WRITING MATTERS: A Guide to UW-W Writing Standards

	Accomplished	Competent	Developing
Focus/Thesis	□ Explicitly and fully addresses the assignment □ Thesis or central idea is clear, compelling, arguable, original, and complex	□ Addresses assignment but may be less relevant □ Thesis/central idea is clear but simplistic, obvious, and/or superficial	□ Partially addresses the assignment □ Thesis/central idea may be absent OR may be unclear, unfocused and/or confused
Analysis/ Interpretation	□ Demonstrates complete, accurate, and insightful understanding and use of materials □ Develops and synthesizes substantive and persuasive arguments/ideas/ interpretations □ Demonstrates complex engagement of alternative perspectives/context	□ Displays complete and accurate understanding of materials, but uneven ability to shape and contextualize materials □ Introduces substantive and persuasive ideas/arguments /interpretations but these are not fully developed or synthesized □ Shows awareness of alternative perspectives/context	□ Shows inaccurate and incomplete understanding OR accurate but superficial understanding OR doesn't move beyond simple summary and description □ Presents obvious and unoriginal OR illogical OR unpersuasive ideas/arguments □ Lack of awareness of alternative perspectives/context
Coherence and Organization	□ Focused and logical development of thesis/ideas throughout □ Cohesive paragraphs that effectively develop the central argument/ideas □ Smooth transitions between ideas at sentence and paragraph level □ Introduction and conclusion are fully developed, engaging, and thoughtful	□ Maintains focus with minor logical lapses or unevenness in development of thesis/ideas □ Generally unified paragraphs with occasional gaps in cohesion □ Some weak or rough transitions at sentence and/or paragraph level □ Introduction and conclusion are adequately developed and effective	□ Focus shifts or is lacking altogether; weak or illogical development of idea/argument □ Disorganized paragraph structure, internal contradictions □ Lack of effective transitions at paragraph and/or paragraph level □ Truncated or absent introduction; redundant or absent conclusion
Evidence And Documentation	□ Sources are used with academic integrity □ Thesis and ideas are consistently supported by well-chosen evidence □ Evidence is smoothly integrated into discussion □ Evidence is credible, accurate and presented with an appropriate level of detail □ Consistently and accurately uses discipline-specific citation format	□ Sources are used with academic integrity □ Thesis and ideas are generally supported, but there may be some gaps or use of irrelevant evidence □ Evidence may be unevenly integrated into argument □ Evidence is occasionally inaccurate, too general or too specific in detail □ Some errors in use of discipline-specific citation format	□ Sources are used with academic integrity □ Evidence is consistently thin, inappropriate, irrelevant, and/or absent □ Evidence is poorly integrated (lacks signal phrases and follow-up) or unconnected to argument □ Evidence is often inaccurate, too general or too specific in detail; there may be lack of or over-reliance on sources □ Many errors in citation format; inappropriate citation format
Language Use and Conventions	□ Precise word choice, appropriate to audience and purpose □ Complex, varied sentences that convey meaning with clarity and fluency □ Closely adheres to rules of Standard Written English (grammar, punctuation, spelling)	□ Occasionally inaccurate, repetitive or imprecise word choice □ Sentences convey meaning clearly but may lack complexity, fluency or variety □ Mostly adheres to rules of Standard Written English but may include some minor errors	□ Often simplistic, inexact or inappropriate word choice □ Meaning is frequently impeded due to awkward or non-idiomatic sentences □ Frequent errors in Standard Written English that often impede meaning

Note: "Competent" defines the level of writing ability that all UW-Whitewater students should achieve by graduation.