

SEMINAR PAPER RUBRIC

Evaluating the Thesis & Analysis (25 POINTS)

- **Thesis Statement**
 - The thesis identifies a problem and proposes a solution
 - The paper is not merely a descriptive summary of the student's research
- **Legal Significance**
 - The problem has some legal significance and the proposal is pragmatic and original
- **Persuasive Argument**
 - The arguments in support of the thesis are clear, logical, consistent, and thoughtfully developed
 - The student analyzes relevant facts, statutes, regulations, case law, policies, and secondary authorities in law and other relevant disciplines and uses these sources effectively to support arguments and distinguish counterarguments
 - The student discusses relevant policy-related developments and issues
 - The student offers a proposition and gives sufficient weight to opposing views and countervailing considerations
 - by addressing issues such as resources and policy matters
 - by testing the solution's viability using facts to avoid unanticipated results
 - by refining or nuancing the thesis as necessary
 - by acknowledging tradeoffs as necessary

Evaluating the Overall Organization of Paper

- **Introduction (10 POINTS)**

The introduction

 - Identifies a topic, provide some context, and perhaps begins with a hook that captures the reader's attention
 - Narrows the topic to a problem
 - Proposes a solution
 - Summarizes the paper's content and structure in a roadmap paragraph
- **Background Structure (10 POINTS)**

The background section

 - prepares the reader for the in-depth analysis by providing sufficient factual and legal background

- breaks the background into logical sections
- structures those sections in a logical order
- **Structure of the Analysis (25 POINTS)**
The analysis section
 - breaks the argument into logical sections and arranges them in a logical order
 - coherently connects sections with informative road maps and headers to guide the reader
 - organizes the analysis using organizational paradigms
 - does not go off on distracting digressions
- **Conclusion (5 POINTS)**
The conclusion
 - restates the thesis
 - provides insightful observations (perhaps by raising future implications of the thesis or forward-looking recommendations)
 - avoids introducing new, confusing information or propositions

Evaluating the Overall Supporting Research (10 POINTS)

The paper shows you

- understand how the thesis fits in the context of the existing literature
- discuss relevant sources of law (constitutions, statutes, treaties, regulations, cases, administrative materials, academic articles and the like) with an appreciation of their authority relative to one another
- use relevant interdisciplinary material

Evaluating Writing Style (10 POINTS)

- The paper is grammatical and correctly spelled and punctuated
- The paper has a professional tone
- The paper has a fluid writing, concise style

Citations (5 POINTS)

- All statements that require footnotes are footnoted in the proper format

*Rubric adapted from Elizabeth Fagans, Brooklyn Law School