**MCS2620F**
**Introduction to Gallery, Museum and Curatorial Studies**

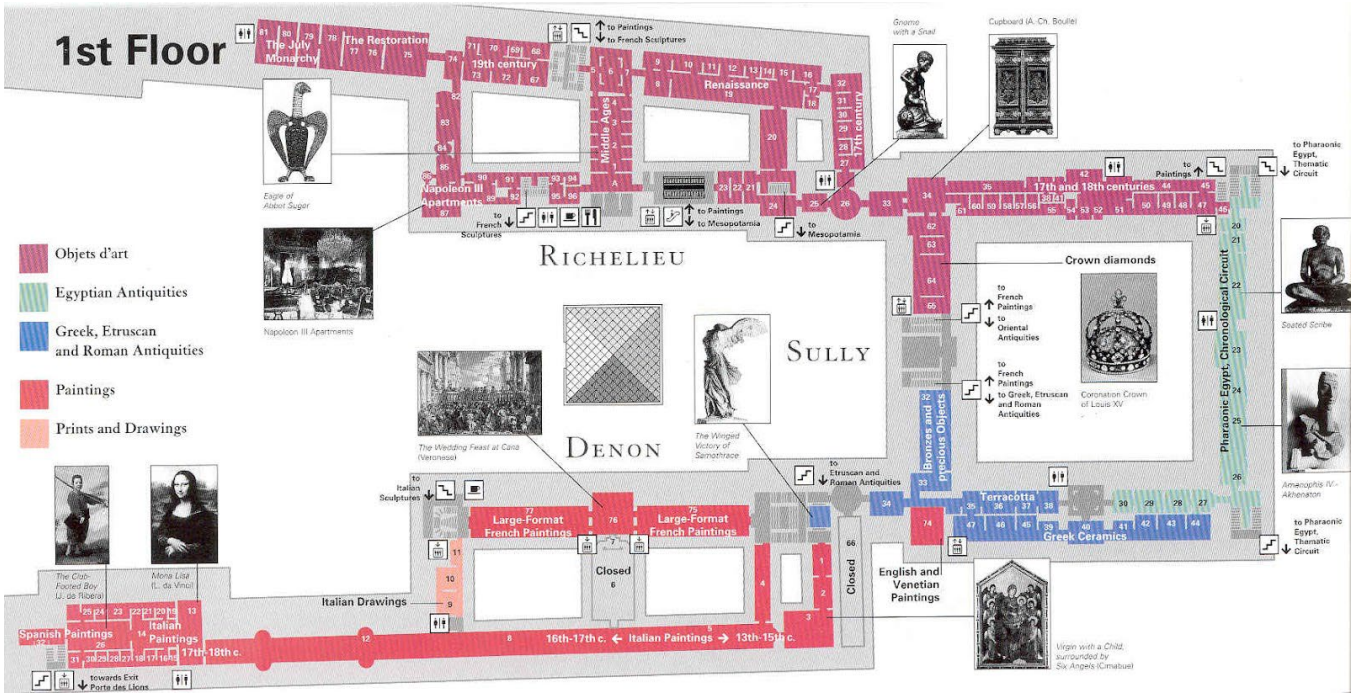


image: *Floorplan of the first floor of the Louvre Museum*, Creative Commons license.

**Course Description and Objectives:**

This class surveys the history and development of collecting, storage, and display practices in museums and art galleries. Students will learn about museums large and small, in North America and globally, with a focus on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The emphasis is on collections management: how are objects chosen for museum collections? How they are maintained in storage? And how are they organized into exhibitions? Such questions will be asked as a part of class units querying whether museums even need objects anymore, and introducing students to concepts of tangible and intangible heritage. Students will learn about how museums interact with their audiences, with an emphasis on labelling, wayfinding, accessibility, and exhibition design. We will also cover fundraising and grant writing. Dealing with disasters (including natural disasters and theft) will lead to discussions of how to protect collections in a changing world. Students will also learn about topics of great current importance including how museums can become more sustainable and conduct carbon audits, how museums can respond to UNDRIP and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and how museums can become more inclusive and equitable. The course is organized thematically, and students will be introduced to different kinds of museums, collections, and archives through case studies, debates, and problem solving. The class moves from critiquing and thinking about already existing museums, collections, and exhibitions to putting into practice what students have learned through short assignments assembled into a portfolio and an online exhibition.

*****all assignments must be handed in prior to the start of the class in which they are due. Please follow instructions on each assignment on how to hand it in. NO ASSIGNMENTS HANDED IN OVER EMAIL WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

**Required Texts:**

All course readings are available on Owl. It is the student's responsibility to let the professor know in advance if they have any trouble downloading the readings.

**Assignment Breakdown:**
**Exhibition Proposal 5% due September 28**
**Field Trip Assignment 10% due November 16**
**Portfolio 45% due October 19 and December 7**
**Final Exhibition 30% due November 23 and December 7**
**Participation and Engagement 10%**

**Assignment Descriptions:**

**MORE DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH ASSIGNMENT CAN BE FOUND ON OWL.**

**Exhibition Proposal**
Students will craft a proposal for an art exhibition that will be held in the (imaginary) Emerging Curators gallery at the Art Gallery of Ontario OR for a historical artefact exhibition at Museum London. The proposal includes a short overview of the exhibition and an initial list of 8-20 artworks and objects that will be included in the show. The exhibition proposed will form the basis for the final exhibition project. Guidelines can be found in the assignment on OWL.
**Due: September 28**

**Field Trip Assignment**
This is a self-guided assignment of the online or in-person exhibition of the student's choice. The exhibition review emphasizes the issues covered in the class (lighting, accessibility, sustainability, inclusivity, wayfinding etc.) over exhibition content. Guidelines can be found in the assignment on OWL.
**Due: October 19**

**Final Exhibition Assignment**
Using Artsteps or Sketchup (if you already have experience), students will expand their exhibition proposals by creating a three-dimensional virtual space for their exhibition. The assignment will also include other exhibition components such as a final budget, a loan agreement, examples of labels and didactics, a short catalogue essay (1000-1500 words), an accessibility plan, and examples of programming. Time will be dedicated in class to learning and problem solving Artsteps, as well as to peer-review and sharing of exhibition ideas. At least two components of the exhibition are due November 23. The rest of the assignment is due December 7. The student can decide which components to hand in when.
**Due: November 23 and December 7**

**Portfolio**
The portfolio is the major assignment in this class, and comprises the following responses, each of which corresponds to one or more classes. In many cases, responses will be started during class time and finished outside of class time. Most of the responses are short, and each is worth 1-5% of the overall portfolio grade (see breakdown of grades in OWL):

1. A reading, presentations, and response journal (most weeks)
2. Examples of tangible and intangible heritage (September 21)
3. A response to the *Moved to Action* report (September 21)

4. Student-generated and AI-assisted labels and didactics (September 28)
5. A wayfinding assignment (September 28)
6. An overview of accessibility for a museum of the student's choice (October 5)
7. A carbon calculation for an exhibition at Museum London or in the artLAB (October 12)
   *At least 4 portfolio responses due October 19*
8. A risk assessment plan for 1 of 3 museums/case studies (October 19)
9. A creative conservation assignment (November 16)
10. A short position paper on the storage and display of culturally sensitive objects and ancient human remains in museums (November 23).
11. A fundraising plan (November 30)

Students must hand in a minimum of 4 portfolio assignments on October 19 (up to 6, plus the reading responses to date, can be submitted if the student wishes to). The remainder of the portfolio assignments must be submitted December 7. The top three grades from the October 19 submission are set, but all other pre-October 19 portfolio assignments can be re-submitted. Post-October 19 responses cannot be re-submitted.
**Due October 19 and December 7**

**Participation**
Students will be graded on attendance and on participation in class discussions and other activities. See attendance policy below in the Policies section. Attendance is important, but engagement is even more important. For an excellent participation grade, show me that you have done the reading, and that you are engaged with the discussions. Active listening and participation in breakout group work is also evidence of participation.

**Learning Outcomes, Museum Studies**

*The Readings and lectures*

- Students will develop a greater understanding of issues of significance to the museum field.
- Students will be given a taste of many potential career paths in the museums field, including: conservation, fundraising and promotions, exhibition design, insurance and law, grant writing and arts administration, collections management.

*Assignments*

- Students will be introduced to the process of designing and mounting a public exhibition.
- Students will have the opportunity to hone their critical thinking and writing skills.
- Through the portfolio assignment, students will gain hands-on experience of museum and collections management that corresponds to real world scenarios.
- Students will also learn about budgeting, grant writing, accessibility, exhibition installation etc.
- Students will become familiar with the Act for Ontarians with Disabilities
- Students will learn about disaster planning and risk management for museums.
- Students will learn time management skills that echo real life museum employment.
- Students will gain skills currently in high demands by museums, including the ability to conduct carbon calculations and understanding of how UNDRIP and the TRC apply to museums.
- Students will learn that equity and inclusivity are key parts of museum operations.

*Field Trips and Classroom Visits*

- Field trips and classroom visits will introduce students to professionals in the fields of art, art history, and museum studies.
- Students will have the opportunity to experience current (online) exhibitions.
- These events are professional development opportunities, which will give students the opportunity to learn more about the arts and culture sector.
- These events give students a forum to ask professionals career-related questions, offering the potential for ongoing mentorship.
- Students will be able to put what they have learned about accessibility, sustainability, and inclusivity, into action.

*Overall*

- Students will acquire familiarity with different methodologies in museum studies.
- Students will develop a critical understanding of current principles, practice, and contemporary debates in Museum Studies.
- Students will develop an understanding of how objects are collected and accessioned by museums, how and why they are displayed, and how and why they are held in storage.
- Students will gain transferable skills necessary for a curatorial or museum career.

**Western University**
**Visual Arts Department**

**POLICIES**

**Submission of assignments:**
All assignments should be submitted through the Assignments feature on OWL unless otherwise noted directly on the assignment.

**Student Conduct:**
All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large. https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf

**Late Policy**
Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Not including the exceptions outlined below, assignments are considered late after the start of class the day they are due. Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, or participation components and/or assignments should see Academic Consideration policies below.

*All assignments in this class can be up to 48 hours late with no penalty. After 48 hours, all assignments except those noted below will be docked 2%/day for the first 5 days, and 5%/day thereafter, inclusive of weekends.*

*The final portfolio and final exhibition assignments (both due December 7) can be handed in up to 5 days late with no academic penalty, BUT students should be aware that grades are submitted 7 days after the end of class. At that point, late assignments cannot be accepted without accommodation arranged through the student's home faculty/Academic Counselling.*

**Academic Consideration**:

*The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by extenuating circumstances, including short-term illness or injury. Reasonable academic consideration is a cooperative process between the University, the student, and academic staff. All participants in the process must act in good faith, and fulfil their respective obligations, if it is to succeed.*

*Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstance) sufficiently significant as to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements, may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:*

*(i) Submitting a Self-Reported Absence form, provided that the conditions for submission are met;*

*(ii) For medical absences, submitting a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner, in order to be eligible for Academic Consideration; or*

*(iii) For non-medical absences, submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to Academic Counselling in their Faculty of registration, in order to be eligible for academic consideration.*

*Students seeking academic consideration:*

- *Are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying handing in work;*
- *Are encouraged to make appropriate decisions, based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (e.g., upset stomach) or upsets (e.g., argument with a friend) are not normally an appropriate basis for a self-reported absence;*
- ***Must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence;*
- ***Are advised that all necessary documentation, forms, etc. are to be submitted to academic counselling within two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities***

*Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance (48 hours or less) that is sufficiently severe as to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements (e.g., attending lectures or labs, writing tests or midterm exams, completing and submitting assignments, participating in presentations) should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours or less. The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances:*

a. *Students will be allowed a maximum of two self-reported absences between September and April, and one self-reported absence between May and August;*
b. *The duration of the excused absence will be for a maximum of 48 hours from the time the Self-Reported Absence form is completed through the online portal, or from 8:30am the following morning if the form is submitted after 4:30pm;*
c. *The duration of the excused absence will terminate prior to the end of the 48 hour period, should the student undertake significant academic responsibilities (e.g., write a test, submit a paper) during that time;*
d. *The duration of an excused absence will terminate at 8:30am on the day following the last day of classes each semester, regardless of how many days of absence have elapsed;*
e. *Self-reported absences will not be allowed for scheduled final examinations; for midterm examinations scheduled during the December examination period; or for final lab examinations*

*f. Self-reporting may not be used for assessments (e.g., midterm exams, tests, reports, presentations, or essays) worth more than 30% of any given course;*

*g. Students must be in touch with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the Self-Reported Absence form, to clarify how they will be expected to fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed*

**AI**

In this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes with the exception of the label assignment for the portfolio, which specifically uses ChatGPT. AI tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploration, however students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding plagiarism. **Assignments should reflect the students own thoughts and independent written work.** By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and ethical learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allows them to produce original written contributions. **Students wanting to use AI for editing purposes (i.e. translation or grammar) may be allowed to do so BUT MUST consult with the professor first.**

**Prerequisites:**

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism, which may be defined as "The act or an instance of copying or stealing another's words or ideas and attributing them as one's own," will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from Black's Law Dictionary, 1999, 7th ed., p. 1170). (Refer to http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_189 with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.) This includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or Aural Plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism – work submitted for assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to similar academic penalties as those identified in Western's Academic Calendar.

If you have doubts about how and when to cite sources, consult the *Chicago Manual of Style* guide on OWL in the Resources section, or talk to me or your TA before the assignment due date. All course work must be completed specifically for this course. Plagiarism and cheating are very serious academic offences and they will be dealt with strictly. Submitting the same work for credit in more than one course is considered cheating.

Plagiarism includes:

1. Quoting verbatim or almost verbatim from any source, including all electronic sources, without acknowledgement;
2. Adopting someone else's line of thought, argument, or supporting evidence without acknowledgement;

3. Submitting someone else's work, in any form, without acknowledgement;
4. Knowingly representing as one's own an idea of another.
5. Handing in the same work for more than one class.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism-detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

**Emails**

- Assignments will not be accepted by email.
- Please clearly identify yourself and the course in any emails.
- Please expect up to 48 hours for email responses, exclusive of weekends.
- Due to privacy regulations, grades cannot be discussed over email.
- Communications on OWL are not always monitored. If you post a question in the forum, for example, it may not be seen for some time.

**Support Services**:

*There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:*

1. *Student Development Centre* -- http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/
2. *Student Health* -- *http://www.shs.uwo.ca/student/studenthealthservices.html*
3. *Registrar's Office* -- *http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/*
4. *Ombuds Office* -- *http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/*
5. *Mental Health* -- https://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

**Health and Wellness**:

*Western offers a variety of counselling services and several mental health resources for students. If you or a friend are feeling overwhelmed, confused or unsure of your mental health state, please don't ignore it. There are steps you can take to help yourself or help others. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help engage in healthy living while pursuing your degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Further information regarding health and wellness-related services available to students may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/.*

*If you are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health Support at Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.*

**Accommodation**

Academic Accommodation: For Western's complete Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities see https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_disabilities.pdf. The policy states, "In its efforts to accommodate disabilities appropriately, the approach adopted by the University is collaborative, involving the student requesting the accommodation, the instructor, department (or school or program where applicable), and/or Faculty which provides the accommodation, and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in the Student Development Centre which coordinates the request for and provision of accommodation."

**Normal Building Access (September 1st to April 30th) (Subject to change)**:

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:00pm each night Monday to Friday. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00pm-5:00pm unless otherwise

posted; access by side entrances only. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm and 5:00pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

For the 2020-2021 academic year the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be available by card access only for students who have in-person classes in the building.

**Permission re: Promotion:**
You grant permission for Western University to reproduce your name, information describing your artwork, representations of your work and any other information you have provided for the purpose of display, promotion and publicity either now or in the future.

By installing your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you grant Western University an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free world-wide licence to photograph your artwork and use such photograph(s) for the promotion of your artwork and/or Western University, including, without limitation, advertising, display, editorial, packaging, promotion, television, social media, the Department of Visual Arts website, flickr, Twitter, Instagram etc.). Students wishing to not have their work photographed should not exhibit it in the Visual Arts Centre, Artlab Gallery or Cohen Commons. As the area is open to the public, students, faculty, staff and other visitors will not be prohibited from photographing your artwork while on exhibit at the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.

You otherwise retain all ownership in your artwork.

**Artwork Installation Liability Release:**
You understand that the area where your artwork will be hanging or displayed is unsupervised and is in a part of the building that may be open to the public, day and evening, whether or not the building is open. Western University accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of, artwork at any time while on display or while being transported to or from the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre. By displaying your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you accept all risk of loss or damage to your artwork. Western University does not provide insurance for the artwork on exhibition. **If you wish to insure artwork, it is your responsibility to do so.**

**Removal:**
Western University reserves the right to dispose of artwork not picked up by April 15th of each year.

**Please remember:**
One of the most important resources for course counselling, special permissions, course changes, grade appeals, etc., is the Undergraduate Chair of Visual Arts, Professor Tricia Johnson (vaugc@uwo.ca). Please note, however, that should you encounter any serious difficulties due to illness, family emergency, etc., you should consult the Academic Counselor for your Faculty. Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the academic counselors in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities located in University College Room 2230.

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; www.sdc.uwo.ca) offers a wide range of useful services including workshops on learning skills, career and employment services, and an effective writing program, amongst many more.

The D.B. Weldon Library offers orientation tours from the first week of classes until Thanksgiving, where you will get acquainted with the numerous research resources available. As well, the University libraries have an extremely useful website where you can search the library system, the databases, view your circulation record, renew materials, access your UWO e-mail account, and much more. Check it out at: www.lib.uwo.ca.

Financial Aid Services is your main source of information for OSAP, bursaries, loans, scholarships, and the work-study program which offer part-time positions on campus for Western students. Tel: 519-661-2100; e-mail finaid@uwo.ca; or check out their website at http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student_finances/financial_counselling.html

**Academic Sanctions:**
In instances of non-payment of prescribed tuition and other fees, the University shall seal the academic record. When an academic record is sealed, the student will not be able to: a) view grades; b) register in future courses; c) receive transcripts or a degree diploma; d) obtain admission or readmission.

The above prohibitions shall be in force until such time as indebtedness to the University, including payment of fee for removal of the seal, has been cleared to the satisfaction of the University http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&Keywords=academic%20sanctions&SubHeadingID=169&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_169

**Dropping the class**
November 13, 2023 is the last day to drop a half semester course without academic penalty.

**Electronic Devices**
You may use a computer in class to take notes. All other activities (e.g. checking email or social media sites, etc.) are strongly discouraged, especially as this is distracting to others. Students should turn off all cell phones while in the classroom.

***Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.***

**Gender Neutral Bathrooms**
There are two gender neutral bathrooms in the JLVAC. One is located in the Artlab and is open only during Artlab hours. A second single stall gender neutral bathroom can be found on the third floor of the JLVAC. *Please contact the Media Lab Technician, Jennifer Slauenwhite (jslauen@uwo.ca), for card access to the elevator and stairs if you are in need of the 3rd floor gender neutral/accessible washroom for the academic year.*

**STATEMENT ON GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, here. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

**Names and Pronouns**
I will happily use your preferred name and pronoun. This includes names that are different from those on your academic file. Please let me know during/after class or during office hours or by email if I have made a mistake.

**Absences on Religious Holy Days**
For purposes of this policy "the University has approved a list of dates which are recognized religious holidays which require members of those religions to be absent from the University; this list is updated annually and is available at departmental, Deans' and Faculty advising Offices." Within reason, I am willing to consult on accommodation for holidays/ceremony days not covered by Western's Policy.

**VISUAL ARTS Undergraduate Grading Guidelines - Art History**
These guidelines are benchmarks that are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. For example, grades in first year courses are generally lower than in fourth year.

**90-100 (Outstanding, A+)**
The writing shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background research is exemplary. Regarding research, all major secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**80-89 (Excellent, A)**
The writing shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Writing is probing through the use of comments and/or questions, and is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing immediately engages the reader. Mastery of complex materials and ideas is demonstrated. The writing is of appropriate length, and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are meaningful and not simplistic. Regarding research, a majority of the secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**75-79 (Very Good, B+)**
The writing shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Written claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The work is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. Written analysis is organized around focal points and the development of the argument is easily followed. The writer demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material. Regarding research, a representative selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**70-74 (Good, B)**
The writing shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Written claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The work is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. Written analysis is organized around focal points. The text is generally well written and well argued. Regarding research, a somewhat limited selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**60-69 (Competent, C)**
The writing demonstrates adequate engagement with the topic. The writing is on topic and is a reasonable response to material covered in the course, but goes no further. Written facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the text. Regarding research, an insufficient number secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted but proper citation has been used.

**50-59 (Marginal, D)**
The writing shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The writing is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Written facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit

reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the text. Regarding research, few secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted; proper citation may or may not have been used.

**Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)**
The writing demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. Written material is disorganized and unintelligible. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Regarding research, secondary sources pertaining to the topic have not been consulted and proper citation has not been used.