HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIVINITY WRITING RUBRICS

Grading (→) Criteria (↓)	-A- Exemplary	-B- Good	-C- Average	-D- Inadequate	-F- Substandard
PURPOSE					
Thesis, main theme or idea	-Introduced and stated clearly	-Introduced and stated clearly	-Introduction only describes what will be done -Thesis is unstated	-Unclear -Reader must "hunt and find" writer's position	-Thesis or purpose, if stated is not tenable
Fulfills assigned task	-Demonstrates *superior* grasp of subject matter -Comprehensive treatment of the question, issue, idea or topic	-Demonstrates *good* grasp of subject matter -Moderate treatment of the question, issue, idea or topic	-Demonstrates *minimal* grasp of subject matter advanced --Adequate treatment of the question, issue, idea or topic	-No demonstration of grasp of subject matter -Fails to answer the question	-Work not relevant to the course or specified assignment
STYLE					
Rules of Style (RoS) *Designated in course syllabus*	-Correct and consistent adherence to RoS with no errors	- Correct and consistent adherence to RoS with few errors	-Inconsistent use of RoS -Minimal errors	-Excessive RoS errors	No adherence to RoS
Terminology	-Uses appropriate language and terminology of the discipline throughout the paper -Uses inclusive language	-Uses appropriate language and terminology of the discipline throughout the paper -Uses inclusive language	-Adequate use of language and terminology with minimal errors	-Inadequate use of language and terminology -Exhibits misunderstanding of terms	-Inappropriate, if any, use of language and terminology -Exhibits misunderstanding of or disregard for terms
Reference/Source Integration	-Conversant with scholarly literature with proper regard of the contexts of the source and author's intent -Integrates sources smoothly -Student's unique voice is heard	-Uses scholarly sources in "prooftexting" fashion without regard for the contexts of the sources and author's intentions	-Merely reports/retells information, facts that are relevant to the thesis	-Superficially identifies sources, information, facts -Inserts extraneous, irrelevant information	-Fails to connect or identify appropriate sources -Contains little if any relevant facts, examples, or details
Succinctness (Readability)	-Understandable to a "learned reader"	-Understandable to a "learned reader"	-Understandable to a "learned reader"	-May be difficult for anyone to read and understand	-Confusing -Verbose and lacks precision
COMPOSITION					
Organization	-Ideas are presented in a unified and orderly sequence - Uses headings to organize the paper and facilitate reading	-Ideas are presented in a unified and orderly sequence - Uses headings to show sections of the paper and facilitate reading	-Organized logically but there are either no headings to guide the reader through the paper or a poor construction of headings and topic sentences	- Ideas are unclear/unfocused - No logical development - No headings or topic sentences	-Unfocused -No logical development -Fails to show any understanding of the issues or events
Grammar and Spelling	-Demonstrates mastery and skill of written communication	-Has minor errors that do not interfere with meaning or argument	-Some errors that interfere with meaning or argument	-Excessive errors -Serious impact on meaning or argument	-Excessive errors render the paper as illegible
Format/Length	-Proper length and number of pages -Sections are appropriately balanced -Free of document formatting errors	-Proper length and number of pages -Sections are appropriately balanced -Minimal document formatting errors	-Acceptable length of pages; exceeds/less than specified number of pages -Sections are slightly unbalanced -Minimal document formatting errors	-Strays considerably from format and size requirements -Lacks proper proportions of sections	-Gross disregard of format and size requirements -Extremely unbalanced; disproportionate sections

Effect of Usage: - The above rubrics provide recommended guidelines for assisting students in preparing scholarly written documents. These rubrics are informational and *are neither a contract nor binding on the School of Divinity. Individual faculty may adjust weighting of criteria or amend any guideline applicable to their course whenever it is deemed appropriate or necessary* prior to a written assignment.

COHERENCE					
Logic	-Arguments and ideas are presented and soundly reasoned -Offers compelling or highly persuasive reasons or examples - Shows cause & effect relationships -Demonstrates connections among key points	-Adheres to basic rules of logic -Offers somewhat persuasive reasons or examples - Shows cause & effect relationships -Demonstrates connections among key points	-Minimal violation of rules of logic -Solely restates examples without persuasive treatment -Minimally shows cause & effect relationships -Shows minimal connections among key points	-Uses fallacious or irrelevant reasoning -Misinterprets or Ignores key points -Exhibits confusion about relationships among key points	-No demonstrated effort to reason -Exhibits close-mindedness -No connection among key points
Critical Thinking	-Thoughtfully wrestles; takes seriously the claims of the author(s) and engages the author(s) around ideas logically rather than by personal bias -Thoughtfully analyzes alternative points of view and contexts -Understands the author's overall context, implications and consequences of the debate	-Competently wrestles; takes seriously the claims of the author(s) and somewhat engages the author(s) around ideas logically rather than by personal bias -Competently analyzes some alternative points of view and contexts -Recognizes the author's context and either the implications or consequences of the debate	-Minimally wrestles; recognizes the claims of the author(s) and minimally engages the author around ideas logically rather than by personal bias -Minimally analyzes some alternative points of view and contexts -States briefly the author's context or implications or consequences of the debate	-Uses personal bias to interpret, ignore or minimize the author(s) claim(s) -Little analysis or evaluation of alternative points of view or contexts -Demonstrates superficial, if any, recognition of the author's context, implications or consequences of the debate.	-No recognition of obvious alternative viewpoints or contexts -No identification or hasty dismissal of alternative viewpoints or contexts -No recognition of author's context, implications or consequences of the debate
CONTENT					
Key Issues	-Identified and prioritized -Relevance is described	-Identified and prioritized -Some relevance described	-Identified and minimally prioritized -Minimal stated relevant	-Little identification and prioritization -Little stated relevance	-No identification and prioritization -No stated relevance; irrelevant
Evidence (Supported)	-Ample supporting material -Clear command of material	-Adequate supporting material -Fair command of material	-Some supporting material -Minimal command of material	-Little or inappropriate supporting material -Little command of material	-Provides no supporting justification, -Makes unwarranted claims -Lacks command of material
Relates to course/program objectives	- Skillful use and application of conceptual frameworks and methodologies presented in the course	Some use or application of relevant frameworks and methodologies	-Occasional use or application of relevant frameworks and methodologies	- No use or proper application of relevant frameworks or methodology	-No recognition of relevant frameworks or methodology
Accuracy	-Information is accurate and complete; adequately supported	-Information is accurate and complete; inadequately supported	-Information is accurate and incomplete; inadequately supported	-Information is incomplete -Information missing or inaccurate	-Information, if provided, is erroneous and not supportable
Analysis	-Sustains insightful, in-depth analysis of specific ideas	-General examination and assessment	-Basic examination and assessment	-Simple restatement	-No recognition of main themes or ideas
Assumptions	-Stated -Identifies most critical ones -Acknowledges other theories or viewpoints (when appropriate)	-Some are stated -Identifies some critical theories or viewpoints	-Somewhat stated -Identifies few if any critical theories or viewpoints	-Barely stated -Identifies few if any critical theories or viewpoints	-No recognition of critical theories or viewpoints
Originality/New ideas	-Demonstrates creative thought -Offers new insight -Offers ideas for improving religious faith and practice	-Some creativity with specific ideas -Offers new ideas with weak rationale	-Ideas presented in generic, vague format -Weak or no rationales	-Few or irrelevant ideas -Uncritical borrowing of ideas -Poorly explained ideas	-Plagiarized
Literature Review	-Paper is of publishable quality: -Succinct synopsis identifying critical background facts -Superior usage of: assigned readings, primary sources, and other scholarly literature and resources	-Summarizes obvious critical background facts -Effective usage of assigned readings and primary sources -Some usage of other scholarly literature and resources	-Minimal command of background facts -Good usage of assigned readings and primary sources -Minimal usage of other scholarly literature and resources	-No command of background facts -Poor usage of assigned readings and primary sources -No usage of other scholarly literature and resources	-No demonstration of familiarity with assigned readings or primary sources