

THE CITADEL DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
Assessment Rubric for Student Papers

COMPETENCY	4 POINTS	3 POINTS	2 POINTS	1 POINT	0 POINTS
Thesis or argument	Thesis is clear and indicates a definite structure for the essay; argument is imaginative, clever, and accounts for subject matter's nuance and complexity.	Thesis shows potential, but lacks clarity or cohesion; argument is vague or tends to ignore subject matter's nuance and complexity.	Thesis is plausible, but poorly stated, and indicates no supporting framework for the essay; argument is simplistic.	Thesis is utterly confused or hard to identify; argument is tautological or absurd.	No discernible thesis or argument.
Use of evidence and source material	Specific data from sources support argument at every turn; excellent use of quoted and paraphrased material.	Specific data from sources support most points of argument; some evidence supports argument weakly or badly.	Limited use of specific data from sources, and the data do not clearly support argument. Quotations deployed without introduction or analysis.	Scant use of source material, with deficient analysis and synthesis.	No use of relevant source material, or any source material at all.
Analysis	Reveals insightful thesis-related patterns, differences, or similarities. Comprehends the historiographical context of its arguments.	Organizes evidence in a clear, well-developed pattern.	Organizes evidence in a clear pattern, but with some gaps and inconsistencies.	Analysis lacks coherence.	No analysis.
Chronology and context	Connections between subject matter and essential contexts – of time, place, and culture – are well articulated and strongly support thesis and argument. Lucid and compelling sense is conveyed either of change and continuity over a span of time, or of the special character of a single historical moment.	Data on subject matter's historical period, geography, and cultural background fairly support thesis and argument. Key cultural reference points, dates, and periodization are clear and accurate.	Data on subject matter's historical period, geography, and cultural background are the bare minimum necessary to sustain thesis and argument.	Sense of subject matter's historical period, geography, and cultural background is imprecise, mistaken, or otherwise poorly conveyed. Dates, periodization, and cultural reference points are muddled or misconstrued.	No awareness shown of subject matter's historical period, geography, and cultural background. There are no dates and no fundamental cultural reference points.
Syntax and mechanics	Language is thoroughly clear, with nearly flawless spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. Strong analytical topic sentences introduce paragraphs; logical flow is strong and consistent.	Language is generally clear, but there are occasional errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Some paragraphs have weak topic sentences, lack full development, or have defective logical flow.	Language sometimes lacks clarity; there are frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Paragraphs lack analytical topic sentences and have scant logical flow.	Language is consistently opaque and marred throughout by errors in grammar, syntax. Paragraphs are incoherent and illogical.	Meaning is practically indiscernible, grammar and syntax terminally corrupted, true paragraph function absent.