ENG4507 – American Environmental History

Autumn 2025

Assessment Criteria

EXCELLENT

Exceptional work, showing evidence of deep and wide-ranging knowledge and understanding. Outstanding ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate within a sustained argument. Evidence of extensive reading beyond the course content, including many sources not on reading list. Displaying the highest standards of presentation and writing. Characterized by insight and originality.

Outstanding work in all aspects that is thoroughly independent, original, and insightful. Significantly pushes the boundaries of existing scholarship. Suggests major revisions to our understanding of the topic. Writing that is clear and focused and has attained high professional standards.

GOOD

Well-argued and clearly focused, based on wide reading. Uses a range of examples to support the argument and is well structured, revealing a clear logic. Shows a breadth of knowledge but lacks real original thought. Weighs up and evaluates different arguments and identifies key issues. Well written with few technical errors.

A mark at the top of this range suggests thoughtfulness, good information, and cogent argument with an awareness of nuance and complexity. Work reflects a thorough grasp of concepts and of their interrelationship. A mark at the bottom end indicates proficiency, coherent and defensible arguments and adequate examples but a bit mechanical.

AVERAGE

A relevant response to the question but with a poorly developed argument. More descriptive than analytical. Based on more limited reading and over-reliant on course text or other basic course material. Provides a reasonably structured account but with some signs of confusion. May contain errors of fact or interpretation. Some grammatical and spelling errors or faults with the references.

A mark at the top of this range suggests a reasonable degree of competence and knowledge but insufficiently developed argument with one or more key points neglected. A mark at the bottom end indicates a thin argument with little analytical awareness. Perhaps reliant on a small range of reading.

POOR

Weak theme and argument. Shows some knowledge of relevant material but at an elementary level. Insignificant or no argument. Contains superficial analysis, which might be irrelevant or tangential. Inadequately informed, erroneous in matters of fact and interpretation, poorly organized. Poorly written with numerous grammatical and spelling errors and numerous faults in the references.

UNACCEPTABLE

Work that is not considered suitable for this level and suffers from a variety of problems. Failure to carry out the task assigned. Negligible or wholly irrelevant content. Limited in scope, imagination, insight, and execution. Frequent grammatical and spelling errors. Problems with citation or other poor academic practice. Fails to take advantage of the extensive literature on the topic. Some attempt at analysis, but is misconceived and/or incoherent.

At the lower end of this range: Shows no serious attempt to carry out the task assigned. Negligible or wholly irrelevant content. Poor structure, theme, argument, and execution. Contains a limited range of source materials and lacks significant detail/evidence. Repetitive and/or superficial understanding of the central subject. Exemplifies poor writing, bad structure, and basic errors. No attempt at analysis. No significant understanding or knowledge of the course.