ENGL 102: Rubric and Writing Corrections

Grade Criteria	A: Exceptional 4 points	B: Good 3 points	C: Fair 2 points	D: Marginal 1 point	F: Unacceptable Essay fails
Intro Paragraph /Thesis Weight: 2	Engaging opening introduces the essay's general topic & inspires thinking about that topic; logically proceeds to thesis; thesis is an easily identifiable, well-phrased argument that assesses the text & addresses a specific idea to be analyzed & proven in the essay; the idea offered in the thesis reflects sound critical, analytical thinking; title & author of work are appropriately referenced.	Generally engaging opening; areas to be strengthened may include: presentation of general topic; development of transition between general opening & specific thesis statement; thesis statement is phrased as an argument but may be strengthened through clarification of the main idea being offered.	Opening is too brief or simplistic; essay's topic is apparent but needs to be developed to engage the reader; abrupt transition to thesis statement; paragraph may be incoherent, jumping from one point to the next without a smooth progression of ideas; thesis may be too general, vague, or imprecisely phrased; thesis may not directly address the prompt (though still an argument that assesses the text).	Opening is ineffective, poorly organized, & undeveloped (inappropriately brief); thesis may summarize plot point rather than present argument about text; thesis may not address the prompt at all; author or title of text may not be referenced properly (i.e. only author's last name, title incorrectly formatted).	Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment.
Body Paragraphs/ Organization TS: Topic sentence Weight: 2	Each TS clearly connects to the thesis & offers an identifiable, well-phrased idea to be proven in the paragraph; concrete details are well-chosen & incorporated; paragraphs are well-organized to create a coherent, carefully developed & supported argument; transitions between ideas are logical & each idea builds on the preceding; writer maintains focus & control of argument so that the point of each paragraph is always clear.	Each TS generally connects to the thesis but in one or more TS the main idea may need to be clarified; concrete details are generally well-chosen though some may be irrelevant or insufficient as evidence to effectively support the thesis or TS; paragraphs are generally well-organized, although some transitions may be awkward & there may be gaps in the development of ideas; focus & control of argument may need improvement because the point of a paragraph	More than one TS is weak in the following areas: main idea not discernible; a fact about the text is summarized; unclear connection to thesis. Concrete details present but weak, providing insufficient evidence to support TS or are irrelevant because they don't support an insightful inference. Lack of coherent organization of ideas within paragraphs or between paragraphs; abrupt transitions impede smooth flow of ideas; essay lacks consistent focus & control of	TS absent or consistently lack focused ideas, either offering general, irrelevant comments or stating facts about the text; there is no discernible argument or point guiding essay; concrete details are absent or ineffective/ insufficient; consistent lack of coherent organization of ideas within paragraphs & from one paragraph to the next; points of paragraphs are unclear.	Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

Grade Criteria	A: Exceptional 4 points	B: Good 3 points	C: Fair 2 points	D: Marginal 1 point	F: Unacceptable Essay fails
		may not always be clear.	argument; paragraph(s) may lack clear point(s); content of paragraphs does not consistently support or connect with thesis or TS.		
Literary Analysis Weight: 3	Writing reflects a critical, analytical understanding of the text; through clear reasoning, writer draws sophisticated, insightful inferences from concrete details to support the connected ideas of the TS & thesis; inferences are developed so that all claims & points made are well-supported & persuasive; analysis demonstrates writer's ability to interpret the function of literary devices in the service of thematic meaning; appropriate balance of quotes & writer's analysis; writer is clearly engaged with & moved by his/her thinking process.	Writing generally reflects a critical, analytical understanding of the text but is uneven; inferences demonstrate interpretive ability but could be developed further to better explain significance of detail & support thesis or TS; some claims may be vague, generalized, or lacking in support; analysis could be stronger through focus on stylistic elements that create thematic meaning; some imbalance of quotes & writer's analysis.	Writing reflects a basic understanding of the text but not a critical, analytical understanding, as shown by at least one of the following: lack of focused, developed idea guiding essay; interpretive analysis inconsistent or unsubstantiated; frequent summary of plot details that retell the story; writer restates the content of cited concrete details rather than draws significant inferences about sub-textual meaning; little or no analysis of how stylistic elements of the text create meaning. Writing weakened by frequent generalizations, unsupported claims, assumptions, or vague statements.	Writing demonstrates some awareness of text details but not a critical, analytical understanding of the text; points made are vague & unsubstantiated; essay lacks focus; no literary analysis present.	Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

Grade / Criteria	A: Exceptional 4 points	B: Good 3 points	C: Fair 2 points	D: Marginal 1 point	F: Unacceptable Essay fails
Language Style/Voice Weight: 1	Writing is academic in tone, writer's voice is evident—confident & sophisticated; vocabulary & phrasing are academically appropriate, concise, persuasive, & sophisticated without being pretentious.	Writing is generally academic in tone; writer's voice may not be consistently persuasive; writing shows an awareness of the purpose to persuade; vocabulary in some places may be simplistic, wordy, or ineffective.	Writing tends to be mechanical in tone; writer's voice is not evident; writing shows inconsistent awareness of the purpose to persuade; vocabulary tends to be simplistic or too fancy, with instances of informal or imprecise diction.	Writing is mechanical in tone; writer's voice is not discernible in essay; writing demonstrates no awareness of purpose to persuade; vocabulary is inappropriate.	Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment.
Mechanics Weight: 2	Essay includes a variety of sentences marked by varying opening words & structure; effective syntax & grammar demonstrate a mastery of writing conventions & serve the author's purpose; consistent adherence to MLA guidelines; accurate Works Cited page; no major spelling errors, only one non-critical grammar & one non-critical punctuation error per page.	Sentences generally effective but may lack appropriate variety (some repeated opening words & structure); syntax & grammar may be awkward in places (but not distracting); no more than one major spelling error per page; only two to three **minor**[1] spelling or grammar errors per page; consistent adherence to MLA guidelines; accurate Works Cited page. No critical grammar errors.	Opening words & structure repeated often; awkward syntax & grammar confuse or distract reader; spelling errors, fragments, contractions, or referring to "you" lower academic quality & distract reader; adherence to MLA inconsistent; Works Cited has inaccuracies (but does not compromise the integrity of essay).	Frequent syntax, grammar, spelling errors that distract the reader; a few to several critical grammar errors; lack of adherence to MLA guidelines undermines integrity of essay; inaccurate Works Cited page compromises integrity of essay.	Too many grammar or spelling errors; more than several critical grammar errors; No adherence to MLA guidelines or using APA or other guideline; incomplete or missing a required Works Cited page or missing parenthetical citations (technically plagiarism). Missing both will earn a zero (0) for the assignment. Parenthetical citations that do not match the Works Cited page.
Design Weight 1	Essay has no document design errors.	Essay has a few design errors.	Essay has several design errors.	Essay has many design errors; page headings and/or page numbers are missing or wrong.	No adherence to style sheet, formatting extremely inconsistent, sloppy appearance.

[1] A minor error is one that is not distracting or confusing to the reader.

Grading Method

Each writing assignment will be judged using the course rubric as a criteria analysis. I will look at each criterion and determine what rating the assignment has earned based by how well the assignment meets that criterion. An essay does not need to meet every issue in a ranking to get that ranking. For example, an essay may "only" have missing page numbers and no other design errors but will still get a D ranking for the Design criterion. Each criterion is weighted, so I will multiple the points earned for that criterion by its weight. I will then add the total weighted criteria points earned. Next, any relevant deductions (late penalties, for instance) will be applied.

The maximum possible **criteria points** for any assignment is 40 points, so I will convert the total criteria points earned to a percentage by dividing the criteria points earned by 40, and then multiply that percentage against the assignment's maximum grade points. Recall that failing any of the grading criteria will fail the paper no matter how well it fares in the other criteria.

For example, a student's second essay (150 points maximum), earns a Good (3 points) for the Literary Analysis criterion, a Fair (2 points) for the Mechanics criteria, a Good for the Design criteria and Exceptional (4 points) for the rest. The student has no grading deductions. The student's second essay would then receive an 80 percent, thus getting 120 points for the essay:

1. Intro/Thesis + Organization + Analysis + Language + Mechanics + Design = criteria points
2. (4 points)(2 weight) + (4)(2) + (4)(3) + (4)(1) + (2)(2) + (3)(1) = 8 + 8 + 12 + 4 + 3= 35 criteria points
3. 36 criteria points earned ÷ 44 criteria points possible = 0.795 or 80%.
4. (0.80)(150 maximum assignment points) = 120 assignment points.

However, you can have grading deductions: points taken off after criteria points have been assessed, reducing your grade further. These are discussed below.

Grading Deductions
These are points taken off after criteria points are assessed.

Deductions for Rough Draft Errors. Having an insufficient rough draft is -5% of total assignment grade, missing rough draft is -10% of total assignment grade, and late is -10% for each 24-hour period late for up to 2 days.

Automatic Failing Grade. Failing any of the above criteria; having n assignment that is missing an introduction, conclusion, primary support, secondary support (for papers requiring such), or analysis (it is just a plot summary); or first instance of plagiarism or contract writing will automatically fail your essay no matter how well you did otherwise on the essay.

Automatic Zero Grade. If the assignment is not submitted or submitted after two days; the writing is not on an assigned topic; or the second instance of plagiarism or contract writing will earn you a zero and a referral to the Honor Council no matter how well you did otherwise on the essay.

Marking Design, Language Style, and Mechanics Errors

Half of the rubric above concerns essay content. When I grade using those criteria, I will comment on the overall content but will not be making specific grademarks or grade error codes. For design, language style/voice, and mechanics criteria, I will use grademarks (error codes).

FOR (Format—Document Design Errors)

These include wrong or inconsistent spacing between lines (line spacing); wrong spacing before or after lists or paragraphs; wrong page margins (should always be 1 inch on every side); wrong alignment of text (using full justification instead of left justified, for example); page headings and/or page numbers are missing or wrong (this last one is a major error).

Two major causes for this error are copying and pasting and not getting rid of the extra padding that Word likes to do at the end of a paragraph (Paragraph→Line Spacing Options→Indents and Spacing→Spacing, set Line spacing to single and Before and After both to zero points).

FOR-txt (Format—Text)

These include issues with capitalization, color, emphasis (italics, underlining), font family, size, weight (boldface or normal), and highlighting of text. Common cause of these errors is copying and pasting from another document or from a web page.

GRA-ce (Grammar and Usage Error—Critical)

Major Sentence-Level Errors: Comma splice, fragment, or run-on (fused). Vague or confusing phrase, pronoun reference, contradictory language or confusing punctuation use. I have read the passage more than once and still do not understand what you are trying to say.

GRA-art (Grammar—Article)

Incorrect or missing article. Sometimes this is caused by a noun incorrectly plural or singular, so your correction may involve correcting the noun. Too many article errors can fail an assignment.

GRA-h (Grammar and Usage—Hyphenation)

Refer to Merchant's English Usage Guide for Technical *Writers for guidance using hyphens, en dashes, a*nd em dashes. Also includes the following error: the dash between section title and page number is incorrect or missing in white paper or technical report page headers.

GRA-o (Grammar and Usage—Other)

This error includes grammar and usage errors not covered by the other categories. This includes abbreviation errors, double negatives, faulty modifiers, hyperbole, incorrect plurals not created by apostrophe errors, incorrect word order, incorrect/ incorrectly used phrases ("could care less," "begs the question," etc.) and symbol use errors. It also includes pronoun errors: antecedent-agreement, case, incorrect shifts, incorrect or overuse of "I" or "you," and overuse of "it" or "this." Confusing errors are critical errors. Finally, this category also includes number/numeral errors (not page numbers): formatting, range, and when to spell a number out, for example.

GRA-p (Grammar and Usage—Punctuation)

This is a big category. This includes errors using apostrophes, comma, punctuating lists,

punctuation with quotations, and spacing with punctuation. Hyphenation errors are covered in the GRA-h error category.

GRA-prep (Grammar and Usage—Preposition)

This error includes incorrect preposition use that while awkward, distracting, or an odd choice, does not change the meaning of the sentence. This error also includes prepositions that should be deleted (not needed). A misspelled preposition is a spelling error.

GRA-v (Grammar and Usage—Verbs)

Errors in verb use. The most common are listed below (not an exhaustive list).

- Ending a sentence with a "to be" verb (too casual tone for formal writing). Avoid this by using more polished word choices or sentence structures.
- Incorrect verb tense. This includes tense shift issues: needless verb tense shifting confuses your reader and is an unpleasant distraction.
- Passive voice. (Not all passive voice constructions are wrong.)
- Split Infinitive: too many words between "to" and the verb.
- Subject-verb agreement error.
- Weak verb (use a stronger verb).
- Wrong verb used is a word choice error (SPE error).

LAN (Language Style/Voice)

Writing needs to be efficient, easy to read: word use needs to be simple, no fancy diction, no unnecessary repetitive words or phrases, no unnecessary modifiers or relative clauses—if a simple word means the same thing as a complex or fancy word, use the simple word. Keep diction and language academic but not pretentious; do not use a conversational tone.

MLA

Errors with inline cites (not in correct MLA style), errors with Works Cited items (not in alphabetical order, not using hanging indents, some elements not italicized which should be italicized, some parts of the citation missing, some parts of the citation in the wrong place, etc.).

SPE (Spelling/Word Choice)

Every instance of a spelling error is counted. Writing with multiple errors has a lower ethos. Misspellings and wrong word choices also increase the chances of misreading, especially by those whose first language is not English; these errors also increase the price of translating a document. Use spell check and the writing aids listed at davidmmerchant.com/writing-help/ to help catch spelling or word choice errors.

- Misspelled words or abbreviations; nonexistent words (words not accepted as official by major dictionaries; for example, "alot" and "conversate" are not proper words).
- Misused possessive pronouns.
- Wrong word choices (including coordinating conjunctions, compound word errors [that changes the meaning of the sentence], prepositions, sexist language, sound-alikes, and transitions). An example of a major compound word error is "back up" (a verb) used instead of "backup" (a noun) or vice versa. This also includes words that affect tone: you

need a professional tone, not a casual or conversational tone; this does not mean use fancy diction as the language needs to be plain (not fancy).

SPE-min (Minor Spelling/Word Choice Errors)

- British spelling of a word.
- Compound word error that does not change the meaning of the sentence: two words should be a compound or a compound should be two words: "space flight" instead of the correct "spaceflight" or "lifeform" instead of the correct "life form." (Yes, bands, songs, and Wikipedia use the incorrect "lifeform." However, "life form" is the official spelling.)
- Potentially, another minor error is a word not using its first definition (first definition listed in a standard dictionary) but is otherwise properly used. However, for this course, I will ignore this error unless you are using the archaic definition of a word.

Writing Corrections Assignment

Do not be lazy: one of the goals of this course is for you to learn to be a self-editor. Businesses rightfully expect college graduates to have a command of the English language. You need to become stronger in your command of English and that is not done by giving you the answers outright. The above error codes narrow down the range of errors but you need to determine the specific error (one of the course goals is to push you to become better self-editors). You must learn to find and fix the mistakes you are making so that you will not continue to commit the same errors. You do have many resources to help you, though, including writing resources listed at davidmmerchant.com/writing-help/, *Merchant's English Usage Guide for Technical Writers* for guidance (index may be helpful), and the Writing Center; also try the tricks I taught you: for example, read your work out loud.

Listing the Errors in an Assignment

Most errors will be listed each time they occur. I usually do not highlight where each grammar, MLA, or spelling error exactly is. To push you in developing a command of the English language, I will click on the Feedback Summary in Turnitin's Feedback Studio display of your paper and list the errors (the last page of these instructions has help for finding the Feedback Summary in Turnitin's Feedback Studio). For essay 1, however, I will offer clues to the error (and sometimes even offer corrections).

I will first list any formatting errors by page and, if appropriate, by paragraph under the heading "Format Errors" (includes MLA formatting errors, page margin errors, and page headers). For example, if you have an MLA error in the first paragraph on page 3, I will type the following:

> P 3
> para 1: MLA

If you have two such errors in the same paragraph, you will see the code listed twice:

> P 3
> para 1: MLA, MLA

I will then next grammar and spelling errors by page and then by paragraph under the heading "Usage Errors" (for English usage). For example, if you have a punctuation error and a spelling error in the third paragraph (where the punctuation error occurs before the spelling error) and a verb error in the fifth paragraph on page 2, I will type the following:

> P 2
> para 3: GRA-p; SPE
> para 5: GRA-v

Finally, I will comment on the content under the heading "Content Comments." Some comments may refer to the entire essay, others to parts, so this section will not be a listing of errors but be given to you in paragraph form.

Correcting the errors

For Essays 1–3, you will write in a writing corrections sheet what you would do to correct each error. A correctly formatted corrections sheet is found at davidmmerchant.com/engl102/. You will NOT rewrite the assignment even if you failed it.

For example, if you have a GRA-p in paragraph 3 on page 2, you would check for a punctuation error in that paragraph. You check and find you have left off a comma in a long introductory clause. You write that the GRA-p error here is a comma error; you would then show how you would correct the error by just writing the part of the sentence with the error, but this time correctly.

For content comments, you will write a response. For example, if I discuss how your analysis relied too much on summary and quotes from secondary sources and not your own analysis, you would write how you would do better for the next essay.

Do you have to correct the same error more than once? Yes, you do—every error that is marked must be corrected to get full writing correction points. For example, if you misspelled "affect" three times, you need to correct it three times. Hopefully, this will help reinforce learning.
If you do not have any formatting errors, leave that part blank and skip to the usage errors section. Likewise, if you only had formatting errors and usage errors, you would leave the usage errors section blank. Do not delete any unused rows in the writing corrections sheet. It is OK to submit the writing corrections sheet with rows left empty as long as you have corrected every error. You need to correct every error to get full writing corrections points.

Merchant's English Usage Guide, your textbook, and the Writing Center offer grammar help. Using the free writing tools listed at my "Writing Help" page at davidmmerchant.com/writing-help/ can help as well. The syllabus offers formatting help. If after you have used these resources you still need clarification, please ask me. But you need to show that you made a good faith effort. You have plenty of resources available to you. I will not just give you the answer as that defeats one of the course goals.

You do not need to write in full sentences (see the example below) in your responses to the formatting, MLA, and usage errors except when you are showing what you need to do to correct

an error that involves a sentence not being correctly written. But otherwise, this assignment is not quite as formal.

When finished, submit to Turnitin (make sure you submit it to the correct folder) within one week after the writing correction is assigned (see the course schedule for due dates—make sure you have an updated schedule). See the syllabus for rules on late work.

Because of time constraints at the end of the quarter, writing corrections only apply to essays 1–3 and NOT to essay 4. Also, writing corrections do not pertain to the diagnostic essay either.

If You Failed to Turn in the Original Assignment

Sorry, but you do not get to do the writing corrections for an assignment that was never turned in. No, you cannot submit the original assignment after two days has passed the due date (see the syllabus) nor can you submit the original assignment for writing corrections points.

Writing Corrections Sheet Formatting

You have an already formatted writing correction sheet at davidmmerchant.com/engl102/ in Word format. Just download and fill it out.

The page margins are narrow and the body text font size is set to size 11 Times New Roman which is OK as this assignment is not a formal document.

The next two pages is an example of a filled-out writing corrections sheet. Following that example is information on Turnitin.com Feedback Studio Layers, showing how to access the Feedback Summary.

Writing Corrections Sheet

Name: Kasumi Goto
Class section: 002
Assignment: Essay 1

Formatting Errors

Page #	Error code(s)	Specific error(s)	How I would correct the error(s)
1	FOR-al	Margins are wrong	Use 1-inch margins
2	FOR-txt	Used wrong font size	Use Times New Roman, size 12 font
3	FOR-MLA	Missing hanging indents.	Use a hanging indent for references in the Works Cited page.
3	FOR-txt	Text color is dark gray for my third reference item	Make sure text is black for references

Usage Errors

Page #	Para #	Error code(s)	Specific error(s)	How I would correct the error(s)
2	1	GRA-v	Subject-verb agreement	"Dickens" writes…
2	2	CON	Wordy phrase	Use "all the" instead of "all of the"
3	5	GRA-art	Used "a" instead of "an"	"an apple"
3	5	FOR-p	Comma before "but" in a "not only, but" construction	"Not only is Scrooge cold but he is stingy as well."

Page #	Para #	Error code(s)	Specific error(s)	How I would correct the error(s)

Content Issues

For content comments, you will write a response. For example, if I discuss how your analysis relied too much on summary and quotes from secondary sources and not your own analysis, you would write how you would do better for the next essay.

Do not need to delete blank rows—leave them blank. If you need to add lines, do so, of course.

Submit your finished corrections sheet as a Word document to Turnitin.com by the deadline (see the course schedule; make sure you have taken note of any updates to the course schedule which are announced in the course Announcements Forum in the Class Info-Start Here section on Moodle).

Turnitin.com Feedback Studio Layers

Click This Layer for Grademark Comments

Click This to View Quickmarks

Click This to Read the Feedback Summary

Click This Layer for the Originality Report

Unfortunately, this may be what your view defaults to; if so, click on the blue stack above to see comments.

If you have not plagiarized, you can normally ignore the number you see: because of the nature of our writing, there will be some similarities between papers. However, if the number gets to be over 50 percent, you might want to double-check to make sure you are not inadvertently plagiarizing. If you have cited quotes, cited paraphrases, and your paraphrases are not very similar to the original text, you should be fine.