

Sample Rubric 1

	Excellent (25-20 pts)	Good (20-15 pts)	Adequate (15-10 pts)	Poor (10-0 pts)
Does the paper have a clear thesis statement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • directly responds to all or a significant portion of the prompt with a sophisticated argument • puts forth arguable or falsifiable claims • is explicit, readily identifiable, and appears early on in the paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly responds to the major points in the prompt, though may miss a major detail, or lack sophistication in its argument • claims are arguable/ falsifiable • thesis statement is implicit or requires rereading to identify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fails to address some major components of the prompt • is descriptive and not arguable or falsifiable OR requires multiple readings to identify or interpret • structure may interfere with the clarity of the argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fails to address the prompt OR • there is no clear thesis statement
Does the structure of the paper match the argument?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear paragraph transitions • clearly signals how the argument is progressing throughout the paper, and the function of each section or paragraph vis-à-vis the argument • defined key terms and consistent use of concepts throughout the paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mostly clear transitions • clearly signals what each section or paragraph is about, though not necessarily vis-à-vis the argument • logic and concepts are mostly on topic and related to thesis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transitions are unclear • connections to the main argument exist, but subarguments are not linked to one another • grammar/sentence structure distracts from paper clarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited or no transitions • no analytical links between subarguments • grammar/sentence structure significantly distracts from paper clarity
Does the paper effectively use subarguments and evidence ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subarguments are ample, sufficiently relevant, and logical; they are tightly connected to the thesis, including exploration of mechanisms • they expand on the thesis by exploring context, alternative mechanisms, or other theoretical wrinkles • evidence is directly tied to observable implications of each step of the thesis • utilizes comparison, most/least likely cases, or other methodological frames 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subarguments connect to the thesis and one another, but some tangential arguments or evidence may be present • subarguments address most, but not necessarily all, of the most important logical steps and implications of the thesis • evidence is directly tied to observable implications of the thesis, though maybe not to each logical step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subarguments may be limited in number • subarguments do not further the author's argument, instead simply summarizing existing arguments • evidence is only loosely tied to observable implications of the thesis • some citations are missing or unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subarguments are irrelevant to the thesis or missing • evidence lacks connection to the thesis • subarguments and evidence simply repeat existing arguments without any added analysis • some or all citations missing or unclear
Does the paper consider counterarguments , conventional wisdoms , or scope conditions ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relates argument to counterarguments, conventional wisdoms, or scope in a productive and analytic way • explicitly discusses implications for the author's argument, using nuanced responses that contextualize the original thesis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acknowledges counterarguments, conventional wisdoms, or scope • implicitly or briefly acknowledges implications for the author's argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acknowledges counterarguments, conventional wisdoms, or scope, but only briefly or in a shallow way • does not draw out implications for the author's argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not acknowledge counterarguments, conventional wisdoms, or scope