

GUIDELINES FOR GRADING SOCIAL SCIENCE/CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOOK PROJECTS AND ARTICLE REPORTS

OVERVIEW: Some of your courses will require either the underlining/highlighting of certain selected books, along with your making appropriate comments in the book's margins, or the completion of two magazine article reports related to the course's content. In the case of the magazine reports, half of the grade will reflect your performance related to the projects' course-centered content. However, these magazine article reports will also be graded for grammar and adherence to the MLA format. In contrast, the book reading projects will be graded on your ability to identify significant content related to the book's topic(s) as well as your ability to contribute relevant insights via marginal notes/comments.

BOOK PROJECTS

BOOK PROJECT'S TIME REQUIREMENTS: Selected book projects are designed to further your in-depth knowledge about some course-related topic. These projects normally involve turning in your completed book on the third test date, though this date may be changed to deal with unique class circumstances. Any date changes for submission will be announced in class at least one week prior to the turn-in date. Normally, turning in an acceptable book, on the required date, will result in **TWO POINTS BEING ADDED TO YOUR FINAL SEMESTER GRADE** (though the number of points awarded in CRJ 115, for acceptably completing the optional book assignment, may be as great as 10 points). The last day to turn in a "REQUIRED BOOK PROJECT" is immediately before taking the final test on the last day the class meets. Except under very unusual circumstances (e.g. severe, medically-documented, extended illness), **BOOKS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE STUDENT BEGINS THE FINAL TEST. FAILURE TO TURN IN AN "ACCEPTABLE" BOOK WILL THEN RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC "F" BEING ASSIGNED FOR THE FINAL COURSE GRADE** (due to the extreme importance of the book's understanding to the student's successful course completion).

CRITERIA FOR "ACCEPTABLE" BOOK PROJECTS:

- (1) As you read each chapter you will find numerous sentences/paragraphs that include information you consider memorable and/or interesting. As you encounter this information you will either highlight or underline it. When grading your assignment your instructor will expect ***NO MORE THAN !0 CONSECUTIVE PAGES WITHOUT SOMETHING BEING HIGHLIGHTED/UNDERLINED.*** However, ***MOST OF THE TIME YOU SHOULD FIND SOMETHING MEMORABLE AT LEAST EVERY 3-4 PAGES.*** While each student may find something different that is considered worthy of underlining, your instructor will be ***CHECKING YOUR UNDERLINING FOR ITS RELEVANCE TO THE BOOK'S TOPIC*** (i.e. he DOES NOT WANT TO SEE INFORMATION THAT IS OBVIOUSLY UNDERLINED WITHOUT ANY THOUGHT BEING GIVEN TO ITS OVERALL RELATION TO THE BOOK'S CENTRAL SUBJECT). Underlining/highlighting without any thought being given to what you are reading IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.
- (2) In addition to thinking about what you are reading, your instructor expects you to occasionally make your own written contributions (i.e. insights) to the book. As you find information that you'd like to respond to (such as an entry you find gross, disturbing, or which perhaps doesn't fit your previous experience with the subject), you are asked to record some of these feelings by writing about them in the page margins. While each reader will have different subjective impressions of what's being read, ***YOUR INSTRUCTOR WILL EXPECT "ACCEPTABLE" NOTES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE MARGINS AT LEAST ONCE EVERY 20 PAGES*** (and, usually, much more frequently than that). ***"ACCEPTABLE" WILL BE DEFINED AS "COMMENTS THAT CLEARLY REFLECT THE STUDENT'S HAVING THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT HAS BEEN READ (and expressed in a written form that indicates this cognitive interaction)."***

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT BOOK PROJECTS: If you are unsure about what your instructor is expecting for acceptable underlining and noting of book projects, please ask him. He will be happy to clarify any misunderstandings you may have and will be glad to show you several examples of books people have previously done acceptably. THIS IS A VALUABLE LEARNING EXPERIENCE. IGNORANCE IS NO EXCUSE! YOUR INSTRUCTOR IS NOT EXPECTING PERFECTION, HE JUST WANTS TO CLEARLY SEE EVIDENCE THAT YOU'VE MADE A REASONABLE EFFORT TO READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ASSIGNED BOOK!!!

ARTICLE REPORTS

MAGAZINE ARTICLE REPORTS' TIME REQUIREMENTS: The two article reports will be normally turned in on the third test date, at the start of that class. Any exceptions to this will be announced in earlier classes. Each day (NOT EACH CLASS DAY, but excluding Saturday and Sunday) the magazine reports are turned in late will result in ***ONE LETTER GRADE BEING DEDUCTED FROM THE GRADE THAT WOULD HAVE NORMALLY BEEN ASSIGNED.*** The reports will not be accepted at all after being one week late. Failure to turn in the article reports will result in a grade of "0" for that part of your course assessment. However, article reports turned in during the regular one-week requirement will not be given a grade lower than "F" (recorded in the grade book as a "50"). THIS MEANS TURNING IN A POORLY DONE ARTICLE REPORT, DURING THE WEEK ALLOWED, IS BETTER THAN NOT TURNING IN A REPORT AT ALL.

GRADING CRITERIA FOR ARTICLES: You will be assigned an overall letter grade for each of the two required magazine articles. These composite grade equivalents, as recorded in the grade book, will be as follows:

A+ = 100

A = 95

A- = 90

B+ = 88

B = 85

B- = 80

C+ = 78

C = 75

C- = 70

D+ = 68

D = 65

D- = 60

F = 50

0 (assigned for not turning in assigned work at all or for not turning it in within one week)

ANALYSIS OF GRADING COMPONENTS: You will receive two separate grades for each magazine article report and the grades will then be averaged for the overall report grade. These two components will be as follows:

(1) **CONTENT:** You will be given one of three grades, using the following criteria as general guidelines:

"A" – Student's selected article was clearly related to the subject. The MLA format, as shown in the class example, was followed very closely and no citation elements were left out. The student's personal observations (explored in a final paragraph of at least 5 sentences) show thoughtfulness and clear relationship to the topic of the article. This is a reflection of "**SUPERIOR**" work.

“C” – Student’s selected article was clearly related to the subject. The MLA format, as shown in the class example, was generally followed . Citation shows a general understanding of MLA format (even though minor elements are incorrect/missing). The student’s personal observations, while perhaps not as well-done (or lengthy),as required for an “A”, nevertheless show a minimum relationship to the article’s topic. This reflects merely “ADEQUATE” work.

“F” – Student’s selected article was not related to the subject or was not done using an appropriate magazine. The MLA format was clearly not followed and/or significant elements of the citation were missing (such as author), citation and title not being the same, etc. The student’s personal observation paragraph is missing or excessively brief. There is clear indication of the report being copied from the article. This is a reflection of “UNACCEPTABLE” work.

(2) **GRAMMAR:** You will also be graded on grammar (i.e. sentence structure, spelling , punctuation, margins, pagination, etc.) according to the following schedule:

“A” = 1-5 errors

“B” = 6-10 errors

“C” = 11-15 errors

“D” = 16-20 errors

“F” = over 20 errors

REMEMBER:

- (1) Your article reports must adhere *exactly* to the *modified-MLA format* as provided in the example distributed in class. If you don’t have a copy of the model report, it is your responsibility to ask the instructor for it. **IGNORANCE IS NO EXCUSE!!!**
- (2) A “perfect” article report will be rewarded with an overall grade of “A+” (which will be recorded as a “100”). In that case, separate grades for content and grammar will be avoided.
- (3) Book projects are graded as simply “*Pass*” or “*Fail*” (with an eventual “Pass”, awarded prior to the final test, being required for successful course completion).