

Northern Essex Community College Writing Rubric

	Novice - Does not meet objective	Developing – needs improvement	Competent - Meets objective	Proficient – Exceeds objective
Organization	The writer does not organize material in a way that is easy-to-navigate for the reader; the material is not presented through a logical arrangement of ideas.	The writer does not organize ideas in a way that allows the reader to easily comprehend the message. The introduction does not give an overview of the main points addressed in the body of the essay and there is no clear focus (thesis statement). There are few transitions and signposts to guide the reader both within, and between, paragraphs. The writer does not conclude by successfully summarizing the main takeaways of their writing or leaving the reader with something to think about.	The writer mostly organizes ideas in a way that allows the reader to easily comprehend the message. The introduction gives an overview of the main points addressed in the body of the essay and there is a thesis statement. There are some appropriate transitions and signposts to guide the reader both within, and between, paragraphs. There are topic sentences to anchor most paragraphs. The writer concludes by successfully summarizing the main takeaways of their writing.	The writer organizes ideas in a way that allows the reader to easily comprehend the message. The introduction gives an overview of the main points addressed in the body of the essay and there is a clear focus (thesis statement). There are appropriate transitions and signposts to guide the reader both within, and between, paragraphs. There are topic sentences to anchor each paragraph. The writer concludes by successfully summarizing the main takeaways of their writing and leaves the reader with something to think about.
Use of sources and citation	The writer often uses information from sources that is not given proper credit (citation). The writer does not show a thorough understanding of appropriate citation, thus accidentally	The writer does not support assertions with appropriate evidence to the topic and audience. Evidence is not cited, if needed, both in-text (through introductions and parenthetical citations) and with a	The writer mostly supports assertions with appropriate evidence to the topic and audience. Evidence is mostly cited, if needed, both in-text (through introductions and parenthetical	The writer supports assertions with appropriate evidence to the topic and audience. Evidence is cited, if needed, both in-text (through introductions and parenthetical citations) and with a strong corresponding Works Cited or References list. The writer gives attribution to material that is

	plagiarizing. The writer uses sources that lack credibility.	corresponding Works Cited or References List. The writer does not accurately reflect the words and ideas of source material and does not clearly distinguish between the writer's words and ideas and the words and ideas of sources. The writer fails to give attribution to material that is paraphrased, summarized, and quoted from a source.	citations) and with a corresponding Works Cited or References list with enough information for the reader to find each source. The writer attempts to accurately reflect the words and ideas of source material and attempts to clearly distinguish between the writer's words and ideas and the words and ideas of sources. The writer often gives attribution to material that is paraphrased, summarized, and quoted from a source.	paraphrased, summarized, and quoted from a source.
Synthesis and critical thinking	The writer offers a list of information rather than a cohesive, thoughtful argument. Information may be redundant and ideas are underdeveloped.	The writer does not offer clear connections (synthesis) between sources. The writer does not fully develop ideas.	The writer accurately reflects the words and ideas of source material and mostly distinguishes between the writer's words and ideas and the words and ideas of sources. The writer often offers substantive connections (synthesis) between sources. The writer fully develops their ideas.	The writer accurately reflects the words and ideas of source material and clearly distinguishes between the writer's words and ideas and the words and ideas of sources. The writer offers clear and substantive connections (synthesis) between sources. The writer fully develops their ideas beyond class discussion.
Style & grammar	Sentence-level error obfuscates the clarity of	The writer does not consider the needs of	The writer considers the needs of the audience	The writer considers the needs of the audience in terms of style and takes care

	the ideas—undermining the writer’s credibility.	the audience in terms of style and does not take care to avoid most obvious errors at the sentence-level (sentence-fragments; misspelled homophones; and capitalization of proper nouns).	in terms of style and takes care to avoid most obvious errors at the sentence-level (sentence-fragments; misspelled homophones; and capitalization of proper nouns).	to avoid all errors at the sentence-level (sentence-fragments; misspelled homophones; and capitalization of proper nouns).
Rhetorical awareness	The writer does not meet the needs of the rhetorical situation (assignment). Either there is not enough source information; the essay is not the required length; or the topic chosen does not respond appropriately to the assignment.	The writer has not generated a research question or thesis appropriate to the assignment and audience.	The writer has generated a research question and thesis that is appropriate to the assignment and audience.	The writer has generated a sophisticated research question and thesis appropriate to the assignment and audience.
Awareness and control of own writing process	The writer does not distinguish between editing and revision. The writer seems passive and sees revision as something to do in response to someone else’s prodding rather than because a piece of work is not yet finished. The writer does not describe or evaluate their own work accurately.	The writer does not fully distinguish between editing and revision. The writer has not fully taken ownership of, or clearly described, their process and their work.	The writer uses the language of writing to describe his or her own composing and revising process. The writer demonstrates an understanding of the difference between revision and editing in their own process and work, and attempts to take ownership of their work and process.	The writer discusses their own work accurately and with authority, using “the language of the writing.” The writer explains their own composing process clearly, drawing on examples from their portfolio.

