

Grading Sheet

POL S 204 – Take Home Exam

This grading sheet is meant to assist teaching assistants in grading the take home essays. It allows us to establish a relatively standardized means for evaluating the essays across different sections. The grading guidelines are based upon the standard elements common to all social science essays, namely your ability to organize your thoughts coherently and advance a logical argument. We are not basing the grade on whether you chose the “correct” form of government, but rather your ability to logically defend your thesis.

Introduction	
Set up of the problem. What are the basic challenges facing the particular government chosen? Or what is the political context under which a new government must be formed?	6
Thesis Statement: A clear defined thesis statement that briefly presents the main argument of the paper. For example: “I argue that Afghanistan should have a parliamentary form of government based upon proportional representation because...”	8
Body	
Organization: Paragraphs ordered in logical progression supporting the main thesis of the paper. Fluid transitions between paragraphs.	7
Content: Provides discussion of a minimum of two democratic institutions for country under discussion OR a logical justification for autocratic rule.	7
Content: Integrates and demonstrates understanding of course material, including references to readings or lecture material (e.g., Moore, Gerschenkron, Hague et al., Linz/Horowitz, K&L).	7
Conclusion	
Provides basic summary of argument and/or discusses broader relevance of topic at hand.	5
Bonus Category (Most people will NOT get points for this category.)	
Additional creativity in addressing the question.	Max 3
TOTAL POINTS	Max 40

Appeals Policy: All appeals must be submitted in writing to Prof. Gill by January 3, 2006 (by 3:00 pm). The written appeal must address the substantive critiques of the paper and explain why the student feels a grade change is warranted. Professor Gill reserves the right to revise the grade – higher or lower – based upon his overall assessment of the paper and the appeal.