

CMSC 434 Essay Rubric

For each essay question, you are asked to take a position on something. You may also be asked to summarize something. Your essay should stand alone as a piece of writing that makes sense on its own. It should be understandable by a recent computer science graduate who may not have taken an HCI course.

Example question: What is cyberpsychology and why is it so important?

To answer this, you need to first summarize what cyberpsychology is. Then make a thesis statement: "Cyberpsychology is important because [.....]". The rest of your answer provides evidence to defend your thesis statement.

Summary

___ 20 points	Sufficient information is provided to support all elements of topic
___ 10-15 points	Some information provided, but not enough to explain the topic
___ 0 points	No summary

Thesis Statement

___ 20 points	Thesis is cogent and clearly stated and answers the question that was asked.
___ 15 points	Thesis is acceptable but not particularly insightful.
___ 10 points	Thesis is too verbose or not compelling.
___ 5 points	Thesis is incomplete.
___ 0 points	Thesis doesn't make sense, or there is no thesis.

Evidence

___ 20 points	Abundant evidence provided to support all elements of thesis
___ 15 points	Adequate evidence provided to support thesis
___ 10 points	Incomplete evidence to support thesis
___ 0 points	Evidence presented is irrelevant, or doesn't actually support thesis

Organization

___ 20 points	Ideas convey fundamental insights concisely without oversimplifying.
___ 15 points	Ideas are well organized and logically presented.
___ 10 points	Discussion is not thorough and lacks detail.
___ 0 points	Writing doesn't make sense.

Citations

___ 10 points	2 or more reliable sources are cited. One source can be the textbook, but another source can be another assigned reading or one you find on your own. Citations are in ACM SIGCHI Papers format.
___ 5 points	2 or more sources are cited, but at least one is less reliable than Wikipedia.
___ 5 points:	Only 1 source cited.
___ 0 points:	No sources cited.

Grammar

___ 10 points:	Consistent and appropriate writing style, no spelling or grammar errors.
___ 5 points:	Fewer than 3 punctuation, capitalization, spelling, or other grammatical errors.
___ 0 points:	Poor sentence structure, Inappropriate language, or 3 or more grammar errors.