 2006. *New Departures in Marxian Theory (Economics as Social Theory)*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 0415770262 (referred to as R&W in the syllabus)

Additional Readings:

In addition to the two texts, a number of xeroxed journal articles and book chapters from various sources are required. These items are available for download through Blackboard under URPA 5306 under the "Course Materials" link (login here using your UTA net ID and password: <https://elearn.uta.edu/webapps/login/>).

An optional text, for students desiring additional presentation of neoclassical theory at an introductory level, is:
P.A. Samuelson & W.D. Nordhaus. 2010. *Economics 19th ed.* New York: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 0073511293

Course Requirements and Descriptions of Major Assignments and Exams with Due Dates

Grades are based on the following three requirements with their associated subrequirements (see Grading Policy for how course grade is calculated):

i In-class participation:

- the course is run as a seminar, which means students must read and digest the assigned readings prior to the class in which they are discussed and come to class prepared not simply to listen but to make quality contributions to class discussions.

DUE: weekly

- find and share a newspaper article on an economic (not business) issue, identifying and describing what economic paradigm the article's author is using in the article's storyline. The article must be a news story not an editorial, opinion piece, blog, and it must come from a major newspaper or news agency (such as *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The (London) Times*, *The (Manchester) Guardian*, Associated Press, Reuters, etc.). Each student needs to find only one article, and there are two opportunities during the semester to discuss your article (if you don't get a chance to share during the first discussion, then you can do so during the second discussion).

DUE: October 11 or November 15

- Doctoral students only: Participate in a panel debate between neoclassical vs. political economy views on the broad topic of "How do we rebuild America's cities, to address aging infrastructure, increasing diversity, shortage of decent-paying jobs, sprawl and long commutes, class polarization, spatial segregation, etc. etc.?" The structure and style of the debate should be loosely similar to Tavis Smiley's "America's Next Chapter" debates (see: <http://www.americasnextchapter.com>). One Ph.D. student is assigned the role of moderator (Tavis Smiley's role) and half the remaining Ph.D. students argues from the neoclassical position while the other half argues from the political economy position (whichever role you choose to play, be sure to be knowledgeable about your position and stay within that role throughout the debate). Master's students are audience and can participate by asking questions of the panelists. All debate contributions must be rooted in the material discussed in class.

DUE: Debate is held in class on November 22

- ii Midterm exam: satisfactorily pass a midterm exam testing your knowledge of the material covered up to that point in the course. The midterm exam is taken online on Blackboard. The exam consists of two separate sections, 1 essay question and 30 multiple choice questions. The links for each section are found under the "Course Materials" link on the course homepage (login here using your UTA net ID and password: <https://elearn.uta.edu/webapps/login/>). You will have 70 minutes to complete the exam (30 minutes for the multiple choice section and 40 minutes for the essay section). Be sure to find a quiet place and allow yourself this time without interruption. The Blackboard timer will alert you when time is up — be sure to click the "Save and Submit" button at the bottom of the exam page as soon as the timer goes off. Whichever section of the exam you take first, move on to the other section after you submit the first one. It is a good idea to take the exam well before the last minute in case you have technical difficulties with the website (technical difficulties are not an excuse for not completing the exam by the deadline). Be sure you take the exam on a compatible browser to minimize the possibility of technical difficulties. More information about compatible browsers is here: <http://www.uta.edu/blackboard/faculty/systemconfig.php>.

DUE: The midterm exam must be completed and submitted no later than 10 p.m. (central time) October 18

- iii Final research paper:

- Submit a memo stating your proposed urban issue, a proposed outline of your paper, and four or five initial references on your issue from the two different paradigms.

DUE: Memo is due in class on October 4

- Complete a written research paper in which you compare and contrast the neoclassical and political economy paradigms. The paper should be ± 20 double-spaced typed pages, plus a properly formatted bibliography, with 1 inch margins on all sides in 10 or 12 point font. Your paper must also include an urban issue of your choice to which you apply the two different frameworks to illustrate the differences between them. In other words, the differences between these two frameworks are exemplified by comparing and contrasting their analyses of, and policy prescriptions for, your issue. Suggested organization of the paper is as follows.

Section One: Introduction (± 1 page): state your urban issue and the two paradigms, and give a brief overview of the paper. Do not use this section to describe your issue in detail. The issue can't be described independently of the way it is understood within each of the paradigms (Section Three is where you can describe the different ways of understanding your issue vis a vis each paradigm).

Section Two: Discussion of the two paradigms (± 8 pages): describe each paradigm in general terms (rather than as they are specifically exemplified by your issue (this latter is done in Section Three)). In other words, discuss the paradigms in terms of the assigned readings and in-class discussion, as well as additional relevant references.

Section Three: Presentation of your issue (± 6 pages): introduce your issue, and distinguish how it is understood and analyzed within each paradigm, including underlying assumptions, analytical concepts, and policy recommendations that arise from each way of understanding. Don't discuss your issue independently of the two paradigms; instead, use the different ways of understanding your issue as means to illustrate the paradigms discussed in Section Two.

Section Four: Comparison and contrast of the two ways of understanding your issue (± 3 pages): describe the similarities and differences between the two different ways of understanding and addressing your issue. Do not give your opinion about which understanding is a "better." When you do step outside both paradigms, simply comment on the differences (or similarities) between the two ways of understanding.

Section Five: Conclusion (± 2 pages): summarize the key points you made in your paper.

You are also expected to give a short (± 8 minute) in-class presentation to share with the class your findings. Before submitting your term paper, you must run it through the SafeAssign feature of Blackboard for plagiarism detection, and generate a clean report (see the Academic Integrity section of this syllabus for more information). Letter grades on the paper are based on the rubric described in the Term Paper Grading Rubric section of this syllabus.

DUE: In-class presentations are held during the last two class sessions and the final paper is due in class on Tuesday, December 6

NOTES: a) All written assignments and presentations for this class must be of professional quality. This means carefully editing and proof-reading your written work before handing it in, for typing, stylistic, spelling, grammatical errors, and for clarity of thought, as well as for plagiarism (see section below on Academic Integrity for more information about plagiarism). These things **will** affect your grade. If you have questions about style, consult *The Chicago Manual of Style* or Strunk & White's *The Elements of Style*. All stylistic and formatting aspects of your paper, including your bibliography, must conform to the stylistic format listed in *The Chicago Manual of Style* or be consistent with some other recognized style (e.g., APA, or MLA). If you would like help with a paper draft, any UTA student can use the UTA Writing Center which can be reached at <http://www.uta.edu/owl/> or 817-272-2601. Online tutoring is also available from the Writing Center at <http://www.uta.edu/owl/OWLtutoring.htm>. Students can also use the Paper's Due Drop-In center, <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/pddi.php>.

b) Be sure to keep copies of all written work that is submitted.

Grading Policy

Quality in-class participation	15%
Midterm exam	40%
Written research paper & oral presentation	45%

Attendance Policy

- Regular class attendance is expected of all students (of course, real life is tolerated; if you must miss a class, please let the instructor know ahead of time)
- Students are responsible for all course information, content, and assignments that may be missed due to absence

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is defined by UT Arlington as (see <http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/saiconstitutes.html>):

- Using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgement
- Making slight variations in the language and then failing to give credit to the source

Plagiarism is not only unethical but is prohibited by UTA (see <http://www.uta.edu/gradcatalog/2011/general/regulations/#dishonesty>). Students sometimes plagiarize because they do not know how and when it is appropriate to cite the work of others. The most common examples of plagiarism include:

- word for word copying of sentences or paragraphs without quotation marks and a proper citation of your source (remedy: if you copy word for word, be sure to use quotation marks *and also* properly cite the source)
- closely paraphrasing sentences or paragraphs without a proper citation of your source (remedy: rewrite someone else's ideas in your own words *and also* properly cite the source — rewriting in your own words does not mean changing word order and replacing a word or two with synonyms; rather, it means stating it *in your own words*)
- drawing upon or using someone else's ideas, work, data, or research without a proper citation of your source (remedy: if you borrow or draw from someone else's study, ideas, work, research, etc., be sure to properly cite the source)

"It wasn't intentional" is NOT an excuse.

UTA offers a tutorial on plagiarism, and it is strongly advised that all SUPA students take this tutorial, here: <http://library.uta.edu/plagiarism/index.html>. The UTA Writing Center offers additional information about source citation here: <http://www.uta.edu/owl/citation.htm>. In addition, there are many useful websites and books that provide information about plagiarism (for example, <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>).

All students are expected to pursue their academic careers with academic honesty and integrity. Students in this course who choose to engage in academic dishonesty are subject to penalties, in accordance with University regulations and procedures, that may range from disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the University.

Before submitting your term paper for this course, you must run it through the SafeAssign feature of Blackboard for plagiarism detection. Please review your Originality Score and Report. You are looking for an Originality Score of 20% or less. Even if your score is less than 20% AND ESPECIALLY IF IT IS NOT, please review the matches one by one to be sure: i) all your sources are properly cited, ii) paraphrasing is completely in your own words, and iii) all direct quotations are set off by quotation marks. You should run your paper through as many times as necessary to generate a clean Originality Report ("clean" = 20% or less and all matches taken care of).

Calendar**August 30**

Introductions

September 6

Paradigms and contending schools of thought in economics

Readings:

R&W, ch. 12 "Division and difference in the 'discipline' of economics" & ch. 2 Appendix "The overdetermination of economic theories"

T. S. Kuhn. 1970. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Selections from "A role for history," "The route to normal science," "The nature and necessity of scientific revolutions," "Revolution as changes of world view," and "The invisibility of revolutions," pp. 1-13; 92-98; 111-113; 136-138.

D. McCloskey. 1994. "How to do a rhetorical analysis of economics, and why." In R. Backhouse (ed.), *New Directions in Economic Methodology*. London: Routledge, pp. 319-342.

Levy, ch. 1 "Who is economic man and where does he come from?"

J. McDonald & D. McMillen. 2010. *Urban Economics and Real Estate: Theory and Policy*. Malden, MA: Blackwell. Ch. 3 "Schools of thought in urban economics," pp. 30-40.

P. Monaghan. 2003. "Taking on 'rational man': dissident economists fight for a niche in the discipline." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 24.

P. Cohen. 2007. "In economics departments, a growing will to debate fundamental assumptions." *New York Times*, July 11.

P. Krugman. 2009. "How did economists get it so wrong?" *New York Times*, September 6.

P. Cohen. 2009. "Ivory tower unswayed by crashing economy." *New York Times*, March 5.

September 13

Neoclassical microeconomic principles

*download microeconomics worksheet from Blackboard and bring to class

Readings:

Levy, chs. 2, 3, & 5 "Definitions and axioms," "Supply and demand," & "Welfare economics"

R.D. Wolff & S.A. Resnick. 1987. *Economics: Marxian versus Neoclassical*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Ch. 2 "Neoclassical theory," pp. 38-60.

A. O'Sullivan. 2009. *Urban Economics*. New York: McGraw Hill. Appendix "Tools of microeconomics," pp. 429-451.

optional: Samuelson & Nordhaus, chs. 1, 3, 4, & 5 especially appendices

September 20

Neoclassical microeconomic principles continued

Readings:

Levy, ch. 5 "Welfare economics" *continued*

R.D. Wolff & S.A. Resnick. 1987. *Economics: Marxian versus Neoclassical*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Ch. 2 "Neoclassical theory," pp. 61-87.

E. Screpanti & S. Zamagni. 1995. *History of Economic Thought*. New York: Oxford University Press. Ch. 5.3 "Léon Walras," pp. 162-170.

optional: Samuelson & Nordhaus, chs. 6, 8, 12, 13, 15

September 27 Neoclassical perspectives on the role of government: liberal vs. conservative views**Readings:**

- Levy, ch. 5 "Welfare economics" *continued* & chs. 6 & 7 "The role of government, parts 1 & 2"
- R.D. Wolff & S.A. Resnick. 1987. *Economics: Marxian versus Neoclassical*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Ch. 2 "Neoclassical theory," pp. 88-99.
- T. Palley. 2005. "From Keynesianism to neoliberalism: Shifting paradigms in economics." In A. Saad-Filho & D. Johnston (eds.), *Neoliberalism: A Critical Reader*. Ann Arbor: Pluto Press, pp. 20-29
- S. Medema. 2003. "The economic role of government in the history of economic thought." In W.J. Samuels, J. Biddle, & J.B. Davis (eds.), *A Companion to the History of Economic Thought*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 428-444.
- J. Buchanan and R. Musgrave. 1999. *Public Finance and Public Choice: Two Contrasting Visions of the State*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Chs. 1.2 and 1.3 "Origins, experiences, and ideas: A retrospective assessment" and "The nature of the fiscal state: The roots of my thinking," pp. 11-49.
- M. Friedman. 1970. "The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits." *New York Times Magazine*, September 13.
- optional: Samuelson & Nordhaus, ch. 16

October 4 Applied microeconomics: neoclassical perspectives on urban issues and policies**Memo re: research paper proposal due****Readings:**

- Levy, chs. 8, 10, 12, & 13 "Taxes, grants, and tax expenditures," "Rent controls," "Selling the right to pollute," & "The minimum wage controversy"
- I. Stelzer. 1997. "A conservative case for regulation." *The Public Interest*, no. 128: 85-97.
- J. Stiglitz. 2011. "Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%." *Vanity Fair*, May.
- D.W. MacKenzie. 2006. "Mythology of the minimum wage." *Mises Daily* (publication of the Ludwig von Mises Institute), May.
- B.J. Clary. 2009. "Smith and living wages: Arguments in support of a mandated living wage." *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 68(5): 1063-84.

October 11 Applied microeconomics continued: neoclassical perspectives on land-use patterns and urban form**Newspaper article and discussion due****Readings:**

- W. Alonso, 1960, "A theory of the urban land market," *Papers and Proceedings of the Regional Science Association*, vol. 6, pp. 149-157.
- Levy, chs. 11 & 14 "Zoning: The economics of land use regulation" & "The economics of interplace competition"
- W. Strange. 2008. "Urban agglomeration." In S.N. Durlauf & L.E. Blume (eds.), *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, 2nd Edition. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- B. Bluestone, M.H. Stevenson, and R. Williams. 2008. *The Urban Experience: Economics, Society, and Public Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ch. 4 "City and suburbs in the

late 20th century," pp. 100-140.

D. McMillen. 2001. "Polycentric urban structure: The case of Milwaukee," *Economic Perspectives* (publication of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago), 25(2): 15-27.

L.W.C. Lai. 1994. "The economics of land-use zoning: A literature review and analysis of the work of Coase." *Town Planning Review*, 65(1): 77-98.

October 18 **Midterm exam (exam administered online; no class meeting)**

October 25 Criticisms of neoclassical economics; economic heterodoxy

Readings:

R&W, "Introduction," & ch. 13 "Radical economics: a tradition of theoretical differences."

D.K. Barker. 1999. "Neoclassical economics." In J. Peterson and M. Lewis (eds.), *The Elgar Companion to Feminist Economics*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, pp. 570-577.

C. Hayes. 2007. "Hip heterodoxy." *The Nation*, May.

M. Edel. 1992. *Urban and Regional Economics: Marxist Perspectives*. Philadelphia: Harwood Academic Publishers. Ch. 1.1 "Introduction: The critique of orthodox analysis," pp. 1-7.

R.C. Hill. 1984. "Urban political economy: Emergence, consolidation, and development." In M.P. Smith (ed.), *Cities in Transformation: Class, Capital, and the State*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 123-137.

"Continued existence of edible arrangements disproves central tenets of capitalism." *The Onion*, March 2011.

optional (recommended especially for Ph.D. students): R&W, chs. 1 & 2 "Marxist epistemology: The critique of economic determinism" & "Rethinking complexity in economic theory: The challenge of overdetermination"

November 1 Political economy basics: exploitation and classes in a capitalist society

Readings:

R&W, chs. 5 & 6 "Classes in Marxian theory" & "Power, property, and class"

R.D. Wolff & S.A. Resnick. 1987. *Economics: Marxian versus Neoclassical*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Ch. 3.E "Marxian theory: Capitalists and laborers," pp. 163-179.

M. Edel. 1992. *Urban and Regional Economics: Marxist Perspectives*. Philadelphia: Harwood Academic Publishers. Ch. 1.2 "Introduction: Basic tenets of Marxist method," pp. 7-18.

K. Marx. orig. 1867. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, Vol. 1*. Various publishers. Chs. 4 through 7, "The general formula of capital," "Contradictions in the general formula," "The sale and purchase of labor-power," & "The labor process and the valorization process"

November 8 Political economy perspectives on the role of the state

Readings:

R&W, chs. 15 & 17, "The Reagan-Bush strategy: Shifting crises from enterprises to households" & "Exploitation, consumption, and the uniqueness of US capitalism"

R.D. Wolff & S.A. Resnick. 1987. *Economics: Marxian versus Neoclassical*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Ch. 3.F.3 "The cycles or crises of capitalist economies," pp. 185-192.

- J.K. Galbraith. 2006. "The predator state." *Mother Jones*, May/June.
- Y. Madra & F. Adaman. 2010. "Public economics after neoliberalism: A theoretical-historical perspective." *European Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 17(4): 1079-1106.
- G. Clark and M. Dear. 1981. "The state in capitalism and the capitalist state." In M. Dear and A. Scott (eds.), *Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society*. New York: Methuen, pp. 45-61.

November 15 Political economy perspectives on urban form and regional restructuring
Newspaper article and discussion due

Readings:

- D. Harvey. 2008. "The right to the city." *New Left Review*, no. 53: 23-40.
- E. Olsen. 2010. "Class conflict and industrial location." *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 42(3): 344-352.
- D. Harvey. 2001. "Globalization and the 'spatial fix'." *Geographische Revue*, no. 2: 23-30.
- B. Pietrykowski. 1995. "Fordism at Ford: Spatial decentralization and labor segmentation at the Ford Motor Company, 1920-1950." *Economic Geography*, 71(4): 383-401.
- R. Peet. 1987. "The geography of class struggle and the relocation of United States manufacturing industry." In R. Peet (ed.), *International Capitalism and Industrial Restructuring*. Boston: Allen and Unwin, pp. 40-71.
- E. Soja, R. Morales, & G. Wolff. 1983. "Urban restructuring: An analysis of social and spatial change in Los Angeles." *Economic Geography*, 59(2): 195-230.
- D. Gordon. 1977. "Class struggle and the stages of American urban development." In A. Watkins and D. Perry (eds.), *The Rise of the Sunbelt Cities*, Beverly Hills: Sage, pp. 55-82.

November 22 The implications of schools of thought in (urban) economics
Panel Debate on the Future of Cities: a debate between neoclassical vs. political economy views

Readings:

- R.D. Wolff & S.A. Resnick. 1987. *Economics: Marxian versus Neoclassical*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Ch. 4 "The importance of theoretical differences," pp. 239-268.

November 29 **Begin in-class research paper presentations**

December 6 **Conclude in-class research paper presentations**

(Note: If you presented your paper on November 29, you are still required to come to class on December 6 as a courtesy to your classmates)

Research papers due by 6 p.m.

Drop Policy

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at <http://www.uta.edu/disability> or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Student Support Services Available

The University of Texas at Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. These resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals to resources for any reason, students may contact the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107 or visit <http://www.uta.edu/resources> for more information.

Electronic Communication Policy

The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University "MavMail" address as the sole official means of communication with students. MavMail is used to remind students of important deadlines, advertise events and activities, and permit the University to conduct official transactions exclusively by electronic means. For example, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation are now sent to students through the MavMail system. All students are assigned a MavMail account. Students are responsible for checking their MavMail regularly. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after they graduate from UT Arlington.

To obtain your NetID or for logon assistance, visit <https://webapps.uta.edu/oit/selfservice/>. If you are unable to resolve your issue from the Self-Service website, contact the Helpdesk at helpdesk@uta.edu.

Term Paper Grading Rubric

	The A Paper	The B Paper	The C Paper	The D Paper	The F Paper
Ideas	Excels in responding to assignment. Interesting, demonstrates sophistication of thought. Central idea/thesis is clearly communicated, worth developing; limited enough to be manageable. Paper recognizes some complexity of its thesis: may acknowledge its contradictions, qualifications, or limits and follow out their logical implications. Understands and critically evaluates its sources, appropriately	A solid paper, responding appropriately to assignment. Clearly states a thesis/central idea, but may have minor lapses in development. Begins to acknowledge the complexity of central idea and the possibility of other points of view. Shows careful reading of sources, but may not evaluate them critically. Attempts to define terms, not always successfully.	Adequate but weaker and less effective, possibly responding less well to assignment. Presents central idea in general terms, often depending on platitudes or clichés. Usually does not acknowledge other views. Shows basic comprehension of sources, perhaps with lapses in understanding. If it defines terms, often depends on dictionary definitions.	Does not have a clear central idea or does not respond appropriately to the assignment. Thesis may be too vague or obvious to be developed effectively. Paper may misunderstand sources.	Does not respond to the assignment, lacks a thesis or central idea, and may neglect to use sources where necessary.
Organization & coherence	Uses a logical structure appropriate to paper's subject, purpose, audience, thesis, and disciplinary field. Sophisticated transitional sentences often develop one idea from the previous one or identify their logical relations. It guides the reader through the chain of reasoning or progression of ideas.	Shows a logical progression of ideas and uses fairly sophisticated transitional devices; e.g., may move from least to more important idea. Some logical links may be faulty, but each paragraph clearly relates to paper's central idea.	May list ideas or arrange them randomly rather than using any evident logical structure. May use transitions, but they are likely to be sequential (first, second, third) rather than logic-based. While each paragraph may relate to central idea, logic is not always clear. Paragraphs have topic sentences but may be overly general, and arrangement of sentences within paragraphs may lack coherence.	May have random organization, lacking internal paragraph coherence and using few or inappropriate transitions. Paragraphs may lack topic sentences or main ideas, or may be too general or too specific to be effective. Paragraphs may not all relate to paper's thesis.	No appreciable organization; lacks transitions and coherence
Support	Uses evidence appropriately and effectively, providing sufficient evidence and explanation to convince.	Begins to offer reasons to support its points, perhaps using varied kinds of evidence. Begins to interpret the evidence and explain connections between evidence and main ideas. Its examples bear some relevance.	Often uses generalizations to support its points. May use examples, but they may be obvious or not relevant. Often depends on unsupported opinion or personal experience, or assumes that evidence speaks for itself and needs no application to the point being discussed. Often has lapses in logic.	Depends on clichés or overgeneralizations for support, or offers little evidence of any kind. May be personal narrative rather than essay, or summary rather than analysis.	Uses irrelevant details or lacks supporting evidence entirely. May be unduly brief.

(continued)	The A Paper	The B Paper	The C Paper	The D Paper	The F Paper
Style	Chooses words for their precise meaning and uses an appropriate level of specificity. Sentence style fits paper's audience and purpose. Sentences are varied, yet clearly structured and carefully focused, not long and rambling.	Generally uses words accurately and effectively, but may sometimes be too general. Sentences generally clear, well structured, and focused, though some may be awkward or ineffective.	Uses relatively vague and general words, may use some inappropriate language. Sentence structure generally correct, but sentences may be wordy, unfocused, repetitive, or confusing.	May be too vague and abstract, or very personal and specific. Usually contains several awkward or ungrammatical sentences; sentence structure is simple or monotonous.	Usually contains many awkward sentences, misuses words, employs inappropriate language.
Mechanics	Almost entirely free of spelling punctuation, and grammatical errors.	May contain a few errors, which may annoy the reader but not impede understanding.	Usually contains several mechanical errors, which may temporarily confuse the reader but not impede the overall understanding.	Usually contains either many mechanical errors or a few important errors that block the reader's understanding and ability to see connections between thoughts.	Usually contains so many mechanical errors that it is impossible for the reader to follow the thinking from sentence to sentence.
Citation & bibliographic practices	Consistent, appropriate use of quotations and paraphrasing, with no hint of plagiarism. Uniform and appropriate handling of in-text citations (or footnotes). Well-organized reference list or bibliography with appropriate, consistent style.	Occasional, minor lapses in use of quotations and paraphrasing, with no hint of plagiarism. Minor inconsistency or inappropriate handling of citations. Reference list or bibliography has minor problems with organization or style.	More frequent minor lapses in use of quotations and paraphrasing, with no hint of plagiarism. Some minor inconsistency or mishandling of citations. Reference list or bibliography has more serious organizational or style problems.	Crude use of quotations or paraphrasing, perhaps with serious inconsistency or mishandling of citations. Plagiarism (including unintentional plagiarism) may be strongly suspected. Reference list or bibliography may have serious problems in organization or style.	Grievously defective use of quotations or paraphrasing or serious mishandling of citations. Plagiarism (even if unintentional) can be demonstrated. Reference list or bibliography deeply defective in organization or style.
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