A. Writing

1. The introduction is rhetorically effective, sets the context for the paper, and presents a specific thesis.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor

2. The thesis is focused on throughout the paper, with paragraphs relating to the thesis/main idea.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor

3. Paragraphs are focused and have topic sentences as appropriate.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor

4. Transitions are used appropriately between sentences, paragraphs and sections.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor

5. The conclusion does not simply restate the thesis, but brings the parts of the essay together and provides closure.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor

6. The prose evidences mastery of style; including concision, clarity, diction, and elegance.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor

7. Problems with word choice, grammar or punctuation do not distract the reader or damage the writer's credibility.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor

B. Close Reading

1. The paper provides a detailed analysis that discloses the intricacies of a text, for example through attention to word choice, figures of speech, tone, point of view, narrative structure, etc.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor
   - N/A

2. The writer recognizes literary forms and conventions as necessary or appropriate.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor
   - N/A

3. The writer formulates a plausible reading of the text.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor
   - N/A

4. The paper uses textual detail appropriately to construct the argument.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor

C. Disciplinary conventions

1. The writer presents the critical project as analytical rather than evaluative or immediately moral/didactic.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor
   - N/A

2. The writer situates texts historically or culturally, for example associated with a particular literary tradition or historical period.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor
   - N/A

3. The writer approaches the text as a mediated construction--for example by literary form, cultural convention or ideology.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor
   - N/A

4. The writer can engage with and evaluate secondary sources.
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Adequate
   - Poor
   - Very Poor
   - N/A

Overall Competence:
- Highly Competent (Excellent + Good)
- Competent (Adequate)
- Not Competent (Poor + Very Poor)

George Mason University