

JOUR 4200 - SENSUR VEILEDNING

The students in this course were required to submit, as obligatory assignment, an initial draft of at least 3 pages of what would become their final term paper. They each received personalized and detailed feedback about what they needed to work on in view of the final submission. In addition, the students were given a presentation at the beginning of the course on “how to write an exam paper” and, after getting back the obligatory assignment, also received “class feedback” about the most common problematic issues. During all of this preparation I made very clear, among the rest, the importance of focusing on the initial question and answering it, of reading all of the syllabus material in order to have enough material to think with and develop a convincing argument.

The exam question is formulated so that each student is free to select which theories, concepts and cases s/he would like to use to answer the question. In the grading more weight is given to independence of thought, originality, the development of critical points, and evidence of reflection.

Although answering the initial question is important, few students seem to be able to actually focus on it. The grading is therefore not as strict as it could have been on this point. Some imprecision and lack of clarity in the language is tolerated, as long as it does not affect the reader’s ability to understand the text. When grading borderline papers, I have attempted to grade in favour of the student if there was evidence of at least some effort.

A

Excellent. It well focuses on answering the question. It shows a firm knowledge of the literature, independence of thought, and reflection on the issues. Confidence in using the syllabus to develop one’s own argument. This is well anchored in the literature and illustrated by examples. Nuanced analysis. Maybe not perfect from a writing perspective. Some sentences can be unclear.

B

Very good. Shows reflection and/or a critical or original approach. It includes relevant material and provides mostly an answer (it can be somehow indirect).

C

Good/fairly good. It provides some kind of answer (maybe unclear, incomplete, or indirect). There is some kind of argument and/or at least some sense of direction. The argument might not be convincing, but there is an attempt. It shows some effort, some reading, and some critical approach to the material. Fairly good understanding of the reading and the issues discussed.

D

Fair/OK (more than sufficient). It does not provide an answer. Relevant material, but not clear what the argument is and where the discussion is going. Not well organized. Unclear, vague sentences. It remains on the surface. It shows nonetheless some work and reading.

E

Sufficient. It mentions relevant issues, but there is no answer to the initial question. There might be a structure and/or sections but the text is fragmented, difficult to follow, with no clear sense of direction. Very little reading and barely sufficient understanding of the course material.

F

Insufficient. Very superficial. Extremely little evidence of any reading. Does not meet the minimum requirements/standards for the MA level.