

ICP Student Handbook

I. About the ICP Student Handbook

The primary aim of the ICP Handbook is to familiarize ICP students with the ICP policies and procedures on assessment, grading, other essential course-related matters, and to provide essential information to help ICP students improve their learning experience at AUCA. Furthermore, the ICP Department hopes that the Handbook will help improve the quality of student-faculty interactions in and out of classroom.

In sections III-XI, students may find essential information to help them improve their essay writing, presentation, reading, and study skills. Students may also familiarize themselves with the modes and methods of teaching at the ICP department in order to better understand the relationship between in-class activities, independent student work, and the achievement of learning outcomes. Finally, the first part also provides information about the main extracurricular activities at ICP. The list of activities is not exhaustive and may not include all the activities ICP may conduct throughout the academic year. Therefore, students are advised to regularly check their emails for announcements from the ICP department.

In section XII, students may learn about ICP policies on assessment, grading, and essential procedures on the submission of work for assessment, attendance, mitigation, and grade disputes.

Section XIII reminds students and specifies the Code of Conduct. For more information on the Code of Conduct, students are advised to consult their AUCA Student Handbook.

The Appendices contain the forms and additional information referred to in the main parts of the Handbook.

All ICP students are expected to be familiar with all the contents of this Handbook. Please consult the handbook to better understand the assessment process at ICP and the criteria that are applied to your work during the assessment. Besides helping you understand your grade and feedback, it should also help with self-assessment.

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III. Introduction to International and Comparative Politics

The department of International and Comparative Politics aims to develop in students the ability to identify, explain, understand and contextualize political institutions, organizations, behaviour, and various other phenomena comparatively and against the general background of contemporary world politics. To that effect, students are expected to have a general understanding of what constitutes International and Comparative Politics.

There is a specific purpose for choosing the concept of 'politics' rather than 'relations' when referring to the 'international' aspect of studies at ICP. International politics assumes a broader and deeper range of political aspects in world politics than 'relations'. We do not study inter-national *relations* only because contemporary world politics does not solely consist of relations between nations. Rather, contemporary world politics involves many non-state actors that bear significance on international relations. Therefore, by identifying precisely the 'political' aspects of 'international relations', we invite our students to focus on a broader range of issues in world politics and consider state as well as non-state actors.

Furthermore, our international focus aims to encourage students not to view political phenomena and institutions in isolation. Rather, we encourage our students to view issues that interest them in the context of international politics. Students are invited to examine the relationship between the broader trends in the region and the wider world.

In the meantime, the 'comparative' element of ICP as a field carries both methodological and substantive implications as we endeavour to explain political processes, institutions and behaviour from a comparative perspective and across national boundaries. It refers to the application of the comparative method of political inquiry, involving 'few cases' as opposed to a case study or statistical analysis, and a wide range of subject matters, including notably regime types, democratization, political and electoral system design, socio-political revolutions and political violence and terrorism. By undertaking systematic comparisons, we manage to reveal patterns of similarities and differences across cases under investigation and make plausible predictions about political and institutional outcomes.

At ICP, we also highlight the significance of political theory. In their latest edition of *Globalization of World Politics*, Professor Steve Smith et al note that theory helps distinguish the discipline of International Relations from 'world news'. Theory bears a similar significance on wider political science as it helps simplify the complexity of, understand, and explain the world of politics. Every course in ICP has theoretical background and presuppositions. Students are invited to explore them and other competing theories in order to offer different perspectives on the issues in focus. ICP students are also invited to think abstractly and attempt to answer normative questions that are still relevant to political science. For example, 'what is the ideal state', 'what is justice', 'what are the virtues of a good ruler, good politician, and a good citizen', 'what is the relationship between the state, society, and the individual', 'how do we balance freedom and equality', 'how can we be more inclusive without violating autonomy and self-determination'. We also invite our students to reflect on many contested concepts in political science (such as 'democracy') and to appreciate the wide range of interpretations and formulations developed by prominent scholars.

Overall, ICP students are only limited by the political phenomena in the objective world, abstract thought in the conceptual world, the validity of their analysis, and time. This means that there are countless research interests and a plurality of methodologies that enable ICP students to further explore, understand, and explain whatever interests them.

Major/Minor/Transfer Requirements

Please visit <https://auca.kg/en/icp/> for the latest information about credit requirements at ICP.

IV. Lines of communication

For matters related to specific courses the students are registered and attending, the students' first-point-of-contact is the professor teaching the course.

For administrative issues and general inquiries, students' first-point-of-contact is the ICP Manager, Miss Nargiza Alieva. The ICP E-mail address is icp@auca.kg

For wider departmental affairs, students are to contact the Chair of the Department Dr. Farhad Kerimov at kerimov_f@auca.kg

The ICP Handbook and other documents are available on ICP Hub on E-Course. Please follow this link to enroll:

<https://e-course.auca.kg/course/index.php?categoryid=38>

Password: ICPHub

ICP has a Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/DepartmentOfInternationalAndComparativePolitics/>

Communication between the department, faculty, and students

The primary means of communication between the department, faculty, and students is the University Email. Faculty may use E-Course as a way to communicate about course-related matters as well. Please check with your syllabus for any other means your professor will use to keep in touch with you. Regardless of extra communication means, students are expected to check their

university email daily and are expected to open and read with care any communication from the department and ICP faculty.

Advice on Correspondence with AUCA Faculty and Staff

Since the primary mode of communication is University E-Mail, students are expected to approach communication with AUCA Staff and Faculty as a formal matter. Please note that emailing in a professional context is always a formal matter. Therefore, students are expected to maintain formal language and organization in their writing. As a rule of thumb, formal emails always contain:

A formal salutation, main body paragraph containing in concise form the main point/reason of your email, and any additional information (as necessary) in a paragraph that follows the main one. If your addressee may not know you, introduce yourself. If you are contacting a person outside AUCA, also indicate how you acquired their contact information and/or who referred you to them. Make sure that you show your addressee your appreciation of their time. And sign off formally. For example:

Dear Dr. Smith,

(NB: Always do your best to use the correct salutation: Dr. or Professor or Mr. or Miss. The directory on the official website is a reliable reference for this. Also, note that Titles are always to be used in conjunction with the addressees LAST NAME or combination of their FIRST NAME + LAST NAME. E.g., Dr. Francis Fukuyama, not Dr. Francis. The same rule applies in the cases of other titles. Also, note that not all Dr.'s are Professors, and not all Professors are Dr.'s – academia is a bit complex about these matters, but to simplify, Professor is a profession, and Dr. represents an academic qualification.)

Last semester, I enjoyed your lectures on History and International Relations very much. Thank you for the insightful lectures and engaging seminars because I have developed a research interest for my senior thesis based on your course. Therefore, I would like to visit

you in your office at your convenience to discuss possible supervision arrangement and, if you have time, perhaps request for our advice on any preliminary research I will benefit from before the start of my senior research.

I could not find information about your office hours at the office or in the course syllabus; therefore, I would appreciate it if we could set up a meeting based on appointment. I am available on Mondays between 2 PM and 6 PM, on Wednesdays between 9 AM and 12 PM, and Fridays between 10 AM and 1 PM.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to seeing you.

Best wishes,

Richard Davidson

V. Effective Studying

The International and Comparative Politics curriculum relies mostly on reading, writing, and classroom discussions. That means that many of the intended learning outcomes are achieved in conjunction with classroom instruction and independent student work. The professors must provide necessary general and contextual information during the lectures, and the students must keep up with the reading load and approach assignments responsibly. While every student may have a different effective studying strategy, it is beneficial to have some awareness of the general effective studying techniques that may aid student learning experience and academic development.

Modes and methods of teaching and learning at ICP

ICP courses are normally taught through a combination of weekly lectures and seminars. Students are expected to attend both lectures and seminars.

Lectures: The lectures are intended to provide a broader context and background. Depending on the course and topic, this may be theoretical/conceptual, historical, and any other relevant context depending on the professor's specialty, research interests, and expertise. Lectures also serve the purpose of elucidating complex ideas and concepts, and to provide an overview of different theoretical, methodological, disciplinary positions and intersections.

The style, organization, and format of lectures will vary from professor to professor. Generally, professors expect the students to attend all the lectures, listen to the lecture carefully, make notes, and ask for clarifications.

The students will get the most out of attending the lectures if they read (or at least skim through the relevant required reading) before attending the lectures, write down their questions, and attempt to work out the problems during or after the lectures.

Seminars: The primary role of the seminar is to facilitate peer discussion between students, deeper understanding of the topic at hand, and engage the students in the application of the theoretical frameworks and concepts in the analyses of existing policies, institutional arrangements, and/or any other relevant political phenomena. The seminars are also an opportunity for students to discuss a specific set of questions about the issues scheduled for discussion. All students are expected to come prepared for the seminars by covering the required reading and doing any additional work required by the professor. Every student is expected to contribute to the class discussion. The seminars are not intended for the professor to deliver a second lecture.

Seminars might also be used to allow for student presentations and/or any other assessed and/or unassessed student activities.

Please note that in some ICP courses participation in the seminars is assessed.

During the seminars, students are expected to:

- Ask relevant questions
- Raise prompts for discussion by raising important questions relevant to the seminar topic.
- Participate in the discussions
- Demonstrate a firm grasp of the assigned reading
- Demonstrate an understanding of the main concepts and ideas

- Put the topic, issues, and/or concepts in concrete context through the use of examples
- Be able to express their disagreement and provide reasons

During the seminars, students SHOULD NOT:

- Take disagreement personally
- Insult others in any form or manner
- Expect to be tested on trivial knowledge and earn points on that basis
- Expect the professor to provide near-perfect, all-knowing answers
- Expect to be provided with an additional lecture if they have not done their reading

How to succeed as an ICP student?

A successful ICP student is capable of conducting independent research in political science commensurate with their degree level, able to process complex information, has an understanding of different theoretical and methodological positions in various disciplines of political science, and can provide a reasoned argument based on evidence in written and oral forms of communication.

Furthermore, a successful ICP student is aware of various discourses in the disciplines of political science and can provide a critical degree of awareness of the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of discourses.

A successful ICP student can critically discuss world affairs and many political events with a higher degree of sophistication, knowledge, and understanding than an average comparable student from other academic disciplines.

For ICP students to achieve these aims, faculty at ICP will assign many kinds of written and oral assessments that will require the students to conduct independent research, construct an argument based on evidence, and produce a scholarly body of work based on the standard principles of analytic logic and reason. A successful ICP student views these assignments as conducive to their academic development as scholars and the achievement of abovementioned targets, not as a series of tasks to complete in order to achieve a grade.

A successful ICP student responds to professors' feedbacks constructively. A successful student attempts to identify their weaknesses through the provided feedback and independently work on improving them. A successful ICP student reflects on the provided feedback to improve the grade of their next assignment, not the grade they already got. A successful ICP student understands the significance of the difference between the attitude that allows a student to say 'You [professor] gave me a certain grade' and the attitude that results in 'I got this grade'. The significance of the latter statement is that the student takes responsibility for their grade and is likely to work on improving it come next assignment. In the former statement, the student tends to defend their ego by assuming that their low grade is the professor's responsibility, absolving themselves of any relevant steps necessary to make improvements.

A successful ICP student keeps up with world and local news on political affairs by reading several sources with differing ideological and political stances. For example, a good ICP student would balance the progressive, social-democratic stance of *The Guardian* with the more conservative position of *The Telegraph* and a more centre-leaning analysis provided by *The Economist*. Related to following world news, a successful ICP student can identify the theoretical,

ideological, and political underpinnings of published articles in news media with relative ease.

A successful ICP student keeps in touch with publications in academic journals related to their research interests.

Tips for reading

Teaching, learning, and researching political science involves a lot of reading. Knowledge and understanding of political science require constant reading of the relevant material. It is nearly impossible to explain many phenomena in politics without providing at least 20-40 pages of reading. Therefore, as an ICP student, the earlier you get used to reading a lot of material, the earlier you develop skills in effective reading, the better you keep up with the reading material for your courses – the better off you will be.

Reading for each subject is similar to learning a new language. You will soon realize that terms like ‘virtue’, ‘liberal’, ‘justice’, ‘institution’ are used in particular but varied ways. You may find yourself encountering new words, which are most likely concepts in social sciences. Use a subject-specific¹ as well as a general dictionary. Consult the very many reference texts and handbooks. Numerous textbooks have glossaries. Always make use of glossaries and consult secondary literature if you are having difficulties understanding something. Google will almost always help you but keep in mind that Wikipedia does not deserve the confidence of a scholar.

Reading on most of the topics in political science can be particularly daunting. At first, it may even be an intimidating and off-putting experience. If you find yourself struggling with your reading, do not

come to any conclusions about yourself and your abilities. Reading political science is just hard. Not everyone gets it the first time or the second time. It is natural to start reading political science for the first time and feel confused and perplexed. If you are reading this handbook, the chances are that you are genuinely interested in your major and wish to be successful in it. Therefore, use your lack of understanding something as the reason to research more and find out more. Come to the seminars with your confusions and ask questions. Do your best at finding answers yourself. Do give the text a try by focusing on what you are reading. These efforts will help you get more acquainted with the ‘language’ of political science. Similar to learning any new language, if you practice sufficiently and frequently, you will soon feel more comfortable talking in that language and get better at understanding it.

Try to at least skim your required reading before the lecture to get a general idea.

Keep a notebook in which you:

- Identify key points and arguments that support those points
- Identify evidence
- Identify context
- Identify the structure and organization of the text
- Note Information on the author
- Make a note of your questions, comments, observations.

ICP Writing tips

As an ICP student, you will be asked to write an essay (submit a paper) for nearly every ICP course you will take. Written work allows

¹ The *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics* by Iain McLean and Alistair McMillan (Oxford University Press), for example.

students to develop some essential skills in addition to broadening and deepening their knowledge and understanding of a particular topic. Writing a paper will sharpen your analytic as well as communication skills. You will improve your ability to find and process new information quickly (the analytic part), and you will improve your ability to express your analysis in a coherent and intelligible written communication. In the future, when you will be looking for a job and advancing your career further, your capacity to find, process, understand, and explain complex information in a simple and accessible way will give you a competitive edge against others. Therefore, it is important to take essay writing seriously as a way to sharpen up these essential skills. Below is a brief guideline on how to write essays generally and what is expected from you in an ICP curriculum particularly.

You should keep in mind that all papers are typically written in an essay format. Therefore, it follows the standard structure and organization of an essay with a proper introduction, main body, and a conclusion. In other words, all papers develop and present a coherent and strong argument on a given question or a problem. The point of a paper is to make a case for that argument, to prove a point; not to re-describe something or re-tell what you have read. Descriptions and reviews should serve the purpose of developing and defending your argument; they should not be the centrepiece of your essay.

A good argument always requires a good question, i.e. a research question or a problem. A good paper starts with a good research question. Developing a question involves time and research. Make sure you follow your course reading and have at least general knowledge of the field in which your chosen topic is located. Only then can you ask a research question that will lead you into writing a

good paper. This means that all papers for ICP are research papers unless you are instructed otherwise. A research paper has the following necessary elements:

1. **A defined topic** that reflects the subject of the central argument of the paper. It should not be generalized as in 'The Security Council', or 'Development in Central Asia'. Think about the central point of your argument. Your topic should reflect that point.
2. **A research question/problem** that the paper is addressing and, if applicable, a string of more specific and secondary questions that require answers too. There are many types of research questions, about which you will learn in your Research Methods course. Generally, you need to pay attention to whether you are asking a causal question, or a question about correlations, or a question about the nature of something, or a conceptual question, a descriptive or a comparative question. There are many types of questions. It is your responsibility to understand which type is yours. Each type of question may have a distinct methodology and argumentation. The better you understand your question, the more appropriate method and argument you will adopt.
3. **An argument that addresses the central question** in the clearest and strongest way without hyperbole or informal and abstract use of language (huge, great, enormous, etc.). Your argument must be based on the evidence you have found in the course of the research you conducted for the paper. This argument is your opinion, but unlike many other opinions that may be shared on the internet, this opinion must be backed up by evidence from reliable research and developed according to the standards of logic and reason.

This opinion is fortified by an argument, which your paper is supposed to prove.

4. **Research methodology:** even the smallest papers have a methodology. You need to be able to explain how you will make your case for the argument; show which sources of information you chose and why you chose them; show how you used that information; explain how you interpreted that information; describe or build a theoretical framework against which your work should be understood/which is used in order to make your argument; and the specific ways in which you will be using some technical terms and jargon that may be unique to your field of research – in general, how did you come to know what you know, how did you come to your conclusion(s). Settle on your methodology well in advance of writing your paper and use it appropriately. In your essay, you need to explain and justify what you have done in terms of your methods. A brief presentation of the structure and organization of your essay may also be part of your methodology. For example: In the first section, I provide the historical background, in the second section, I present the theoretical background and assumptions, in the third section, I will provide the analysis to support my argument.
5. **Evidence of research:** your argument should draw from the evidence that you have found by doing thorough research in primary and secondary sources. Google search the difference between primary and secondary sources if you are not sure what they mean. A good academic paper is typically based on peer-reviewed scholarly publications — Google search what peer-reviewed scholarly paper is and where to find them too. A bad paper is based on random sources, non-academic sources, and irrelevant sources. Non-academic sources include but are not limited to SparkNotes, Wikipedia,

personal blogs, newspaper articles, YouTube. Some of these are useful objects of research, rarely sources for research (some exceptions apply depending on your research).

6. A proper **citation and referencing.** You need to cite all your references and acknowledge all the sources. ‘X believes’, ‘Y argues’, ‘according to Z’, ‘some scholars have...’, ‘it has been studied...’ and similar phrases are references, therefore **must be cited and acknowledged** properly. Failure to do so may result in plagiarism! Citation and references must follow a known citation format (APSA, APA, Chicago, Harvard, etc.) If your instructor does not require a specific format, pick the one you are comfortable with and use it to cite your references and sources. Make sure that you understand the difference between in-text citation and footnotes. Make sure you know the difference between citing an electronic source, a printed source, a book, an edited book, a chapter from an edited book, newspaper, website, and many other sources - they all have specific ways in which they must be cited and acknowledged.
7. Last but not least, **all papers must have a bibliography that follows your citation format.** A bibliography (if referenced in footnotes) or ‘Works Cited’ (if in-text citation) is a list of works with full bibliographic information. Only include the works that are cited in your paper.

Please note that elements 1-4 (4 included) must be presented clearly and explained in the introductory part of your essay. Sometimes it is appropriate to present them in one or two paragraphs. Sometimes it takes more space. You should be the judge of how much space is adequate. Hopefully, your judgment will be based on the size and scope of your research. Elements 5-6 must be present throughout the paper! 7. at the end of your paper... the very End... in the same file as

your paper... not as a separate attachment in a separate email sent a few days after the deadline.

Your grade will reflect the presence and quality of each of these elements.

Research Question

Your research question should generally have the following identifiable elements:

- Content words: concepts, issues, and/or theories that your essay will address and/or involve
- Indicative words (sometimes presumptions): what does the question require the researcher to do? Describe or explain? What is the object of your investigation?
- The context of the question: what debate is the question located in? Is there a historical context? An analytic/theoretical background? What is the significance of this question in the given context (what's at stake)?

Answering the question

Obviously, research and critical reading. You have to read the material with your research question in mind. Do not rely on a textbook only. Textbooks are too general and introductory. Chances are you will not find anything useful in them for your particular paper. Textbooks are useful to orient yourself within the more specific and technical literature. Use them for that purpose. Once you are comfortable with the general knowledge on the field, start looking into more specific literature. Often, your textbook will have a list of

further reading or references to the leading scholars in the topic that you are interested in. Take advantage of that. Usually, writing a paper means that once you are finished, you will have gained a more advanced knowledge on the topic of your paper. Writing a paper must not mean that you only retell what you already know about the topic. Your standard here is a simple question: at the end of the assignment, do you know more about the topic than is minimally required for the course?

Argument

Your argument is your opinion backed up by evidence drawn from research and developed analytically. Your argument should address your research question directly. It should also reflect the nature of your question: if your question probes causal relationship between two factors/phenomena, then your argument should contain causal logic (A is caused by B in XYZ conditions); if your question probes a correlation between various factors/phenomena, then your argument should state something like 'change in A is followed by a change in B whether positively or inversely, or whatever other ways correlations might exist; if your question is a normative one, i.e. how things should be, then your argument should be normative, not positive².

Your argument must answer the question directly and take a clear position. It should have coherence between premises, an explanation

² Normative – how things 'should be'; often a theoretical argument or an argument based on some theory; positive – how things are, a depiction of

the objective world without any value judgement (i.e. that it is good or bad, or normative judgement)

of why something may happen³, and evidence for why your argument is valid/correct/right.

In good essays, the argument drives the essay. In not very good essays, the argument is derivative. In its simple form, a good essay will develop an argument, provide and discuss supporting points, consider objections to the argument and shows how these objections may be addressed or overcome. A derivative essay may proceed by considering one view, then another view, and state in the conclusion which view is more convincing.

A good argument should be clear and confident, supported by evidence, well-balanced, and aware of its limitations. Here are some general points to consider when developing an argument:

- Consider and refute the most prominent objections to your argument. Examine secondary literature to get a better understanding of these objections and counter-arguments.
- Be concise and clear. Do not try to include everything you know about the argument. Include key and essential information.
- Highlight the limitations of your argument: what is it unable to prove or grasp, and why it cannot do so. Knowing the limitations of one's argument shows critical self-awareness and understanding, not lack of knowledge and understanding.
- Do your best to develop your own original argument and keep in mind that you must provide solid evidence and justification for your ideas. These are available in primary and secondary sources.

- Do not assume that what lots of contemporary scholars think is necessarily more justified than the primary thinker. For example, the statement that 'Hobbes thought that monarchy was the best form of government but now we have come to realize that democracies are far more preferable' is not a good argument. If you think democracies are more preferable, you have to demonstrate and justify why and why Hobbes was wrong about monarchies.
- Do not be overly dismissive of the primary thinker's or scholar's arguments and do not misconstrue their ideas, arguments, positions. For example, avoid statements like 'Hobbes did not realize the importance of human rights'. If you want to argue against Hobbes about rights, you have to engage with Hobbes' arguments (e.g. rights are the problem and must be given up).
- Do not adopt a rhetorical style. E.g. rhetorical questions and refutations. Your paper should not read like a newspaper article.

Structure

You may already know about introduction, body, and conclusion. In all essays, developing a clear structure is essential. The essay must be structured around an argument (the argument that addresses the main question/problem directly). The introduction of the essay must make the argument clear and specify the steps that were taken to develop and support the argument (methodology).

Every paragraph should contribute something to the argument. They should either provide background information, outline the conceptual/theoretical framework, provide, evaluate, and discuss

³ Not just a general statement of the fact. Do your best at explaining why something happens (cause or contributing factors) and its significance.

key evidence, demonstrate or illustrate points that support the argument. There are many other functions paragraphs can take in your essay. Check this when proof-reading your essay. If a paragraph has no discernible purpose for the argument, it requires major revisions.

Please make sure that your introductions introduce your paper: what is the question/problem you are addressing, why is it important, what is your answer (argument), how you are going to go about to make your case for your answer (methodology). State your argument as clearly and directly as possible. It is permissible to use the I pronoun in introductory paragraphs: 'In this essay, I argue that...' – but do not overuse it.

A good introduction:

- Demonstrates your understanding of the topic (context, etc. Look above again on question and argument)
- Defines key terms, theories, concepts, etc.
- Provides a clear statement of your argument: your answer to the essay question
- Signposts the structure of the essay and, if applicable, methodology
- Uses active voice and contains no padding⁴; every single word is essential and used precisely
- Demonstrates independent thought, i.e. that you are not about to embark on a mediocre retelling of the latest publication on realism with illustrations.

Introductions, body's, and conclusions – THE ESSAY – must be organized around your answer. Outline your supporting points and

⁴ Greatest scholar, philosopher, important topic, has influenced many people and is the reason asteroids visit Earth frequently but aliens don't

ensure logical connections are made. Make sure you are picking the key points, not the less relevant ones⁵.

The conclusion should draw the argument together.

The body of the essay:

- **Structure:** Use proper paragraphs with key sentences that get to the point. Each paragraph has its own mini argument and purpose in the essay.
- **Rationale:** the rationale for the structure should be thoughtful and explicit. For example: There should be a reason for choosing one method over another; there must be a reason why you will describe some things in more detail than others; there must be a reason why you included this author and not the other, there must be a reason why you included, for example, a table. Never have any illustrations (tables, graphs, stats) if you are not going to discuss them sufficiently.
- **Coherence:** there should be a logical and consistent progression of the argument. One point leads to another point, then the next one. Evidence A shows B and points in the direction of Evidence C. What extrapolations are possible? Coherence should exist in the terminology and the conceptual framework as well. For example, writing with the aim to analyze some political phenomena according to the realist framework because reality is a socially constructed concept and we can fight this construction by increasing cooperation and economic interdependence with the end goal of establishing a global supra-government that will finally show the UN how to rule the world and bring it to order properly is an example of

⁵ Plug in the less relevant ones if you need to fill the word count but don't count on the faculty to highlight it as one of the strengths of your essay

incoherent conceptual/theoretical framework that combines various conflicting strands of realism, liberalism, constructivism with a rant about the UN. If you intend to do an analysis assuming a realist framework, then do so in a manner that is coherent and consistent with realism. Then present a competing point of view based on another theoretical framework, if you wish. Provide an argument for why you prefer one over the other.

- **Consistency:** The key points should support your answer. This aspect is closely connected to the bit above on **coherence**. If you are drawing on contradictory evidence, building relationships or extrapolating, deducing on theories and concepts that are not consistent with each other or your units of analysis – your essay will be inconsistent.

Make sure your essay uses appropriate academic language. Most importantly, stop referring to 'YOU' unless you want to address the reader directly. You know what I mean? Make sure you are not using malapropisms: no one is making 'America Grate Again'.

Check your grammar. Please give it to your peer to proofread.

Check your spelling thoroughly. MS Word spelling checker is an impostor or imposter.

Using primary sources

The primary source in your essay will be the main text of the thinker or scholar that you are reading (in the latter case, the source has to be the scholar's original work). Other forms of primary sources might be archives, speeches, data sets, interviews – in short, all the material with original content. You must reference the primary sources throughout your essay because this will be your evidence for having read the material. Do not cite secondary sources for references to

arguments or ideas available in the primary source. For example, if you state 'Plao argued...' 'Lijphart showed...' then you should refer and cite to the original (primary sources) written by Plato and Lihphart, not textbooks or secondary sources that discuss Plato and Lijphart. This is particularly important in the section of your essay where you outline the primary thinker's or source's arguments.

Using secondary sources

Normally, there are two ways to use secondary sources. The first is to give information not provided in the primary source. This information might be contextual or historical information or even information on what the primary thinker or scholar argued in other works that you are not expected to have read for your course.

The second way is more important and difficult and is your opportunity to develop and demonstrate your understanding and analytical skills. This way is to engage critically with the secondary literature in developing your argument. Critical engagement involves evaluating arguments instead of summarizing them. Critical engagement is easier if you read sources that disagree with your argument. Keep in mind that you must justify your critical points about sources.

In short:

- Do not just provide summary of the secondary literature, critically evaluate what is written there
- Do not defer to secondary literature. For example, Popper's argument that Plato provides a blueprint for a totalitarian society is not evidence that Plato does, in fact, provide a blueprint for a totalitarian society. You must work that out by yourself.

- Do not reference secondary literature when you should be referencing primary literature – this implies that you have not read the primary text.

Assessment Criteria:

Please refer to your course syllabus and/or your professor to learn more specifically about the assessment criteria. Your work will be assessed against four general criteria:

- Knowledge and understanding of the subject material
- Analytic skills (ability to make judgements based on evidence)
- Use of research-informed literature
- Communication skills: grammar, presentation, citation and referencing, language, clarity of expression.

Please see section on ‘Assessment Criteria at ICP’ for details.

ICP Presentation Tips

A lot of the ICP courses also rely on student presentations to help aid student learning experience and development. Student presentations are essential in developing and improving communication skills and confidence in students. A student presentation, similar to a paper, is an opportunity for the students to gain more in-depth knowledge about a certain topic or an issue. Students must always refer to the course syllabus on guidelines for the presentation. Below is general advice on how to make a successful presentation.

First and foremost, a successful student presentation does not simply retell material from the lecture or the required reading. A successful presentation focuses on something specific from the lecture or the course material, for example, a case study, and expands on it. In

other words, a successful presentation requires research and preparation.

A good presentation is informative, conceptually sound, analytic, and engaging.

Students must ensure that their presentation demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the core material. The core material may be the minimum requirement for the course, the conceptual vocabulary and/or the information that all the students in the given course must know and understand. It is important to go over the key relevant points of the core material. It is not necessary to make the core material the centrepiece of the presentation unless specified in the syllabus or expressly required by the professor.

Second, student presentation must demonstrate that an appropriate and deeper and broader research than is minimally required for the rest of the class has been conducted.

Third, a good presentation demonstrates the conceptual grasp of issues, quality of argument, and must be able to provide answers to questions from the audience. Conceptual grasp is demonstrated in the ability of the presenter to generalize specific phenomena and/or institutions by using available conceptual and/or theoretical positions in a meaningful and analytic manner. A lot of the aspects of presentation contain an argument. Generalizing a phenomenon is supported by an argument that shows the relevance of the theoretical framework to the given phenomena supported by further examples that show a similar relationship. A presentation that focuses on a case study also contains an analytic aspect, i.e. an evaluation of a given case against the core course material or some other context – this evaluation must also be backed up by an

argument that highlights relationships and draws on existing evidence.

You are not expected to know everything about the topic of your presentation. However, you are expected to be able to provide answers to questions relating to the key aspects of your presentation. If you do not know the answer to a question, try to give reasons for why you may not know the answer: it could be outside the scope of your presentation, it could just be that you are yet to research it.

Structure of the presentation: Broadly speaking, a good presentation consists of an effective introduction, elaboration of major points, and an effective conclusion. And, of course, sources (references).

- **Effective introduction:** you must at all times introduce your presentation in addition to introducing your topic. Give the audience a brief introduction about the main parts of your presentation and your argument. Explain the significance of your topic and try to identify who or what is the topic significant for.
- **Elaboration of major points:** your major points will vary depending on your topic. Generally, the major points are the key events, institutions, definitions, theories, concepts, that will help the audience understand your presentation. Provide only the necessary information and leave the less relevant background information for the Q&A session. If you are presenting a case study, you are also expected to provide the key background information in this section.
- **Effective conclusion:** in this section, you must draw all your key points together to make a strong and clear conclusion. Try to consider what you would like your audience to remember most about your presentation when they leave the classroom and forget most of the information.

A good presentation also engages its audience where necessary and relevant. Peer engagement normally involves providing discussion points and/or questions that will allow the audience to respond. Try to touch upon their existing knowledge and understanding that is relevant to your presentation. If you wish to facilitate a good discussion, do not ask trivial questions that check your peers' memory. Instead, ask open-ended questions that probe their opinions. Invite your audience to back up their opinions with argument and evidence. If someone disagrees with your presentation or your peers' opinion, it is usually a good leeway into an interesting and engaging discussion.

Your presentation may also benefit from additional examples, illustrations, case studies done by others, tables, and graphs. If you wish to include a video clip, make sure that the video clip does not take too much time from your presentation. Video clips must have a defined and obvious purpose in your presentation. They should not simply do your presentation for you. Make sure that you discuss your video clip.

Avoiding Plagiarism

In order to avoid plagiarism in your writing, consider keeping the following tips in mind;

1. **Citing properly.** It is advisable to gain proper familiarity, preferably at an early stage of education, with the standard requirements of a chosen citation and referencing style. Where there are no specific preferences or requirements in terms of citation and referencing styles indicated by your course instructors, we recommend the following formats, commonly used in political science – APA, Chicago and APSA, or Harvard.

2. **Paraphrasing.** Paraphrasing can be a valuable technique for conveying an author's ideas or arguments in your words and consequently avoiding plagiarism issues. A properly written paraphrase permits to avoid using too many direct quotes, a strategy that often undermines the coherency and overall quality of your writing, and articulate the main ideas or arguments with a sufficient level of clarity, brevity and understanding. In effect, it entails making substantial re-arrangements in the structure of sentences and avoiding a mere replacement of words in a sentence with synonyms. The latter could be potentially considered as an improper form of paraphrasing and result in unintentional plagiarism due to a misunderstanding of paraphrasing criteria.

Please, note further that each paraphrased sentence in a paragraph or passage needs to be cited individually. Providing a single citation at the end of the paragraph, which was entirely paraphrased, indicates that only the last paraphrased sentence was accompanied by a clear acknowledgement of the source and fails to establish which of the preceding sentences are paraphrased or represent own ideas and arguments. Depending on the course, such a failure to meet standard paraphrasing requirements could result in a considerable reduction of the final grade, or an automatic failing grade, on the assignment.

3. **Using a reference manager.** In order to ensure that your citations and references are organized in both an efficient and proper way, it may be reasonable to use an electronic reference manager, such as Mendeley, EndNote, RefWorks or Zotero. In general, and despite technical variations, such systems can help you to sync academic works and corresponding reference details across multiple electronic

devices, instantly generate citations and reference or bibliographical lists and save your time and energy.

4. **Editing your writing.** Producing a quality piece of writing normally requires consistent work and effort in the form of self-editing and improving the overall quality of your writing. The same rationale applies to the accuracy and appropriateness of your citations and references as editing would help you to detect potential issues with direct quotes or come up with better and proper ways to paraphrase an author's ideas or arguments in order to eschew unintentional plagiarism.
5. **Consulting with your course instructor.** In order to obtain a more detailed information on what constitutes plagiarism or discuss any doubtful instances of potential plagiarism, consider consulting with your course instructors or academic advisors. However, because of the infeasibility to ask your course instructor, or any other faculty, to check the entire draft for plagiarism or improper paraphrasing, it will be your sole responsibility for both preventing plagiarism and facing the consequences of plagiarism.
6. **Note-taking technique:** make sure that, while you are reading and taking notes, you keep accurate records of the bibliographic information: author, title, year, publication details of the source, and page numbers (where relevant). Keep a clear distinction between word-for-word copies, paraphrases, and your own words, thoughts, observations. If you have taken an idea from a source without a specific reference point in the text, make a clear note of that.

VI. Assessment Criteria at ICP

The following criteria are intended to be a general guideline for the assessors of student written work and students. Assessors may vary in their interpretation of the criteria depending on the intended learning outcomes of their particular courses. These guidelines may be used as a reference point for grade disputes between professors and students.

Written works at ICP are generally assessed against four broad criteria.

1. Knowledge and understanding of the subject
2. Critical and analytic skills
3. Use of research-informed literature
4. Communication and transferrable skills

Students are reminded that their grade is determined as a result of assessing different aspects of their work. The final grade cannot simply reflect the strengths of the essay in some of the criteria but not the weaknesses in others. Only a case of plagiarism and cheating overrides all the criteria of the assessment.

General Definitions and Explanation of Assessment Criteria

Knowledge and understanding of the subject: This refers to the substantive content of the written work: empirical evidence, theoretical terminology, and conceptual definitions that are relevant to the subject. These constitute the 'knowledge' bit of the criterion. With regards to 'understanding', assessors evaluate the students' ability to translate and/or apply that knowledge into general and/or

specific statements (deductions and inductions), their ability to interpret the information (be it terminology, concept, or statistical data), and if appropriate, their ability to extrapolate from their knowledge, and the students' ability to elaborate on the conclusions they reach by extrapolation. Students must be able to demonstrate a sound grasp of issues (theoretical, conceptual, empirical, logical, ethical, moral) raised by the knowledge and evidence used and demonstrated in the written work. Students must be able to demonstrate a grasp of the way in which concepts and terms are related to one another, and how their assumptions (theoretical or otherwise) are or can be constructed based on those relationships. A successful written work must not demonstrate the ability to restate information only.

Critical and analytic skills: This refers to the analysis the students present. Is their analysis based on evidence, prior knowledge, and experience? Is it a mere unsubstantiated opinion? Is the student relying on a simple restatement from other sources without critical/analytic engagement with the sources? Is the evidence used reliable and have the students demonstrated their critical standards for judging the reliability of the information and their sources? Students' ability to construct an argument with an identifiable, coherent, and systematic thread of reasoning based on standard norms of argumentation, reasoning, and logic must be evaluated as part of this criterion. This criterion also refers to the students' ability to evaluate and reflect: the degree to which the students used the material presented in their written work to draw thoughtful and reflective conclusions. Based on this criterion, assessors evaluate whether the student is developing a critical argument which supports a defensible conclusion through the presentation of appropriate

knowledge and reasoning. Also assessed is the students' awareness of the limitations of their argument(s) and the evidence, theories, terms, and concepts, and logics of explanation they rely on to make a case for their argument. A poorly written work typically lists several sources that might agree/disagree with the student's opinion and either accept/dismiss them very quickly on broad terms and/or on personal and unsubstantiated opinions or ignore them altogether.

Use of research-informed literature: This criterion refers to the degree of research conducted and reflected in the written work, i.e. how well-researched is the written work. This must not necessarily refer to just how many sources are cited in the written work. Assessors evaluate the students' ability to organize their material, reconstruct the substantive bits – debates and competing positions, for example – in ways that add quality to the scholarship of the written work. Also, the students must demonstrate their ability to assess the relevance of the research-informed material and their ability to incorporate the material into their work. Most commonly, a poorly written work treats the essay as a scrapbook into which the student has collected snippets of quotations and paraphrases tied together by transition words and sentences. Use of research-informed literature must allow students to improve their skills in producing independent and higher quality scholarship.

Communication and transferrable skills: This criterion refers to general (not discipline-specific) skills in communicating and presenting the information. Different tasks develop different transferrable skills in students. Presumably, written work develops in students the ability to communicate their thought and reasoning in written form. This means that students' ability to communicate clearly and succinctly with proper and formal use of language is

assessed. Assessors evaluate how the information is communicated: spelling, punctuation and grammar (NB: students are advised to pay particular attention to syntax), paragraphing, vocabulary, and formality. Other assessed transferrable skills might be the ability to receive and process information, ability to work with others, ability to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. Poorly written works commonly demonstrate below adequate levels of language skills; they involve use of informal language, demonstrate systematic inability to construct complex compound sentences correctly, they do not have a rich vocabulary (general or discipline-specific). Assessors, therefore, will push students to achieve acceptable levels of formality, complexity, and grammar. Students are strongly advised to proof-read their works at least once before submission. Occasional errors are permissible but only if it is obvious to the assessor that these errors are not systematic. Poorly written papers consistently demonstrate similar grammar errors, consistently misspell words, consistently misuse words, consistently engage in malapropisms, consistently demonstrate problems in punctuation and paragraphing, consistently demonstrate unawareness of formal uses of language.

Assessment of written work

The following criteria are used in the assessment of written work. Students may use the same criteria in order to assess their own work for improvement.

1. Definition of the topic
 - Has the topic been clearly defined and directly addressed?
2. Structure of the essay
 - Does the introduction present a clear statement of the issues to be covered?

- Does the essay have a clear structure or organisation in which a) the main points are developed logically; and b) the relevance of the material to the theme or argument is clear?
- Is there an effective conclusion which draws together the main points?

3. Content

- Is there evidence of adequate reading and research?
- Has the question been answered?
- Is the breadth of coverage adequate?
- Are the issues and ideas analysed in sufficient depth?
- Are arguments supported by evidence, examples, sources and quotations?

4. Analysis

- Are the arguments logical and consistent?
- Are opinions based on evidence and/or logic?
- Does the essay show evidence of original or independent thought?

5. Presentation

- Fluency and style of writing
- Spelling, grammar, paragraphing
- Presentation of data: effective use of figures and tables and correct use of units and quantities
- Neatness and legibility
- Sources: are sources acknowledged? Are references cited? Are the references presented correctly?

Assessment rubric

The Assessment Rubric is to serve as a guideline for assessors and students in determining the quality of work and the grade that is commensurate with the demonstrated quality. Students are advised

to use the rubric as a standard to strive for. It is best to attempt to understand your professor's feedback in light of the rubric. Please see the Appendices for the Assessment Rubric relevant for each level of study at ICP.

Assessment of Exams

Some classes may rely on in-class, timed exams. Your professor will clarify the general terms and conditions for the exam. Some exams may be closed-note exams; some may be open-book exams.

A closed-note exam means that students are not allowed to use any sources in order to provide the answers to the exam questions. An open-book exam means that students may use their lecture notes or a combination of lecture notes and reading material during the exam. Students must always follow the instructions provided by the professors.

Exams are broadly assessed against similar criteria as ICP papers, though some of the criteria may be waived or loosened. Knowledge and understanding of the subject, as well as critical and analytical skills, remain as the core criteria of evaluation of the exam scripts. That means that your answers to the questions must demonstrate your best knowledge and understanding of the material. Depending on the nature of the question, you may require an argument, i.e. you must provide your opinion backed up by an argument that is informed by your knowledge and understanding of the topic.

A good answer in an exam is driven by an argument that addresses the main question directly. The argument is supported by a substantive discussion that draws from your knowledge and understanding of the course material (these may be concepts, theories, definitions, examples, case studies, institutions, organizations). The answer is written in a structured and organized

manner. In other words, it has a clear introduction, main body, and conclusion. The argument is balanced and addresses counter-arguments to the best of the student's ability.

A poor answer is unstructured and disorganized. No argument addresses the main question directly. The discussion is broadly general, based on superficial knowledge with minimal understanding of the course material. Discussion includes extraneous and irrelevant information. The essay format is not followed. A poor answer may also consist of one or a series of personal opinions that are not supported by an argument and sufficient evidence.

Students must ensure that they understand the nature of the exam questions. Some questions may be descriptive and require knowledge of the course material only. Other questions may be open-ended and require critical and analytical thought in order to provide a satisfactory answer.

Generally, a student that has been a regular attendee of lectures and seminars and who has kept up with the minimum reading requirements of the course is expected to do well in an exam.

Assessment of presentations

Students are invited to ensure they fully understand the professor's minimum requirements for the presentations and make their best effort at meeting them. Generally, student presentations must

- Demonstrate sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject material and the specific topic of their presentation.
- Demonstrate that the student has conducted sufficiently deep and broad research on the topic of the presentation.
- Demonstrate a conceptual grasp of issues. Students must be able to show how the specific examples they use or cases they present may be interpreted by or belong to a conceptual

framework or a theory that is relevant to the subject. Often, this ability is demonstrated by the quality of generalizations, i.e. what and how can specific institutions, trends, and/or phenomena can be generalized conceptually.

- Be based on a strong argument
- Demonstrate the ability to answer questions
- Be structured and organized by an effective introduction, elaboration of the key points, and an effective conclusion.
- Depending on the requirements of the professor, engage the audience in a discussion, invite and be responsive to questions from the audience
- Contain necessary information in the form of (where relevant) background information, examples, illustrations, graphs, tables, case studies, references to research-informed literature, concepts and theories.
- Diligently cite all the sources throughout the presentation and provide the bibliographic information in the correct format (please do not simply provide bare links at the end of the presentation! Use correct citation format to include all the necessary bibliographic information).

Assessment of Participation:

Student participation in the seminars is essential to the student learning experience and the achievement of the courses' intended learning outcomes. Whether student participation will be assessed and rewarded accordingly (and the specific criteria for assessment) is determined by the professors and may vary from course to course. Whatever the case, the primary goal of student participation in seminars is not grading. The primary goal is to encourage students to critically reflect about the information they received from the lecture and the reading material, develop in students a deeper understanding of the course material, allow students to critically engage with one another, demonstrate to students the benefits of

dialogical engagement and disagreement, allow students to pose questions and examine more closely the points that are of interest to them, and for the professor to push the students towards higher levels of knowledge and understanding of the subject material. A seminar can only be as good as the student contributions.

If the participation is assessed and graded, then students must be mindful that professors tend to assess the regularity and quality of the student contributions. Professors value student questions in the same manner they value student answers to their questions. Please also note that there are different types of questions that may bear different influence on your participation grade. To that effect, students are encouraged to come to the seminars with questions that emerged when they were preparing and reviewing for the seminar. Regular participation in seminars by asking questions, responding to student questions and comments, engaging your peers in a discussion add to the value of your participation.

ICP Grading Scale

Percentage Range	Grade
96 - 100	A
91 - 95	A-
86 - 90	B+
81 - 85	B
76 - 80	B-
71 - 75	C+
66 - 70	C
61 - 65	C-
56 - 60	D+
51 - 55	D
46 - 50	D-
45 – or less	F

How to interpret and understand your grade? (see also the Appendix 1: Assessment Rubric)

Grades that fall within the 96 - 100 range are considered as ‘outstanding’ works in class.

The ones within the 91-95 range are considered to have ‘excellent’ qualities.

Grades between the 76 – 90 range are considered between ‘good’ and ‘very good’ with varying degrees of success in meeting the assessment criteria.

Grades between 61 – 75 are considered as ‘competent’ with varying degrees of demonstrated competence in meeting the assessment criteria.

Grades between the 46 – 60 range are considered as ‘poor’ with varying degrees of areas that require significant improvement in order to meet the assessment criteria with relative success.

A grade equivalent of 45 means that the submitted work fails to meet the minimum standards of the assignment.

Grades below 45 indicate significant and systematic problems and/or complete or near-complete noncompliance with the minimum standards of the assignment and/or academic standards.

Students that systematically receive grade equivalents of 45 or below must consider complete revisions in their study strategy, writing skills, and any other skills and knowledge necessary to complete the assignment with relative success. Your professor and/or advisor might be able to help direct you in the direction of improvement. Therefore, you are highly encouraged to seek advice for improvement from your professor and/or advisor.

VII. Extracurricular activities at ICP

Besides taking courses students can engage in various other learning activities provided through the Department's centers as well as projects. The Department has several centers that which facilitate academic development and scholarly/public outreach for its faculty and students. Besides established centers the department also occasionally initiates students' led research projects as well as such activities as crisis games. Participation in the work of centers or in projects can be part of extra-curricular activities, or in many cases it can be counted towards internship requirements as well.

ICP centers

Development Clinic is the civic engagement initiative of the Department. It aims at facilitating development of civic engagement skills by the department's students. Students in the past were designing and implementing education programs at the municipal center for homeless children, developing environmental and other initiatives.

The Clinic works by facilitating students organizing their initiatives which aim to address social issues in communities around the campus. Besides this, the Clinic partners with non-profit organizations where students can be placed as volunteers/interns and gain valuable civic engagement and project management experience.

Panorama Politics Club was founded by alumni and faculty of the Department to discuss and analyze important political issues in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia. It works through organizing regular roundtables, commissioning short policy and political analysis briefs

to be developed its students, faculty and department associates. More information about the club is available at www.panorama.kg

The Variety of Democracy Institute's **Regional Center for Central Asia** was founded in October 2016 at the American University of Central Asia to study dynamics of regime change and post-soviet transformation in Central Asia and other parts of the post-soviet space. Its activities are aimed to support and advance scholarship in this area through research projects. The center is focused on the study of political regime dynamics and political transformation of the region through research, conducting academic conferences, workshops, roundtables and summer schools as well as through public events. More information about V-Dem is available at <https://v-dem.net>

Extra-curricular activities

Students led research projects aim at developing research skills by students in designing and implementing projects which may also have potential for wider civic education. These projects are done under the guidance of faculty and produce data collection by students which can be beneficial for project participants as well as for other scholars. In the past students were collecting data on political elite and on elections in Kyrgyzstan. Some of these students later on defended successful theses based on these data. One of the recent projects is *Central Asian Political History* (www.caph.space) which started with the oral histories of Perestroika in Kyrgyzstan where students mostly were organizing and undertaking themselves their interviews and study of archives.

Besides, the Department organizes annual **international crisis games** where students enhance their communication skills as well as learn about major international issues by playing real political actors. Students can take part in games that are organized for students, or

can become co-organizers in games that are organized for high school students.

VIII. ICP Teaching Assistant Program

The ICP TA Program aims to provide experience and support to ICP students who intend to pursue a career in higher education. The Program invites outstanding third and fourth-year students enrolled in the ICP program as their Majors to submit their applications when the respective call for applications is announced via the regular ICP communication lines. Teaching Assistants may be recruited for one term or for the entire academic year.

Successful applicants are expected to assist in the teaching and administration of the 'Introductory' level ICP Courses. The assignment will be arranged by the Department upon the agreement of the relevant faculty.

Interested candidates are required to submit their CV, Statements of Purpose, and a Teaching Statement that outlines the candidate's philosophy on teaching in higher education and a statement on any teaching methods they are already familiar with. Successful candidates will be invited for an interview with the Department and relevant ICP faculty member.

Participation in the ICP TA Program may count towards the required internship credit hours in the ICP curriculum. Candidates that wish to teach for an entire academic year may seek permission from the Internship Course coordinator to cover the required credits for both Internship I and II courses. Students seeking such an arrangement must understand that the primary intent of the Department in this arrangement is to benefit only the students that aim to matriculate into graduate programs and pursue an academic career as a scholar and a teacher. Therefore, students that wish to establish such an

arrangement must convincingly demonstrate their motivations in their Statement of Purpose.

Duties and Responsibilities of Teaching Assistants

The duties and responsibilities of the TA's may vary depending on the needs of the course and faculty. Generally, TA's are expected to

- Assist course and assessment administration
- Assist course development
- Teach at least three seminars, in which at least one is co-taught with faculty, at least one seminar is observed by faculty and at least one seminar without the faculty.
- Assist the assessment of written work (subject to approval by relevant faculty and agreement from the relevant faculty to moderate the grades awarded by the TA).
- Students intending to count the program towards internship credits must write a report entitled "Critical Reflection on My Role as Teaching Assistant" and submit it to the Internship Course Coordinator.

ICP TA Program Requirements

- ICP students in their 3rd or 4th year of studies
- GPA above 3.0
- Proven record of outstanding performance in ICP-related courses
- Proven record of excellence in written and oral communication in English

('Proven record' may be a recommendation or a reference letter from ICP faculty supplemented with academic transcript)

IX. Policies and Procedures

Submission of work, academic honesty, and penalties

Submission of work

Students may find specific information on the submission procedure for each course in the course syllabus. Normally, students are asked to either submit their works via E-Mail or E-Course. These matters are normally introduced in the first lecture along with the syllabus.

Written work must be submitted in Microsoft Word format. You may receive a zero for an assignment that is submitted in a file format that requires unconventional and/or unavailable software on AUCA computers.

Formatting

It is the student's responsibility to submit their work in the required format. Any incorrect submissions that may result in a late submission may be subject to penalties as a late submission. Students are advised to always submit their written works in MS Word format unless instructed otherwise.

We advise the following text fonts and sizes: Calibri (size 12), Times New Roman (size 12), and Arial (size 11). Your instructor may have specific requirements for the spacing between the lines. Therefore, make sure you check the syllabus for specific requirements on font, size, and spacing. Normally, it is acceptable to submit works with 1.15-1.5 spacing.

There are no strict requirements on text alignment unless stated otherwise by your professor. 'Justified' alignment may look better aesthetically, but it may create problems if you have sophisticated graphics or other elements in your text.

Word Counts

The student must always comply with the word count requirements for every written assignment. Failing to do so may affect your grades negatively. It is important that students keep to the word length specified for each assignment at all times in order for faculty to:

- Encourage succinct, precise, and clear writing by students
- Ensure fairness and equality between all the students undergoing the same assessment

The permissible margin for going over or under the specified word length is 10%. For example, if the specified word length (word count) for your essay is 1000 words, the word length of your submitted work may be between 900 words at minimum or 1100 words maximum. Anything less or more than the permitted margin may be penalized by the assessor.

Citation and Referencing

Students must keep in mind the standards and requirements of Academic Honesty and Integrity. All sources and references must be cited appropriately according to a known citation format and style. Students are reminded that even mistaken omission of citation may be counted as failure to cite and reference their work appropriately, therefore as a case of unintended plagiarism.

Please note that, among other more obvious references you may be familiar with, such phrases as 'according to X', 'X believes', 'X argues', 'according to Y's theory', 'according to Z school of thought' are references as well. Therefore, they too must be cited accordingly.

There is a range of citation styles and formats you may choose from. You may choose to use in-text citation formats or footnote citation formats. Choose the style that is most convenient for you and choose

the format that is appropriate for your style. At ICP, we recommend that students use either APSA, APA, Harvard, or Chicago.

Furthermore, all submitted works with citations must have a list of references with all the necessary bibliographic information written in a way that complies with your chosen format. Your list of references normally comes at the end of your essay. Please note that students that use in-text citation styles must title their list of references as 'Works Cited' and students that like to use footnote citation style must title their list of references as 'Bibliography'.

It is the students' responsibility to take the time to learn about the citation style and format they wish to use. A good source may be available at the AUCA library. You are also welcome to use Purdue University Online Writing Lab at <https://owl.purdue.edu> for more information on different kinds of citation styles and formats.

Students must make note that there are differences between citing electronic sources, chapters in edited volumes, newspaper articles online or in print, blogs, videos, periodicals, etc depending on their chose citation style and format. Failure to cite every source correctly may negatively affect your grade or result in an accusation of plagiarism.

Penalties for late submission

The penalty for late submission of student work is -10% of the mark for the assignment for each day from the deadline⁶. It is the students' responsibility to ensure the timely submission of their work.

⁶ For example, if you submitted your work two days late, it means the penalty for the late submission is -20%. That is, if your work received 85

Penalties for coming under or going over the required word count

Any word lengths that are under or over the 10% margin from the required word length are subject to penalty. If your word count is:

- Between 10%-20% over or under the required word length, the penalty is -5 points from your mark for the assignment
- 20% or more: your grade for the assignment will be capped at C. (It means the maximum grade your work can receive for this assignment is C)

Penalties for Cheating and Plagiarism

Plagiarism and Cheating

Please refer to your AUCA Student Handbook for more information about Academic Misconduct and Dishonesty. The way faculty at ICP understand and deal with plagiarism and cheating is compliant with the AUCA policy on Academic Misconduct and Dishonesty.

At AUCA, as well as ICP, there is a 'zero tolerance' policy on plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating are against AUCA rules on academic honesty.

Plagiarism and cheating are defined as any illegitimate behavior designed to deceive those setting, administering and grading the assessment. They may take various forms, including:

- The use of unauthorized books, notes, electronic aids or other materials in an examination

points, your final grade for the assignment will be 68 because $85 - 20\% = 68$.

- Obtaining an examination script ahead of its authorized release
- Acting dishonestly in any way including the fabrication of data, whether before, during or after an examination or other assessment so as to either obtain or offer to others an unfair advantage in that examination or assessment;
- Collusion i.e. the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing, where the owner of the work knows of the situation and both parties work towards the deceit of the marker. (In plagiarism the author of the work has not knowingly authorized the use of her or his work).
- Plagiarism i.e. the act of representing another's work or idea as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing. There are three main types of plagiarism:
 1. Direct copying from a book, article, fellow student's essay, student or lecturer's handout, thesis, web page or other source without proper acknowledgement.
 2. Claiming individual ideas derived from a book, article, handout, thesis, web page or other source as one's own, and incorporating them into one's own work without acknowledging the source of these ideas.
 3. Overly depending on the work of one or more works (as outlined above) without proper acknowledgement of the source. By, for example, constructing a piece of written work based on extracting large sections of text from another source and merely linking these together with a few of one's own sentences.

Penalties for plagiarism

The consequences of accusation in plagiarism and/or cheating are:

- **First offence:** you get a zero for the assignment, a formal warning from your professor, and will be included in the ICP Departmental Watchlist of students that have a proven record of plagiarism.
- **Second offence:** you get a zero for the course, effectively failing the course. Your record on the ICP Departmental Watchlist will be updated accordingly.
- **Third offence:** highly likely expulsion from the program or the university.

Please note that your record of plagiarism cases travels with you throughout your undergraduate education. For example, if you are caught with plagiarism in two different courses, they will count as two offences. Also note that severe cases of plagiarism or cheating may result in immediate expulsion.

Appealing grades and results of the assessment

Grades may be changed only in exceptional circumstances⁷ or when there has been an error in the calculations.

The object of assessment is the work submitted or performed in class, not the person submitting or performing. Therefore, all student claims about their work must be demonstrated beyond doubt in the work submitted or performed.

⁷ See 'Mitigating Circumstances'

In cases of grade disputes, students are welcome to exercise their right to appeal their case to the AUCA Academic Appeals Committee. The AUCA Academic Appeals Committee is the only body at the University that is formally charged with the responsibility to consider student appeals on grade disputes. Therefore, grade disputes between faculty and students are only resolved through the process of application to the Academic Appeals Committee.

Students are strongly recommended to **consult the 'Bylaws' of the Academic Appeals Committee** available on the official AUCA website before they approach the committee members with their case⁸.

[Procedure for grade appeals](#)

The Bylaws of the AAC require that the student first make a good faith effort at resolving the dispute with their professor. After having exhausted that option, students must consult the Department Chair. After having exhausted the second option, the student may appeal to the AAC. To reiterate, professors rarely change grades unless there are genuinely exceptional and verifiable circumstances presented by the student.

ICP has a **'zero tolerance' policy on student intimidation**. ICP faculty have the right to immediately report any case of intimidation to the Head of the ICP Department or the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. Any student that resorts to any form of intimidation (including emotional, blackmailing, threatening) of the AUCA faculty shall be referred to appropriate disciplinary procedures at AUCA. Some cases of intimidation may result in expulsion from AUCA. Students are reminded that their communication with AUCA faculty

and staff is taken seriously. Therefore, any claims they make must strictly reflect objective facts and supported by verifiable evidence.

[Conditions for grade disputes](#)

Students must note that grade disputes must have objective and verifiable grounds.

Grounds for 'grade dispute': procedural irregularities in the grading of the course, for example, the grading procedures outlined in the syllabus or the ICP Handbook are not followed or applied to all students in the same class.

Resolution of grade disputes follow the procedure outlined in the AAC Bylaws.

Unacceptable/insufficient grounds for grade disputes: students' personal opinions of themselves and of their performance do not count as sufficient grounds for grade disputes. Tuition waivers and scholarships do not count as reasons to change the grade. Student ignorance of basic rules and standards of academic honesty, integrity, and standards of logic and reason do not count as legitimate grounds for grade disputes. Students' inability to work independently within the specified parameters and criteria of the course/assignment in the syllabus and/or in class do not count as legitimate grounds for grade disputes. Students' unfounded opinions of professors do not count as legitimate grounds for grade disputes. Students' post-factum declaration of emotional or mental distress are very rarely grounds for grade disputes and should constitute genuine grounds for exceptional circumstances.

⁸ Source: American University of Central Asia Bylaws of the Academic Appeals Committee available at

<https://www.auca.kg/uploads/Faculty%20Senate/Academic%20Appeals%20Committee%20Bylaws.pdf> as of August 1, 2019

Furthermore, if poor performance is the result of poor time-management, ignorance of the requirements, criteria, terms, conditions, and procedures specified in the syllabus, during class, or before the administration of assessment, ignorance of basic content of ICP curriculum, limitations in communication and language skills that should have prevented your admission into AUCA and the ICP program – then it is unlikely that your grade may be disputed. The primary reason is that changing a grade on any of these grounds constitutes preferential treatment and misconduct that violates fairness and equality towards other students.

Please note that your professors reserve the right to ignore student emails that dispute or request to change the grade based on student's personal feelings or opinions about their grade. Students are reminded that contacting their professors with requests of this nature more than twice in any form or format may constitute harassment.

References: the documents for reference in order to resolve the grade dispute between the student and ICP faculty are the current ICP Handbook, the Course Syllabus, and the requirements and criteria (if not included in the course syllabus but provided to students in due course). In cases where penalties, requirements, and criteria specified in the course syllabus differ from the ones in the ICP Handbook, the course syllabus has priority.

Conditions for grade change

Grades may be changed ONLY if there is an error in grade calculation or a technical error.

If your grade is a result of an identifiable error, it will become obvious to your professor during your appointment to discuss your work and

their feedback. If there is an error in calculations, then the professor will take appropriate corrective action.

Students are advised to do their calculation to verify their concerns before they contact their professor.

Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating circumstances are the kinds of circumstances that may excuse the student from penalties (except in cases of plagiarism), serve as grounds for the extension of the deadline for the individual students, or reduction of the word length for individual students, or waiving of some requirements and criteria of the assessment apart from academic honesty and conduct for individual students.

Mitigating circumstances are adverse circumstances that are beyond the student's control and affect their ability to study, submit their assignment on time, or meet the requirements of the course.

Mitigating circumstances may include serious medical conditions or serious personal circumstances.

The final decision on mitigation is made by the professor, to whom the student with mitigating circumstances has reported. The professor's decision is not subject to appeal.

The professor is obligated to weigh the student's circumstances and the student's best interest against fairness and equality towards other students when considering the reported mitigating circumstances.

Students are reminded that common colds, light seasonal allergies, lack of sleep (unless confirmed as a serious medical condition by a doctor) and many other medical conditions, as well as common relationship problems with family, friends, and significant others, that a majority of the students encounter throughout the academic

year are not mitigating circumstances. ICP faculty understand that family affairs can get quite complex and beyond the reach of their full understanding but they can differentiate between serious and adverse family circumstances from the ones that cannot constitute mitigation.

Mitigation policy and procedure:

1. Mitigation is conducted between the student and the professor via AUCA Email or face-to-face.
2. Acceptance of mitigating circumstances by one professor for a specific course does not automatically entitle the student to mitigation in other courses. Students must follow the mitigation procedure for each course separately; outcomes of the process may differ.
3. **All foreseeable circumstances** that might affect the student's ability to submit the assignment in a timely manner or meet other requirements and criteria of the assignment must be communicated to the professor in advance (before the submission of the assignment). This contact must be made via AUCA Email and the student is obligated to provide as much evidence as necessary for the professor to evaluate the circumstances. The final decision is subject to the professor's consideration of the individual case and is not subject to any further appeals. If the student failed to report on foreseeable circumstances in advance, professor may decline the student's request for mitigation.
4. **All unforeseeable circumstances** must be reported via AUCA email to the professor as soon as it is possible. Students are obligated to provide as much evidence as necessary. The final decision is subject to the professor's

consideration of the individual case and is not subject to any further appeals.

5. The existence of Mitigation Policy in the ICP Student Handbook does not constitute entitlement to mitigation in all circumstances and is to be referred to only in the most serious cases of mitigating circumstances.
6. If the student chooses to remain vague about their mitigating circumstances, refuses or fails to provide sufficient evidence or provides dubious information, the ICP faculty reserve the right to refuse consideration of the student's mitigating circumstances.
7. **Mitigating circumstances may constitute grounds for:** extension of deadlines for individual students, resubmission of the assignment for individual students, waiving of requirements and criteria for individual students, and/or assignment of an 'Incomplete' grade for the course.
8. Requirements on **academic honesty and conduct** ARE NOT subject to any mitigating circumstances and procedures. This means that faculty WILL NOT excuse such violations of academic honesty and conduct as plagiarism and cheating in any circumstances.
9. **Mitigating circumstances DO NOT constitute grounds for a grade change per se.** Grades may change as a result of waiving of penalties, criteria, or requirements (apart from academic honesty and plagiarism). Faculty will not change grades based on mitigating circumstances IF THE CHANGE IN GRADE IS NOT a result of waiving of penalties, relevant criteria/requirements, or resubmission of the assignment.

10. **Mitigation procedure is NOT APPLICABLE once the final grades have been submitted to the Registrars.** This is due to AUCA Academic Rules and Regulations, which states that grades submitted to the Registrars may be changed only if there has been an error. It is not possible to change final grades submitted to the Registrars due to mitigating circumstances (exceptions apply in the case of an Incomplete Grade).

Attendance Requirements

Attendance is usually mandatory for all ICP courses. Please check your course syllabus for specific details and requirements set by your professor. Students are expected to understand the significance of regular attendance of courses for their learning experience and academic development.

Many professors take attendance. Students are obligated to follow all the faculty requirements for the registration of attendance.

Students are reminded that attendance is their responsibility and is a given. Therefore, students should not expect any rewards for attendance.

Reporting absences

Students must ensure that they provide advance notice about their absence. If the course syllabus specifies attendance as a mandatory requirement, then students are expected to provide verifiable evidence that will excuse their absence. Any absence without a good and verifiable reason may be counted as an unexcused absence and may affect the student's final grade. The judgement on what constitutes a 'good' reason for absence is always at the discretion of the professor. Students must be confident that the decision of the

professor is in the best interest of the student balanced by fairness and equity to other students in the class.

Absences for **medical reasons** must be supported by a doctor's note.

If an emergency or personal issues preclude the student from providing advance notice about their absence, it is the responsibility of the student to get in touch with the professor as soon as it is possible and provide the evidence requested by the professor. Please note that 'emergency' and 'personal' issues are also to be considered at the discretion of the professor. Again, the students must remain confident that the professor balances the best interest of the student against fairness and equity to other students. For example, the professor may decide that absence due to traffic jams in the city centre may not constitute a good excuse given that traffic jams are a regular occurrence in Bishkek and all students are expected to plan their commute.

Permitted absences

Permitted absences are absences that students request in advance due to their attendance of conferences, exchanges, and other academic and/or university/department-related extracurricular activities, or doctor's appointments/medical treatments. Please note that not all extracurricular activities are good reasons to request for permitted absences. Students are advised to use their best judgement and check with their professor whether they may have a permitted absence. Please note that your professor may require valid evidence and/or contact information for reference.

Students with permitted absences must note that it is their full responsibility to keep up with the course requirements during their absence and to ensure the timely submission of all assessment

material. It is not the responsibility of the professor to keep the student with permitted absence up to date on course-related issues.

Tardiness

Students must be on time to class and leave only when the class is over unless there is a medical necessity or advance permission from the professor. Students are reminded that the time indicated in their study cards as the time of the start of the class is the time when the class starts, not the time students need to arrive in the classroom. For example, if the class starts at 12:45, students must arrive a few minutes before and be ready to start the class at 12:45. All arrivals after the class starts may be counted by the professor as tardiness and may result in penalties.

The ICP faculty reserve the right not to let tardy students into the classroom and/or count it as unexcused absence. Individual faculty policies on tardiness may vary. Students are advised to consult their syllabus or professor on their requirements on attendance.

If you are late but allowed to attend the class, please proceed quietly and with the least distractions and disruptions for the professor and students.

When the professor is not present for a scheduled class...

AUCA faculty always do their best to start the class on time. If they are running late or must miss it without the advance notice, it is due to reasons that are beyond their control.

The often presumed 'wait 15 minutes and leave' is not a formal policy. If the relevant ICP faculty is not present for a scheduled class, students are to follow the following steps:

1. Assume the professor is running late and will make it to class eventually.

2. If the faculty has provided their phone number in the syllabus, attempt to contact them by phone.
3. If the faculty is not present for over 10 minutes and no ICP faculty or staff has informed the students about the situation, the students are to remain in the classroom while one or two students visit the ICP office (Students' first point of contact is the ICP Manager in Room 210) to let the ICP Manager know about the situation and wait until the Manager provides further information and formally excuses the students from attending the class.

Bonus Assignments

Some professors reserve the possibility to assign bonus assessment to the students. Such arrangements are normally communicated in the course syllabus and/or during class.

Bonus assignments may not be assigned to individual students. The same opportunity for bonus points by the completion of bonus assignment(s) must be provided equally to all students in the class.

All bonus assignments must comply with the standards of academic honesty and conduct in the AUCA Student Handbook.

Bonus assignments are subject to the professor's consideration. The professor's decision on bonus assignments is final and not subject to appeal. Faculty is obligated to weigh the benefits of any bonus assignments against fairness and equity towards all the students.

No student is entitled to a bonus assignment at any period of their undergraduate studies in the ICP program.

Internship requirements

ICP students in order to fulfill curriculum requirements should undertake two internships each worth 3 credits. It is advised that internships to be taken between the end of the 3rd semester and beginning of the 7th semester of studies.

Each internship should entail working at least 120 of work hours.

Students should enroll in a relevant internship course and have their de facto internship taking place in a semester when they enrolled for the course. It could be that de facto internship is taken in summer and the course is registered for in the fall following that summer. Work done more a year or more prior to enrollment for internship is not be counted as internship.

Internship I & II

Both internships aims at helping students to understand and learn practically what they have been learning the in their classes. Two internships through aim at developing different skills.

Internship I aims at familiarizing students with work of public institutions. Internship I should be taken in any public institutions such as governmental agencies, local governments, NGOs, international organizations and projects, media, etc. In any case, it is advised that prior to taking internship a student consults with a faculty who is coordinating internships.

Internship II aims at developing creative skills related to civic engagement, research and analysis, project development and implementation, etc. Usually requirements for Internship II is fulfilled by students by engaging into one of the department's centers and initiatives such as Development Clinic, Panorama Politics Club, Varieties of Democracy Institute's Regional Center For Central Asia or some of its research projects (see the relevant section in the Handbook). In certain cases, with permission of the course's instructor, a student can suggest his/her own place of internship if it marches aims of the Internship II.

Reporting and grading

A student should at the end of course enrollment, by a designated deadline, submit a 3-4 pp. report as well as provide a letter from a supervisor from a place of internship. Both should indicate what were duties of an intern, what has been done and achieved, which skills and knowledge a student learned and assessment of work in overall. During a semester a student should also make a presentation to other students enrolled in a course his/her internship experience.

Each student enrolled in a course should also attend at least four sessions of presentations made by other students.

An internship is graded as pass/fail.

Senior Thesis and Supervision

Senior thesis will be your main independent piece of research to be completed by the end of your senior year. Your senior thesis must be written based on independent research into a particular (research) question which you will formulate in consultation with your supervisor (or ICP faculty). It will require high level of commitment, discipline, initiative and organization on behalf of the student. The final product (thesis paper) should demonstrate originality and effort by the student.

All ICP students will be allocated a thesis supervisor among ICP full and part-time faculty. It is student's responsibility to make sure they have a regular schedule of meetings with their supervisor. The precise structure, methods and overall success of a thesis paper will depend on the student-supervisor regular meetings.

All senior students should take **Senior Thesis Seminar I and Senior Thesis Seminar II** in their fourth year. It is a year-long course designed to help (strongly encourage) the students develop a workable topic for their Senior Thesis research projects and complete their major undergraduate paper. For that purpose, the course assignments are all designed with the idea of pushing the students to devote a regular thinking and writing time to their research projects/topics.

By the end Senior Thesis Seminar I, the students should have a clear idea of both what their research projects are (the research design) and specifically how they would carry it out (research methods). At the end of Fall Semester, the work process should culminate in a well-

written **Chapter One** of your Senior Thesis – the chapter that outlines the core of your research project, which will then be written up during the Spring Semester.

Students will need guidance with the following:

- Identifying a thesis within a manageable topic.
- Identifying appropriate research tools and methods; contacting other faculty members with related areas of expertise.
- Evaluating the relevance of published sources and preparing a focused, current bibliography.
- Devising a schedule for completion of certain stages of the thesis. This should include meetings with you on a regular basis.

Organizing and editing the final paper in accordance with the departmental rules.

The student and supervisor should come to a clear understanding as early as possible as to the supervisor's expectations regarding the student's responsibilities, the time commitment involved for the student, etc. Regular meetings (at least bi-weekly) should be scheduled so that the student is able to obtain continuous guidance, feedback, and support from the supervisor. Although it is primarily the responsibility of the student to meet the specified deadlines, the supervisor should provide a degree of supervision that would allow the student to complete the thesis research on schedule. Supervisors should be informed about the Senior Seminar course schedule and requirements so to be aware of what is expected from the student. To that end, senior students will be signing Supervision Agreements with their supervisors. **All senior students must have a complete and**

signed Supervision Agreement Form before they proceed with substantive supervision process. **A copy of the Supervision Agreement Form must be submitted to the ICP Manager in Room 210.**

Students may find the form on the ICP Hub on E-Course.

Although it is not possible to give an exact figure for the time required for a successful thesis, the student should plan on spending, on average, about 5-7 hours per week on the Senior Seminar course and thesis.

The workload will likely vary considerably over the course of the academic year. Students are advised to submit a first draft of their introduction or their first chapter by the end of the Fall semester as this will be their final paper assignment of the Senior Seminar course. It is also expected that students complete their thesis research by the end of January, so that there will be ample time to analyze the data and complete the written document by the deadline. Students sometimes run into difficulties because they do not begin the work early in the academic year or pursue it diligently throughout the year and, as a result, leave too much for the end of the term.

Very occasionally, there may be some disagreements between student and supervisor concerning the thesis work. For example, a student may think that he/she is not getting sufficient access to the supervisor to deal with questions concerning data collection or the preparation of the thesis document, or the supervisor may think that the student is not fulfilling his/her obligations with respect to the research. It is important that the student and/or supervisor bring such disagreements to the attention of the course coordinator and/or to the chair of the department as soon as possible. It is too

late to deal with such problems when it is almost time for submission of the completed thesis document.

Students and Supervisors should check whether their research needs an IRB approval by visiting e-course.auca.kg in the "university academic activity" section and checking IRB's procedures.

Senior Thesis Defense

Students that successfully complete Senior Thesis Seminars I and II and other requirements for their major will be allowed to defend their thesis against the State Examination Committee consisting of external academics and a few ICP faculty.

Successful defense of your thesis is a requirement for the fulfillment of your degree.

The Senior Thesis Defense procedure consists of a presentation of the thesis by the student followed by cross-examination/questions from the members of the State Examination Committee. The duration of each part will be specified in Senior Thesis Seminar II.

During the defense, students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of their research project, its scope, implications, significance, and its limitations. They should also successfully demonstrate that they have conducted research independently and in ways that comply with AUCA rules and regulations on academic honesty, integrity, and ethics.

The State Examination Committee reviews and evaluates the written paper, the presentation, and the cross-examination/questioning section according to the AUCA academic rules and regulations. The Committee may invite an individual student after their presentation to ask additional questions or request for additional information. Normally, students are invited for additional questions if the State

Examination Committee remains in doubt (or cannot reach a consensus) about the integrity of the research project or the quality of its scholarship.

Senior Thesis Defense welcomes other ICP faculty and students, seniors' friends and family on the condition that they do not interrupt, disrupt, or distract the defense procedure at any point. To avoid any unnecessary distractions, nobody is allowed to enter or leave the venue during the student presentation.

Students may request their supervisors to be present on the Senior Thesis Defense. However, in order to ensure fairness and equity, supervisors may not offer comments or ask questions that create unfair advantage for individual students.

All participants and attendees must at all times follow the instructions and requests of the Chairperson of the State Examination Committee.

Students and supervisors must refrain from any attempts to hold an individual conversation with the members of the State Examination Committee about individual students for the entire duration of Senior Thesis Defense. Should an exceptionally compelling reason arise, the Chairperson of the State Examination Committee may authorize an individual contact with the supervisor of the student.

Senior Thesis Rules and Regulations:

- The thesis must be an original work by the student (that is, not the same as one of your course papers, not a previously published project, and not a project that you actually completed with some other co-authors for some other purpose. That said, a thesis can of course be related to a previously written paper, a further substantial (not minimal) development of a previous work).

- As with any other written academic work, rules concerning academic honesty and plagiarism apply (so, any bit of plagiarism or other manners of dishonest completion of the thesis are sufficient for automatic dismissal of the thesis as unacceptable; further administrative actions of punitive kind are stipulated in AUCA rules).
- The thesis topic must be within the scope of your major field of specialization (so, a thesis about new methods of raising cotton in southern Kyrgyzstan would be difficult to accept in ICP department; however, it is very difficult for a student to come up with an unsuitable topic – the scope of political science is so wide that virtually any topic of social relevance can have a political aspect to it).
- The thesis must be between 12000-15000 words long. Wordcount does not include footnotes, bibliography, and appendices.
- The deadline for comprehensive changes in the topic and change in supervisor is September 30. Supervisors may be changed only in situations where the student or supervisor encounters systematic issues associated with their supervision. Such changes are subject to availability of another supervisor already enlisted in ICP and must be confirmed by the ICP Department Chair. Students must sign a new Supervision Agreement with their new supervisor.
- The deadline for Senior Thesis submission is April 30.
- The final grade for the Senior Thesis is 67% for the written work and 33% for the oral defense.

ICP State Exam

ICP State Exam administered at the end of the fourth academic year to all ICP students who have fully completed all of their major requirements. ICP students that did not pass, for example, their Senior Thesis Seminar, are not allowed to attend the ICP State Exam.

The exam questions for the ICP State exam vary from year to year and are written, administered and assessed by the ICP Faculty appointed to the State Exam Committee.

ICP faculty may hold a review session for the ICP students, though this is not a requirement.

The length and structure of the exam is normally 120 minutes to write two essays on questions chosen from two parts in the exam script. Length and structure may vary, subject to the final decision of the ICP faculty on the State Exam Committee.

ICP State Exam is a closed-book/notes assessment. This means that students are not allowed to use any sources in any form or format during the exam.

All electronic devices must be switched off for the duration of the exam and removed away from the students' reach. No electronic device is permitted on the desk. Students are not allowed to wear any headphones or earphones or any type of audio/video transmission devices during the exam. Smart devices such as smart watches are not permitted within reachable distance of the students.

Students are not allowed to talk to one another during the exam or engage in any form or manner. For any issues or concerns, students must raise their hand and wait until one of the faculty approaches them.

All communication between faculty and students during the exam must be conducted with minimum disruptions and distractions for other students.

Students may not leave the room during the exam unless there is an emergency or a medical necessity.

Violation of any of the abovementioned or academic honesty and conduct may result in an immediate zero and removal of the student from the exam room.

If faculty or exam administrator asks you to leave the room, do so quietly. You may only talk to faculty after the exam.

Communication with faculty

Office hours c.f. 'by appointment'

Some faculty prefer to see the students during designated office hours. Some prefer to see students by appointment. Normally, faculty specify their preferences and necessary contact information in the course syllabus.

Office hours: Faculty 'office hours' are hours during which faculty conduct their advising, all course-related contact with students, and all of their other duties and responsibilities towards the students. Students are advised to make their best effort to see the professor during their designated 'office hours'. Students are not entitled to a meeting with faculty outside the faculty's specified office hours. If your schedule does not permit you to see the professor during their designated office hours, you may request for a meeting by appointment.

'By appointment': students must make a prior appointment to see the professor through means specified in the syllabus. Students are not entitled to a meeting with professors without an appointment.

Students are advised to respect faculty time and meet with them only during the faculty's 'office hours' or 'by appointment'. Follow the information about the ways in which faculty prefer to be contacted and met. Such information is normally available in the course syllabus. If in doubt, send faculty an e-mail. Students are reminded that the presence of faculty at their desk does not imply their availability and should expect to be refused any contact without appointment or outside 'office hours'.

Contact about grades and coursework

Majority of the student-faculty communication is about grades and coursework. In this communication, faculty are happy to provide feedback that will help improve student performance in their next assessment and provide information about coursework that is not included in the syllabus.

It is not acceptable to contact faculty solely for the purpose of requesting a 'grade change'.

The quality of your communication with faculty often depends on how you phrase your question and/or concerns. For example, if you wish to discuss your grade, it is much better to phrase your request in a manner that implies your wish to improve your skills and future performance. It signals to the professor that you are asking for additional feedback and they will be happy to help you improve.

If you are indeed surprised by your grade, you will be able to have a more beneficial conversation with the professor if you indicate that you did not expect to receive such a grade and that you wish to talk further with the professor about areas that they think you need to improve. Students are advised to keep in mind that their personal opinion about their own work may be exaggerated. Therefore, they will benefit more from applying the criteria of the assessment to their own essay with as much objectivity and critical self-awareness as possible.

Unless there are reasonable grounds for mitigation, students that ask for preferential treatment shall be rejected. Persistent requests from the same student for "extra" points may be forwarded to the Chair of the ICP Department and dealt with via appropriate disciplinary procedures at AUCA.

Students are expected to request for the reasons they received any grade (for additional feedback) and may request a revision of the calculations if they have substantial reasons to believe an error may have occurred (for example, your final grade does not make much sense in light of your previous grades in the course). Requests for recalculation because of an unfounded hope that a low grade was mistaken will be ignored.

Students shall not negotiate, bargain, plead and/or intimidate faculty for grades⁹.

⁹ Here are some examples of attempts to negotiate, bargain, intimidate, plead or just plainly rude and unprofessional ways of talking to faculty about grades: 'you were tough', 'the course was overwhelming', 'you expected too much from us', 'I got higher grades from other professors, who are, by the way, very nice people', 'my future is in your hands', 'nobody needs this class anyway or cares what grade you give, so why not just add something to my

grade', 'please, just please please please', 'I will not tell anyone...!', 'all you cared about was what we know about [title of the course or subject], you never cared about [course or subject outside the scope of the given course/subject]', 'you never gave me the chance to show you my knowledge in ways I know best', 'You never noticed this, I came prepared every day', 'you are scary', 'You gave me a zero for participation, which is unfair,

Any conversation related to your grade or feedback is not an opportunity for you to convince your professor that you deserve a different grade. It is an opportunity for you to get a better insight on how you can improve your skills, knowledge, and understanding, so you are better prepared for your next assignments and to achieve better grades in the future.

If you are planning on referring to your lack of skills and knowledge as reasons to change your grade, ask yourself the following question: would you write these reasons in your university admissions essay and expect to be admitted? If your answer is 'no', then definitely avoid talking about them as reasons your professor should reconsider your grade. Instead, talk to your professor about ways you can improve those skills.

Students are reminded that university-level education is about setting challenging standards and showing students how to reach them. We all lose if our academic standards and rigour do not challenge and push students to develop. If the standards are lowered for one, they must be lowered for all. Therefore, students are encouraged to reflect on the nature of their contact with faculty and its long-term consequences. The main point of their contact should not be about the lowering of the standards. The main point should be about getting advice on how to reach those standards.

because I did participate [followed by an unverifiable example of insignificant participation in class]', 'I am unhappy with my grade', 'YOU GAVE me a bad grade', 'You gave a difficult assignment', 'You gave me this grade and now I cannot sleep', 'Your grade is cruel', 'You are cruel', 'You are unfair', 'I worked so hard for this paper, this grade is unfair', 'Your grade made me cry', 'Why did you give me such a bad grade?!', 'My grade is low, please recheck my grade', 'Other professors give better grades', 'I am better

If you threaten AUCA faculty, the faculty will report the incident to relevant bodies at AUCA, which may result in your expulsion. Threatening to harm faculty's career, livelihood, or reputation, threatening to harm one's own health, livelihood, wellness, making any kinds of intimidating remarks if faculty do not comply with your demands shall be reported immediately to the relevant AUCA institutions. There are no circumstances that justify such forms of intimidation and threats. If you wish to be persuasive and heard, use reason, evidence, and the logic of a good argument. When they fail, suggest that your dispute is attended by a third independent party.

Furthermore, it is not appropriate to threaten to disclose any faults of the faculty unless they comply with your demands. If there is a fault, act in good faith and inform the ICP Manager or Chair about it in due time instead of using it in your own interests as leverage against faculty. Please note that you are subject to disciplinary procedures if you try to leverage information in an attempt to make faculty or staff comply with your demands. You must at all times act in good faith.

In all circumstances, avoid escalation by maintaining formal and professional attitude and demeanor.

In short, students must keep in mind that their correspondence and statements in written and spoken form will be taken seriously by

than other students, so change my grade', 'You gave a higher grade to my classmate who is worse than me', 'No one has ever required such things from us', 'I have never heard of such thing as citation and references', 'other professors do not care about this', 'I get higher grades in other departments', 'This is not Harvard, why do you require this?', 'Please change my grade and I promise I will do better next time'

AUCA faculty and staff, which means that students may be required to justify their statements.

Interpreting Feedback

Your professor will provide feedback on your assessment in written form and/or communicate it to you during your meeting. Feedbacks normally highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of your work and the main points for improvement. They are not exhaustive. Sometimes, due to time constraints, your professor may only highlight the points that you need to improve. It is your responsibility to make the best use out of feedback provided to you.

Feedback is never given to justify a grade, so it is not an appropriate source for you to make accurate judgements about your or others' grades. The primary purpose of feedback is to help students improve their skills.

When you receive your grade and feedback, make sure you carefully read the feedback and identify the points that the feedback is suggesting you improve. Go back to your submitted work and review the areas your feedback is highlighting and think about how you would do them differently.

Given that you will be receiving multiple feedbacks from different professors, try your best to identify patterns in them. What are the common points mentioned in all the feedbacks? Which points are not common? Common points require your attention most urgently as they would normally indicate a necessity in the improvement of key skills.

Do not take feedback personally. Even though there may be pronouns present in your feedback, the object of feedback is always the work submitted and the skills involved, not the person.

Reporting problems, issues, and concerns related to courses and faculty

Problems and concerns related to courses and faculty may be communicated to the Head of the ICP Department. Depending on the sensitivity of the issue, however, students are advised to first exhaust the possibility to address the problem with respective faculty directly.

When reporting any issues, problems, or concerns, students must make their best effort in identifying the problem as clearly as possible and act in good faith.

Students are also obligated to provide all the evidence that support their claims. The Department may ignore any reports without evidence or anonymous reports.

Students should take the Teaching Evaluations distributed at the end of each term for every course as an opportunity to make their suggestions for improvement and to inform the department about their concerns.

Requesting recommendation letters

Students are welcome to request for recommendation or reference letters from the ICP faculty. However, students must understand that they are not entitled to a recommendation letter and that professors have the right to refuse to write students any recommendations or references.

Students must ensure to give faculty as much advance notice as possible. It is courteous to request recommendations at least two weeks before your deadline.

If you are required only to submit the contact information of your referee, you must only do so with the permission and consent of your referee.

It is unethical to ask faculty to write you a 'good' recommendation or to fabricate or misrepresent any information.

If the faculty agrees to write you a recommendation letter, make sure that you send them your CV and highlight any of your achievements that you would like them to consider. Also, remind faculty about any of their classes that you have attended and the final grade you received for those classes. In short, do your best to provide all the key information that they will need to consider when writing your recommendation letter.

Request for recommendations from faculty that know you well.

Advising

Student advisers are appointed at the beginning of each year. All ICP students are advised by ICP faculty on course selection. Advisers also are one of the parties that must approve Study Cards during every registration period.

Students are obligated to respond to any course-related queries from their advisers. Students take full responsibility for submitting late study cards if the study card is submitted late as a result of the student's failure to cooperate with the adviser in a responsible and timely manner. Student advisers must be given at least two days advance notice about any course-related or Study Card related matters.

Use of Electronic Devices

This policy concerns the use of any electronic devices during class, assessment, or during contact with AUCA faculty or staff.

Students may use electronic devices in class or during contact with AUCA faculty and staff only to enhance their learning experience. For example, students may use electronic devices to take notes during lectures or to look up the necessary information to supplement their learning in class.

Students with disabilities may use necessary electronic devices.

Use of electronic devices for purposes that are not related education (including irrelevant web browsing and social networking) in class or during contact with AUCA faculty and staff is strictly prohibited.

If the policy is violated: ICP faculty reserve the right to warn the student in violation of this policy, remove the electronic device from student's possession until the end of class or contact with AUCA faculty and staff, or remove the student from class (which may result in an unexcused absence) or end the contact with the student.

Use of mobile phones is strictly limited to searching necessary information when it is relevant and permissible.

Taking phone calls, texting, or social networking during class is strictly prohibited and may result in the removal of the device until the end of class, removal of the student from the class, reduction of participation points, or penalties consistent with the terms and conditions of the course syllabus.

Video/audio recording

Please do not record classes on video without the explicit consent of the professor and students in class, even if the intent of video recording is to record student's own performance. Professors must be notified at least a week in advance, which gives the professor sufficient time and opportunity to consult the students in class for their consent.

Students may not perform live broadcasts during class without advance consent from all the participants in class.

Audio: students may make audio records with the professor's consent.

Students may not take pictures of professors as a sign of respect to personal privacy. If you have to take a picture of the lecture slides, do so when the professor is out of the shot.

ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES MUST BE IN SILENT MODE OR SWITCHED OFF. NO ELECTRONIC DEVICE (apart from medical) SHALL CAUSE DISRUPTIONS OR DISTRACTIONS DURING CLASS.

Teaching Evaluations

AUCA administers a university-wide teaching evaluation at the end of every semester. Students are invited to provide feedback on the provided form during the final lecture or seminar. The evaluation process is anonymous, faculty are provided with the results of the evaluation only after they submit the final grades.

Students must follow the instructions provided before the distribution of evaluation forms.

Students must wait until the faculty vacates the room before they start the evaluation process.

Teaching evaluations are anonymous and are intended purely to improve teaching and learning at AUCA.

Students are welcome to provide any additional feedback on the form about the strengths, weaknesses, and points for improvement of the course.

Teaching evaluation is not an opportunity for the students to express their personal grievances. The main reason is that expression of your personal grievance or insulting the professor does not help them improve the course. If you are unhappy about something, indicate the problem and your views on how we can make improvements to address it. Keep in mind that faculty do take constructive feedback seriously. Your feedback is essential in identifying problems and their causes.

Course Syllabi

Every ICP course has a course syllabus that is provided at the beginning of the semester. The syllabus contains all the essential information about the course structure and organization, and about all the requirements and criteria. Students are expected to read the syllabus carefully as soon as it is available to them and are expected first to consult the syllabus should any questions or concerns emerge.

Failure to follow the information provided in the syllabus does not absolve the students from any consequences they may incur as a result of this failure.

ICP faculty reserve the right to change and modify syllabi when necessary if the changes and modifications benefit teaching and learning. All changes and modifications must be communicated to the students via E-mail, E-Course, or during class.

X. Code of Conduct

The ICP Code of Conduct complies with the code of conduct described in AUCA Student Handbook. Below are more specified iterations in order to ensure fairness, equality, academic freedom, and freedom of speech and expression in the classroom.

Students shall respect the opinions of their peers and their right to speak without interruptions or fear of ridicule.

Students shall not discriminate based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual preferences, disabilities or any other personal features and/or characteristics that define an individual or community.

Students shall not ask for any undeserved preferential treatment from AUCA faculty and staff.

Students shall respect AUCA faculty and staff. Students shall ask for the faculty's and staff's attention outside the classroom only during the times of their appointment or office hours.

Students shall be held accountable for any claims and/or statements they make about AUCA faculty and staff and shall provide all the necessary evidence when requested by relevant AUCA faculty and staff.

Students shall not exert any form of intimidation, blackmail, threats, or any other forms of illegitimate influence on AUCA students, faculty, and staff.

Students shall be on time to classes and all contacts with AUCA faculty and staff and shall leave the class when the class is over unless there is a medical necessity or advance permission from the

professor. Your professors reserve the right not to let you into the class if you are late and/or count your late arrival as an unexcused absence.

Students shall attend classes regularly unless there is a good and verifiable reason requiring their absence in class.

Students shall not cause unnecessary distractions and disruptions in class.

XI. Appendix 1: Assessment Rubric¹⁰

Grade	Assessment Criteria – Levels 100 and 200
96-100 (A)	Outstanding. Very detailed knowledge and understanding of the material, concepts and theories at this level. Logical, articulate analysis a consistent feature. Judiciously selected evidence, drawn from relevant research. Convincing conclusions. Very wide range of relevant literature used critically to inform argument, balance discussion and/or inform problem-solving. Consistently accurate and assured use of academic conventions. Can collect and interpret appropriate data/ information and undertake research tasks with autonomy and exceptional success.
91-95 (A-)	Excellent. Detailed knowledge and understanding of the main concepts/ theories at this level. Very good analysis throughout. Arguments well-articulated, and logically developed with a range of evidence. Strong conclusions. Critical engagement with appropriate reading. Knowledge of research-informed literature embedded in the work. Consistently accurate use of academic conventions. Can collect and interpret appropriate data/ information and undertake research tasks with a degree of success.
76-90 (B-; B; B+)	Very good. Good, consistent knowledge and understanding of the material, main concepts and key theories at this level. Good analytical ability. Arguments generally logical, coherently expressed, well organised and supported. Sound conclusions. Knowledge of the field of literature appropriately used to support views. Research-informed literature integrated into the work. Good use of academic conventions. Can collect and interpret appropriate data/ information and successfully undertake straightforward research tasks with limited external guidance.
61-75	Competent. Sound, routine knowledge and understanding of the material, main concepts and key theories. Some flaws may be

¹⁰ Credit: Teaching Quality Assurance Manual, University of Exeter
Available at <http://as.exeter.ac.uk/academic-policy-standards/tqa-manual/> as of August 21, 2019

<p>(C-; C; C+)</p>	<p>evident. An emerging awareness of different stances and ability to use evidence to support a coherent argument. Broadly valid conclusions. Knowledge of literature beyond core text(s). Literature used accurately but descriptively. Academic skills generally sound. Can collect and interpret appropriate data/information and undertake straightforward research tasks with external guidance.</p>
<p>46-60 (D-; D; D+)</p>	<p>Poor. Broadly accurate knowledge and understanding of the material. Some elements missing and flaws evident. Sense of argument emerging though not completely coherent. Some evidence to support views, but not always consistent. Some relevant conclusions. Some evidence of reading, with superficial linking to given text(s). Some academic conventions evident and largely consistent, but with some weaknesses. Some evidence of ability to collect appropriate data/ information and undertake straightforward research tasks with external guidance.</p>
<p>45 (Fail)</p>	<p>Inadequate. Gaps in knowledge and superficial understanding. Some inaccuracies. For the most part descriptive. Views/ findings sometimes illogical or contradictory. Generalisations/statements made with scant evidence. Conclusions lack relevance and/or validity. Evidence of little reading appropriate for the level of study, and/or indiscriminate use of sources. Academic conventions used weakly. Limited evidence of skills in the range identified for the assessment at this level.</p>
<p>0-44 (Fail)</p>	<p>Very inadequate. Major gaps in knowledge and understanding. Significant inaccuracies. Brief and irrelevant. Descriptive. Only personal views offered. Unsubstantiated generalisations. Little or no attempt to draw conclusions. No evidence of reading. Views are unsupported and non- authoritative. Academic conventions largely ignored. Little or no evidence of the required skills in any of the skills areas.</p>

Grade	Assessment Criteria – Level 300
96-100 (A)	<p>Outstanding knowledge and understanding of the material and main concepts and theories of the subject. Perceptive, logically connected points made throughout the work within an eloquent, balanced argument. Evidence selected judiciously and thoroughly analysed. Persuasive conclusions. Wide range of relevant literature evaluated and used critically to inform argument, balance discussion and/or inform problem-solving. Assured use of academic conventions. Exceptional level of independent research. Highly effective communication.</p>
91-95 (A-; A)	<p>Excellent, detailed knowledge and understanding of material, main concepts/theories at this level. Awareness of the limitations of knowledge. Excellent analysis and synthesis. A range of perceptive points made. Arguments logically developed, supported by a range of relevant evidence. Explicit acknowledgement of other stances. Strong conclusions. Critical engagement with a range of reading. Knowledge of research-informed literature embedded in the work. Consistently accurate use of academic conventions. Draws on wide range of sources. Research-related task completed with significant degree of autonomy. Very effective communication.</p>
76-90 (B-; B; B+)	<p>Very good knowledge and understanding of material, of well-established principles of area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have been developed. Good level of analysis and synthesis. An awareness of different stances and ability to use evidence convincingly to support argument. Ability to apply concepts/ principles effectively beyond context of study. Valid conclusions. Knowledge of the field of literature used consistently to support findings. Research-informed literature integrated into the work. Very good use of academic conventions. Can successfully complete research-like tasks, drawing on a range of sources, with limited external guidance.</p>
61-75	<p>Competent. Broad knowledge and understanding of material, of well-established principles of area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have been developed. Issues</p>

<p>(C-; C; C+)</p>	<p>identified and critically analysed within given areas. An awareness of different stances and ability to use evidence to support argument. Ability to apply concepts and principles outside context of study context. Generally sound conclusions. Knowledge and analysis of a range of literature beyond core text(s). Literature used accurately and analytically. Academic skills generally sound. Can undertake research-like tasks, drawing on a range of sources, with limited external guidance.</p>
<p>46-60 (D-; D; D+)</p>	<p>Poor. Broadly accurate knowledge and understanding of the material. Some elements missing and flaws evident. Some awareness of issues. Sense of argument emerging though not completely coherent. Some evidence to support views, but not always consistent. Some relevant conclusions. Some evidence of reading, with superficial linking to sources. Some academic conventions evident and largely consistent, but with some weaknesses. Some collection/interpretation of appropriate data/information.</p>
<p>45 (Fail)</p>	<p>Inadequate. Gaps in knowledge and only superficial understanding of the well-established principles of area(s) of study. Some inaccuracies. Views/ findings largely irrelevant, illogical or contradictory. Generalisations/statements made with scant evidence. Conclusions lack relevance and/or validity. Evidence of little reading appropriate for this level and/or indiscriminate use of sources. Academic conventions used weakly. Significant weaknesses evident, which suggest that the candidate is not yet on course to gain skills necessary for graduate-level employment.</p>
<p>0-44 (Fail)</p>	<p>Very inadequate. Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of material at this level. Significant inaccuracies. Unsubstantiated generalizations, made without use of any credible evidence. Lack of logic, leading to unsupportable conclusions or missing conclusions. Lack of analysis and relevance. No evidence of reading. Views are unsupported and non- authoritative. Academic conventions largely ignored. Little or no evidence of the required skills in any of the areas identified for assessment at this level.</p>

Grade	Assessment Criteria – Level 400
96-100 (A)	<p>Outstanding. Excellent and highly detailed knowledge and understanding of the material and main concepts and theories of the subject. Exceptional work; judiciously selected and evaluated evidence. Evidence selected judiciously and thoroughly analysed. Very high quality analysis. Highly persuasive conclusions. Outstanding knowledge of research-informed literature embedded in the work. Consistent analysis and evaluation of sources. High-level academic skills consistently and professionally applied. Exceptionally successful in a wide range of research-like tasks, including evaluation, with a high degree of autonomy.</p>
91-95 (A-; A)	<p>Excellent. Excellent knowledge and understanding of the material and main concepts and theories of the subject. Thoroughly logical work supported by judiciously selected and evaluated evidence. Evidence selected judiciously and thoroughly analysed. High quality analysis. Strong and persuasive conclusions. Excellent knowledge of research-informed literature embedded in the work. Consistent analysis and evaluation of sources. High-level academic skills consistently applied. Can very successfully complete a wide range of research-like tasks, including evaluation, with a high degree of autonomy.</p>
76-90 (B-; B; B+)	<p>Very good. Good understanding of the field(s) of study. Sound logical, analytical thinking; synthesis and evaluation. Ability to review the reliability, validity & significance of evidence. Sound, convincing conclusions. Knowledge, analysis and evaluation of a range of research-informed literature, analysed independently with accuracy and assurance. Good academic skills consistently applied. Can successfully complete a wide range of research-like tasks, including evaluation, with very limited external guidance.</p>
61-75 (C-; C; C+)	<p>Competent. Systematic understanding of the field(s) of study. Evidence of some logical, analytical thinking and synthesis. Some awareness of different stances and ability to use evidence to support the argument. Valid conclusions. Knowledge, analysis and evaluation of a range of research-informed literature, analysed independently. Academic skills consistently applied.</p>

	Can competently undertake reasonably straightforward research tasks with minimum guidance.
46-60 (D-; D; D+)	Poor. Understanding of key aspects of the field(s) of study. Evidence of some logical, analytical thinking and some attempts to synthesise, albeit with some weaknesses. Some evidence to support findings/views but evidence not consistently interpreted. Some relevant conclusions. References to a range of relevant sources. Some omissions and minor errors. Academic conventions evident and largely consistent, with minor lapses. Can competently undertake reasonably straightforward research tasks with minimum guidance but with minor weaknesses.
45 (Fail)	Inadequate. Gaps in knowledge with only superficial understanding. Evidence of some logical, analytical thinking and some attempts to synthesise, albeit with some weaknesses. Some evidence of analytical intellectual skills but for the most part descriptive. Conclusions lack relevance. Evidence of little reading and/or of reliance on inappropriate sources, and/or indiscriminate use of sources. Academic conventions used inconsistently. Little evidence/significant weaknesses in undertaking reasonably straightforward research tasks.
0-44 (Fail)	Very inadequate. Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of material at this level. Significant inaccuracies. Unsubstantiated generalizations, made without use of any credible evidence. Lack of logic, leading to unsupported/ missing conclusions. Lack of any attempt to analyse, synthesise or evaluate. Little evidence of reading. Views and findings unsupported and non-authoritative. Academic conventions largely ignored. Little or no evidence of ability to undertake reasonably straightforward research tasks.

XII. Chronology of Updates and Changes