

GRADUATION RESEARCH PAPER REQUIREMENT

Basic Requirements: To receive a degree from Quinebaug Valley Community College, every student must complete a satisfactory research paper. Although a paper may involve various formats or media, its textual portion must at least be equal to ten standard pages of typed (12-point) double-spaced text (on 8-1/2" x 11" paper with one-inch margins)—that is, a minimum of 2500 standard (6-character) words, the bibliography being additional.

Context of Preparation: Each student must secure a faculty member to supervise the preparation of the paper and judge whether it fulfills the requirement. If the paper also fulfills requirements of a course, the course instructor will normally be the supervisor. For papers originally prepared for courses but subsequently revised to satisfy the research paper requirement, the original instructor (if full-time) will typically supervise the later version.

Procedure: The student and supervisor should discuss the requirements. The student must apprise the supervisor of graduation deadlines, so the paper can be evaluated on time; the supervisor should require plenty of time for evaluation, leaving time for revisions, if necessary. If the supervisor deems the paper satisfactory (earning a B or higher), she or he informs the student and submits a completed Research Paper Requirement certification sheet to the Records Office. If the supervisor does not approve the paper, the student may request a review by forwarding a copy of the paper with a cover letter to the Dean of Learning and Student Development. The Dean will choose a board of two faculty reviewers. If both find the paper satisfactory, the Dean's office will notify the student and the Dean will sign a certification sheet for the paper. Otherwise, the paper will remain unsatisfactory and be returned to the student.

Content Area Requirements: The paper must demonstrate the student's appropriate mastery of content, form, procedures, documentation and citation, and other criteria relevant to the field in which the paper is submitted. The supervisor will judge whether the paper is satisfactory in such respects, and thus she or he should make sure the student has enough preparation in the field to perform the work with appropriate independence. The supervisor will judge whether the paper's topic is significant, whether the research covers relevant material in the field, whether the approach involves analytical thinking, whether the student accesses materials by using current information technologies, and whether the student grasps the terms of discussion on the topic and engages it on those terms, recognizing and evaluating the contributions of others.

Information Literacy (Research) Requirements: The paper must have a Bibliography, References, or Works Cited list containing a range of sources—books, periodicals (including journals, where appropriate), and authoritative Internet sources. Sources must be balanced, not excessively relying on QVCC and local sources and not excessively relying on one particular kind of source (such as full-text periodical resources). The student must critically evaluate the sources, and a significant amount of research must be integrated into the text.

Writing Skills Requirements: The paper must be organized in a clear and coherent fashion, being readable for the audience it addresses. Its purpose and conclusions must be clear and its points adequately supported. Also, it must demonstrate the student's ability to communicate clearly and effectively in written English, not being marred by errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling. The supervisor may judge these aspects as far as she or he feels competent. But once a paper has been deemed satisfactory in content, a supervisor also may confer with English or other faculty to evaluate the writing.

Resources concerning the Graduation Research Paper, for faculty and students, are available in the library.

GRADUATION RESEARCH PAPER PREPARATION AGREEMENT

To fulfill the QVCC Graduation Research Paper Requirement, for graduation at the end of _____
(semester and year), I intend to develop a paper for the QVCC faculty member signing below.

Student: _____ Signature: _____
(please print name)

Date: _____

Tentative title of paper: _____

Students Please Read and Check the Appropriate Box:

Research papers at QVCC are collected as part of a study used to improve writing instruction and learning in college courses. If you agree to participate in this study a copy of your paper will be saved, but any information relating to your identity will be removed. Please check one of the following boxes to indicate that you have read this note and request one of the following actions:

- QVCC may use my written work as part of its research study.
- QVCC may not use my written work as part of its research study.

Faculty:

I have discussed the Graduation Research Paper Requirement (given on the reverse of this sheet) with the student signing above.

Faculty: _____ Signature: _____
(please print name)

Date: _____

GRADUATION RESEARCH PAPER CERTIFICATION

I certify that _____ has satisfactorily completed the QVCC Graduation Research Paper Requirement, following the procedures given on the reverse of this sheet and on the accompanying writing and research guidelines.

Faculty: _____ Signature: _____
(please print name)

Date: _____

GRADUATION RESEARCH PAPER EVALUATION GUIDELINES – WRITING

Paper in this Category	Central Idea	Organization	Audience/Purpose	Sentence Structure	Grammar, Spelling Punctuation
<p style="text-align: center;">EXCELLENT PAPER A (90 - 100)</p>	<p>Contains a central idea, clearly focused, and with supported concrete, substantial, and relevant details and examples.</p>	<p>Is well developed and well organized; contains coherent and unified paragraphs and effective transitions between ideas.</p>	<p>Displays a clear sense of audience and the kind of writing suitable for the discipline.</p>	<p>Contains skillfully constructed sentences, demonstrating syntactic variety.</p>	<p>Is virtually free of errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">GOOD PAPER B (80 - 89)</p> <p>Minimum Grade B to Satisfy Research Paper Requirement</p>	<p>Contains a central idea, focused and supported with relevant details and examples.</p>	<p>Is generally well developed and well organized, although it may contain minor flaws in organization and/or some transitions may not be effective.</p>	<p>Displays a general awareness of audience and the kind of writing suitable for the discipline.</p>	<p>Demonstrates some syntactic variety.</p>	<p>Is generally free from errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">AVERAGE PAPER C (70 - 79)</p>	<p>Contains a central idea, but is vague or too general. The central idea is supported but details may be repetitious or irrelevant.</p>	<p>Is adequately developed and organized, although it may contain some flaws in organization; transitions between ideas are abrupt or monotonous.</p>	<p>Displays some awareness of audience and the kind of writing suitable for the discipline.</p>	<p>Fails to display syntactic variety, although the sentences may be correctly constructed.</p>	<p>May display some errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">UNACCEPTABLE D - F (69-)</p>	<p>Does not contain a central idea.</p>	<p>Is underdeveloped or developed with irrelevance, redundancy, or inconsistency; paragraphs are incoherent and not unified; presents no clear line of thinking.</p>	<p>Reveals the writer's unawareness of the kind of writing suitable for the discipline.</p>	<p>Contains poorly constructed sentences.</p>	<p>Displays a pattern of errors suggesting that the writer does not have control over conventions of standard written English.</p>

GRADUATION RESEARCH PAPER EVALUATION GUIDE – RESEARCH

Research Level	Research in Text	Bibliography/Works Cited/References
EXCELLENT PAPER A (90 - 100)	<p>Communicates a comprehensive understanding of the topic. Research is well-integrated into the text. Direct quotations are appropriate in number and construction. In-text citations or notes are appropriate in number and construction. Sources are critically evaluated.</p>	<p>Bibliography /Works Cited/References list is comprehensive and varied, including books, periodicals – both popular magazines/newspapers and peer-reviewed journals – and authoritative Internet resources. The list is correctly constructed.</p> <p>The list of sources cited is substantial, scholarly, appropriate to the topic, and clearly used to critically support the paper’s thesis.</p>
GOOD PAPER B (80 - 89) Minimum Grade B to Satisfy Research Paper Requirement	<p>Communicates a substantial understanding of the topic. Research is integrated into the text. Direct quotations and/or in-text citations or notes are appropriate in number and construction. Sources are critically evaluated. The use of sources within the text is good overall, but not substantial enough to be rated excellent.</p>	<p>Bibliography/Works Cited/References list includes books, popular periodical articles and/or peer-reviewed journals, as well as authoritative Internet resources. The list is correctly constructed.</p> <p>The list of sources cited is good overall, but not scholarly or substantial enough to be rated excellent.</p>
AVERAGE PAPER C (70 - 79)	<p>Communicates an adequate understanding of the topic. Research is not fully integrated into the text. Direct quotations and/or in-text citations or notes may be inappropriate in number or construction. All sources are not critically evaluated.</p>	<p>Bibliography/Works Cited/References list is inadequate or does not contain an appropriate range of resources. The list displays an over-reliance on one type of resource or relies exclusively on non-scholarly books, full-text popular periodical resources, and/or Internet sources of questionable value. The list may contain mistakes in construction.</p> <p>Resources suggest an inadequate understanding of how to conduct college-level research.</p>
UNACCEPTABLE D - F (69-)	<p>Does not communicate an adequate understanding of the topic. Research is not integrated into the text. Direct quotations and/or in-text citations or notes are inappropriate or incorrect. Sources are not critically evaluated.</p>	<p>Bibliography/Works Cited/References list is minimal, inadequate and/or unbalanced. Over-reliance on one type of resource (such as the Internet) is apparent. The list contains mistakes in construction.</p> <p>Research appears haphazard and rushed. Resources demonstrate an inadequate understanding of how to conduct college-level research.</p>