Name: _____   **Grade: _____**

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Context	5	4	3	2	1 / 0
Thesis	10 / 9	8 / 7	6	5	4 / 3 / 2 / 1
Road Map	5	4	3	2	1 / 0
Conclusion	10 / 9	8 / 7	6	5	4 / 3 / 2 / 1
Paragraphs	10 / 9	8 / 7	6	5	4 / 3 / 2 / 1
Mechanics of Writing	10 / 9	8 / 7	6	5	4 / 3 / 2 / 1
Quotations	10 / 9	8 / 7	6	5	4 / 3 / 2 / 1
Evidence	20 / 19 / 18 / 17	16 / 15	14 / 13 / 12	11 / 10	8 / 5 / 3 / 0
Research	20 / 19 / 18 / 17	16 / 15	14 / 13 / 12	11 / 10	8 / 5 / 3 / 0

Applicable Alpha-numeric Codes

Context CX	Thesis T	Road Map RM	Conclusion C	Paragraphs P	Mechanics of Writing M	Quotations Q	Evidence E	Research R

Check if applicable:

☐   For additional comments, please see over.

☐   The paper received no marks or comments because it was late, without an approved extension.

Grading Rubric: Glossary of Terms

Social Welfare and Social Development (SWLF)
Nipissing University

1. Context

The paper begins with an enticing context. The author hooks readers and "reels them in," especially with the opening sentence, suggesting why they should be interested in the topic at hand. The author might also explain that there is a fascinating puzzle that needs to be solved. The paper's thesis is not laid out in the context. However, in the "story" it tells, this opening paragraph hints at what the thesis will be. For a five-page paper, the context must be a separate paragraph of 80 to 100 words.

2. Thesis

There is a clear, explicit thesis (that is, the main claims being made) along with a succinct indication of the reasons, the justifications, for making these claims (that is, the "why" of the thesis). The thesis is interesting – not banal or obvious. The thesis is also debatable; it would be reasonable for someone to propose something different from what the author is arguing. For a five-page paper, the thesis must be a separate paragraph of 60 to 80 words.

3. Road Map

There is a road map which indicates how the paper is organized. It is a brief summary of the "stepping stones" of the argument – what will be discussed and the order in which the discussion will unfold. There should be no justifications of the thesis in the road map. The body of the paper has to follow exactly the plan laid out in this paragraph. For a five-page paper, the road map must be a separate paragraph of 60 to 80 words.

4. Conclusion

There is a pointed summary of what has been argued for and defended throughout the paper. There is little or no duplication of what was said earlier. A fine line is walked; new phrasing is used but new (and provocative) views are not introduced. The author may discuss the implications of their findings for future research. For a five-page paper, the conclusion must be a separate paragraph of 100 to 120 words.

5. Paragraphs

Each paragraph conveys one idea. This idea forms the basis of an appropriate topic sentence (a general statement that controls the information in the paragraph), which is followed by pertinent supporting details. Within paragraphs, sentences are linked. Consecutive paragraphs blend together seamlessly. There is no "leapfrogging" within or between paragraphs. The paper progresses from one point (that is, one paragraph) to the next, laying out the evidence in an orderly manner, with an obvious sense of direction, from the start, through the middle, to the end. The information presented does not constitute a collection of random thoughts.

6. Mechanics of Writing

Sentences are complete and grammatically correct. Word choices are consistently appropriate and precise. For the most part, the author uses an active voice that is interesting and engaging. The writing is elegant; language is employed creatively. Spelling is accurate and there is evidence of careful proofreading. The punctuation is near flawless, especially the use of commas and semi-colons. The paper makes use of the proper style for margins, fonts, page numbers, references, and so forth.

7. Quotations

The paper does not overuse quotations to the point where they drown out the author's voice. Some quotations, however, are employed, and these are well integrated, effectively woven into the text. Quotations are not "tacked on" in an attempt to add credence to a weak argument. The quotations usually furnish support for the points being made, or they are subjected to the author's incisive critique. Statistics are generally not quoted (though they are cited). Quotations are typically insightful, pithy, and beautifully written.

8. Evidence

Evidence is used effectively throughout the paper to support the thesis. The case put forward is strong, sophisticated, and persuasive. Counter-arguments are anticipated and successfully contested. Contradictory claims are not made. Appropriate examples are provided and statistics are used judiciously. Important points are prioritized and discussed in detail. Mundane, incorrect, and irrelevant information is nowhere to be found. Space is used efficiently, with repetition kept to a minimum. The evidence is critical – it reflects on ideas, calls assumptions into question, and challenges claims to truth.

9. Research

A significant amount of research is undertaken. Research texts are read in a comprehensive manner, are understood, and shape the author's argument, regardless of what is argued. The most important information is extracted from the texts, elaborated on, and integrated into a coherent analysis. The paper extends the material found in the research texts in imaginative ways, synthesizing the ideas of the texts with those of the author. All research is properly cited.

Grading Rubric: Alpha-numeric Codes

Social Welfare and Social Development (SWLF)
Nipissing University

CX   Context

1. There is no context.
2. The context is evident, but it is too brief; it requires further elaboration.
3. The opening sentence of the context does not draw the reader into the paper.
4. Parts of the thesis (reasons/justifications) are mixed in with the context.

T   Thesis

1. There is no thesis.
2. The thesis is evident, but it is too brief; it requires further elaboration.
3. The "why" of the thesis is missing.
4. The "why" of the thesis is evident, but it is too brief; it requires further elaboration.
5. The paper has a "straw" thesis; it purports to argue against a view that almost no reasonable person would hold. Make your opponents' arguments as strong as *they* would make them.

RM   Road Map

1. There is no road map.
2. The road map is evident, but it is still not clear how the discussion will unfold.
3. Parts of the thesis (reasons/justifications) are mixed in with the road map.

C   Conclusion

1. The conclusion consists of an almost word-for-word duplication, a "cut and paste," of various sentences that appear throughout the paper.

2. The conclusion contains some duplication – a strong "echo" – of various sentences that appear throughout the paper.

3. The conclusion contains new and provocative ideas.

4. The conclusion is too brief; it requires further elaboration. Add a few sentences.

5. The conclusion is weak because the argument is not well developed throughout the paper.

P   Paragraphs

1. Begin a new paragraph at this point.

2. This is not a suitable topic sentence; it is too specific, too detailed.

3. This paragraph is too long. There is more than one central idea in it, and the topic sentence has been abandoned. As a general rule, keep paragraphs to a half-page, maximum.

4. This paragraph is too short. This idea should have been either developed sufficiently or omitted.

5. These sentences are not linked.

6. These paragraphs are not linked.

7. Distinguish the three elements of your introduction (context, thesis, and road map) with separate paragraphs for each.

8. The paper reads like a listing of points rather than an integrated whole. Ideas are discussed almost at random. Points need to be effectively connected (notice the absence of transitions between paragraphs).

9. The author's voice is weak throughout. While plagiarism has been avoided, the writing is too close to the wording of the research materials. Use sources as an aid to developing your own voice; don't lean on the sources too heavily.

10. The author's voice is evident throughout, but it could be stronger; the reader can still hear an "echo" from the research materials.

M   Mechanics of Writing

1. This sentence is incomplete; it is lacking either a subject or a verb.

2. This sentence is awkwardly structured and/or contains inaccurate words; it is difficult to grasp what the sentence means.

3. Commas are either used incorrectly, at various points throughout the paper, or are not used at points where they are required.

4. Semi-colons are often used incorrectly.

5. The referencing system follows the recommended style, but there are a number of formatting errors in the text and/or the References list.

6. This is not recommended formatting/style.

7. Because the paper contains numerous writing errors, it is very difficult to follow the argument. You need to work closely with the Academic Skills Centre to improve your writing abilities. Please visit the Centre in Room B210 to schedule an appointment.

Q   Quotations

1. This quotation is unnecessary; summarize this information in your own words.

2. Do not quote statistics. Statistics should be cited, for sure, but with rare exceptions, they should be summarized rather than quoted.

3. This quotation is out of context. It is "tacked on" and hence fails to provide support for the point being made.

4. This quotation is not smoothly integrated into the text; the sentence is awkward as a result.

5. In general, do not have a quotation as a topic sentence (the first sentence of a paragraph).

6. Try to avoid having long, indented quotations. Boil each long quotation down to its essential core, and use that small fragment instead. Ask yourself: What is the evocative phrase in the lengthy quotation that attracted me to this passage in the first place?

7. There is too much quotation throughout the paper with the result that your voice is drowned out.

8. There are no (or virtually no) quotations throughout the paper. Was there nothing in the research materials that was worth quoting? Always squeeze some quotations into the paper to demonstrate that you have an eye for thoughtful, innovative phrases, and that you know how to incorporate them into a paper.

E   Evidence

1. This is a weak argument, not well supported by the evidence presented.

2. This is a minor point, one that is given too much space. It contributes little to the defence of the thesis.

3. This is a good point, but it could have been made in less space.

4. This is an important point. It needs to be drawn out. Provide more details.

5. This point contradicts the argument.

6. This is a repetition of the argument.

7. This is a circular argument; the cause and the effect are basically the same.

8. Throughout the paper, the focus is almost exclusively on one or two points. These points could have been condensed, leaving room to discuss other matters.

9. Important issues are not addressed in sufficient detail.

10. Important counter-arguments (opposing views) are not given adequate consideration.

R   Research

1. A citation is required for this information.

2. Page numbers are required for *all* citations.

3. Support this point with information from more credible sources.

4. Many of the research texts in your References list are barely used, or are not used at all, hence the References list is "padded."

5. The paper is overly dependent on notes from class activities (such as lectures and videos).

6. The paper is overly dependent on small sections from one or two research sources.

7. A deeper, more comprehensive reading of relevant research materials would have resulted in the production of a much stronger argument.