

**Fall 2015**  
**URPA 5364 Urban Political Economy**

*Dr. Enid Arvidson*  
*Tuesday, 6:00-8:50 p.m.*  
*Fine Arts Building room 409*  
*Public Affairs Department • College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs*  
*University of Texas, Arlington*

fall 2015 office hours: Wednesday 3:00-5:00 by appointment  
office location: Architecture Building 326

phone (direct line): 817-272-3349\*  
email: enid@uta.edu\*

### **Course Description**

This course examines the theoretical bases of orthodox neoclassical economics, and the urban economic applications and policies that derive from it. Neoclassical economics is then compared and contrasted with the heterodox political economy paradigm and the economic applications and policies that flow from this alternative framework. Attention is paid to how and why the neoclassical model remains the basis for economic policy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The concept of “paradigm,” or school of thought, is utilized to establish the notion of alternative, or contending, schools of thought within economics, and the two alternative schools are explored in detail — orthodox neoclassical and heterodox political economic perspectives.

### **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 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: 9780275943639

R.D. Wolff & S.A. Resnick. 2012. *Contending Economic Theories: Neoclassical, Keynesian, and Marxian*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. ISBN: 9780262517836

Additional Readings:

In addition to the two texts, a number of journal articles and book chapters from various sources are required. These items are available as downloadable PDF files through Blackboard under the “Course Materials” menu item.

An optional text, for students desiring additional presentation of neoclassical theory at an introductory level, is:  
P.A. Samuelson & W.D. Nordhaus. 2010. *Economics 19<sup>th</sup> ed.* New York: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 9780073511290

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

Grades are based on the following requirements — three requirements for master’s students, four requirements for Ph.D. students (see Grading Policy for how course grade is calculated):

---

\*Email is the preferred form of contact. If you contact me by phone and leave a message, it may take several days to reply. Please note I will not reply to email or phone messages with questions regarding things that are clearly covered in the syllabus.

- i **In-class participation** — this participation requires two things:
- **Contribution to discussion:** 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
  - **Leading discussion:** once during the semester, students are expected to prepare an assignment to present in class that applies the ideas in the readings. Sign-up sheet and assignment description is circulated on the first day of class and posted to Blackboard. **DUE:** see sign up sheet for your own assignment and due date.
- 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 "Exam" menu item on Blackboard. You will have 135 minutes to complete the exam (75 minutes for the multiple choice section and 60 minutes for the essay section). Additional information about the exam is available on Blackboard. **DUE:** no later than 11:59 p.m. CDT October 23
- iii **Annotated bibliography — Ph.D. students only:** conduct a library search for five refereed academic journal articles, all on the same topic, that use orthodox neoclassical analysis (2 articles) and heterodox political economy analysis (3 articles) of your topic — topic is of your choice. Write an annotated bibliography of all five articles, using the concepts discussed in class in your annotations. Be sure to note the aims and scope of the journal that each article is published in (to learn which economics journals publish which framework). One strategy to follow in tracking down articles on a topic is, once you have found one or two good articles, to check their reference list for other related articles. See <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/03/> for more information about writing an annotated bibliography. **DUE:** December 8
- iv **Final research paper** — this research paper requires all of the following:
- **Proposal memo:** Submit a memo stating your proposed urban or policy issue, a proposed outline of your paper, and four or five initial references on your issue from the two different paradigms. **DUE:** October 6
  - **Research paper:** Complete a written research paper in which you compare and contrast the neoclassical and political economy paradigms. The paper should be roughly 3500 words (i.e., roughly 15 double-spaced pages) plus a properly formatted bibliography. The entire paper must be double-spaced, 1 inch margins on all sides, 12 point font. Your paper must also include an urban or policy issue of your choice, in which you present and describe an orthodox neoclassical analysis of your issue, and then critique the neoclassical analysis through the lens of heterodox political economy. Recommended organization of the paper is as follows. **DUE:** December 8

Section One: Introduction (±1 page): state your urban or policy issue, describe 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 (Sections Three and Four are where you describe the different ways of understanding your issue with respect to each paradigm).

Section Two: Discussion of the two paradigms (±6 pages): describe each paradigm in general terms (rather than as they are specifically exemplified by your issue (this latter is done in Sections Three and Four)). In other words, discuss the paradigms in terms of the assigned readings, in-class discussion, and additional relevant references.

Section Three: Orthodox analysis of your issue (±3 pages): introduce your issue, and describe how orthodox neoclassical economics understands the issue, including underlying assumptions, analytical concepts, and policy recommendations that arise from this way of understanding. Draw on and cite scholarly sources. This section is the place you can use your issue as means to illustrate the orthodox neoclassical paradigm discussed in Section Two.

Section Four: Critique of orthodox analysis (±3 pages): use the heterodox political economy framework to critique the orthodox neoclassical analysis of your issue presented in Section Three. Be sure to include the underlying assumptions, analytical concepts, and policy recommendations that arise from

the heterodox political economy way of understanding your issue. Draw on and cite scholarly sources. This section is the place you can use your issue as means to illustrate the heterodox political economy paradigm discussed in Section Two.

Section Five: Conclusion (±2 pages): summarize the key points of your paper. Do not give your opinion about which analysis is “better” or more “realistic.” Rather, simply review what’s at stake in the different positions.

- **Presentation:** On the last day of class, you are required to give a short (±8 minute) in-class presentation to share with the class your findings. **DUE:** December 8
- **SafeAssign:** 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. **DUE:** prior to December 8
- **Term paper grading rubric:** Letter grades on the paper are based on the rubric described in the Term Paper Grading Rubric section of this syllabus.

NOTES: Written assignments and presentations for this class must be of professional quality. This means *carefully editing and proof-reading* all written work for typing, stylistic, spelling, and grammatical errors, and for clarity of thought. These things *will* affect your grade. If you have questions about style, consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Your bibliographical references must conform to the format listed in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, or be consistent with some other bibliographic style (such as American Psychological Association, or Modern Languages Association). 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/appointments/graduate.php>. The UTA Library also sponsors a number of tutorials and guides to help with research: <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/tutorials.php>

### ⚡ Grading Policy

Quality in-class participation (including Ph.D. bibliography)	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

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and unauthorized collaboration. Detailed descriptions of cheating, plagiarism, and collusion are found on the Office of Student Conduct website, <http://www.uta.edu/conduct/academic-integrity/index.php>. Academic dishonesty is prohibited by UTA (see <http://catalog.uta.edu/academicregulations/dishonesty/#academicintegritytext>).

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 disciplinary sanctions, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University.

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 clear citation of the source
- closely paraphrasing sentences or paragraphs without clear citation of the source (rewrite ideas in your own words and also then cite the source)

- drawing upon or using another person's ideas, work, data, or research without clear citation of the source

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

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

Before submitting your proposal for this course, you must run it through the SafeAssign feature of Blackboard for plagiarism detection. Please review your SA Score and Report. You are looking for a SA Score of 15% or less. Even if your score is less than 15% — 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 verbatim quotations are set off by quotation marks. You should make revisions and run your paper through as many times as necessary to generate a clean SA Score ("clean" = 15% or less and all matches taken care of). Running your paper through without the bibliography will reduce your SA Score.



## 🌀 Course Calendar

**September 1 (week 1)** Introductions

**September 8 (week 2)** Paradigms and contending schools of thought in economics

### Readings:

Wolff & Resnick, ch. 1 "Three different 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.

M. Alberti, 2012. "Behind scientific façade, economics departments serve heavy dose of laissez faire." *Part 2 of Series on Undergraduate Economics Education*. New York, NY: Remapping Debate.

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

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.

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.

**September 15 (week 3)** 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"

Wolff & Resnick, ch. 2 "Neoclassical theory," pp. 51-72 and 91-104 only (skip pp. 73-91)  
 optional: Samuelson & Nordhaus, chs. 1, 3, 4, & 5 especially appendices

**September 22 (week 4)** Neoclassical microeconomic principles *continued*

**Readings:**

Levy, ch. 5 "Welfare economics" *continued*  
 Wolff & Resnick, ch. 2 "Neoclassical theory" pp. 51-72 and 91-104 only (skip pp. 73-91)  
*continued*  
 E. Screpanti & S. Zamagni. 1995. "Léon Walras." From *An Outline of the History of Economic Thought*. New York: Oxford University Press. Ch. 5.3 pp. 162-170.  
 optional: Samuelson & Nordhaus, chs. 6, 8, 12, 13, 15

**September 29 (week 5)** 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"  
 Wolff & Resnick, ch. 3 "Keynesian Theory" pp. 105-108 and 129-132 only (skip pp. 108-129) & ch. 2 "Neoclassical theory" *continued* especially pp. 97-104  
 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  
 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 6 (week 6)** 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 13 (week 7)** Applied microeconomics continued: neoclassical perspectives on land-use patterns and urban form

**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*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

**October 20 (week 8)** **Midterm exam — no class meeting. Exam window is 6 a.m. CDT October 17 through 11:59 p.m. CDT October 23.**

**October 27 (week 9)** Criticisms of neoclassical economics; economic heterodoxy

**Readings:**

Wolff & Resnick, ch. 4 "Marxian Theory" sections 4.1 and 4.2 only (pp. 133-153)

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.

T. Barnes. 2009. "Neoclassical economics." In D. Gregory, et al (eds.), *Dictionary of Human Geography 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley and Sons, pp. 495-496.

V. Gidwani. 2009. "Marxist economics." In D. Gregory, et al (eds.), *Dictionary of Human Geography 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley and Sons, pp. 445-446.

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.

**November 3 (week 10)** Political economy basics: exploitation and classes in a capitalist society

**Readings:**

Wolff & Resnick, ch. 4 "Marxian Theory" *continued* especially pp. 177-180.

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 10 (week 11)** Political economy perspectives on the role of the state**Readings:**

- Wolff & Resnick, ch. 4 "Marxian Theory" *continued* especially pp. 195-203 and pp. 232-238.
- D. Kotz, 2009. "The financial and economic crisis of 2008: A systemic crisis of neoliberal capitalism." *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 41(3): 305-317.
- J.K. Galbraith. 2006. "The predator state." *Mother Jones*, May/June.
- 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 17 (week 12)** Political economy perspectives on spatial structure and urban form**Readings:**

- 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 24 (week 13)** Class cancelled**December 1 (week 14)** The implications of schools of thought in (urban) economics**Readings:**

- Wolff & Resnick, ch. 7 "The importance of theoretical differences"
- S. Dewan. 2014. "Who needs a boss?" *New York Times Magazine*, March 30.
- D. Wolff. 2014. "Better than redistributing income." *Truthout*, May 17.

**December 8 (week 15)** In-class research paper presentations

Research papers due by 6 p.m.

Ph.D. students' annotated bibliography due by 6 p.m.

### ✂ UTA's Required Information for the Syllabus

**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. For more information, contact the Office of Records and Registration:  
<<http://www.uta.edu/records/courses/policies/add-drop-withdrawal.php>>

**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.

**Title IX:** The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit <<http://www.uta.edu/titleIX/>>

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code, stated here <<http://www.uta.edu/conduct/>>:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at  
<<http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>>



**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit [<http://www.uta.edu/ier/Surveys/sfs/>](http://www.uta.edu/ier/Surveys/sfs/).

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells.

**Student Support Services:** UT 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. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [<http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/current/academic-support/sss/>](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/current/academic-support/sss/)

## Term Paper Grading Rubric

	The A Paper	The B Paper	The C Paper	The D Paper	The F Paper
<b>Ideas</b>	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.
<b>Organization &amp; coherence</b>	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
<b>Support</b>	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
<b>Style</b>	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.
<b>Mechanics</b>	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.
<b>Citation &amp; bibliographic practices</b>	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.
Original rubric provided by UTA's Office of Instructional Assessment (12-2010)					Modeled after UC Davis English Department Composition Program rubric