

# Smith College

## Writing Intensive Assessment Rubric (2013)

### 1. Statement of the thesis (or main goal)

*Exemplary:* The paper makes a bold central claim that is substantive, articulately stated, and thought provoking.

*Adequate:* The paper makes a fine central claim, but it could be more substantive, articulately stated, and/or thought provoking.

*Needs work:* The paper makes no central claim, or one that is irrelevant, unclear, or self-evident.

### 2. Paragraph development

*Exemplary:* Paragraphs are consistently well structured and developed. They are organized around a clearly stated, well-positioned central argument, which is thoroughly and convincingly supported with evidence. The evidence is fully explicated and analyzed. The sentences are coherent (they are clearly linked) and unified (they stay on topic).

*Adequate:* Paragraphs are well structured but manifest lapses in development. They exhibit all the essential elements—argument, evidence, explication, and analysis—but, often enough, these elements could be developed more fully and/or in a more orderly manner. The sentences may show minor lapses in coherence and unity.

*Needs work:* The paragraphs are poorly developed. They barely manifest the essential elements, or not at all. The sentences often show major lapses in coherence and unity.

### 3. Complexity of thought

*Exemplary:* The complexity of thought in the paper impresses. The discussion is intricate and original, stretching well beyond what is immediately apparent.

*Adequate:* The complexity of thought in the paper pleases, but does not impress. The discussion is competent and mildly original, but it does not stretch, or stretches very little, beyond what is immediately apparent.

*Needs work:* The paper shows little or no complexity of thought. The discussion is oversimplified, unoriginal, and self-evident, ultimately boring.

### 4. Command of written English

*Exemplary:* The paper is free of errors in grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. The writer's voice is engaging and the prose fluent.

*Adequate:* The paper manifests minor, occasional errors in grammar, punctuation, and style. The writer's voice is appropriate and the prose competent.

*Needs work:* The paper manifests major, persistent errors in grammar, punctuation, and style. The writer's voice is inappropriate or inconsistent, and the prose substandard.

**5. Overall**

*Exemplary:* This paper exceeds expectations for a writer at this point in her college career.

*Adequate:* This paper meets expectations for a writer at this point in her college career.

*Needs work:* This paper does not meet expectations for a writer at this point in her college career.