

Mason Core Rubric for Evaluating Student Work in Western Civilization/World History

This rubric was developed by a team of faculty experts to evaluate student work for the Mason Core learning outcomes in Western Civilization and World History. For more information about the learning outcomes and approved courses, <http://masoncore.gmu.edu/western-civilizationworld-history/>

How to use this rubric: This rubric is designed to evaluate student performance on six learning outcomes, with four increasingly sophisticated performance descriptors for each outcome. This rubric can be used with many types of written work. Most student work will not show evidence of all six outcomes; in this case, an additional category for “no evidence” should be made available.

Student Learning Outcomes	Level of Performance			
	Capstone	Advanced Milestone	Emerging Milestone	Benchmark
1. Demonstrate knowledge of major patterns, processes, themes and events	Identify and describe in detail a historical pattern, process, theme, or event and fully explain its broader historical significance	Identify and describe a historical pattern, process, theme, or event and attempt to explain its broader historical significance	Identify a historical pattern, process, theme or event	Partially identify a historical pattern, process, theme or event with no effort to explain its broader historical significance
2. Situate events, concepts, and/or sources within broad historical context(s)	Place an event, concept, or source in relation to other major events or developments, and present an argument about the relationship between the particular (event, concept, or source) and the general (broader) context(s), taking into account the beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and historically situated assumptions demonstrated in the event, concept, or source	Place an event, concept, or source in relation to other major events or developments and present an argument about the relationship between the particular (event, concept, or source) and the general (broader) context(s)	Place an event, concept, or source in relation to at least one other major event or development, but not present a convincing argument about the relationship between the particular (event, concept, or source) and the general (broader) context(s)	Attempt to situate event, concept, or source within a historical context but not develop or present a convincing argument about the relationship between the particular (event, concept, or source) and the general (broader) context(s)
3. Demonstrate knowledge of historical causation or chronological reasoning	Provide multi-causal, complex, and layered account for historical change based upon an awareness of time, sequencing, and periodization by prioritizing and analyzing a variety of historical influences	Provide a multi-causal (economic, social, political, etc.) account for historical change based upon an awareness of time, sequencing, and periodization	Provide a simple, monocausal account for historical change based upon an awareness of time, sequencing, and periodization	Demonstrate an emerging awareness of time, sequencing, and periodization

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4. Identify, evaluate, and cite primary and secondary historical sources to present an interpretation	Properly identify, evaluate, and cite primary and secondary source material, while weighing issues of genre, content, audience, perspective, and purpose in order to analyze and locate evidence to be used in support of an interpretation	Properly and fully identify and cite sources in support of an historical interpretation, while making a distinction between primary and secondary source materials	Identify and cite sources in support of an historical interpretation, while making a basic distinction between primary and secondary source materials	Begin to identify and cite sources to support an historical interpretation
5. Evaluate and analyze various interpretations of the past to describe historical events	Present an interpretation of a historical event and/or process that demonstrates an understanding of conflicting interpretations of the past and that analyzes the basis for each interpretation	Present an interpretation of a historical event and/or process while acknowledging differing interpretations of historical events and/or processes	Present an interpretation of a historical event and/or process that attempts to incorporate at least one differing interpretation	Present an interpretation of a historical event and/or process
6. Effectively construct and communicate a defensible historical account	Articulate a persuasive historical account of a historical event or process with a clear and well-developed thesis, supported by diverse and/or conflicting sources	Articulate a persuasive explanation for a historical event or process with an identifiable thesis that engages with diverse and/or conflicting evidence	Articulate a basic explanation for a historical event or process with an identifiable thesis that is supported by organized evidence	Articulate a basic explanation for a historical event or process with a simple yet identifiable thesis; sequencing of information may be random