Criteria	Exemplary	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Purpose	The writer's central purpose or argument is readily apparent to the reader.	The writing has a clear purpose or argument, but may sometimes digress from it.	The central purpose or argument is not consistently clear throughout the paper.	The purpose or argument is generally unclear.
Content	Balanced presentation of relevant and legitimate information that clearly supports a central purpose or argument and shows a thoughtful, in-depth analysis of a significant topic. Reader gains important insights.	Information provides reasonable support for a central purpose or argument and displays evidence of a basic analysis of a significant topic. Reader gains some insights.	Information supports a central purpose or argument at times. Analysis is basic or general. Reader gains few insights.	Central purpose or argument is not clearly identified. Analysis is vague or not evident. Reader is confused or may be misinformed.
Organization	The ideas are arranged logically to support the purpose or argument. They flow smoothly from one to another and are clearly linked to each other. The reader can follow the line of reasoning.	The ideas are arranged logically to support the central purpose or argument. They are usually clearly linked to each other. For the most part, the reader can follow the line of reasoning.	In general, the writing is arranged logically, although occasionally ideas fail to make sense together. The reader is fairly clear about what writer intends.	The writing is not logically organized. Frequently, ideas fail to make sense together. The reader cannot identify a line of reasoning and loses interest.
Feel	The writing is compelling. It hooks the reader and sustains interest throughout.	The writing is generally engaging, but has some dry spots. In general, it is focused and keeps the reader's attention.	The writing is dull and unengaging. Though the paper has some interesting parts, the reader finds it difficult to maintain interest.	The writing has little personality. The reader quickly loses interest and stops reading.

Criteria	Exemplary	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Tone	The tone is consistently professional and appropriate for an academic research paper.	The tone is generally professional. For the most part, it is appropriate for an academic research paper.	The tone is not consistent-ly professional or appropriate for an academic research paper.	The tone is unprofessional. It is not appropriate for an academic research paper.
Sentence Structure	Sentences are well-phrased and varied in length and structure. They flow smoothly from one to another.	Sentences are well-phrased and there is some variety in length and structure. The flow from sentence to sentence is generally smooth.	Some sentences are awkwardly constructed so that the reader is occasionally distracted.	Errors in sentence structure are frequent enough to be a major distraction to the reader.
Word Choice	Word choice is consistently precise and accurate.	Word choice is generally good. The writer often goes beyond the generic word to find one more precise and effective.	Word choice is merely adequate, and the range of words is limited. Some words are used inappropriately.	Many words are used inappropriately, confusing the reader.
Grammar, Spelling, Writing Mechanics (punctua-tion, italics, capitali-zation,etc.	The writing is free or almost free of errors.	There are occasional errors, but they don't represent a major distraction or obscure meaning.	The writing has many errors, and the reader is distracted by them.	There are so many errors that meaning is obscured. The reader is confused and stops reading.
Length	Paper is the number of pages specified in the assignment.			Paper has more or fewer pages than specified in the assignment.

Criteria	Exemplary	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Use of References	Compelling evidence from professionally legitimate sources is given to support claims. Attribution is clear and fairly represented.	Professionally legitimate sources that support claims are generally present and attribution is, for the most part, clear and fairly represented.	Although attributions are occasionally given, many statements seem unsubstantiated. The reader is confused about the source of information and ideas.	References are seldom cited to support statements.
Quality of References	References are primarily peer-reviewed professional journals or other approved sources (e.g., government documents, agency manuals, …). The reader is confident that the information and ideas can be trusted.	Although most of the references are professionally legitimate, a few are questionable (e.g., trade books, internet sources, popular magazines, …). The reader is uncertain of the reliability of some of the sources.	Most of the references are from sources that are not peer-reviewed and have uncertain reliability. The reader doubts the accuracy of much of the material presented.	There are virtually no sources that are professionally reliable. The reader seriously doubts the value of the material and stops reading.
Use of Most Recent Edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psycho-logical Association (APA)	APA format is used accurately and consistently in the paper and on the "References" page.	APA format is used with minor errors.	There are frequent errors in APA format.	Format of the document is not recognizable as APA.