

Anderson University School of Theology

The Literature and History of the Old Testament I (BIST 5110)
Fall 2013

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Office Hours: M W F 9:00 -11:00 am
1:00 - 3:00 pm and by appointment

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Mission Statement of the Anderson University School of Theology:

The mission of Anderson University School of Theology is to form women and men for the ministry of biblical reconciliation.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course studies Genesis through 2 Kings (to the fall of Jerusalem and Exile to Babylon), within the wider context of the peoples, kingdoms, and empires of the Old Testament world. Major topics, such as creation, exodus, covenant, and the rise of the Prophetic Movement, will be explored. Emphasis is given to the understanding of the texts within their historical milieu, while, at the same time, being attentive to contemporary methodologies of biblical interpretation, especially literary approaches. The student will also research and write a major exegesis study of an Old Testament passage. *This course is prerequisite to BIST 5120.*

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- 1) The student will become familiar with the contents of the Old Testament (up until the book of Second Kings). The student will learn about the various types of writings found in the Old Testament and will become knowledgeable about the history and theology of ancient Israel (as assessed through quizzes and exams).
- 2) The student will develop effective skills in reading, thinking and listening by exploring (individually) and discussing (cooperatively) major themes and messages of the Old Testament within its historical and cultural context (as assessed through participation in group discussion, quizzes and in-class writings).
- 3) Through class lectures, readings, writing and discussion, the student will comprehend the significance of the Old Testament in shaping today's societies—religiously, historically, economically, politically and socially (as assessed through participation in group discussion, quizzes, in-class writings and a formal paper).
- 4) The student will develop effective writing skills through both in-class and out of class writing assignments (as assessed through in-class writings and the final draft of the formal paper).
- 5) Through all of the above, the student will develop an appreciation for the Judeo-Christian tradition and its commitment to social justice since ancient times, and to develop and articulate his/her own beliefs and values regarding faith, freedom and personal responsibility toward him/herself and others (as assessed through participation in group discussion and the formal paper).

III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS:

A. Bible: Although you can use the Bible of your preference, I strongly recommend the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). A particularly good one is: Michael D. Coogan, Marc Z. Brettler and Carol A. Newsom, eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

B. Michael Joseph Brown. *What They Don't Tell You: A Survivor's Guide to Biblical Studies*. Louisville, KY: WJKP, 2000. ISBN: 9780664222208.

C. John Drane. *Introducing the Old Testament*. Third Edition. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011. ISBN: 9780800698133.

D. John Kessler. *Old Testament Theology: Divine Call and Human Response*. Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press. ISBN: 978-1-60258-737-3.

E. Kate L. Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. 8th ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-226816-38-8.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Attendance:** I take attendance at every class period.

2. **Weekly quizzes:** each week you will take a time-limited, objective quiz based on that week's assigned biblical, textbook readings, and the lectures. The quiz is published immediately after the end of the class session, and will be available for 48 hours. If not taken by that time, you forfeit the possibility of taking the quiz and will receive 0 points. **These are NOT open book quizzes. You are on your honor to take the quizzes with no books or notes open before you!**

3. **Two tests: a midterm (Oct 24) and a final (Dec. 16).**

4. **One formal writing assignment.** In addition to these preliminary instructions, you will be provided with specific instructions.

- You are expected to write an exegetical paper on a biblical passage, selected by you from the list of passages below.
- Your paper may **not be less than 11 pages nor longer than 12 pages (between 3,700- 4,000 words)**. A proper title page and bibliography are additional.
- Your paper must be double-spaced, and in all formatting must conform to *Turabian*, 8th edition. Relevant sections of *Turabian* have been assigned as readings. Please don't dispense those readings as they will significantly impact your research for this and other courses. There is also an Anderson University School of Theology *Guide to Turabian* posted on <http://www.anderson.edu/sot/resources/> Access this and use it! **This, however, should not substitute for your actual mastery of Turabian.**
 - **Exception:** See "Mechanics," in *A Guide to Writing an Exegesis Paper*.
- Content and progression must conform to the instructions in *A Guide to Writing an Exegesis Paper*, which will be provided for your use. Print it out, read it carefully, and follow it when writing your paper!
- A copy of your paper must be submitted in Microsoft Word format (not in PDF) to the correct folder located in the Moodle section of your course no later than 11:00 pm on November 25. I will not accept papers sent via email. Please don't ask for emails of confirmation. If you upload your paper into the proper Moodle folder, it will be there.
- Typos, incorrect grammatical constructions, incorrect formatting in text body, footnote and bibliographical citations, will significantly depreciate your grade on the paper. I will not return papers for redos. It is incumbent upon the student to comply with the rubric and the formatting requirements found in *Turabian*.
- **You MUST submit your completed paper to the Writing Center in order to gain their feedback.** The Writing Center will generate a report form indicating that you submitted your paper to them. You must make sure they send me the form.
- In addition to the feedback received from the Writing Center, you must send the completed paper to two of your peers who will, then, read the paper and type up one, single-spaced page with comments, and send them back to you. They will, in turn, upload those comments to Moodle. You must revise your paper in view of your peers' comments. When evaluating your paper, I will take into account whether you attended to your peers' observations and the feedback received from the Writing Center.
- The School of Theology believes it to be of high importance that you learn to do competent biblical research and exegesis, and to competently express your results in writing. To that end, *to be considered for a passing grade in the course, you must achieve a grade of C (73%) or better on this exegetical paper.*

Exegetical Paper Passages:

Gen 1:24-31 Gen 2:15-25 Gen 22:1-13 Gen 28:10-22 Gen 33:8-17 Gen 39:1-9, 20-23	Ex 3:1-12 Ex 3:13-22 Ex 15:22-26 Ex 18:13-23 Ex 20:1-17 Ex 23:1-9	Deut 4:1-10 Deut 5:7-21 Deut 8:10-20 Deut 30:11-20	Josh 1:1-9 Josh 24:19-28 Ruth 2:8-16 Ruth 3:6-18 1 Sam 4:1-11 2 Sam 12:1-13
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Policy on Academic Integrity:

1. All students in the School of Theology are required to read Appendix E, "Policy on Academic Integrity," in the Student Handbook (<http://www.anderson.edu/sites/default/files/migrate/sot/about/handbook.pdf> page 43)
2. All students in the School of Theology are required to read Turabian 4.2.3 and 7.9 (including all of its subsections, 7.9.1 through 7.9.4).
3. All students in the School of Theology are required to comply with this Policy on Plagiarism.

Simply put, plagiarism consists of using someone else's words or ideas as if they were your own. If you copy verbatim words from an author, you must put those words within quotation marks (or within a block quotation) and footnote them properly, according to Turabian. Not doing so constitutes plagiarism.

Plagiarism is a very serious issue. It is academic dishonesty; it is stealing intellectual property that belongs to someone else and passing it off as if it were your own. It is incumbent upon you to use sources properly and responsibly, giving credit to the author whose words or ideas you are using.

When you violate this policy even one time in any written assignment you submit, your professor will proceed as follows (reprinted here from Appendix E of the Student Handbook):

Students who are guilty of such academic violations can expect to be penalized. The course instructor shall have the authority to deal with instances of academic dishonesty in whatever way he or she deems appropriate within the following guidelines:

1. The penalty for a first time offense shall be having to rewrite the assignment with a grade no higher than a C.¹
2. In all instances of academic dishonesty, instructors are urged to counsel offenders. Students who, in the judgment of the instructor, have committed an act of academic dishonesty are reported to the Assessment and Nurture Committee of the School of Theology. Following two such reports against a particular student, disciplinary action will be initiated and may lead to dismissal of the student from the School of Theology.²

As Turabian notes in 4.2.3 and 7.9, many instances are "Inadvertent Plagiarism."³ Your professor has the authority to judge whether an instance of plagiarism is inadvertent or intentional. You are advised not to treat this lightly; you should avoid all instances of plagiarism: inadvertent and intentional. Follow Turabian's procedures for avoiding inadvertent plagiarism (4.2.3 and 7.9).

¹ If I detect even one instance of plagiarism, the paper will be returned to you to be corrected. However, in that case the highest possible grade you may receive for a flawless paper will be a C. You may run the risk of obtaining a lower grade and thus failing the course. Don't run that risk. It is your responsibility to make sure the paper is completely free of plagiarism and other errors.

² School of Theology, *Student Handbook* (Anderson: School of Theology, 2013-2014), 43.

³ Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 43.

For further reflections and explications on plagiarism, read Dr. Guy Brewer's paper at <http://www.anderson.edu/sites/default/files/migrate/sot/faculty/brewer-plagiarism.pdf>.

Style Standard:

All written assignments must follow the guidelines found in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 8th Edition. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press, 2013.

Grading the Exegetical Paper:

The exegetical paper will be graded according to the following rubric:

STUDENT NAME:					
ASSESSMENT RUBRIC: Exegetical Paper (200 points possible)					
Performance Levels	Beginning	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary	Score
DIMENSION 1: Style, Form, Grammar, and Length (3700-4000 words): (20 points total)	0-12 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations in 0-69% of the paper.	14 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations in 70-79% of the paper.	16 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations in 80-89% of the paper.	18- 20 points Submits a paper that, in 90-100% of the paper: 1) correctly follows Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations</i> format for in-text citations as needed 2) has been proofread, and employs correct grammar, spelling, style, and length clearly following syllabus requirements.	/20
DIMENSION 2: Sources Used (10 points total)	0-4 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations in 0-69% of the sources.	6 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations in 70-79% of the sources.	8 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations in 80-89% of the sources.	10 points Submits a paper that, per rubric requirements, uses: 1) a <u>substantial</u> number of scholarly sources, including contemporary commentaries and academic journals. 2) sources that meet syllabus criteria for content <i>quality</i> .	/10
DIMENSION 3: Format includes each of seven components (10 points total)	0-4 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations in 0-69% of the sources.	6 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations in 70-79% of the sources.	8 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations in 80-89% of the sources.	10 points 1) Submits a paper that, per rubric requirements, includes each of the seven (7) components, namely, Introduction, Text and Translation, Context, Form and Structure, Commentary Body, Commentary Conclusion, and Application. 2) Each of those sections does what is required (nothing less, nothing more) and stays within the page limit.	/10

DIMENSION 4: Literary Analysis (20 points total)	0-12 points Submits a paper that includes appropriate analysis, per course requirements, of at least 2 of the literary elements listed to the right.	14 points Submits a paper that includes appropriate analysis, per course requirements, of at least 3 of the literary elements listed to the right.	16 points Submits a paper that includes appropriate analysis, per course requirements, of at least 4 of the literary elements listed to the right.	18- 20 points Submits a paper that includes appropriate analysis, per course requirements, of at least 5 of the following literary elements: 1) audience/narrator 2) literary context 3) genre 4) structure 5) key phrases/words 6) key themes 7) setting/time 8) characters 9) intertextuality 10) socio-cultural elements 11) historical-critical elements	/20
DIMENSION 5: Structure Analysis (40 points total)	0-26 points Submits a paper that includes appropriate analysis, per course requirements, of at least 2 of the literary elements listed to the right.	28-30 points Submits a paper that includes appropriate analysis, per course requirements, of at least 3 of the literary elements listed to the right.	32-34 points Submits a paper that includes appropriate analysis, per course requirements, of at least 4 of the literary elements listed to the right.	36- 40 points Submits a paper that includes a structure analysis of the biblical text, which, per course requirements, fulfills all of the following 4 requirements: 1) units are well structured 2) each biblical phrase is included 3) verse divisions by number are included, and proper notation of biblical verses is used. 4) each unit level is used <i>at least</i> twice, e.g.,: I. II. A. B., etc.	/40
DIMENSION 6: Content: (100 points total)	0 – 68 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations with four or more major exceptions.	70-78 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations with three major exceptions.	80-88 points Follows the exemplary performance level expectations with at least two major exceptions.	90-100 points Submits a paper that is aimed toward a critical audience and shows good comprehension, in which arguments support thesis, conclusions follow from claims, and claims are backed up with evidence.	/100
SCORE				Total	/200

Contesting a Grade or Initiating an Appeal:

If a student wants to challenge a grade he or she receives, the student must make the case for a grade change in writing and then submit this written request for re-evaluation to the professor within 30 days of receiving the grade.

This written request must express clearly

- What assignment, project, quiz or test grade the student is contesting.
- Why the student believes the given grade is an inaccurate assessment of the work.
- What specific assets or evidence of performance were overlooked, ignored or discounted by the professor.

This written request for re-evaluation must accompany the document under question.

The professor will read this request and re-evaluate the work within two weeks and provide a written response to the student.

Warning: This re-evaluation of the work may result in a grade increase or a grade decrease. (In other words, the final score/grade could go up or it could go down as a consequence of the professor's re-evaluation.)

If this process fails to resolve the student's conflict with the grade earned, then the student should follow the procedures for a formal appeal as described in the School of Theology Catalog.

V. COURSE EVALUATION:

- Quizzes: (13 x 10 points) 130 points
- Tests (2 x 100 points) 200 points
- Exegetical paper 200 points

Grades will be calculated according to the following percentages:

A 93-100%	B ⁺ 87-89%	C ⁺ 77-79%	D ⁺ 67-69%	F 0-59%
A ⁻ 90-92%	B 83-86%	C 73-76%	D 62-66%	
	B ⁻ 80-82%	C ⁻ 70-72%	D ⁻ 60-61%	

VI. COURSE POLICIES:

1. Careful, thoughtful reading of all assignments prior to the class for which they are assigned. Each week's assignments will consist of readings from the Bible, the textbooks and/or readings posted on the AU Nicholson Library e-reserves. You are expected to actively engage the texts and to be able to discern key themes and viewpoints of the various writers. Material from the reading assignments will not necessarily be covered in class. It is essential that you read the material. Learning will be facilitated through lectures, class discussion, small group interaction, and audio-visual presentations.

2. Punctual attendance and active participation in all class sessions.

Credit for attendance requires the following:

- Respectful behavior and proper classroom decorum at all times
- Respectful behavior includes but is not limited to:
 - No improper use of computer (see below)
 - No cell phone use in class
 - No text messaging in class
 - No private discussions during class

If you are engaged in any of the misconducts listed above, you will be counted as absent!

If you need to miss class due to illness or emergency, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor and to gather any missed information from another student. *More than three absences will significantly affect your grade.* You should assume a loss of five points for every absence.

Credit for Participation requires the following:

Taking notes during lectures. You may use your computer in class *for the purpose of taking notes.* However, be aware that surfing the net, checking email, and any other non-class related computer use during class is not only rude and distracting to others but may also significantly affect your performance in this course.

Thoughtful contributions to class discussion. Ability to thoughtfully complete short unannounced in-class writing assignments related to the readings, lectures and class discussion. These may occur several times throughout the semester.

3. Deadlines for Quizzes, Exams, and the Exegetical Paper.

If you don't take a quiz or an exam within the allotted timeframe, you won't be given another opportunity to take the quiz or exam unless you couldn't take the quiz or exam due to a medical condition, and you have a valid doctor's letter. Please don't insist.

If the exegetical paper is submitted after 11:00 pm on November 25, it will be considered a late submission, and will be reduced incrementally a whole letter grade per day.

University and Departmental Policies:

All University and School of Theology policies affecting student work, appeals, and grievances, as outlined in the School of Theology Catalog will apply, unless otherwise indicated in this syllabus.

VII. COURSE CALENDAR:

“Course schedule, topics, evaluation and assignments may be changed at the instructor’s discretion.”

Week 1 (Sept. 5): Syllabus Presentation and Introductions to one another
Introduction to the Course:

Who or What is God?
History of Israel as a Journey – Theirs and Ours

Read:

Drane -- chapter 9
Brown – chapter 1

Week 2 (Sept. 12): Introduction to the Old Testament texts

Books of the Bible and types of literature
Jewish and Christian canons
Locating texts within the larger text
Geographical area of the Ancient Near East
Time Frame of the Old Testament and designations of the periods

Read:

Drane -- chapter 1
Borowski—Daily Life, “The Land and Its People”
Chart on Old Testament canons
Brown -- pp.41-60
Turabian, ch. 1 (pp. 5-11)
Exegetical Paper Passage selection due Sept 15

Week 3 (Sept. 19): Primordial History and universal questions

Read:

Gen 1-3
Drane -- chapter 10; read also article “The Pentateuch,” p. 174-177
Kessler -- pp.109-144
Excerpt from Enuma Elish
Brown -- pp. 63-79
Turabian -- chapters 2-3 (pp. 12-36)

Week 4 (Sept. 26): Good, evil and frameworks for justice

Read:

Gen 6-11
Drane -- pp. 256-258 (the flood story); 267-277
Epic of Gilgamesh
Brown -- pp.79-95
Turabian -- chapters 4-5 (pp. 37-62)

Week 5 (Oct. 3): Beginning the journey / Israel’s History: Who Am I? What is my relationship with God?

Covenant beginnings – being chosen – blessing and responsibility

Read:

Gen 12 & Gen 15-35
Drane -- chapter 2
Kessler -- pp.175-194
Brown -- pp.95-108
Turabian -- chapters 6-7 (pp. 63-83)

Week 6 (Oct. 10): What types are among the chosen? (Joseph, Judah, Tamar, Reuben, little slave girl . . .)

Read:

Gen 37-50

As you read this text answer the following question: "Is Joseph an admirable character or not?"

You must be prepared to discuss both sides of the question, though on the day of class, you will get to defend just one side.

Kessler -- pp.275-296

Brown -- pp.109-129

Turabian -- chapters 9-11 (pp. 100-121)

Week 7 (Oct. 17): Toward the Promised Land -- Oppressed but God Delivers and shows the people how to live (Moses, Joshua, Rahab . . . giving of the Law)

Read:

Ex 1-19

Drane -- chapter 3

Turabian -- chapters 21, 24, 25 (pp.293-306; 330-357)

Exegetical paper is due to your peers.

Week 8 (Oct. 24): The Law as a life-structuring gift from God

Read:

Ex 20-23; Lev 17-26; Deut 5-10, 12-30

Drane -- "Discovering God's will in the Law" (pp. 278-288)

Excerpt from Code of Hammurabi

Excerpt from Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon

Kessler -- pp.195-212; 252-260; 267-274

Test #1

Week 9 (Oct. 31): Journey/Life as a Repetitive Cycle -- Falling away from God/Returning to God

Falling away/shaky alliances/disintegration (Judges)

Read:

Joshua 1-2, 6, 18, 24; Judges 4-5; 13-16; 19-21

Kessler -- pp.212-224

Brown -- pp.131-156

In this class, among other things, we will discuss the Bible's view on the conquest of Canaan. For that we'll divide the class into two groups: Group A will read Joshua 1-12, and Group B will read Judges 1-12. Each group should come prepared to discuss what the Bible says about the conquest of Canaan.

Week 10 (Nov. 7): Tribal Confederacy to Monarchy: Saul, David and Solomon

Individual Portrait of Falling away and Returning (David and Family; Solomon and division of the Kingdom)

Read:

1 Sam 1-11; 15-19; 26-31

2 Sam 1-7; 11-18; 21-24

Drane -- chapter 4

Kessler -- pp.296-305; 312-317

Exegetical paper is due back from your peers.

Week 11 (Nov. 14): Aftermath of Solomon's life and actions

Read:

Pr 1-9, 22-24, 30-31
Job 1-9, 27-29, 38-42
Drane -- pp. 95-105
Kessler -- pp.447-505

Week 12 (Nov. 21): Falling away and the promise of Restoration (Focus on Northern Kingdom)

Read:

1 Kings 2-6 & 11; 12-21
Drane -- chapter 5
Kessler -- pp.225-247

Exegetical paper is due to the instructor on Monday, November 25. Upload it to Moodle.

Week 13 (Dec. 5): Falling away and the promise of Restoration (Focus on Southern Kingdom)

Read:

2 Kings 1-4, 17-25
Drane -- chapter 6 (just until p. 149)
Kessler – chapters 1-2

Week 14 (Dec. 12): Hebrew Short Story

Read:

Ruth, Esther, (Judith, Tobit)
Drane -- chapter 8 (esp. p. 204ff.)
Turabian -- chapters 12 and 14 (pp.122-3; 131-32)
Kessler – chapter 3

Week 15: Worshipping a Holy God

Read:

Psalms 1, 19, 45-46, 82, 90, 95, 114, 136-137 145-150.
Drane -- chapter 12
Kessler -- pp. 381-445

Dec. 16: Final Exam

Appendix One
Guidelines for Exegesis Papers

If you have never written an exegesis paper, you can find instructions for writing one in either of the following sources:

1. *New Testament Story: An Introduction*. David L. Barr. 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Pub. Co., 1995. Appendix, pp. 480-83. Though primarily geared for writing papers in the NT, the suggestions can be applied to research in the OT as well. There are two copies of this appendix on Reserve in the library.
2. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginners Handbook*. Revised Ed. John H. Hayes and Carl R. Holladay. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987.

General Principle:

An exegesis paper is designed to be an exercise in interpretation of the biblical text. It is not designed to be a presentation of one's theological beliefs or mere opinions. The student will let the text speak, as it were, with its own voice. While following the general principles of biblical interpretation, be reminded that one's analysis has to engage, and be in conversation with, other interpreters. Moreover, your conclusions will only be valid insofar as you will be able to back them up. That means that your paper ought to show a judicious effort at interpretation by which you read the text and try, to the best of your ability, to extricate its meaning, while remaining in conversation with other scholars.

In order to follow the procedure described above, you ought to consult sources, and your paper ought to be fully documented. Follow Turabian's Manual of Style (7th edition). You may want to consult this website for reference: <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

After reading carefully the biblical text, be sure to read other scholarly sources, e.g., academic journals and commentaries. Finally, while you will be in conversation with other interpreters, remember that the paper is your interpretation of the text. So, your conclusions ought to reflect your engagement with the text.

Apart from following the guidelines for writing exegesis papers, students are expected to follow the guidelines and standards for written assignments that follow.

Mechanics:

Each paper should meet college level standards of scholarship and expression. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and neatness will all be taken into account. Proofread and read papers out loud before submitting them. If you need help with writing, consult the Writing Center located in the upper level of the library. Don't procrastinate, especially if you need to work with the Writing Center.

Appendix Two
Evaluation for all Papers

A: This is an excellent, exceptional essay. It is soundly organized and contains clearly developed paragraphs. The main idea is sharply focused and thoughtfully fulfills or exceeds the assignment. The writing contains illuminating, original insights; assertions are supported by appropriate examples and rich details. It may contain a few (4-6) minor errors (typos, misspelled words, etc.) and no more than one major grammatical or mechanical error (comma splice, subject-verb agreement, etc.).

B: An essay earning this grade demonstrates good writing and clear ideas. Its thesis may not be as focused or as well developed as it could be. This essay may be flawed by some stylistic and/or organizational problems. Or, it may be well organized and fairly sophisticated at the sentence level but offers fewer insights than an A essay. It may contain some (7-10) distracting minor errors and not more than three major grammatical or mechanical errors.

C: Though this essay may exhibit some positive attributes (such as thoughtful consideration of assignment/topic), **it may be flawed by a lack of adequate development.** Its main idea may be poorly focused or inappropriate. Main points may be obscured by unclear or inappropriate writing, or it may present clear and competent writing but convey only superficial or uninspired ideas. This essay may contain many (10-15) mechanical and grammatical errors, both major and minor in scope.

D: This is a weak paper that is poorly written throughout. The thesis lacks focus or may be difficult to discern; its main points are totally unsupported and/or exceedingly superficial. Paragraphs lack both organization and cohesion. It contains numerous (over 15) major grammatical and mechanical errors. The student writer should rewrite this essay after a conference with the instructor and appointments in the Writing Center.

F: Failing most of the assignment/course objectives, this essay is unacceptable as college-level writing. It is full of major grammatical and mechanical errors. Its ideas are presented randomly without support and/or logic. The student needs tutoring from the Writing Center and the Academic Support and Testing Center.

(Adapted from the College Essay Scoring Rubric, Riverside Publishing Company, 1993.)