**Columbia College**

**Argumentative Essay Marking Rubric**

Revised Jan. 2012

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| **Student’s Name** |  | **Course Code** |  | **Date** |  | **Facilitator/Evaluator’s Name** |

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|  | **A** | **B** | **C-D** | **F** |
|  | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2-0** |
| **Thesis** | * Easily identifiable, believable, original, well-developed, clear thesis that states a definite point to be argued. | * Good thesis, but slightly unclear in parts. Or, while not incorrect, lacking in originality or insight. | * Promising thesis is somewhat unclear or contains vague terms. Or, largely unoriginal, or offering relatively little that is unique or new. | * Thesis is difficult to identify at all. May be restatement of an obvious point. * Provides little basis for a clear argument to be developed or structure to be devised |
| **Structure**  **of the essay** | * Overall structure of essay is clear and excellent organization is evident to strategically argue the point of view. * Opening paragraph provides appropriate and thorough background for the thesis. * Excellent transitions from point to point. * Paragraphs support solid topic sentences and contain points relevant to the topic. * Conclusion is strong and clearly brings closure to the argument. | * Generally, structure is clear and appropriate, though may ramble on in parts, or be too brief on one or two points. * Opening paragraph provides sufficient background for the thesis. * May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs either lacking clear topic sentences, or with two or more topics combined together. * Conclusion is evident and brings closure to the argument. | * Generally, there is evidence of a structure which is at times unclear. * Opening paragraph has the beginnings of good information. * Ideas may at times wander or jump around. * Some transitions. * Some paragraphs lack an identifiable topic sentence. * Beginning of a conclusion is evident. | * Organization is unclear because thesis is weak or not defined. * Introduction lacks sufficient information to support the thesis. * Transitions confusing and unclear. * Few clear topic sentences. * Conclusion has not been developed. |

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|  | **A** | **B** | **C-D** | **F** |
|  | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2-0** |
| **Use of Evidence** | * Primary source information and/or quality secondary source information used to support every point with at least one example. * Examples support topic and fit within each paragraph. * Smooth integration of quoted material into sentence. | * Examples used to support most points; generally quality sources (primary or secondary), though quality varies. * Examples are usually provided to support points. * Quotes and evidence generally integrated well into sentences. | * Examples used to support some points. * Some points lack supporting evidence or examples. * Quotes and evidence are evident, but at times inconsistently integrated into sentences and structure. | * Very few or very weak examples. * General failure to support statements, or evidence given does not support the statement, because it is low-quality or irrelevant. * Quotes and evidence not integrated into sentences. |
| **Analysis** | * Clearly relates evidence to topic sentences and to larger thesis. * Analysis is fresh and exciting, posing new ways to think about the material and to make connections among different sources. | * Evidence often relates to topic of paragraph and to larger thesis, though some connections are not clear. | * Quotes and evidence are evident, but at times are not followed by the author’s analysis, and/or lack an explanation of how they relate to the paragraph topics and the larger thesis as a whole | * Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to the central thesis and arguments of the paper. |
| **Logic and Argumentation** | * All ideas in the paper flow logically; the arguments are identifiable, reasonable, and supported by evidence. * Anticipates and successfully refutes/disproves objections or counter-arguments * Makes original connections to outside material (whether from the class, other classes, or independent research) that illuminates the thesis and its constituent parts. | * Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. * Identifies some counterarguments, but these are addressed unevenly. * Some insightful connections made. | * Argument is present, but may at times be inconsistent in presentation. * Logic at times fails, or argument may be unclear. * Some counter-arguments are identified, but this area needs more development. | * Ideas do not flow well. * Simplistic view of topic. * Faulty logic. * No effort to address possible alternative views. |

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|  | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2-0** |
| **Mechanics, Grammar, Professional Format** | * Mainly error free. * Uses APA citation correctly. * Meets and exceeds all requirements for an excellent academic response. * Meets and exceeds all requirements of the assignment. | * A few minor errors in usage, grammar, or mechanics. * Generally uses APA citation correctly. * Meets requirements for a well written academic response. * Meets requirements of the assignment. | * Some errors in usage, grammar, and mechanics, beginning to interfere with the readability and meaning of the paper. * Uses APA citation inconsistently and with some errors. * Meets some requirements for an acceptable academic response. * Meets some of the requirements of the assignment. | * Numerous errors in usage, grammar, and mechanics, affecting the readability and meaning of the paper. * Many errors in APA citation, demonstrating lack of citation knowledge. * Does not meet enough requirements for an acceptable academic response. * Does not meet enough requirements to address assignment. |

**Plagiarism: A “0” grade will be given to a paper where significant sections of the paper were copied from other, unattributed sources.**

**Total Score out of 30:**

**Facilitator/Evaluator’s Comments:**