

EUS4010: Evaluation criteria

The students choose an essay topic related to the subtopics and research literature introduced in the seminars. Because students can relatively freely choose their essay topics, they are expected to inform themselves about previous research and use additional relevant research literature closely related to their specific topics. What counts or does not count as research literature was discussed in the sessions.

The following aspects are considered in the evaluation. The grades depend on the degree of mastery of the elements listed below.

- 1) **Articulation of a compelling argument that draws definite conclusions** about a specific topic or problem. Credit is given for the originality and significance of the analysis. Elements of a compelling argument include the following:
 - A clear and arguable statement of thesis
 - Relevant evidence drawn from appropriate and credible sources
 - Original analysis of the evidence such that it supports the thesis
 - Explanation of the argument's significance

- 2) **Logical and persuasive organization** such that the reader can easily follow the development of the argument. It includes:
 - An introduction that establishes the importance of the topic and the purpose of the paper
 - An analysis.
 - A conclusion that reminds the reader of what is at stake in the argument and suggests an appropriate response
 - Overall structure that emphasizes the most important evidence or analysis

- 3) **Awareness of audience** demonstrated through:
 - Appropriate tone, precise vocabulary
 - Clear definitions of key or unfamiliar terms, convincing explanations of data or methods of analysis
 - Acknowledgement of and response to potential objections to authors' arguments

- 4) **Sophisticated style and professional presentation**, with attention to the following:
 - Proofreading and proper grammar, syntax and punctuation
 - Concision and transitions between topics
 - Appropriate and complete acknowledgement of sources and quotations
 - Correct and consistent citation format

A successful essay is characterized by:

- clarity, excellence of presentation, originality of argument
- comprehensive knowledge of the subject, excellent understanding of issues and debates in the field
- confidence in the selection and interpretation of materials
- logical and convincing development of an argument
- evidence of independent thought and judgment in answering research questions

- written style appropriate to the level of the work
- fluent and articulate expression
- correct use of academic referencing

“A” essays demonstrate mastery of all the elements.

They show a high degree of originality and creativity, and they display evidence of independent and critical thinking.

“B” essays show awareness of all the elements, but not perfect mastery. For instance, some aspects addressed need greater development, some paragraphs include irrelevant information or are not well connected, and there is occasional inconsistency in tone or organizational logic.

“C” essays also show overall awareness of all the elements, but they have certain weaknesses. For instance, the reader sometimes has difficulty following the flow of the argument. The essay may include less relevant information. There may be some issues with the focus, inconsistencies in tone, and/or organizational logic, or the essay fails to make a fully convincing case for the merits or significance of the argument.

“D” essays ignore some of the key points. Issues may pertain to style and presentation or analysis. The essay presents some evidence, but the analysis is superficial. Inadequate sources are used. Relevant research has not been sufficiently considered. Further issues may be a lack of logical organization and/or audience awareness; conclusions based on inadequate evidence; unconvincing, general, and obvious conclusions; or presenting the reader with a summary of some sources instead of an argument.

“E” essays ignore key points to a large degree. The issues may pertain to style and presentation, use of relevant research literature, or depth of analysis. The essay shows a lack of logical organization and/or audience awareness. It presents inadequate evidence and/or unconvincing conclusions.

“F” essays fail to meet the majority of the objectives. The issues may be formal or content-related.