



BCS Evaluation Criteria

This guide is to be used to evaluate students in the Circumpolar Studies Core Courses. The percentage grades are suggestions for weighting activities in the course and are somewhat flexible. It is not required that each instructor use all of the activities listed. It is possible, for example, to evaluate students on a combination of activities including discussion, assignments, and a final examination, but not a midterm exam. The combination of activities and their grades will be at the discretion of the instructor and the institution.

The evaluation criteria should reflect the purpose and relevance of learning and encourage students to take responsibility for their progress. The activities and exams should provide opportunities for students to learn with others. Finally, the instructor is encouraged to provide descriptive feedback and involve students in on-going self-assessment by providing easily understood criteria for success. We advise providing students with partial evaluation by the fourth week of the course so they have a good understanding of their progress and performance in sufficient time for improvement if necessary.

Activity	Criteria	% Grade (Min–Max)
Discussions/ Forums	<p>Discussion criteria are based on the quality of the discussion, in addition to participation in discussions. The instructor shall evaluate the extent to which the student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• evidence of knowledge and learning,• evidence of original thinking, • capacity to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate material,• ability to apply practical skills,• responses that engage a conversational tone that open up avenues of exploration,• effective communication skills, and• respect of the opinions and positions of others especially if not in agreement.	15-25%
Assignments (including term paper)	Student activities or assignments can range from written work to presentations and should be assigned to help the student meet the learning objectives. Group work is also appropriate for assignments, but the instructor should clearly state how grades would be	Up to 25%



	<p>assigned (as a group and/or individually).</p> <p>Blogs and PowerPoint presentations, as well as other emerging online media tools can be used to present work produced from group projects, learning partners, and peer teaching for example. These tools can be used to assess each student's ability to grasp concepts presented in the learning materials. Students should be able to synthesize what they have learned and present their views to the class.</p>		
	<p>Term Paper: ideally, the term paper would be submitted at least twice, such that the instructor could evaluate the manuscript, provide comments, and allow the student to submit additional drafts. The paper should demonstrate the following skills:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organization of thought and arguments, • research and referencing skills, • the ability to analyze theory, • the ability to synthesize learning materials, and • presentation of an argument or thesis, <p><i>(Rubric included below)</i></p>	<p>(Marks distributed across at least two drafts to enable students to learn through instructor or peer editing, or both.</p>
	<p>Blogs PowerPoint Presentations Web 2 Tools Group Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organization of thought and arguments, • research and referencing skills, • the ability to analyze theory, • the ability to synthesize materials, and • clear presentation of thought. 	<p>Teamwork evaluations for assignments could based on a combination of peer, self and instructor evaluation.</p>
Midterm Exam	<p>The midterm exam shall evaluate each student's comprehension of the learning material including module content and readings. The midterm should be set such that students learn their strengths and weaknesses, and can use this information to improve their academic performance.</p> <p>Midterms can consist of a variety of question types including short-answer and multiple choice. Questions should pertain to the topics studied and be designed to assess a student's progress in achieving the learning objectives. Additional assessment tools include:</p>		<p>20-30%</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• essay-type (rote, question spotting, speed structuring),• open book,• take home assignment (read widely, interrelate, organize), and• objective test (multiple choice with recognition, coverage, comprehension) or ordered outcomes (hierarchies of understanding).	
Final Exam	<p>The final exam shall be comprehensive and shall evaluate each student's comprehension of course material. The final may be offered during a specified time, or offered as a take-home that spans a number of hours or days. The final should be designed to enable the student to demonstrate their individual accomplishments as relevant to the learning objectives for the course. Questions may be of the following types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• essay-type (rote, question spotting, speed structuring),• open book,• take home assignment (read widely, interrelate, organize), and• objective test (multiple choice with recognition, coverage, comprehension) or ordered outcomes (hierarchies of understanding).	35-50%

References:

Davies, A. 2003. What does the classroom assessment research say? Online Journal © 2003 Classroom Connections International – www.connect2learning.com



Research paper rubric

As part of your course requirements, you must write a research paper. The paper should follow the format outlined below and include all the sections as described. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Structure: The most logical way to write a paper (and this is largely true for most academic literature) is to tell a compelling and interesting story. The following sections constitute the majority of the paper and our commentary gives you an idea of what we are expecting of you.

- Prior to beginning the paper, you include an *abstract*, which is a brief (150 words) synopsis of the entire paper including your findings, recommendations or conclusions. The abstract is designed for readers to assess whether the paper is relevant and can judge whether to read the paper in its entirety.
- You should begin with an *introduction* of your topic/subject and explain why it's important and to whom it's important. You should also discuss the controversy surrounding the topic and the point of your paper. You would then go on to say what your paper is about and provide a brief "roadmap" of what the reader can expect in the following pages.
- After the introduction, you should provide *background* information including reference material and research done on this topic to date. This section often draws from academic literature, news articles and other information that helps you to present your ideas. You should not just provide the background, but interpret for the reader why the information you selected to present is important and allude to how it helps you build your argument. Additionally, you may also want to show gaps in the research as a reason for why you are focusing on your topic – to fill such gaps.
- Following the background is the main body of the paper: you may use subtitles to divide content into logical topics. In the *main body*, you need to discuss the key issues using ideas you've learned in class (or in other classes). For example, you might consider economic analysis and globalization to discuss the causes of resource development in the North.
- After the main arguments are laid out, you should discuss the key problems or elements of your case study/paper, and how science, industry, communities, individuals, society or politicians might address them. This section is typically called the *discussion*. You must clearly discuss the issues and provide insight for the reader rather than reiterate the issues. This section should be a synthesis of all the information presented up to this point.
- The last section is the *conclusion*. It is in this section that you provide a brief summary of your work/research/opinion and lay out next steps or recommendations. The conclusion should clearly indicate the answer to the question/thesis you presented in the introduction, thus tying the paper together.



Grading criteria

Approximate Grade	Writing quality according to the criteria laid out above.
A – (85-100%)	The paper is well written, with logically formulated arguments that stem from a clear problem statement, with a conclusion that follows from the ideas presented in the main body. There should be no grammatical errors or spelling mistakes; the paper has been edited. References and sources are sound and properly cited. The paper stands out and is an exceptional piece of work that indicates effort and talent by the author.
B – (70-84%)	The paper is well written and logically organized, but does not stand out as stellar. More original research, thoughts and ideas could be introduced and developed. There should be few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes and editing is evident. References and sources are sound and properly cited. The paper should demonstrate a strong effort by the author.
C – (60-69%)	The paper is moderately well written, but needs better organization of ideas and thoughts and could use more research and stronger arguments. There are grammatical errors and spelling mistakes, and word usage could be improved to better communicate ideas. The paper requires editing. References and sources need improvement. Clear indication that effort was used to develop the manuscript.
D – 50-59%	The manuscript needs work for structure, organization, research and thought. There are spelling errors and grammatical mistakes. The arguments are rather confusing and the paper does not tell a logical story. There is a lack of evidence that the student put effort into writing the paper. References need to be used, and cited consistently. The paper requires significant editorial revisions.
F – (< 49%)	The manuscript indicates a significant lack of effort and talent, is poorly organized and poorly written. The material is not presented logically and is often incomplete. Citations are missing or non-existent. It is clear that no time was spent on writing or editing.



Suggested research paper format

Title: [Choose a title that is descriptive but relatively brief.]

Name: [Name and affiliation (course title and number, your home location)]

Abstract: [Brief synopsis of entire paper including recommendations/conclusions.]

Introduction: [Introduction of the topic or case study, including why it's important. This section shall also include a "roadmap" that briefly lists the sections to follow.]

Background: [Background information including literature review.]

Main body: [Choose a relevant and descriptive title for this section and include subheadings where necessary. This section presents the issues based on teachings in class and other relevant classes.]

Discussion: [Provide a detailed analysis of the problems and how they are related. This section should also analyze the problem and provide insight based on your expertise.]

Conclusion: [Provide a brief summary of the issues and your recommendations for solutions or future research.]

Literature Cited: [Include all citations. You should have no fewer than 10 and no more than 20. You may use any citation style, as long as you are consistent.]