Contribution Rubric

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| **Content, Focus, and Development** |
| The paper argues for a particular, reasonable thesis about a course text, speculative fiction as a genre, or a cultural facet that stems from careful analysis and utilizes a theoretical lens. |
| The paper’s thesis is debatable and / or interpretable. It is new or it expands upon preexisting arguments in new ways. |
| The paper clearly defines the salient features of theoretical lens(es) utilized in the argument. |
| The paper explains significant historical, literary, or cultural background necessary for the understanding of the argument. |
| The paper demonstrates an awareness of insider vs. common knowledge (e.g. by explaining theoretical concepts, defining key terms and attributing information to outside sources). |
| The paper explains the stakes: how the argument facilitates a new understanding (e.g. enhance, extend, critique / evaluate preexisting arguments). |
| The paper defines keywords and *utilizes signposting and key terms* *high-priority places* (e.g. thesis, topic sentences) to consistently to show explicit connections between the thesis and other points in the paper. |
| The paper uses information from at least four credible academic sources (see assignment guidelines). |
| The paper demonstrates strategic use of authoritative research, as relevant. |
| The paper contextualizes the argument within already existing perspectives (explains relevant theoretical lenses, converses with arguments from class sources and outside sources, recognizes broader cultural and rhetorical contexts and discourses that are pertinent to the paper, etc.). |
| The paper uses relevant and sufficient evidence to develop its generalizations (e.g., details, examples, paraphrases and quotes from the text). |
| The paper makes central warrants or assumptions explicit for the reader. |
| The paper acknowledges alternative perspectives and converses with them or possibly entirely refutes them (i.e., it counters naysayers). |
| **Structure, Coherence, and Language** |
| The paper is structured with a thesis and a preview of the major points. |
| The paper adheres to the structure laid out in the introductory preview. |
| Paragraphs and ideas are organized so that their order progresses logically. There are transitions connecting paragraphs and sentences to each other and to the thesis/introduction. |
| The paper has an abstract, introduction, subheadings, and conclusion that facilitate close reading *and* skimming and that showcase the paper’s main ideas (the paper is organized using a thesis-driven structure and possibly an IMRaD-like structure, as decided upon with instructor and peers during drafting stages). |
| The paper uses language conventions and considerations of genre to craft writing that is an appropriate level of stylistic difficulty for the audience. |
| **Style and Process** |
| The writer has completed and possibly reworked all smaller drafting assignments leading up to this larger draft (structure rationale, proposal, introductory preview). |
| Revisions are substantive and considerate. |
| Vocabulary and style are appropriate for academic writing. Attention has been paid to issues of standard written English. There are few, if any, errors; and no error causes difficulty for the reader’s comprehension. |
| The paper follows the MLA guidelines for formatting, in-text parenthetical citation, and a “Works Cited” page. |
| Insight and Risk-Taking |
| The paper demonstrates intellectual risk-taking through providing insight or approaching aspects of the task creatively. |
| Abstract The abstract provides a concise and accurate preview of the contribution essay (probably using “Novelty Moves”). |