

## **Dr. Wells's Fancy Colour-Coded Grading Scheme Explained**

### **Wells; Fall, 2007**

When your paper is returned to you, you will find two things: colour-coded grading, and a paper rubric sheet with commentary on the back. The former will show you where you did things right, and where things need improvement. The latter will detail how you earned and lost grades on the essay/paper. Please read the comments, as they can help you to improve your work as you travel through your undergraduate years. Let the colours guide you as to what aspects of your paper (ideas/facts, structure, or expression/presentation) need the most work.

#### Red

It used to be that everyone used either pencil or red to mark papers. Some people feel like this is “bleeding” on the paper, but I like to see it as a passionate, intense, and engaged colour. Accordingly, this is used to mark ideas - your own original ideas, how you assess and write about the ideas of others, and how you make use of factual material. This colour shows the essential content of your paper, the building blocks and what you make of them.

#### Green

This is a little more neutral a colour. I use it to mark paper structure. What ideas have you started with, where you have ended? Do your arguments or evidence build in a logical sequence? Are your paragraphs the right length, and is there a logic to the ordering and shaping of the paragraphs? Should some things come in a different order? Where have you placed your musical examples, if you have any? Does this help the reader to follow your argument?

#### Blue

This is an everyday colour and I use it for everyday things. Are your margins, fonts, formatting, correct? Have you included your name, course number, an appropriate and engaging title on the front page? Is your bibliography in the proper format, and are your footnotes and citations correct? Even more importantly, is your grammar, spelling, and prose correct? Do your sentences make sense? I use this for things we used to call “typos” but refers to all the nuts and bolts of the essay.

I hope this colour-coded grading helps you to improve your essay and paper writing skills over time.

