



HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

5732 Foundations of Counseling

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: An exploration of the history and philosophy of counseling, including marriage and family therapy along with professional roles, organizations, credentialing and licensing, accreditation standards and practices, and relationships with other human service providers. Technological competence, computer literacy, and APA writing standards are emphasized. Includes an overview of major counseling theories. Must be taken in the first year of Master of Arts in Counseling course work.

Instructor:

John F. Kennedy, Ph.D., LMFT, LPC-MHSP, NCC
1000 Cherry Road
Memphis, TN 38117

Semester: Fall 2011(Aug 18th – Dec 8th)

Format: Blended (On-campus/online)

Day(s) Class Meets: Thursday (in Library)

Time Class Meets: 8:00 A.M.–10:55 A.M.

Office Location: Ijams Administration Building, Room 226

Office Hours: Mon 1-5, Tue 8-11, Thurs 1-5 (please schedule appointments)

Office Phone: (901) 432-7715

Email: jfkennedy@hst.edu

Website: <http://www.jfkcpa.com>

Skype ID: jfk1465

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: It is the policy of Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact Dr. Steve McLeod, Associate Dean, at (901) 761-1353.

LIBRARY RESOURCES: If you have not taken 5770-Research in Counseling, or took it more than a year ago, go to the Harding School of Theology (HST) Web site (www.hst.edu) for information concerning library services to students. Under the “Library” tab, you will find a link and instructions for searching the HST online catalog (Quest). There are also instructions for using the following databases available through the library: OCLC FirstSearch, EBSCOhost, Infotrac, PsycINFO, and Religious and Theological Abstracts. Contact the library for passwords to these databases. The research guides distributed in 5770-Research in Counseling are available on site as well. These annotated bibliographies list basic tools you will find helpful in your research.

This course adheres to university guidelines regarding workload requirements per credit hour

I. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Harding University's Three Principles of Integrity:

1. **Honesty:** Using only authorized collaboration, information, and study aids for assignments and testing. Being completely truthful in all academic endeavors.
2. **Authenticity:** Presenting only ideas and creative expressions that are unique, unless properly cited according to University guidelines. Submitting the work of another constitutes plagiarism.
3. **Accountability:** Holding ourselves to the highest ethical standards, and not allowing academic dishonesty in others to go unchallenged.

Academic dishonesty will result in penalties which could include a failing grade for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, dismissal from the course, and even dismissal from school.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a foundational framework for professional counseling and marriage/family therapy as professions. Students will become acquainted with insight-oriented and action-oriented approaches, varied counseling applications including group counseling, marital and family counseling, career counseling, addictions counseling, and psychopharmacology, and counseling culturally-diverse clients. Students will also explore ethical and legal issues. During the course, students will become familiar with licensure and credentialing organizations and requirements, as well as counseling professional organizations. Students will develop be challenged to improve their technological and writing skill, specifically in APA writing. Instructional methods include lectures, class discussion of readings, library research (printed and electronic), group projects, and experiential learning.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES & CRITICAL COMPETENCIES

(CACREP 2009 Standards can be found at: <http://67.199.126.156/doc/2009%20Standards.pdf>)

As a result of taking this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of all of the following aspects of professional functioning, by: (Fulfills CACREP common core curricular experiences 2009 Standards Section II G.1)
 - a. identifying and discussing the history and philosophy of the counseling profession (as measured by successful completion of examinations and IFC paper);
 - b. identifying professional roles, functions, and relationships with other human service providers, including strategies for interagency/interorganization collaboration and communications (as measured by successful completion of examinations);
 - c. assessing counselors' roles and responsibilities as members of an interdisciplinary emergency management response team during a local, regional, or national crisis, disaster or other trauma-causing event identifying professional organizations, primarily ACA, its divisions, branches, and affiliates, including membership

- benefits, activities, services to members, and current emphases (as measured by successful completion of examinations);
- d. discussing self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role (as measured by successful completion of examinations and book review);
 - e. identifying counseling supervision models, practices, and processes (as measured by successful completion of examinations and literature review on supervision);
 - f. exploring professional organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current issues (as measured by successful completion of examinations);
 - g. exploring professional credentialing, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues (as measured by successful completion of examinations and completion of mock TN applications for licensure);
 - h. discussing the role and process of the professional counselor advocating on behalf of the profession (as measured by successful completion of examinations);
 - i. discussing the advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients (as measured by successful completion of examinations and integration statement papers); and
 - j. discussing the ethical standards of professional organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling (as measured by successful completion of examinations).

IV. USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Please read the Technology Use Policy for this class found on page 12 of this syllabus. Once you have reviewed it, sign it, and turn it in during our first class meeting.

This course is supported via **SKYPE** (free download from www.skype.com) and **Moodle** (available at <http://elearning.harding.edu/>) to facilitate synchronous class participation.

Assignments in this course offer opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency in the use of technology in the following ways:

- Use of library and electronic databases to do research
- Use of online technology for submissions
- Exploration of the Internet to identify resources (e.g. dialogue groups, professional organizations, professional writings).
- Use of technology platforms for live-chats such as Moodle (text chat) and SKYPE (live text, audio, and visual chat)

Equipment Requirements: Internet access using a graphical web browser such as FireFox 2.0 or higher, Netscape Navigator 4.0 or higher, or Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.01 or higher.

This course is designed to be completed in a blended face-to-face/online format. The minimum competencies include the use of standard course processes (homework and evaluation) and include the following technological competencies: email, Internet resources, dialogue via SKYPE, and use of Moodle. You may be asked to participate in asynchronous and, synchronous discussion and feedback forums, submit written assignments via attached document files, and

utilize electronic databases as well as hard-copy resources for research papers. Moodle can be accessed at <http://elearning.harding.edu/>. If you have problems gaining access to the Moodle system, contact technical support for students by calling (501) 279-4545. You will need your HST username and your password to log into Harding Pipeline. These are the same credentials you use to register for classes via Pipeline.

Harding University gives each student an email address that also utilizes your user name. For example, your instructor’s email addresses is jfkennedy@harding.edu. Many students use other email addresses as their preferred address. You can set your Harding G-mail account to forward messages to an alternative email address if you want; however, **it is your responsibility to check your Harding email account regularly because this is the official Harding email address to which all Harding-related email will be sent.**

V. METHOD OF EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

A. Course Requirements

1. Attendance, preparation, and participation

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes for which they are enrolled. **Your professor should be notified in advance regarding any absence or missed deadline for an assignment.** In your professional practice as a counselor, you will need to notify your clients and employer should you need to reschedule appointments or meetings. The expectation is that you will regularly meet the deadlines listed in the syllabus as adult learners and responsible counseling professionals. A reduction in points per assignment will be made even with permission for late submission; however, a lack of prior notification for missed classes or assignments will increase the point reduction significantly.

Students are to have read the assigned readings prior to the beginning of class per the course schedule. *This course requirement is worth 50 points.*

Evaluation of your level of participation this semester will be based on the following criteria:

| Level of Participation Rubric | Level |
|---|---------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates good preparation: knows readings well, has thought through implications of readings. • Offers interpretations and analysis of materials (not just recalling of facts). • Interacts with other students; able to hear other views, and respond professionally | A-level |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates adequate participation (reading sheets included): knows basic reading facts, but does not show evidence of higher order skills (Bloom’s taxonomy) | B-level |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present, but not involved in discussions. | C-level |

2. Integration of Faith and Counseling Paper-First Draft

Students will be required to develop a brief initial integration of spirituality/faith and counseling paper/statement. This two-page maximum double-spaced paper should be a Microsoft word document, one inch margins, and typed in a 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The header should contain only your name, date, and the title Integration of Faith and Counseling 1. *The paper is worth 75 points and **should be uploaded via the Moodle assignment link before noon, September 8, 2011.** ***Late submissions on this assignment will at best receive half of the allotted points.*

This two-page paper should be your best attempt to make sense of how you approach counseling and your faith. The document should look at how the two influence and relate to one another. Do you use a specific approach or technique because of your faith and why? How is what you do as a counselor related to your faith and vice versa? It is a reflective piece that should demonstrate and explain why you do what you do. I will not view either version as your final and last position since as we grow, our understanding or manner of presenting our positions may change. This is not an evangelical piece but a piece for self-reflection. I do not expect or want a biblical exposition or declaration of faith, I am assuming this. I want you to tell me how you integrate the two (Christianity & Counseling) in your mind and in practice. There may be a discrepancy between the two, which is fine as well. I just want you to make an effort to begin to process this (if you have not already), or to bring further clarify to your thoughts (if you have already done this before). **No examples will be provided** – this is your personal struggle and therefore it will be your personal struggle to put it concisely into words. As noted, you will have the opportunity to post your second version later in the semester.

3. Midterm exam

The midterm exam will consist of questions in multiple choice, T/F, and short answer, fill-in-the-blank, and essay format. The exam will cover material read or discussed since the beginning of the semester. ***The midterm exam is worth 100 points and will be given during class September 29, 2011.***

4. Literature Review of Supervision

A literature review is a paper in which the author examines research studies on a certain topic. Students will introduce readers to the importance of the topic, and proceed to summarize and synthesize the research before stating a conclusion. One of the main purposes of the literature review is to present published research in a manner that easily allows the reader to identify the relationship between the studies and the benefit of research in the topic.

As part of this course, you will prepare a literature review that demonstrates your competency in researching, reviewing, and synthesizing current literature on counseling supervision. Your paper will review **eight current articles** (research studies published since 2000) on your chosen topic of supervision, and the **body** of the paper should be **five pages or less**. This paper must follow APA 6th edition style and format, and it should have a cover page, abstract, body, and references.

Students will submit copies (preferably electronic copies if available) of the eight research studies reviewed along with the literature review. You and two other people must proofread your paper. More detail on this instruction will be provided during the first class meeting. **The grading rubric for the assignment is included on page 13 of the syllabus.** *The paper is worth 150 points and is **should be uploaded via the Moodle assignment link before noon, November 17, 2011.***

5. Integration of Faith and Counseling Paper-Revised Version

This assignment is the second version of course requirement A2 above (see for instructions). Students will be required to revise their initial integration of spirituality/faith and counseling paper/statement. This **two page maximum** double-spaced paper should be a Microsoft word document, one-inch margins, and typed in a 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The header should contain only your name, date, and the title Integration of Faith and Counseling 2 *The paper is worth 75 points and **should be uploaded via the Moodle assignment link any time before noon, December 1, 2011.** ***Late submissions will receive no more than half of the allotted points.*

6. Book Review - [Kottler, J. (2003). *On being a therapist*].

Students will prepare a review and critique of Kottler (2003), *On being a therapist*. The body of the paper should be no longer than five pages in length and should be written using APA 6th edition formatting. Include a cover page, abstract, and reference page in APA format. **The grading rubric for the assignment is included on page 13 of the syllabus.** *The course requirement is worth 50 points and **should be uploaded via the Moodle assignment link any time before noon, October 13, 2011.***

7. Final exam

The final assessment will consist of questions in multiple choice, T/F, and short answer, fill-in-the-blank, and essay format. The exam will cover material read or discussed since the midterm and will include some comprehensive questions to assess students' grasp of the course content and implications. ***This course requirement is worth 100 points and will be given during class December 8, 2011.***

8. APA Mastery Tests

Students will be given a set of mastery tests on APA style. You will need to study the APA Style Manual accordingly. I will evaluate each student's performance on the test and make recommendations for options for those needing further tutoring in APA writing style. The four versions of the APA Mastery Test will be administered according to the course schedule. ***This course requirement is worth 100 points.***

B. Grading

1. Scale

| <u>Grade</u> | <u>Percentage of points needed</u> |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| A | at least 90 – 100 |
| B | at least 80 – 89 |
| C | at least 70 – 79 |
| D | at least 60 – 69 |
| F | less than 60 |

2. Overview Criteria for Grading

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Attendance/Participation | | 50 points |
| 2. Integration Paper-Draft | (9/8 via Moodle by noon) | 75 points |
| 3. Midterm Assessment | (9/29 in class) | 100 points |
| 4. Literature Review | (11/17 via Moodle by noon) | 150 points |
| 5. Integration Paper-Final | (12/1 via Moodle by noon) | 75 points |
| 6. Book review | (10/13 via Moodle by noon) | 50 points |
| 7. Final exam | (12/8 in class) | 100 points |
| 8. APA Proficiency | (4 tests given) | 100 points |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Total points available for course | 700 points |
|-----------------------------------|------------|

VI. NATURE OF COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Becoming a professional counselor and/or marriage and family therapist requires a lot of hard work and self-examination. Although you will enjoy personal and professional growth opportunities through readings, assignments, projects, experiential activities, and practicum/internship experiences, you may also expect that some of your training may possibly invoke strong negative emotional reactions. You may experience a heightened awareness of past and/or present emotionally-charged issues. You are encouraged to make faculty and staff members aware of strong personal reactions related to course materials, assignments, and experiences. Also, as part of your ongoing development in the counseling profession, you may be asked to seek professional counseling for any issues affecting your personal and/or professional development. Should you experience extreme reactions to your training experiences, you should consult with your departmental advisor to discuss appropriate courses of action. These may include entering personal therapy, deferring taking the course, or withdrawal from the program.

VII. CONFIDENTIALITY

Counselors recognize that trust is a cornerstone of the counseling relationship. The ACA Code of Ethics (section B) and the AAMFT Code of Ethics (Principle 2) specify that counselors must respect their client's right to privacy and avoid illegal or unwarranted disclosures of confidential

information. This includes anything that might readily identify a client to others who are not authorized to have this information. Counselors must make every effort to ensure that a client's privacy and confidentiality are maintained by supervisees, students, clerical assistants, and volunteers. Therefore, privacy and confidentiality are requirements regarding the sharing of either a student's or a client's personal information and the sharing of any identifying information should be avoided during class discussions, presentations, and in journals or other course assignments. Any breach of confidentiality will result in disciplinary action.

VIII. TEXTS/MATERIALS

Textbooks are available through our book services on campus. You can order them by email (bdavid@hst.edu), phone (901-432-7735 or 800-366-7481), or fax (901-761-1358).

*****Be sure to purchase the correct required editions if you purchase elsewhere.**

A. Required Texts/Readings:

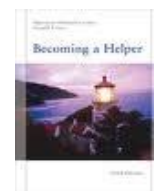
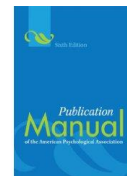
American Psychological Association. (October, 2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

*****Must use 6th edition. Be sure to get the October version!**

Paperback (\$28.95) ISBN: 1-4338-0561-8

Hardcover (\$39.95) ISBN: 1-4338-0559-6

Spiral (\$36.95) ISBN: 1-4338-0562-6



Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (2010). *Becoming a helper* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks Cole.

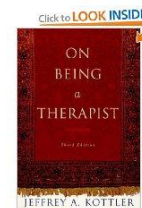
Print ISBN-13: 978-0-495-81226-5 eText ISBN-13: 978-1-111-15216-1



Hacker, D. (2008). *Rules for writers* (6th ed.). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

ISBN: 0-312-48573-5

Kottler, J. A. (2003). *On being a therapist* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
ISBN:0-7879-6894-3



B. Required selected research articles/materials to be downloaded and collected by students:

Rules Governing Marital and Family Therapists – Chapter 0450-2 (Tennessee) - <http://www.state.tn.us/sos/rules/0450/0450-02.pdf>

Rules Governing Professional Counselors – Chapter 0450-1 (Tennessee) - <http://www.state.tn.us/sos/rules/0450/0450-01.pdf>

Tennessee Department of Health-Professional Counselors and Marital & Family Therapists http://health.state.tn.us/Boards/PC_MFT&CPT/index.htm

Bibliography (recommended for further reading):

- Bloom, M. (1975). *The paradox of helping*. New York NY: Wiley Press.
- Boy, A. V., & Pine, G.J. (1982) *Client-centered counseling: a renewal*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Buber, M. (1970). *I and thou*. Continuum Intl Pub Group.
- Bugental, J. F. T. (1990). *Intimate journeys: stories from life changing therapy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bugental, J. F. T. (1991). Lessons clients teach therapists. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 31, 28-32.
- Burton, A., & Associates (Eds.), (1972). *Twelve Therapists: How they live and actualize themselves*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Combs, A. V., Avila, D. L., & Purkey, W. W. (1971). *Helping relationships*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Corey, G., Corey, M. S., & Callahan, P. (1988). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Decker, R.J. (1988). *Effective psychotherapy: the silent dialogue*. New York: Hemisphere.
- Edwards, T. (1980). *Spiritual friend*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.
- Edwards, T. (2001). *Spiritual director, spiritual companion: Guide to tending the soul*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.
- Guy, J. D. (1987). *The personal life of the psychotherapist*. New York: Wiley.
- Herlihy, B., & Corey, G. (1992). *Dual relationships in counseling*. Alexandria VA: American Counseling Association.
- Hobson, R. F. (1985). *Forms of feeling: the heart of psychotherapy*. London: Tavistock/Routledge.
- Jourard, S. M. (1971). *The transparent self*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Kellerman, J. (1992). *Private eyes*. New York: Bantam.
- Kottler, J. A., & Shepard, D. S. (2008). *Introduction to Counseling: Voices from the Field* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. ISBN: 978-0-495-09209-4
- Maslach, C. (1982). *Burnout: The cost of caring*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Maslow, A. (1968). *Toward a psychology of being*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

- May, G. (1992). *Care of mind care of spirit: A psychiatrist explores spiritual direction*. New York: HarperCollins.
- May, R. (1983). *The discovery of being*. New York: W.W.Norton.
- Moore, T. (1994). *Care of the soul: A guide to cultivating depth and sacredness in everyday life*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Nouwen, H. (1994). *The wounded healer*. New York: Bantam.
- Peck, M. S. (1978). *The road less traveled*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Pines, A. M., Aronsen, E., & Kafrey, D. (1981). *Burnout*. New York: Free Press.
- Pope, K. S., & Bouhoutsos, J. C. (1986). *Sexual intimacy between therapists and patients*. New York: Prager.
- Roskelley, C. W. (2008). *On the road to becoming a successful marriage and family therapist*. Saint Peters, MO: Femme Osage Publishing.
- Schon, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.
- Weiner, M. F. (1982). *The psychotherapeutic impasse*. New York: Free Press.
- Wilber, K. (1983). *Eye to eye*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.
- Yalom, I. D. (1989). *Love's executioner and other tales of psychotherapy*. New York: Basic Books.
- National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) Exams - <http://www.nbcc.org/stateLicensure/exams/Default.aspx>
- NBCC National Certification - <http://www.nbcc.org/certifications/Default.aspx>
- NBCC State Board Directory - <http://www.nbcc.org/directory/Default.aspx>
- Further information on APA format can be obtained from the following websites:
- <http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPAHeadings.html>
- <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/online/index.html>
- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- <http://www.dianahacker.com>

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE *(subject to modification)*

| Date | Topics/Assignments Due | Corey & Corey Readings | Hacker Readings | APA Manual Topics | Other Readings |
|----------------------|--|------------------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Aug 18 (1) | Are the helping professions for you? Review of syllabus in class | Ch. 1 | The writing process/Avoiding Plagiarism 1 – 4, 51 | 1.01 - 1.16 6.01 – 6.10 | |
| Aug 25 (2) | History of Counseling/ Professional Organizations | | Clarity 8 - 12 | 2.01 – 2.13 | |
| Sept 1 (3) | Knowing your values APA TEST 1 | Ch. 2 | Clarity 13 – 18 | 2.01 – 2.13 | |
| Sept 8 (4) | Knowing yourself/The New Creature Process: Part I IFC Paper 1 due by noon-9/8 | Ch. 3 | Grammar 19 – 21 | 3.01 – 3.17 | |
| Sept 15 (5) | Common concerns of beginning helpers/New Creature Process: Part II APA TEST 2 | Ch. 4 | Grammar 22 – 27 | 3.18 – 3.23 | |
| Sept 22 (6) | The helping process/New Creature Process: Part III | Ch. 5 | Punctuation 32 – 39 | 4.01 – 4.11 | |
| Sept 29 (7) | Midterm exam | | | | |
| Oct 6 (8) | No classes – Study Week | | | | |
| Oct 13 (9) | Theory applied to practice Kottler book review due by noon-10/13 | Ch. 6 | Mechanics 40 - 45 | 4.12 – 4.49 | |
| Oct 20 (10) | Understanding diversity APA TEST 3 | Ch. 7 | Academic Writing - 46 | 6.11 – 7.11 | |
| Oct 27 (11) | Ethical & legal issues facing helpers | Ch. 8 | Constructing reasonable arguments - 47 | 5.01 – 5.30 | ASSIGNED ARTICLES |
| Nov 3 (12) | Managing boundary issues APA TEST 4 | Ch. 9 | Evaluating Arguments - 48 | 8.01 – 8.07 | |
| Nov 10 (13) | Supervision | Ch. 10 | Conducting Research - 49 | | ASSIGNED ARTICLES |
| Nov 17 (14) | Stress, Burnout, and Self-care Lit review due noon-Nov 17 | Ch. 11 | Evaluating Sources - 50 | | |
| Nov 24 (15) | No classes – Happy Thanksgiving | | | | |
| Dec 1 (16) | TN licensure process for LPC-MHSP/LMFT In class completion of TN licensure applications IFC Paper 2 due by noon-12/1 | | | | Download/read TN LPC & LMFT Rules |
| Dec 8 (17) | Final exam | | | | |

X. TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE CLASSROOM

TECHNOLOGY POLICY: Read and sign. Turn this in at the first class meeting.

In our society, multitasking is the norm. Checking email, surfing the Internet, social networking, texting, instant messaging, and other technology tasks are done at the same time we interact with others; however, these tasks are totally inappropriate as you counsel people. These activities are also distractions to you, your classmates, and your professor; therefore, my classroom policy will not allow for any of these activities (surfing the Internet, Facebook, email, texting, instant messaging, etc...) during our class time.

Listening to lectures, classmates, and video vignettes will provide you with practice opportunities to be fully present and hone your observation skills as you seek to learn counseling skills.

By signing my name below, I am demonstrating my commitment to personal integrity in the use of technology in the classroom and will abide by the policy above. I will also address a fellow student who is not following this policy and encourage him or her to further develop their attentiveness and observation skills.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

| Grading Rubric | The A paper | The B paper | The C paper | The D Paper | The F paper |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|
| Ideas | Excels in responding to assignment. Interesting, demonstrates sophistication of thought. Central idea/thesis clearly communicated, worth developing; limited enough to be manageable. Paper recognizes some complexity of its thesis: may acknowledge its contradictions, qualifications, or limits and follow out their logical implications. Understands and critically evaluates its sources, appropriately limits and defines terms. | A solid paper, responding appropriately to assignment. Clearly states a thesis/central idea, but may have minor lapses in development. Begins to acknowledge the complexity of the central idea and the possibility of other points of view. Shows careful reading if sources, but may not evaluate them critically. Attempts to define terms, not always successful. | Adequate but weaker and less effective, possible responding less well to assignment. Presents central idea in general terms, often depending on platitudes or clichés. Usually does not acknowledge other views. Shows basic comprehension of sources, perhaps with lapses in understanding. If it defines terms, often depends on dictionary definitions. | Does not have a clear central idea or does not respond appropriately to the assignment. Thesis may be too vague or obvious to be developed effectively. Paper may misunderstand sources. | Does not respond to the assignment, lacks a thesis or central idea, and may neglect to use sources where necessary. |
| Organization/Coherence | Uses a logical structure appropriate to the paper's subject, purpose, audience, thesis, and disciplinary field. Sophisticated transitional sentences often develop one idea from the previous one or identify their logical relations. It guides the reader through the chain of reasoning or progression of ideas. | Shows a logical progression of ideas and uses fairly sophisticated transitional devices; e.g., may move from least to more important idea. Some logical links may be faulty, but each paragraph clearly relates to the paper's central idea. | May list ideas or arrange them randomly rather than using any evident logical structure. May use transitions, but they are likely to be sequential (first, second, third) rather than logic based. While each paragraph may relate to central idea, logic is not always clear. Paragraphs have topic sentences but may be overly general, and arrangement of sentences within paragraphs may lack coherence. | May have random organization, lacking internal paragraph coherence and using few or inappropriate transitions. Paragraphs may lack topic sentences or main ideas, or may be too general or too specific to be effective. Paragraphs may not all relate to paper's thesis. | No appreciable organization; lacks transitions and coherence. |
| Support | Uses evidence appropriately and effectively, providing sufficient evidence and explanation to convince. | Begins to offer reasons to support its points, perhaps using varied kinds of evidence. Begins to interpret the evidence and explain connections between evidence and main ideas. Its examples bear some relevance. | Often uses generalizations to support points. May use examples, but they may be obvious or not relevant. Often depends on unsupported opinion or personal experience, or assumes that evidence speaks for itself and needs no application to the point being discussed. Often has lapses in logic. | Depends on clichés or overgeneralizations for support, or offers little evidence of any kind. May be personal narrative rather than essay, or summary rather than analysis. | Uses irrelevant details or lacks supporting evidence entirely. May be unduly brief. |
| Style | Chooses words for their precise meaning and uses an appropriate level of specificity. Sentence style fits paper's audience and purpose. Sentences are varied, yet clearly structured and carefully focused, not long and rambling. | Generally uses words accurately and effectively, but may sometimes be too general. Sentences generally clear, well-structured, and focused, though some may be awkward or ineffective. | Uses relatively vague and general words, may use some inappropriate language. Sentence structure generally correct, but sentences may be wordy, unfocused, repetitive, or confusing. | May be too vague and abstract, or very personal and specific. Usually contains several awkward or ungrammatical sentences; sentence structure is simple or monotonous. | Usually contains many awkward sentences, misuses words, employs inappropriate language. |
| Mechanics | Almost entirely free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. | May contain a few errors, which may annoy the reader but not impede understanding. | Usually contains several mechanical errors, which may temporarily confuse the reader but not impede the overall understanding. | Usually contains either many mechanical errors or a few important errors that block the reader's understanding and ability to see connections between thoughts. | Usually contains so many mechanical errors that it is impossible for the reader to follow the thinking from sentence to sentence. |