1. ASSIGNMENT
   O The essay responds to the prompt and discusses the question(s) posed.
   O The essay stays focused on the prompt throughout.

2. CONTENT
   O A clear main idea/thesis is established.
   O The main idea is supported by a number of major points or arguments.
   O The supporting points are backed up by evidence (from readings, outside sources, relevant experience, etc.).
   O Any evidence offered is analyzed to strengthen the main idea(s) in the paper.
   O A variety of relevant perspectives are considered and addressed.

3. USE OF TEXT/READINGS
   O The paper includes text from outside sources.
   O The information from outside sources has been interpreted correctly.
   O The paper uses both paraphrasing and direct citations to support arguments/points.
   O Quotations have been ‘blended’ correctly and smoothly – proper use of …ellipses..., [square brackets], “quotation marks”, c,o,m,m,a,s, p.e.r.i.o.d.s., etc.
   O Quotes are integrated effectively by using proper verb tense, capitalization, and proper identification of the person who wrote/said the words.
   O All readings/outside sources are properly cited to avoid plagiarism.

4. ORGANIZATION
   O The essay has a clear beginning (introduction), middle (body) and end (conclusion).
   O The introduction provides brief background and clearly expresses the main idea.
   O The body paragraphs have topic sentences that tie directly back to the main idea/thesis.
   O Each body paragraph is well organized and has a topic sentence, supporting evidence and proper analysis.
   O Each body paragraph lends effective support to the overall main idea.
   O Transitions and other techniques are used to make the essay flow coherently.
   O The conclusion sums up the essay and expresses the significance (the “so what?”) of the overall issue.

5. LANGUAGE & MECHANICS
   O Spell-check was used.
   O The paper was proofread to make sure that nothing slipped past the spell-check.
   O There are no serious and frequent errors in capitalization, grammar, punctuation or spelling.
   O The paper is formatted properly.

Adapted from Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005, p. 213-214