Instructor Manual

Ford, American Government and Politics Today 19e, ISBN: 9780357458891; Chapter 1: One Republic—A Divided Country

Table of Contents

[Purpose and Perspective of the Chapter 2](#_Toc62053893)

[Cengage Supplements 2](#_Toc62053894)

[List of Student Downloads 2](#_Toc62053895)

[Chapter Objectives 3](#_Toc62053896)

[Complete List of Chapter Activities and Assessments 3](#_Toc62053897)

[Key Terms 5](#_Toc62053898)

[What's New in This Chapter 8](#_Toc62053899)

[Chapter Outline 8](#_Toc62053900)

[Discussion Questions 9](#_Toc62053901)

[Additional Resources 13](#_Toc62053902)

[Cengage Video Resources 13](#_Toc62053903)

[Media Resources 13](#_Toc62053904)

[Online Resources 14](#_Toc62053905)

[Print Resources 14](#_Toc62053906)

[Appendix 16](#_Toc62053907)

[Generic Rubrics 16](#_Toc62053908)

[Standard Writing Rubric 16](#_Toc62053909)

[Standard Discussion Rubric 17](#_Toc62053910)

# Purpose and Perspective of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce students to the essential functions of government, and outline key concepts related to democratic governance within the American political system. Students will learn why governments are necessary, what the fundamental values of the Constitution are, and how to distinguish between popular political ideologies. This chapter also covers theories of American democracy, and provides a detailed analysis of demographic changes in the United States.

# Cengage Supplements

The following product-level supplements provide additional information that may help you in preparing your course. They are available in the Instructor Resource Center.

* Political Science Guide to Teaching Online
  + A guide with technology and pedagogy tips for teaching your course online
* The Cengage Political Science Blog: <https://blog.cengage.com/tag/political-science/>
  + A source of discovery and connection to a community of instructors sharing teaching tips, class activities, timely discussion ideas, and more
* American Government YouTube Playlist: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcFM0VUmi-f8BvRMaiWae4g
  + A selection of videos for customizing your learning path
* MindTap Educator Guide:
  + A detailed list of the assets in your MindTap course
* Transition Guide
  + Highlights content changes and updates in the new edition of the textbook and courseware design
* Standard Writing Rubric
  + A customizable rubric for evaluating students’ written work, for use as both a grading tool and a student-facing document for setting expectations
* Standard Discussion Rubric
  + A customizable rubric for evaluating students’ discussion contributions, for use as both a grading tool and a student-facing document for setting expectations
* MindTap Performance Reports Instructor Guide for American Government
  + A guide for making the most of the new performance reports functionality within MindTap

## List of Student Downloads

Students should download the following items from the Student Companion Center to complete the activities and assignments related to this course:

* The Declaration of Independence
* The Constitution of the United States
* The Federalist Papers No. 10
* The Federalist Papers No. 51
* The Federalist Papers No. 78

# Chapter Objectives

The following objectives are addressed in this chapter:

LO 1-1: Define the institution of government and the process of politics.

LO 1-2: Identify the political philosophers associated with the “social contract” and explain how this theory shapes our understanding of the purpose and essential functions of government and the role for individuals and communities in the United States.

LO 1-3: Describe the U.S. political culture and identify the set of ideas, values, and ways of thinking about government and politics shared by all.

LO 1-4: Compare and contrast types of government systems and identify the source of power in each.

LO 1-5: Define political ideology and locate socialism, liberalism, conservatism, and libertarianism along the ideological spectrum.

LO 1-6: Apply understanding of the purpose of government, the essential functions of government, and the U.S. political culture to evaluate government’s ability to meet new challenges over time.

# Complete List of Chapter Activities and Assessments

For additional guidance refer to the Guide to Teaching Online.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Chapter Objective | PPT slide | Activity/Assessment | Duration | Texas State Standards for GOVT 2305 |
| LO 1-1, 1-2 | 8-9 | MindTap Learn It: The Purpose of Politics and Government | 15 min | 1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States. |
| LO 1-1 |  | MindTap Learn It: Rule of Law | 10 min | 1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States. |
|  |  | MindTap Learn It: Pluralism, Elitism, and Majoritarianism | 10 min | 1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States. |
| LO 1-1, 1-2 | 12-14 | MindTap Case Study: What is Government For? | 20 min | 1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States. |
| LO 1-1, 1-2 | 15-16 | MindTap: Why Does Government Matter to Me? | 10 min | 1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.  4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government. |
| LO 1-3 | 19-20 | Discussion Activity from PPT | 10 min | 8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics. |
| LO 1-4 | 22 | Knowledge Check Activity from PPT | 2 min | 2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system. |
| LO 1-6 | 28 | Self-Assessment (1) from PPT | 5 min | 7. Analyze the nature and role of government and politics. |
| LO 1-5 | 31 | Written Reflection from PPT | 5-7 min | 8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.  7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens. |
| LO 1-6 | 36 | Self-Assessment (2) from PPT | 5-7 min | 8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics. |
| LO 1-6 | 37 | Discussion Activity from PPT | 10 min | 7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens. |

[[return to top]](#_top)

# Key Terms

**Anarchy**: The absence of any form of government or political authority.

**Aristocracy**: Rule by “the best”; in reality, rule by an upper class.

**Authoritarianism**: A type of regime in which only the government is fully controlled by the rule. Social and economic institutions exist that are not under the government’s control.

**Capitalism**: An economic system characterized by the private ownership of wealth-creating assets, free markets, and freedom of contract.

**Conservatism**: A set of beliefs that includes a limited role for the national government in helping support individuals for traditional values and lifestyles, and a cautious response to change.

**Democracy:** A system of government in which political authority is vested in the people. Derived from the Greek words *demos* (“the people”) and *kratos* (“authority”).

**Democratic Republic**: A republic in which representatives elected by the people make and enforce laws and policies.

**Democratic Socialism**: A political ideology based on strong support for economic and social equality, social and economic justice, with a strong reliance on direct political engagement by all people.

**Direct Democracy**: A system of government in which political decisions are made by the people directly, rather than by their elected representatives; probably attained most easily in small political communities.

**Divine Right of Kings**: A political and religious doctrine that asserts a monarch’s legitimacy is conferred directly by God and, as such, a king is not subject to any earthly authority, including his people or the church.

**Elite Theory**: A perspective holding that society is ruled by a small number of people who exercise power to further their self-interest.

**Eminent Domain**: A power set forth in the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that allows government to take private property for public use under the condition that just compensation is offered to the landowner.

**Equality**: As a political value, the idea that all people are of equal worth.

**Government:** The preeminent institution in which decisions are made that resolve conflicts or allocate benefits and privileges. It is unique because it has the ultimate authority within society.

**Hispanic**: Someone who can claim heritage from a Spanish-speaking country other than Spain. This is the term most often used by government agencies to describe this group. Citizens of Spanish-speaking countries do not use this term to describe themselves.

**Hypothesis**: A tentative explanation that can be tested and confirmed or discarded.

**Ideology**: A comprehensive set of beliefs about the nature of people and about the role of an institution or government.

**Initiative**: A procedure by which voters can propose a law or a constitutional amendment.

**Institution**: An ongoing organization that performs certain functions for society.

**Latino**: Preferred term for referring to individuals who claim a heritage from a Spanish-speaking country other than Spain.

**Legislature**: A governmental body primarily responsible for the making of laws.

**Liberalism**: A set of beliefs that includes the advocacy of positive government action to improve the welfare of individuals, support for civil rights, and tolerance for political and social change.

**Libertarianism**: A political ideology based on skepticism or opposition toward almost all government activities.

**Liberty**: The greatest freedom of individuals that is consistent with the freedom of other individuals in the society.

**Limited Government**: The principle that the powers of government should be limited, usually by institutional checks.

**Majoritarianism**: A political theory holding that in a democracy, the government ought to do what the majority of the people want.

**Majority**: More than 50 percent.

**Majority Rule**: A basic principle of democracy asserting that the greatest number of citizens in any political unit should select officials and determine policies.

**Oligarchy**: Rule by the few in their own interests.

**Order**: A state of peace and security. Maintaining order by protecting members of society from violence and criminal activity is the oldest purpose of government.

**Pluralism**: A theory that views politics as a conflict among interest groups. Political decision making is characterized by bargaining and compromise.

**Political Culture**: The set of ideas, values, and ways of thinking about government and politics that is shared by all citizens.

**Political Socialization**: The process through which individuals learn a set of political attitudes and form opinions about social issues. Families and the educational system are two of the most important forces in the political socialization process.

**Politics**: The process of resolving conflicts and deciding “who gets what, when, and how.” More specifically, politics is the struggle over power or influence within organizations or informal groups that can grant or withhold benefits or privileges.

**Property**: Anything that is or may be subject to ownership. As conceived by the political philosopher John Locke, the right to property is a natural right superior to human law (laws made by government).

**Recall**: A procedure allowing the people to vote to dismiss an elected official from state office before his or her term has expired.

**Referendum**: An electoral device whereby legislative or constitutional measures are referred by the legislature to the voters for approval or disapproval.

**Representative Democracy**: A form of government in which representatives elected by the people make and enforce laws and policies; may retain the monarchy in a ceremonial role.

**Republic**: A form of government in which sovereignty rests with the people, as opposed to a king or monarch.

**Social Contract**: A theory of politics that asserts that individuals form political communities by a process of mutual consent, giving up a measure of their individual liberty in order to gain the protection of the government.

**Socialism**: A political ideology based on strong support for economic and social equality. Socialists traditionally envisioned a society in which major businesses were taken over by the government or by employee cooperatives.

**Totalitarian Regime**: A form of government that controls all aspects of the political and social life of a nation.

**Universal Suffrage**: The right of all adults to vote for their representatives.

[[return to top]](#_top)

# What's New in This Chapter

The following elements are improvements in this chapter from the previous edition:

* This edition has been substantially revised and updated to include the most recent data, issues, and engaging examples of politics, politicians, and policies.
* An “Election 2020” box guides students to think about the ways an election can change American politics or reinforce the status quo.

[[return to top]](#_top)

# Chapter Outline

1. What if…Today’s problems are too big for any government to solve? (LO 1-6, PPT Slide 5, Texas State Standards for GOVT 2305: Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.)
2. Beyond Our Borders: The Rapid Rise of Global Migration (LO 1-6, PPT Slide 6, Texas State Standards for GOVT 2305: Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.)
3. Politics and Government (LO 1-1, PPT Slide 7, Texas State Standards for GOVT 2305: 1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States)
   1. Why Is Government Necessary?
   2. Fundamental Values
   3. Liberty
   4. Order and the Rule of Law
   5. Individualism
   6. Equality
   7. Property
4. Why Choose Democracy? (LO 1-4, PPT Slide 21, Texas State Standards for GOVT 2305: Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.)
   1. Direct Democracy as a Model
   2. The Limits of Direct Democracy
   3. A Democratic Republic
5. Principles of Democratic Government (LO 1-6, PPT Slide 25, Texas State Standards for GOVT 2305: Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.)
6. Who Really Rules in America? (LO 1-4, PPT Slide 26, Texas State Standards for GOVT 2305: Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.)
   1. Majoritarianism
   2. Elitism
   3. Pluralism
7. Politics in Practice: Climate Consciousness and Greta Thunberg: The Politics of Climate Anger (LO 1-6, PPT Slide 27, Texas State Standards for GOVT 2305: Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.)
8. Political Ideologies (LO 1-5, PPT Slide 29, Texas State Standards for GOVT 2305: Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.)
   1. The Traditional Political Spectrum
   2. In the Middle: Liberalism and Conservatism
   3. The Difficulty of Defining Liberalism and Conservatism
9. The Challenge of Change (LO 1-6, PPT Slide 32, State Standards for GOVT 2305: Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.)
   1. Demographic Change in a Democratic Republic
   2. Ethnic Change
   3. Globalization
   4. The Technology Revolution
   5. Climate Change

[[return to top]](#_top)

# Discussion Questions

You can assign these questions several ways: in a discussion forum in your LMS; as content for creating in-class polls using online polling tools or the MindTap mobile application; as whole-class discussions in person; or as a partner or group activity in class. Refer to the Guide to Teaching Online for additional instructional strategies and tools for using these questions in class.

1. Discussion: What if today’s problems are too big for government to solve? (LO 1-6, pp. 2-7, PPT Slide 5) Duration 5 minutes.
   1. Even though we are citizens of a state and of the United States, we are increasingly confronted with complex problems that are global in nature.
   2. How might the essential functions of any single government need to change to confront new challenges?
      1. Answers: Students should demonstrate knowledge of the essential functions of government, which are: to provide security and protection, promote the general welfare, manage and resolve conflict, secure the blessings of liberty, and provide public goods that might not be available otherwise. Students should acknowledge that single governments confronting complex problems that are global in nature need to consider how multinational cooperation can be used to promote peace and security.
   3. Given the challenges we face, are individual nations the best way to govern?
      1. Answer: Students should acknowledge that governments around the worlds take different forms. Coordinating a response across the levels of government in our federal system (i.e., national, state, and local levels) is tough enough, not to mention the need to coordinate a global response with other nations. However, issues that do not respect national borders (for example, climate change and a rapidly spreading, infectious disease) call upon governments to cooperate.
2. Discussion: Beyond Our Borders: The Rapid Rise of Global Migration (LO 1-6, pp. 10-11, PPT Slide 6) Duration 5 minutes.
   1. The causes of migration are varied, but *climate migrant* is a new term for an ancient phenomenon.
   2. When people are forced to move in search of food, water, and housing, how should the world’s governments respond?
      1. Answer: Students should acknowledge that the rapid expansion of migration in its many forms puts stress on the social, political, and cultural norms of the countries receiving new residents. In spite of this, refugees are protected in international law, and everyone has a right to seek and enjoy asylum.
   3. Perhaps you have already moved one or more times in your lifetime. If so, what challenges did you face integrating into a new community?
      1. Answer: There is no right or wrong answer, but make sure that students elaborate on their views.
3. MindTap Learn It: The Purpose of Politics and Government (LO 1-2, pp. 7-15, PPT Slide 15) Duration 10 minutes.
   1. How much authority to grant a national government was debated extensively between two main groups at the time of America's founding. The Federalists favored more centralized powers to ensure national unity and stability. Under this system, they believed policies could be more coherent and foster greater cooperation among the states. Anti-Federalists feared such an arrangement would invite tyranny similar to that of King George III. They favored a diffusion of power granting individual states greater authority. This debate on the role of government has persisted over time, becoming a feature of American political culture. The final compromise creating a federal system reflects the Founder's attempt to balance these disagreements. These excerpts from the "Federalist Papers" and "Anti-Federalist Papers" display one example of deliberations on the nature of government.
   2. As the Founders debated whether to have a more centralized or diffuse national government, Federalist No. 2 argued for a union among the states under which of the following: confederal government, unitary government, monarchy, or federal government?
      1. Answer: There is no right or wrong answer, but make sure that students elaborate on their views.
4. MindTap Case Study: What is Government For? (LO 1-2, pp. 7-15, PPT Slide 14) Duration 10 minutes.
   1. With recent discussions of Universal Basic Income, pandemic and healthcare readiness, and education gaps, many have indicated that they see a more activist role for government. Some of these ideas were articulated in what has been called the “Second Bill of Rights,” which was part of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s 1944 State of the Union Address and consisted of an economic bill of rights.
   2. How do Roosevelt and Locke's conceptions of government compare to each other?
      1. Answer: Locke's view is that government exists to protect fundamental rights, while Roosevelt argues that government has an obligation to support the economic well-being of its citizens.
   3. Why did Roosevelt want a more activist government?
      1. Answer: To prevent dictators.
   4. In the speech, Roosevelt discusses the role of political rights in the Founding and the Founders' conception of government. What reason does he give for pursuing a broader set of rights under the auspices of the government?
      1. Answer: “Industrialization has revealed that political rights are insufficient to ensure access to the pursuit of happiness for all Americans.”
5. MindTap Learn It: Why Does Government Matter to Me? (LO 1-2, pp. 7-15, PPT Slide 15) Duration 10 minutes.
   1. Seventeenth-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes famously described life without rule as “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” in his work *Leviathan*. Hobbes and other philosophers considered why individuals form governments and debated important questions, including who should govern and the purposes of government. Influenced by these philosophical debates, Americans likewise considered the purposes and powers of government at the time of the country’s founding. Drawing heavily from another enlightenment thinker, John Locke, Thomas Jefferson declared America’s independence, writing that governments’ responsibilities include the protection of certain rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Jefferson, Locke, and Hobbes believed that individuals must exchange some autonomy for protection and security by the government. President Franklin D. Roosevelt expanded this idea on the eve of World War II and out of the Great Depression and proposed that governments should protect four freedoms: freedoms of speech and worship and freedoms from want and fear. Roosevelt believed that in order to protect individuals’ rights to pursue happiness, governments must provide for the prosperity of its citizens.
   2. Now that you have looked at different purposes of government, what do you think is the more important one?
      1. Answer: There is no right or wrong answer, but make sure that students elaborate on their views.
6. Discussion: Fundamental Values (CH.1-3, pp. 9, PPT Slide 19) Duration 10 minutes.
   1. The authors of the U.S. Constitution believed that the structures they had created would provide for both democracy and a stable political system. They also believed that the nation could be sustained by its political culture.
   2. To what extent do all citizens continue to share a single political culture?
      1. Answers should acknowledge that, although there are widening gaps in income, wealth, and education, there is considerable consensus among American citizens about concepts basic to the U.S. political system, which is primarily the result of political socialization—the process by which beliefs and values are transmitted to successive generations.
7. Discussion: Why Choose Democracy? (CH.1-4, pp. 15-22, PPT Slide 22) Duration 5 minutes.
   1. Now that you have reviewed the forms of government, answer the following question:
   2. What is the source of power in a totalitarian government system?
      1. Answer: In such a political system, a small group of leaders or a single individual—a dictator— makes all political decisions for the society. North Korea is an example of a totalitarian state. Citizens are deprived of the freedom to speak, to dissent, to assemble, and to seek solutions to problems. Individual needs, including food, are subsumed by the interests of the ruler and the regime.
8. Discussion: Politics in Practice: Climate Consciousness and Greta Thunberg: The Politics of Climate Anger (LO 1-6, pp. 24, PPT Slide 29) Duration 5-7 minutes.
   1. Greta Thunberg and #NeverAgain gun control activists are part of a growing movement of angry young people using direct protest to call for policy action.
   2. Have you ever participated in a protest?
      1. Answers: Yes or no.
   3. What were your goals and who was your intended audience?
      1. Students should discuss instances when they protested, what their goals were, and who their intended audience was.
   4. What was the outcome?
      1. Students should give examples of what happened as a result of their protest efforts.
   5. If you never protested, why not?
      1. Students who have never protested should explain why.
9. Discussion: Who Really Rules in America (LO 1-5, pp. 25-28, PPT Slide 31) Duration 5-7 minutes.
   1. Write down the definition of liberalism and conservatism.
   2. According to your definition, what is the main difference between liberalism and conservatism?
      1. Answer: There is no right or wrong answer, but make sure that students elaborate on their views.
   3. What difficulties did you encounter while you tried to define them?
      1. Answer: There is no right or wrong answer, but make sure that students elaborate on their views.
10. Discussion: The Challenge of Change (LO 1-6, pp. 28-35, PPT Slide 37) Duration 10 minutes.
    1. The United States faces enormous internal and external challenges. In the next 50 years, not only will the face of America change as its citizens age, become more diverse, and generate new needs for laws and policies, but the country will also have to contend with a decline in economic dominance in the world. The United States and its citizens will need to meet the challenges of a global economy and mitigate the impact of global climate change. Technology has transformed the way we live, learn, and work, but it has also opened new security, surveillance, and privacy concerns. All of these challenges will affect how the American political system functions in the future.
    2. Is the American government nimble enough to recognize the many challenges we will face in the future in time to meet them?
       1. Answers: Yes or no. Students should provide an explanation for their answer to this question. They should also demonstrate an understanding of how demographic change, globalization, and the technology revolution are impacting Americans.

[[return to top]](#_top)

# Additional Resources

## Cengage Video Resources

* Cengage YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcFM0VUmi-f8BvRMaiWae4g>
  + Introduction: Crash Course U.S. Government and Politics <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrk4oY7UxpQ>

## Media Resources

* *All Things Considered—*A daily broadcast of National Public Radio (NPR) that provides extensive coverage of political, economic, and social news stories.
* *American Experience—*A Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) documentary series highlighting the people and stories that have shaped America’s past and present. Many of the films are available online at [www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/).
* The Daily—A daily news podcast and radio show by *The New York Times*. Hosted by Michael Barbaro; featuring interviews with journalists and newsmakers.
* *This American Life—*An award-winning hour-long, weekly radio program and podcast hosted by Ira Glass presenting highly engaging stories about people and issues.

## Online Resources

* American Conservative Union—information about conservative position: [www.conservative.org](http://www.conservative.org)
* Americans for Democratic Action—home of one of the nation’s oldest liberal political organizations: [www.adaction.org](http://www.adaction.org)
* Bureau of the Census—a wealth of information about the changing face of America: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
* Pew Research Center—a nonpartisan repository for facts on the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world, Pew is a research center and does not take positions on policy: [www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org)
* University of Michigan—a basic “front door” to almost all U.S. government websites: [www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/govweb.html](http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/govweb.html)
* U.S. Government—access to federal offices and agencies: [www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov)

## Print Resources

* Acemoglu, Daron, and James Robinson. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2012). The authors, one an economist and the other a political scientist, argue that nations thrive when they develop inclusive political and economic institutions and fail when institutions concentrate power and opportunity in the hands of only a few.
* Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015). Framed as a six-chapter letter from Coates to his 15-year-old son, Samori, prompted by his son’s reaction to the announcement that no charges would be brought against Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson in the killing of unarmed teenager Michael Brown, he writes, “This is your country, this is your world, this is your body, and you must find some way to live within the all of it.”
* DeParle, Jason. *A Good Provider Is One Who Leaves: One Family and Migration in the 21st Century*. (New York: Viking 2019). A deeply reported story of a Filipino family, the globalized economy, and the search for work.
* Klein, Ezra. *Why We’re Polarized* (New York: Simon & Shuster, Inc., 2020). A journalist, Klein explores the structural and psychological forces behind America’s polarized politics.
* McCall, Leslie. *The Underserving Rich: American Beliefs About Inequality, Opportunity, and Redistribution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013). An evidence-based examination of the public’s knowledge of growing income inequality, the strongly held belief that equality of opportunity is the best counter to income inequality, and deep ambivalence over public policies emphasizing income redistribution.
* Packer, George. *The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America* (New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013). A narrative tale of America’s “unwinding” told through the lives of everyday Americans and cultural icons with a focus on economic transformation, decline of political institutions, and fraying of the social contract.
* Thunberg, Greta. *No One Is too Small to Make a Difference.* (New York: Penguin Press, 2020). A collection of speeches by teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg.

[[return to top]](#_top)

# Appendix

## Generic Rubrics

Providing students with rubrics helps them understand expectations and components of assignments. Rubrics help students become more aware of their learning process and progress, and they improve students’ work through timely and detailed feedback.

Customize these rubric templates as you wish. The writing rubric indicates 40 points and the discussion rubric indicates 30 points.

## Standard Writing Rubric

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Meets Requirements** | **Needs Improvement** | **Incomplete** |
| Content | The assignment clearly and comprehensively addresses all questions in the assignment.  15 points | The assignment partially addresses some or all questions in the assignment.  8 points | The assignment does not address the questions in the assignment.  0 points |
| Organization and Clarity | The assignment presents ideas in a clear manner and with strong organizational structure. The assignment includes an appropriate introduction, content, and conclusion. Coverage of facts, arguments, and conclusions are logically related and consistent.  10 points | The assignment presents ideas in a mostly clear manner and with a mostly strong organizational structure. The assignment includes an appropriate introduction, content, and conclusion. Coverage of facts, arguments, and conclusions are mostly logically related and consistent.  7 points | The assignment does not present ideas in a clear manner and with strong organizational structure. The assignment includes an introduction, content, and conclusion, but coverage of facts, arguments, and conclusions are not logically related and consistent.  0 points |
| Research | The assignment is based upon appropriate and adequate academic literature, including peer reviewed journals and other scholarly work.  5 points | The assignment is based upon adequate academic literature but does not include peer reviewed journals and other scholarly work.  3 points | The assignment is not based upon appropriate and adequate academic literature and does not include peer reviewed journals and other scholarly work.  0 points |
| Research | The assignment follows the required citation guidelines.  5 points | The assignment follows some of the required citation guidelines.  3 points | The assignment does not follow the required citation guidelines.  0 points |
| Grammar and Spelling | The assignment has two or fewer grammatical and spelling errors.  5 points | The assignment has three to five grammatical and spelling errors.  3 points | The assignment is incomplete or unintelligible.  0 points |

[return to top]

## Standard Discussion Rubric

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Meets Requirements** | **Needs Improvement** | **Incomplete** |
| Participation | Submits or participates in discussion by the posted deadlines. Follows all assignment instructions for initial post and responses.  5 points | Does not participate or submit discussion by the posted deadlines. Does not follow instructions for initial post and responses.  3 points | Does not participate in discussion.  0 points |
| Contribution Quality | Comments stay on task. Comments add value to discussion topic. Comments motivate other students to respond.  20 points | Comments may not stay on task. Comments may not add value to discussion topic. Comments may not motivate other students to respond.  10 points | Does not participate in discussion.  0 points |
| Etiquette | Maintains appropriate language. Offers criticism in a constructive manner. Provides both positive and negative feedback.  5 points | Does not always maintain appropriate language. Offers criticism in an offensive manner. Provides only negative feedback.  3 points | Does not participate in discussion.  0 points |

[return to top]