

POLI 203
Spring 2022
Final Paper Guidelines

In order to promote consistency in grading, each TA will be assessing your paper with regards to 4 criteria as below. Please pay attention to these aspects of your paper in order to ensure your best performance. Good luck!

Statement of the Topic/Argument

The thesis statement should present the central argument for your essay and clearly frame the topic that you will be examining. In your paper, you should execute a consistent argument throughout the paper, and you should support your argument with appropriate evidence. Claims and arguments should be based on evidence and not opinion. Restate your argument in the conclusion and assess the degree to which the evidence supported the thesis, and the implications of this.

Organization

A well-organized paper contains a focused overall approach with an introduction, body, and conclusion. The thesis statement is in the introduction and should be the first or second sentence in your introduction. In the body paragraphs, arguments and research material are grouped into coherent paragraphs with topic sentences. The paragraphs in your essays are connected by transitions that allow your essay to flow from one point to another. Avoid digressions and irrelevant information. The conclusion should summarize your argument and connect your work to the broader study of the death penalty in the United States.

Sources and Research

Incorporate references and sources as needed to support your argument. Incorporates three academic sources such as journal articles, law review articles, dissertations, or university press books in the paper. Cite sources using a consistent citation format (ex. APA). Include a bibliography at the end of the paper (Does not count towards page count). Also use appropriate sources and citations for factual information, such as from newspapers, court documents, or websites. Cites to lecture and to the readings from class should also be made and can be in the form of (Class Lecture 3/15/2022) or (Deadly Justice, p. 42.). Don't plagiarize; you need a source for things that are not your own ideas.

Grammar/spelling

Your essay follows appropriate language conventions (syntax, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, word choice, etc.). Grammatical and spelling errors are kept to a minimum. Do not use contractions (isn't, won't, don't, etc.). Overall, these errors should be kept to a minimum so as not to detract from the argument that you are trying to make in your essay.