

Department of Classics: rubrics for assessing student writing in USLI pilot project

	Excellent	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Overall conception, thesis	<p>—Conception of the project shows an original analysis of materials, beyond what was discussed in class.</p> <p>—Thesis offers an interesting and arguable claim.</p> <p>—Thesis is of the right scope for the assignment.</p> <p>—Key concepts and terms are generally defined clearly and used consistently.</p>	<p>—Conception of the project synthesizes coherently the ideas discussed in class and shows an accurate understanding of material.</p> <p>—Thesis offers a non-trivial and arguable claim.</p> <p>—Thesis is of the right scope for the assignment.</p> <p>—Key concepts are used consistently but may not be fully or rigorously defined.</p>	<p>—Conception of project is incoherent or does not show an understanding of class material.</p> <p>—There is no thesis or the thesis offers an obvious or non-provable claim.</p> <p>—Thesis is too big or too small to be handled within the scope the assignment.</p> <p>—Key concepts are generally left undefined and/or are used inconsistently.</p>
Interpretive skills	<p>—The paper offers accurate observations about texts and/or material evidence that are not obvious and shows an ability to perceive detail and read analytically.</p> <p>—The paper demonstrates the ability to interpret texts and/or material culture and to understand the implications of interpretive methods.</p>	<p>—The paper offers accurate observations about texts and/or material evidence, but the observations do not go substantially beyond the most obvious level.</p> <p>—The paper demonstrates a basic understanding of interpretive methods and their implications, but does not push the analysis very far or does not show a full understanding of the implications of interpretive methods.</p>	<p>—The paper either offers too few concrete observations about texts and/or material evidence or offers observations that are inaccurate or misleading.</p> <p>—The paper either offers no interpretation of the text and/or material evidence or offers interpretations that are illogical, unconvincing or that otherwise show a lack of understanding of interpretive methods and their implications.</p>
Mastery of relevant information and concepts	<p>—Information throughout, or with very rare exceptions, is factually correct.</p> <p>—Treatment demonstrates throughout, or with very occasional and minor lapses, a grasp of which key events, institutions, personalities, places, and concepts of ancient Greek and/or Roman culture are relevant to the topic, and of how they are relevant.</p> <p>—Treatment demonstrates throughout, or with very occasional and minor lapses, a critical awareness of continuities and differences between and within cultures and of ideologies of gender, group identity, social status, and political organization (assuming that the assignment offers the opportunity for demonstrating such awareness).</p>	<p>—Information is mostly correct, though there may be several small errors.</p> <p>—Although the treatment does not demonstrate a fully secure grasp of which key events, institutions, personalities, places, and concepts of ancient Greek and/or Roman culture are relevant to the topic, and of how they are relevant, its grasp is mostly along the right lines.</p> <p>—Although it lacks full assurance, treatment demonstrates to a reasonable degree a critical awareness of continuities and differences between and within cultures and of ideologies of gender, group identity, social status, and political organization (assuming that the assignment offers the opportunity for demonstrating such awareness).</p>	<p>—Information is often incorrect or incomplete in fundamental points.</p> <p>—Treatment demonstrates little or no grasp of which key events, institutions, personalities, places, and concepts of ancient Greek and/or Roman culture are relevant to the topic, and of how they are relevant.</p> <p>—Treatment demonstrates little or no critical awareness of continuities and differences between and within cultures and of ideologies of gender, group identity, social status, and political organization (assuming that the assignment offers the opportunity for demonstrating such awareness).</p>
Argumentation, Organization, Use of evidence	<p>—Argumentation overall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows an excellent grasp of logic; • generally acknowledges and accounts for potential counter-evidence and contrary interpretations; • uses mostly concrete examples that are well-chosen and well-analyzed. <p>—Use of evidence always or almost always engages fully with the contextual implications of the examples (e.g. historical context, genre of text).</p> <p>—The paper has a clear development of ideas throughout its length.</p>	<p>—Argumentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is mostly logical, but may have some errors (e.g. over-generalizing); • shows a consciousness of counter-evidence and contrary interpretations but may not fully acknowledge and account for them; • uses relevant examples, but examples that may not be specific enough or analyzed well enough to show their relation to the argument. <p>—Use of evidence generally shows an</p>	<p>—Argumentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has serious lapses in logic (e.g. circular reasoning); • fails to acknowledge counter-evidence and contrary interpretations; • fails to use examples in support of claims or uses examples that are irrelevant. <p>—Examples are often chosen and used without reference to context.</p> <p>—The paper lacks a clear development of ideas overall.</p> <p>—One or more key steps in the argument are</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — All or almost all logical steps in the argument are accounted for within the paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understanding of the context from which each example is taken (e.g. historical context, genre of text). — The paper has a clear development of ideas overall but some steps in the argument may be missing or insufficiently discussed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> missing or insufficiently expressed.
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The paper uses only relevant and authoritative sources and includes (where appropriate) more than just the most obvious sources. — All sources are cited appropriately and consistently throughout. — The paper accurately represents the claims and arguments of its sources and discusses them in a rigorous, inquiring way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The paper uses relevant and authoritative sources, though may also include one or two less suitable sources; only the most obvious sources are used. — All sources are cited appropriately, though there may be some inconsistency in citation style. — The paper cites sources accurately (i.e. not misrepresenting the argument) but without taking full account of the author’s aims or assumptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The paper uses too few sources, or sources that are irrelevant or not reliable. — There is significant inconsistency or confusion in the citation style. — The paper misrepresents or fails to understand the arguments of sources. <p>NB: Plagiarism is different from just “unacceptable” work, so that’s not covered here.</p>
Paragraphing; Clarity and precision of expression; Orthography and punctuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — All or almost all paragraphs make a clearly delineated step in the argument. — The serial arrangement of paragraphs and the transitions between paragraphs help the reader to follow the argument. — Language throughout the paper is clear, precise and easy to follow. — Words are used appropriately. — Syntax is correct and sentence structure is used to best advantage for clarity and readability. — Spelling and punctuation conform to the standards of formal academic prose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Most paragraphs make a clearly delineated step in the argument, but there may be some repetition between paragraphs. — Most paragraphs are coherent and well placed in sequence, but either the design of individual paragraphs or the serial arrangement of paragraphs may not be optimal for expressing the argument. — Transitions are mostly clear and logical but there may be some gaps or confusion. — Language throughout is readable and clear, though there may be some limited instances of imprecise word choice, awkward or unclear phrasing or an overuse of a relatively restricted vocabulary. — Syntax is generally correct, but there may be some small errors. — Spelling and punctuation generally conform to standards of formal academic prose, but there may be some errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Arrangement of paragraphs is haphazard and does not follow the logic of the argument. — There is significant repetition of ideas between paragraphs. — Individual paragraphs are either not coherent, not relevant to the overall argument. — Transitions between paragraphs are neglected or are badly expressed. — Language throughout is unclear or imprecise. — There are significant and/or multiple errors in word usage. — There are significant and/or multiple errors in syntax. — There are significant and/or multiple errors in spelling and/or punctuation.