Grading Criteria for Essays in English 200

I will use the following set of guidelines for evaluating your essay assignments this semester.

A essays:

- Have a clear, well defined thesis that predicts and controls the development of the paper.
- Demonstrate an awareness of their readers by making clear the relevance of the essay to the audience.
- Prove their thesis with sufficient examples and supporting evidence. All examples are sufficiently described and explained with an abundance of detail.
- Demonstrate that a significant amount of research has been done (relative to the length and requirement of the specific assignment) and that this research has been effectively used in support of larger claims.
- Have an introduction that interests the reader and prepares them for the development of the paper.
- Have a logical organizational scheme. The connections and transitions between paragraphs and ideas make sense to the reader. Paragraphs are distinct and controlled by topic sentences.
- Use a variety of rhetorical strategies to develop ideas and prove thesis.
- Show a thorough and thoughtful revision process in the materials contained in the essay packet.
- Use a writing style which is appropriate to the audience and demonstrate both sentence and word choice variety.
- Contain virtually no errors in usage, grammar or writing mechanics.

B essays:

- Have a clear, well defined thesis that is sustained throughout the essay.
- Demonstrate an awareness of their readers by making clear the relevance of the essay to their audience.
- Have a logical organizational scheme. The connections and transitions between paragraphs and ideas make sense to the reader, though there may be occasional minor gaps and inconsistencies.
- Prove their thesis with sufficient examples and supporting evidence. Most examples are sufficiently described and explained with an abundance of detail, though there may be places where more would be desired.
- Demonstrate that a significant amount of research has been done (relative to the length and requirement of the specific assignment) and that this research has been effectively used in support of larger claims. There may however be places where research has been ineffectively incorporated.
• Show an adequate revision process in the materials contained in the essay packet.
• Use a writing style which is appropriate to the audience and demonstrate both sentence and word choice variety.
• Contain no more than occasional errors in usage, grammar or writing mechanics.

C essays:

• Contain a thesis but lacks a clear focus. The author’s main purpose in writing is difficult to determine and the thesis does not adequately control the development of the paper.
• Do not make clear the relevance of the essay to the audience.
• Contain insufficient evidence and supporting detail.
• Demonstrate adequate research skills and an adequate ability to incorporate research.
• Show a hasty and/or incomplete revision process in the materials contained in the essay packet. Often, only surface changes have been made to drafts.
• Use a writing style which is either inappropriate to the audience or lacks sentence and word choice variety.
• Contain significant errors in usage, grammar or writing mechanics or show a pattern of such errors throughout the essay.

D essays:

• Have only a vague sense of focus or none at all. The author seems to lack a clear purpose in writing.
• Do not make clear the relevance of the essay to their audience.
• Lack a clear organizational scheme.
• Failure to use evidence or supporting detail.
• Use insufficient research.
• Show minimal revisions to drafts in the essay packet.
• Use a writing style which is either inappropriate to the audience or lacks sentence and word choice variety.
• Demonstrate patterns of error in usage that are significant enough to impede the reader’s ability to understand the essay.
• Have not followed the guidelines of the assignment.