

URBS 350

GROUP PAPER RUBRIC

The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize you with a developing country and help you think critically about a major issue confronting the country. You are expected to develop a descriptive and analytic narrative using the concepts, ideas and vocabulary presented during class lectures. In other words, describe the country and a major issue in terms of its demographic, economic, housing, political, and social/cultural characteristics (you are not limited to these concepts, but, at a minimum, should include these). Your final paper will be no more than 6 pages, 12 pt. Times New Roman or equivalent font, 1.5 spacing or 2X spacing max. References and other items in the appendix are not part of page limit (you must provide references; appendix is optional).

Descriptive Narrative (60 points)

___ (Excellent) Provides a comprehensive overview of the country and a major urban area drawing upon many of the important concepts and ideas discussed during class lectures. The various descriptive data are woven into a coherent narrative that not only tells the reader where the country stands today with respect to important indicators, but also how it got there. Also, there is little if any extraneous information. (41 to 50 points)

___ (Adequate) Provides a reasonable overview of the country and a major urban area. Many of the important ideas discussed in lecture are incorporated, however, the narrative structure and data presentation are somewhat disjointed and lacking in focus. The historical context is underdeveloped and some of the information is superfluous. (25 to 39 points)

___ (Uh-Oh) Provides some data in a mostly disjointed, meandering narrative that appears as if it was pieced together hastily from various sources. Only a few of the main concepts developed in class are employed, and much of the country specific information does not fit together in a manner that imparts any sense of place (i.e. it does not give the reader a feel for the country). The reader does not leave the paper much wiser about the country (or the major urban area in it). (0 to 24 points)

Analytic Narrative (30 points)

___ (Excellent) Provides a thorough overview of a major issue confronting the country, its root causes and one or more policy prescriptions (or proscriptions). A well written analytic section will not only describe the problem clearly, using data, narrative description as necessary, but also help the reader understand the important causes of the problem/issue. (31 to 40 points)

___ (Adequate) Provides a reasonable overview of a major issue and some of its causes, however, the argument made by the authors is underdeveloped and/or does not include sufficient evidence to validate its claims (in other words, the paper does not sufficiently elucidate the pathway between cause and effect); additionally, the recommendations are unclear or don't make much sense (15 to 30 points).

___ (Whoops) The analytic section appears perfunctory, as if pieced together from sundry sources. The section is bereft of any underlying logic and may also include a laundry list of issues and causes without any clear connection between any of them. The paper also does not contain any recommendations (0 to 14 points)

Punctuation, Grammar and References (0-5 points)

Intangibles (the "Gestalt") – the paper's feel, flow and cogency (0-5 points)