

## PADP 8680: Advanced Policy Analysis - Grading Rubric

The following rubric describes the elements on which your final project will be assessed. The final project (including your final paper and presentation) is worth 35 points; of those, 30 points will specifically stem from your final written paper.

\_\_\_ / 10: Quality of Writing: The use of proper grammar and syntax is a minimum requirement of graduate-level writing. Your paper should certainly be free of wording errors, grammatical mistakes, incomplete sentences, and other basic issues. However, it is equally critical that your paper has a clear flow and logical structure.

- Paragraphs and sections should connect to one another and transition smoothly.
- Sentences within a paragraph should fit together for a cohesive purpose.
- Words that help with logical organization (however, likewise, but, also, nonetheless, therefore) should match the logic of your paper (e.g., don't use "however" in front of a sentence that supports your previous point).
- Technical/theoretical terms should be used clearly, consistently, and specifically; in other words, avoiding "jargon" is less about what words are actually used (after all, words exist because no other word quite suffices!) and more about ensuring that whatever word you use conveys clear meaning.

\_\_\_ / 10: Analytic Contribution: Depending upon topic and intent, each the nature and form of each paper's analytic contribution will likely differ. Thus, you will essentially be graded upon whether your paper sufficiently makes the analytic contribution that you state your intention to make in the introduction section of your paper. This implies two things: (1) somewhere in the introduction section, you must: (a) say what your paper is about; (b) what the point of the paper is; and (c) and your plan for making this point; and (2) then you must successfully implement this plan. On a more fine-grained level, analytic contribution also requires that you follow the "show me, don't tell me" principle. For instance, do not just say that a tool is particularly unpopular, say why! Do not just that a tool improves access to a service, say how! This does not necessary mean that you have to provide citations; in some cases, it is as simple as exposing the logical underpinnings of how a tool works (e.g., "A household water consumption tax increases the per-unit cost of water, thereby disincentivizing water usage and in theory leading to decreased consumption.")

\_\_\_ / 10: Topical Content: This is also an area that will be somewhat dependent upon the aims and structure of your paper, but in general your paper should focus on prominent conceptual elements from the course. Namely, as a rule of thumb everything in your paper should somehow relate either to tools, goals, or evidence. For instance, in discussing the topic or policy issue at hand, try to frame this discussion in terms of policy problem(s) and policy goal(s) (e.g., market failure, under provision of a public good, equity concerns, etc.). As another example, if your paper contains historical/topical background, try to orient (implicitly or explicitly) in terms of prior tool usage, changing goals, how evidence has led to changing tools, etc.)