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| **Scale** | **Basic** | **Beginning** | **Developing** | **Competent** | **Mature** | **Exemplary** |
| **Rhetorical Awareness**Response to situation, including purpose, audience, register, and context | Overlooks two or more aspects of the situation or assignment, and thus does not fulfill the task | Overlooks at least one aspect of the situation or assignment and thus compromises effectiveness | Attempts to respond to all aspects of the situation or assignment, but the attempt is incomplete | Addresses the situation or assignment in a complete but perfunctory or predictable way | Addresses the situation completely, with unexpected insight | Addresses the situation in a sophisticated manner that could advance professional discourse on the topic |
| **Stance**Argument, significance and implications (“so what” factor) | Involves an unspecified or confusing argument; significance is not evident | Makes an overly general argument; significance is difficult to discern, or not appropriate to the rhetorical situation | Makes a simplistic or implicit argument, or multiple arguments that have no clear connection to one another; gestures towards significance, but does not fully develop it | Makes an explicit and straightforward argument that does not oversimplify the problem or question; explores at least one implication of the argument in depth | Makes a complex, unified argument that clearly articulates a position or stance; explores multiple implications of the argument | Offers an inventive, expert-like argument that clearly articulates a sophisticated position/stance; explores multiple implications of the argument in a compelling manner |
| **Development of Ideas**Evidence, analysis, and substance | Claims requiring support are not backed by necessary evidence; lacks analysis of major pieces of evidence; content is not substantive | Evidence and/or analysis is weak or contradictory; does not account for important evidence that could support or disprove the argument | Evidence provides minimal but necessary support to each point; attempted analysis is not sufficient to prove the argument | Evidence and analysis are substantive; they support the argument and related claims, but are mostly predictable | Evidence fully supports and proves the argument and all related claims; evidence is always paired with compelling analysis | Evidence and analysis are precise, nuanced, fully developed, and work together to enhance the argument, |
| **Organization**Structure and coherence, including elements such as introductions and conclusions as well as logical connections between points | Lacks unity in constituent parts; fails to create coherence among constituent parts; contains major argumentative holes or fallacies | Uses insufficient unifying statements; uses few effective connections; some logical moves necessary to prove the argument are absent  | Uses some effective unifying claims, but a few are unclear; inconsistently makes connections between points and the argument; employs simplistic organization | States unifying claims with supporting points that relate clearly to the overall argument and employs an effective but mechanical scheme | Asserts and sustains a claim that develops logically and progressively; adapts typical organizational schemes for the context; achieves substantive coherence | Artifact is organized to achieve maximum coherence and momentum; connections are sophisticated and complex when required |
| **Conventions**Expectations for grammar, mechanics, style, citation | Involves errors that risk making the overall message distorted or incomprehensible | Involves a major pattern of errors | Involves some distracting errors | Meets expectations, with minor errors | Meets expectationsin a virtually flawless manner | Exceeds expectations and manipulates conventions to advance the argument |
| **Design for Medium**Features that use affordances of the genre to enhance factors such as usability and comprehensibility | Lacks features necessary or significant for the genre; uses features that conflict with or ignore the argument | Omits some important features; distracting inconsistencies in features; uses features that don’t support argument | Uses features that support the argument, but some match imprecisely with content; involves minor omissions or inconsistencies | Supports the argument with features that are generally suited to genre and content | Promotes engagement and supports the argument with features that efficiently use affordances | Persuades with careful, seamless integration of features and content and with innovative use of affordances |