

Research Paper Evaluation Sheet

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Criteria for an Excellent Paper:

- _____ 1. Technical terms are defined clearly. (5pts)
- _____ 2. Coherence: A single governing theme unifies the paper from beginning to end. The author should constantly make sure that individual paragraphs (and even sentences) relate to a developing argument or thesis, which will eventually reach an informed conclusion. In the editing process, authors should delete sentences and paragraphs that do not meet this criterion. (10 pts)
- _____ 3. Mechanical Perfection: Spelling, Grammar, Syntax, Margins, Appropriate Capitalization, etc. You should always have a friend read your paper before handing it in. Papers should be formatted for this class using a 12 pt. Romans font with 1 inch margins on all sides. (10 pts)
- _____ 4. Conventions for footnotes, bibliography, etc., must be consistent with the *Kregel Manual of Style* found on the writing page of www.edwardpmeadors.com. Students in this class must cite their references using footnote citations—I do not permit MLA style conventions or endnotes. The reason for this is that the vast majority of journals in the field of biblical studies use the footnote system. (5 pts)
- _____ 5. An excellent paper is characterized by a clear introduction often including a statement of: 1) the problem bringing about the need for this paper (why the author is writing); 2) purpose/thesis (what the author is going to argue as the solution to the previously stated problem—*thesis* derives from the Greek word “position”); 3) procedures (How the author is going to go about proving or defending his/her thesis); 4) the scope of the study (what material will and will not be taken into consideration). The introduction, especially the first paragraph, must be crystal clear and enthusiastic, so that the reader is interested and stimulated to read the entire work. (10 pts)
- _____ 6. An excellent paper is characterized by a clear conclusion that states both the pertinent results of the study and its ramifications for further study and thought. Ideally, you want your concluding thoughts to linger in the mind of your reader like the afterthoughts of a great movie. (10 pts)
- _____ 7. An excellent paper is characterized by organization within the paper. Are internal paragraphs logically progressing from one to the next with reader friendly transitions. I require subtitles within papers that direct the reader’s attention like organizing sign posts (10 pts)
- _____ 8. Content. In proof-reading these are questions the author should ask: 1) Does the paper contain accurate, up-to-date documentation? 2) Does the author cite the most important authorities on this subject? 3) Does the paper say something that goes beyond the self-evident? Has real analytical deep thinking gone into the writing of this paper? 4) Does the paper challenge the reader to think about this subject from a fresh perspective that is consistent with the true meaning of the text? 5) Does the paper bear evidence of the writer’s learning and does it effectively teach something of value to the reader? Does the paper inspire interest and lead to further questions to explore? (30 pts)
- _____ 9. Bibliography. Appropriate use of primary and secondary sources and accurate citation of them. Are the major works referred to and has the author demonstrated first-hand knowledge of them? Did the research go beyond the surface? How up to date are the sources cited-- the more recent the documentation the better! Are the entries cited correctly according to the *Kregel Manual of Style*? (5 pts)
- _____ 10. Abstract. Your paper should have an abstract of 100 words or less written two spaces below your title. This abstract will present your basic theme, purpose for writing, and method. The abstract presents in a nutshell what your paper is about. (5 pts)

Late papers will be penalized 10 points per day that the paper is late. **A copy of this handout should be attached to the end of your paper.**