Assessment of General Education Principle 4: Diversity
Department of Minority Studies
Spring 2015

In the Department of Minority Studies, Learning outcomes for **General Education Principle 4: Diversity** were assessed in the spring semester course: A151 (1917)/C151 (2026) Minority People in the U.S. The Diversity Principle outcomes are:

- Demonstrate understanding of cultural diversity in a variety of contexts
- Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between social structures, social justice and human rights
- Demonstrate understanding of racial minority experiences and diverse worldviews and the manner in which they shape U.S. culture and the world

A151/C151, MINORITY PEOPLE IN THE U.S. (COURSE DESCRIPTION)

A151/C151 is the general introductory course for the Department of Minority Studies. It is taught every spring semester (1995-2015) by Professor Raoul Contreras. On the first working day of the class (2nd class session) students are introduced to the course by explaining that thematically the class will be a historically based, and critical study, of the "problem of race" in the U.S.

There are two parts to the historical perspective of A151/C151. In the first part, the topical focus is the historical experiences that characterize the "Long 19th Century" (1776-1914) incorporation into the U.S. of those Racial/ Ethnic/Cultural groupings that have come to be generalized as "Minority People." A specific focus of this historical and critical study of Minority People is the experiences of Native Americans, African Americans, and Mexican Americans. (There is tangential study of Asian/Pacific Peoples in the U.S.)

Through its course materials (Lectures, Reading, Visual documentaries, Graphs, Statistics, etc.) A151/C151's perspective (the "Minority Studies Perspective") is presented to the class over the semester's first few weeks. That is, it is the problematic historical encounter with the **structural, institutional, cultural, and ideological (worldview) dimensions of the 19th Century U.S. polity, economy, and cultural framework** that explains the social transformation of indigenous peoples, Africans, and Mexicans into "Racial Minorities" (A principle category of Minority People in the U.S.).

That is, it is through the historical processes of this encounter that Racial/Ethnic/Cultural groups distinguished; most importantly, in this course's study of the problem of race, by qualitatively high measures of all variants of social inequality, social injustice, and overall, all manner of social disadvantage, are socially constructed.

In the second half of A151/C151's historical and critical study of the problem of Race (covering the turn into the 20th Century and through the Social Movement period of "the 60s") the topical emphasis of the class turns toward how the community development, emergence of Social Movements, the Culture (and in particular the culture of resistance), and the worldviews of "Minority People" serve as the foundation for the (relative) amelioration of the problem of race in the U.S. In particular, there is emphasis on how these 20th Century experiences serve not only to frame Minority Peoples ' quest for social justice and social equality, but to shape and to better U.S. culture and the world.

A151/C151 COURSE JOURNALS

Course grades in A151/C151 have always been determined by four criteria: Attendance/Participation, Course Journal, Mid-term, and Final Exam. Since 2003, the evaluation of course journals has been the single most important of these criteria (35%) in determining a student's course grade.

On the first day of class the guidelines for journal work are explained as: **a)** One Journal entry for **each week** of the class (except for the final week of class sessions); **b)** 1 ½ typewritten pages/double space to a max of 2 ½ pages for **each journal entry**; **c)** Personal/informal/1st person style of writing is encouraged, self-reflection is encouraged, argumentive is encouraged … "Think, writing a letter to a **friend**, who you know is going to be surprised, doubtful, or even strongly disagree with what you have to say … you have to convince;" **d)** Topically, journal entries can address **any topic** one can derive from the class sessions during the week the entry is for, including lecture, classroom discussion, anecdotal or "off the cuff" student or teacher comments, etc.; **or** any topic one can derive from course materials for that week such as text(s), other readings, documentaries, etc.; **or** anything current outside the classroom , including topics raised by public or social mass media, or current events, that one can **analytically relate**

to the teaching in A151/C151, or to the course materials, like the reading the week the entry is for; **or** (highly encouraged) personal experiences, past or present, with race, or the problem of race, that one can **analytically relate** to something A151/C151 or its course materials addressed the week the entry is for.

The journal is submitted for evaluation and grading four times during the semester: at the beginning of the 3rd week of the semester, and a second, third, and fourth time roughly every subsequent four weeks. Thus, there are usually **four individual journal entries** to be evaluated the second, third, and fourth time journals are submitted. Each of the four journal submissions are graded on a 1 (low) to 5 (high) scale; a **single cumulative grade** for the entire set of journal entries (usually four entries). There is one such grade for each of the four semester submissions.

Until 2009 the grade for each of the four journal submissions was evaluated on the basis of qualities of "reflection," "analysis," and "critical thinking" (described as probing the premises and assumptions of one's own thinking and/or that of the topic being addressed by the journal entry). In 2009 the criteria for evaluating journal submissions was formalized by adopting a "scoring guide" for evaluating *Critical Thinking* in written work that was developed at California State University, Fresno (See the Scoring guide below).

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The method used to assess learning outcomes for *General Education Principle 4: Diversity* was to evaluate students' **third** course journal submission of the semester. This journal submission was evaluated specifically in relation to the Learning Outcomes of the Diversity principle. The third journal submission was at the beginning of the 11th (of 16) week of the semester. By this point in the semester students have experience with the journal work, and how it is being evaluated by the instructor, and know how "important" it is relative to their final course grade.

As a generality, students are into their journal work by the 11th week, and have infused their writing on topics derived from the teaching of A151/C151 with the knowledge of their own individual experiences and previous learning, beliefs, and values about Race and the Problem of Race. Of

the course's four grading criteria the Journal is the most transparent in conveying what the student understands about what A151/C151 is teaching.

As presented in the above course description of A151/C151, the **subject material** of this class can be generalized as a **historically specific** and **critical study** of the Diversity Principle. That is, in the context of the specific form of abstraction and focus indicated by the Learning Outcomes of the Diversity Principle, the subject matter (and course materials) of A151/C151, and, thus, the base subject matter for course Journal work, can be generalized as critical study of **how**, and to what social consequence *the relationship between social structures, social justice, and human rights* was manifested in the 19th and 20th Century historical experience of Native Americans, African Americans, and Mexican Americans (Chicanos). And, A151/C151 can be similarly generalized as a body of learning about **how** these same … *racial minority experiences and diverse worldviews* serve not only to historically frame Minority Peoples' quest for social justice and social equality, but to *shape U.S. culture and the world* for the better.

In turn, the Course Journal has evolved into the most valuable (instructor's) tool for gauging and evaluating what the student has learned and understands through A151/C151. The relative topical freedom of the course journal assignment facilitates the possibility of a journal entry that makes no substantive reference to the learning outcomes of the Diversity Principle. However, unless there is a more or less conscious intellectual evasion of the learning outcomes, a journal submission of four entries will articulate multiple topics, analyses, reflections on personal experiences, beliefs or values, or critical reflections relating to episodes in the Native American, African American, and Chicano historical experiences that can be evaluated in terms of their understanding of the Diversity Learning Outcomes.

THE ASSESSMENT OF DIVERSITY PRINCIPLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The assessment of Diversity learning outcomes in A151/C151 was done through an evaluation of the semester's third journal submission. "Scoring" of students' understanding of the Diversity Learning outcomes was done on the basis of the scoring guide used for journal work in A151/C151 beginning in 2009. This scoring guide was a relative refinement of how journals were evaluated 1996-2008.

When journals were returned after the **second** journal submission (7th week of semester) students were "emphatically" reminded about journal work's obligation to be analytically related to what A151/C151 was teaching. However, students were not informed that there would be a "different," more specific, focus to how the next, the third, journal submission would be evaluated. This was a methodological decision based on the premise that, given the course's subject material, "writing to the learning outcomes" was inherent to the general guidelines for journal work explained to students on the first day of class.

Another relevant methodological decision was to use the use the scoring guide for evaluating journal work in use since 2009 without any substantive adaptation … only that there would be a more "focused" orientation to what would be evaluated (specific articulations of the Diversity Learning Outcomes) for its qualities of "Critical Thinking."

The scoring guide posits four scoring levels: ACCOMPLISHED (4.5+ → 5+), COMPETENT (4.0+ → 4.5), DEVELOPING (3.5 → 4.0), AND BEGINNING (3.0 → 3.5-), over which the 1-5 grading spectrum that has been traditionally used in journal grading is distributed. Each of the scoring levels is evaluating specific characteristics or qualities of critical thinking in writing (about the Learning Outcomes) over three categories: INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION, and PRESENTATION. In terms of the traditional grading spectrum (A → F) used in official university grading the ACCOMPLISHED level spectrum is A- → A+; COMPETENT is B- → B+; DEVELOPING is C → C+; and BEGINNING is (F) D → C- (There would be no individual evaluations below 3).

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The entire class (61) submitted journals, although some were "late" (submitted more than a week after the designated turn in date), and/or contained less than the four entries. Being "late" usually means losing a point after the evaluation of the journal work submitted, and "less" entries than the required one per week also usually means loss of a point for each "missing" entry. For the assessment of Diversity Learning Outcomes, being "late" was not deducted; however, turning in less than four entries did result in

a point deduction.

Every journal submitted contained multiple (at least two) entries that addressed the learning outcomes. They did this through reflections, analyses, assessments, critiques, etc. of issues, events, individuals, personal experiences, public media, social media, etc. That were derived from or analytically related by the journal entry to the teachings of A151/C151 and could be evaluated in terms of the Diversity Learning Outcomes (See table of individual student scores and scoring level). The "high" in the range of quality of these journal submissions were six (10%) that scored as 5+ or ACCOMPISHED (Exceptional). All six of these individuals will eventually earn an "A" for the course (and three will earn an A+) on the basis of the four criteria for Course grade (Attendance/Participation, Journal Work, Mid-term, Final Exam).

The "low" on the quality of Learning Outcome assessment were the five (8%) that scored at the BEGINNING level. Eventually, one of these students will receive a C+ final grade for the Course, the other four will fail to submit Mid-terms and/or Final exam and receive Course Incompletes. Two will complete the course in Summer Session 2015 and receive C+ and a B grades.

The general numerical results of the Diversity Outcomes assessment (summarized on the Individual student scoring table) were:

a) 20 (33%) scoring on the ACCOMPLISHED level with 6 (10%) of these being "Exceptional"

b) 24 (39%) scoring on the COMPETENT level

c) 12 (19%) scoring on the DEVELOPING level

d) 5 (8%) scoring on the BEGINNER level

In a more substantive sense, relatively "high" or "low" individual scoring demonstrated different levels of understanding the thematic centrality of Race and The Problem of Race in A151/C151. That is, the main categorical distinction characterizing the ACCOMPLISHED/COMPETENT individual scores was in capacity to analytically and critically **recognize and explain** the role (and the prominence) of "structure," "institutions," and "systems," in writing about specific manifestations of the Problem of Race.

In contrast, characteristic of DEVELOPING/BEGINNING individual scores was to posit a context of a relative non-recognition of "structure," "Institutions," and "systems" and to emphasize individual malfeasance or racial idiosyncrasy, and historical aberration, or abstract notions of (implicitly individual) bias, prejudice, discrimination, or "hate;" or, when acknowledging group, organizational, or mass/collective behavior, or repetitive situations to fall back on ahistorical factors such as "human nature" to explain specific manifestations of the Problem of Race.

This categorical distinction between ACCOMPLISHED/COMPETENT and DEVELOPING/BEGINNING was also manifested in capacity to analytically and critically recognize and explain the centrality of historical "racial minority experiences" and their "diverse worldviews" **in the 20th Century struggle for social justice and social equality**. Characteristic of the DEVELOPING/BEGINNING individual scores was a blunting of this understanding through a tendency to [over]emphasize the commonality of the human experience, to an exclusion of specificity and uniqueness ("Africans practiced slavery, just like the Europeans…"), as well as that of the worldviews generated by these *racial minority experiences* ("Everybody (Blacks) is racist just like Whites … and everybody has to stop being racist …") to address specific historical manifestations of the Problem of Race in the teaching of A151/C151.

Important in assessing these results is that this "categorical" distinction was also a relative one **within** the ACCOMPLISHED/COMPETENT and **within** the DEVELOPING/BEGINNING sectors of the assessment. The ideal of "recognize and explain … racial minority experiences and their "diverse worldviews" was clearly characteristic of the 10% of ACCOMPLISHED (EXCEPTIONAL), however, more characteristic of the "lower end" of the spectrum of ACCOMPLISHED/ COMPETENT, was a journal submission that was strong, or at the very least adequate, on "Recognition," but not so strong, even inadequate, in its explanation.

Similarly, on the "high end" of the DEVELOPING/BEGINNING spectrum journal submissions were characterized by "Recognition" and even a certain level of "explanation," but usually one that would tend to, more or less, conceptually collapse "structure" and "individual." Characteristic of the "lower

end" of the DEVELOPING/BEGINNING spectrum was a more or less total reliance on abstract notions of "bias," "hypocrisy," "prejudice," "Hate," etc. and ahistorical concepts like "Human Nature."

ASSESSMENT PROJECTIONS

In the instructor's estimation, the method of assessment worked, and the results provide a meaningful measure of the students understanding of the Diversity Leaning Outcomes. The intent is to do the assessment in the next semester of A151/C151 with special instructions preceding student preparation for the third journal submission. These instructions will be that the third journal submission will serve as the course mid-term, and for that reason will be a single, extended, journal entry in which students will write to a specific scenario that will be crafted by the instructor to direct writing to the Learning Outcomes.

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METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

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Important in assessing these results is that this "categorical" distinction was also a relative one **within** the ACCOMPLISHED/COMPETENT and **within** the DEVELOPING/BEGINNING sectors of the assessment. The ideal of "recognize and explain … racial minority experiences and their "diverse worldviews" was clearly characteristic of the 10% of ACCOMPLISHED (EXCEPTIONAL), however, more characteristic of the "lower end" of the spectrum of ACCOMPLISHED/ COMPETENT, was a journal submission that was strong, or at the very least adequate, on "Recognition," but not so strong, even inadequate, in its explanation.

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ASSESSMENT PROJECTIONS

In the instructor's estimation, the method of assessment worked, and the results provide a meaningful measure of the students understanding of the Diversity Leaning Outcomes. The intent is to do the assessment in the next semester of A151/C151 with special instructions preceding student preparation for the third journal submission. These instructions will be that the third journal submission will serve as the course mid-term, and for that reason will be a single, extended, journal entry in which students will write to a specific scenario that will be crafted by the instructor to direct writing to the Learning Outcomes.

Scoring Guide for Evaluating Spring semester A151 (1003)/C151 (1106) Student course journals on General Education
Principle #4 – Diversity Learning Outcomes

SCORING LEVEL	INTERPRETATION	ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION	PRESENTATION
ACCOMPLISHED 4.5- 5	Analyzes Insightful Question Identifies Bias Critiques Content Examines Inconsistencies Emphasizes Context	Examines Conclusions Makes Reasonable Judgments Discriminates Rationally Synthesizes Data View Information Critically	Argues Shows Justifie Assimi
COMPETENT 4.0 – 4.5	Asks Insightful Questions Detects Some Bias Categorizes content Identifies inconsistencies Recognizes Context	Formulates Conclusions Recognizes Arguments Notices Differences Evaluates Data Seeks out Information	Argues Identifi Attribu Sugges Incorpo
DEVELOPING 3.5 – 4.0	Identifies Some Questions Acknowledges Bias Recognizes Basic content States some inconsistencies Selects sources adequately	Identifies some conclusions Sees some arguments Identifies some differences Paraphrases Data Assumes Information valid	Miscon Genera Cites s Present Overlo
BEGINNING 3.0 – 3.5	Fails to question data Ignores Bias Misses major content areas Detects no inconsistencies Chooses biased sources	Fails to draw conclusions Sees no arguments Overlooks differences Repeats Data Omits research	Omits Misrep Exclud Draws Shows

A151/C151 Diversity Learning Principle #4 – Journal submission #3 Assessment

Student Journal # 3 61 JOURNALS WERE SUBMITTED AND EVALUATED FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES 2 & 3 OF DIVERSITY LEARNING PRINCIPLE #4	Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between social structures, social justice, and human rights in a variety of cultural contexts	Demonstrate understanding of racial minority experiences and diverse world views and the manner in which they shape U. S. culture and the world	Combined average score and Evaluation of Diversity Learning Principle #4
Student # 1	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student # 2	4	4	4 Developing
Student # 3	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #4	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #5	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #6	4.5	5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #7	4	4	4 Developing
Student #8	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #9	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #10	4	3.5	3.75 Developing
Student #11	4	3.5	3.75 Developing
Student #12	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #13	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student # 14	3.5	3.0	3.25 Beginner
Student #15	3.5	3.5	3.5 Developing

Student #16	4.5	5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #17	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #18	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #19	3.5	3.0	3.25 Beginner
Student #20	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #21	4.5	4	4.25 Competent

Student #22	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #23	4.0	4.5	4.25 Competent
Student #24	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #25	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #26	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #27	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #28	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #29	4	3.5	3.75 Developing
Student #30	3.5	4	3.75 Developing
Student #31	5	4.5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #32	3.0	3.5	3.25 Beginner
Student #33	5	4.0	4.5 Competent
Student #34	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #35	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #36	3.5	4	3.75 Developing
Student #37	4.5	5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #38	4	4	4 Developing

Student #39	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #40	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #41	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #42	3.0	3.0	3.0 Beginner

Student #43	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #44	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #45	3.5	3.0	3.25 Beginner
Student #46	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #47	4	4	4 Developing
Student #48	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #49	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #50	3.5	3.5	3.5 Developing
Student #51	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #52	3.5	3.5	3.5 Developing
Student #53	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #54	5	4.5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #55	4.4	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #56	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #57	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #58	5	4	4.5 Competent
Student #59	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #60	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #61	4.5	5	4.75 Accomplished

			SUMMARY Accomplished – 20 (6) (33%) (10%) Competent - 24 (39%) Developing - 12 (19%) Beginner - 5 (8%)

A151/C151 Diversity Learning Principle #4 – Journal submission #3 Assessment

Student Journal # 3 61 JOURNALS WERE SUBMITTED AND EVALUATED FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES 2 & 3 OF DIVERSITY LEARNING PRINCIPLE #4	Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between social structures, social justice, and human rights in a variety of cultural contexts	Demonstrate understanding of racial minority experiences and diverse world views and the manner in which they shape U. S. culture and the world	Combined average score and Evaluation of Diversity Learning Principle #4
Student # 1	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student # 2	4	4	4 Developing
Student # 3	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #4	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #5	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #6	4.5	5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #7	4	4	4 Developing
Student #8	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #9	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #10	4	3.5	3.75 Developing
Student #11	4	3.5	3.75 Developing
Student #12	5	5	5 Accomplished

Student #13	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student # 14	3.5	3.0	3.25 Beginner
Student #15	3.5	3.5	3.5 Developing
Student #16	4.5	5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #17	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #18	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #19	3.5	3.0	3.25 Beginner
Student #20	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #21	4.5	4	4.25 Competent

Student #22	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #23	4.0	4.5	4.25 Competent
Student #24	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #25	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #26	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #27	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #28	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #29	4	3.5	3.75 Developing
Student #30	3.5	4	3.75 Developing
Student #31	5	4.5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #32	3.0	3.5	3.25 Beginner
Student #33	5	4.0	4.5 Competent
Student #34	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #35	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent

Student #36	3.5	4	3.75 Developing
Student #37	4.5	5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #38	4	4	4 Developing
Student #39	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #40	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #41	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #42	3.0	3.0	3.0 Beginner

Student #43	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #44	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #45	3.5	3.0	3.25 Beginner
Student #46	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #47	4	4	4 Developing
Student #48	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #49	5	5	5 Accomplished
Student #50	3.5	3.5	3.5 Developing
Student #51	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #52	3.5	3.5	3.5 Developing
Student #53	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #54	5	4.5	4.75 Accomplished
Student #55	4.4	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #56	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #57	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #58	5	4	4.5 Competent

Student #59	4.5	4.5	4.5 Competent
Student #60	5	5	5 Accomplished (+)
Student #61	4.5	5	4.75 Accomplished
			SUMMARY Accomplished – 20 (6) (33%) (10%) Competent - 24 (39%) Developing - 12 (19%) Beginner - 5 (8%)

Scoring Guide for Evaluating Spring semester A151 (1003)/C151 (1106) Student course journals on General Education
Principle #4 – Diversity Learning Outcomes

SCORING LEVEL	INTERPRETATION	ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION	PRESENTATION
ACCOMPLISHED 4.5- 5	Analyzes Insightful Question Identifies Bias Critiques Content Examines Inconsistencies Emphasizes Context	Examines Conclusions Makes Reasonable Judgments Discriminates Rationally Synthesizes Data View Information Critically	Argues Succinctly Shows Intellectual Honesty Justifies Decisions Assimilates Information
COMPETENT 4.0 – 4.5	Asks Insightful Questions Detects Some Bias Categorizes content Identifies inconsistencies Recognizes Context	Formulates Conclusions Recognizes Arguments Notices Differences Evaluates Data Seeks out Information	Argues Clearly Identifies issues Attributes sources Suggests solutions Incorporates information
DEVELOPING 3.5 – 4.0	Identifies Some Questions Acknowledges Bias Recognizes Basic content States some inconsistencies Selects sources adequately	Identifies some conclusions Sees some arguments Identifies some differences Paraphrases Data Assumes Information valid	Misconstructs arguments Generalizes issues Cites sources Presents few options Overlooks some information
BEGINNING 3.0 – 3.5	Fails to question data Ignores Bias Misses major content areas Detects no inconsistencies Chooses biased sources	Fails to draw conclusions Sees no arguments Overlooks differences Repeats Data Omits research	Omits arguments Misrepresents issues Excludes Data Draws faulty conclusions Shows intellectual dishonesty
