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## Research Paper Evaluations

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# Research Paper Evaluations

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## DOCUMENT

### Document

#### Final Research Paper Evaluation Rubric

Research papers are evaluated on a criterion of how well the assignment **guidelines are followed**, a **clear thesis** “supported with specific (and appropriate) **evidence**,” an **organization** “appropriate for the purpose and subject,” and a **style** containing “**few surface errors**, none of which seriously undermines the overall effectiveness of the paper.”

The evaluations specifies five types of writing: Superior, Good, Average, Below Average, and Poor.

*This rubric is from a course at the Richard Stockton University of New Jersey.*

#### TERMS:

- Attention to **audience**
- Topic defined, focused, and **supported**
- **Paragraphs** progress logically
- **Clear**, readable, and sometimes memorable

## GOALS

### Goals v. Theory

#### Goals of the Assignment:

- Meeting the needs of the **rhetorical situation** with sensitivity to context
- Displaying good judgement within the essay and an awareness of the topic’s **complexities**
- Demonstrating fluency in **stylistic flourishes**

#### Theories Utilized

**Aristotle** - “Instead of examining everything, rhetorical argument builds, whenever possible, **on assumptions the audience already holds**” (170).

**Campbell** - “[E]very speech being intended to **enlighten the understanding**, to please the imagination, to move the passions, or to influence the will” (902).

**Bain** - “The sustained practice of Rhetorical *parsing*,...and rules of Rhetoric,...would eventually form, in the mind of the pupil, an **abiding ideal of good composition**” (1146).

**Hill** - “The Unity which every writer should seek is...from the harmonious arrangement of the parts...the only **Variety** which can be of avail is that which **naturally presents itself**” (1151).

## THEORY

### Theory

#### Berlin/Crowley Quotes:

“Classical Rhetoric emphasizes rational structures, and the concern for the **audience** is only a **concession to the imperfection of human nature**” (B 775).

“Bain’s application of methodical principles to...paragraphs exacerbated the...tendency of...composition theory to **concentrate on the shape of discourse, rather than on its contents**” (C 272).

#### Analysis

Relying “on assumptions the audience already holds” would not meet the needs of the rhetorical situation. It also would not “enlighten the understanding” of the topic’s complexities but likely neglect them. If the writer is confined within “an abiding ideal of good composition,” it would limit their demonstration of fluency in stylistic flourishes, as this “Variety” may not “naturally present itself” within those confines.

#### Recommendations

**Isocrates** - “Rhetoric...was...for investigating such problems—where only probable...knowledge was available—and for moving people to **action for the common good**” (67).

**Burke** - “In [his] system, one can study and **compare statements about motives** by examining how they treat the dramatic statements of human relations” (1296).

**Balester** - “The policies we enact must include...multiculturalism, and **tolerance of all varieties and types of World Englishes**” (75).

## RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

### Discussion and Conclusions

#### ADVANTAGES

By using Isocrates, students must “**weigh their words**” (79) if they are to “**move others to action** for the common good” (67).

Burke’s pentad provides students with a simple tool for breaking down their motives “that can be developed into considerable **complexity...discovered beneath its elaborations**” (1299).

Balester’s proposition that rubrics “**embrace language variety**” (64) allows students to tap into their multilingualism and enables them to provide depth to their work that “reflects the variety of human experience and reminds us that **conventions change**” (65).

#### Grid Category Analysis

**Isocrates** - “[H]e **rejects...the handbook writers seeking universally applicable techniques for composing**” (69).

**Burke** - “[T]he **classical notion of clear persuasive intent is not an accurate fit** for describing the ways in which the members of a group promote social cohesion by acting rhetorically upon themselves and one another” (1325).

**Balester** - “Error, or lack of adherence to convention, is related to...**readability**, rather than comprehensibility” (74).

#### Questions for Further Study:

1. Which of Valerie Balester’s categories of rubrics would this rubric fall under?
2. Which elements of this rubric are revisable?