NORTHWEST UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ADULT AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Grading for this course is designed to provide students with an honest evaluation of their performance, not only in relation to other students in the course, but also in relation to the academic standards expected at institutions of higher education worldwide. To that end, and especially from a Christian perspective, grading is approached with a focus on academic performance along with the values of integrity, truth-telling, and respect. In the assigning of grades, these values apply not only to the relationship of the individual student to the professor, but also to the relationship of the larger communities (social, religious, academic, and regulatory) in which the student functions on a daily basis. Therefore this course seeks to uphold a grading system that carefully differentiates and provides an honest assessment of student performance, rewards truly exceptional achievement, and maintains credibility.

GRADING GUIDELINES

A  The student exhibits superior performance in all aspects of the course with work exemplifying the highest quality. The student is unquestionably prepared for subsequent courses in the field.

Pertaining to written assignments, the professor is looking for:
• Clearly understood ideas. Valuable information has been added placing the information in a larger context.
• Engaging, original, focused composition written in clear sentences.
• Clear mastery of the material under examination.
• Ideas and concepts that are richly developed.
• Organization and form that enhance the development of the central idea.
• Academic reflection, experiential application, and critical analysis that are in clear balance.

A-  The student exhibits superior performance in most aspects of the course for subsequent courses in the field.

B+  There is a high quality performance in all or most aspects of the course and a very good chance the student will succeed in subsequent courses in the field.

Pertaining to written assignments, the professor is looking for:
• Clearly understood ideas, described, illustrated, and re-stated in the writer’s own words.
• Solid grasp of material under examination.
- A coherent line of thought (Since “A” … Then “B” … So that “C” … Therefore “D”).
- Composition excellence (i.e. punctuation, clear flow of thought, parallel structure, citations in APA format, etc.).

**B**  The student exhibits a high quality performance in some of the course and a satisfactory performance in the remainder. There is a good chance the student will succeed in subsequent courses in the field.

**B-**  There is satisfactory performance in the course and evidence of learning that the student will succeed in subsequent courses in the field.

**C+**  The student exhibits a satisfactory performance in most of the course, with the reminder being substandard. There is evidence of sufficient learning to succeed in subsequent courses in the field with effort.

Pertaining to written assignments the professor is looking for:
- A paper that answers the question with some support for the answer and resources are quoted or paraphrased with limited original value added.
- A paper that retells information without adding a high degree of critical thinking.
- Limited development of details and examples that would clearly demonstrate an understanding of the readings and assignments.
- Minor content problems (e.g. minor punctuation errors, misunderstanding a concept, etc.)
- Limited structure and word choice (e.g. He said … He said … He said).
- Surface features (grammar, composition and punctuation) that distract from the understanding, meaning, or reading of the paper.

**C**  There is evidence of some learning but generally marginal performance. A similar attitude and discipline toward learning suggests the student has a marginal chance of success in subsequent courses in the field.

**C-**  There is minimal evidence of learning and substandard performance throughout the course. A similar attitude and discipline toward learning suggests the student has a highly marginal chance of success in subsequent courses in the field.

**D+**  The student exhibits minimal learning and low quality performance throughout the course. A similar attitude and discipline toward learning suggests the student has a doubtful chance of success in subsequent courses in the field.

Pertaining to written assignments the professor is looking for:
- A question left unanswered or a different question addressed.
- Constant variation of person and/or extensive use of second person.
- Demonstrated lack of understanding or familiarity with reading assignments.
• Continuous grammar, composition, and punctuation difficulties (e.g. not writing in sentences, lack of verb and subject agreement, extremely long incoherent sentences, lack of parallel structure, many distracting extra words like “really” and “so,” sudden changes in verb tenses, misspellings, obvious lack of proofreading, frequent use of slang, redundant expressions, etc.).
• The assignment or question is difficult to identify and poorly presented

D The student exhibits very minimal learning and very low quality performance in all aspects of the course. A similar attitude and discipline toward learning suggests the student has a highly doubtful chance of success in subsequent courses in the field.

D- There is little evidence of the student learning and predominately poor performance in all aspects of the course. A similar attitude and discipline toward learning suggests the student is not adequately prepared for subsequent courses in the field.

F There is an absence or little evidence of the student learning. A similar attitude and discipline toward learning would suggest the student is unprepared to approach subsequent courses in the field.