1. **Topic.** Is the topic of the paper clearly stated, early on, and does the stated topic remain the actual topic throughout the paper?

2. **Research Question.** Is the research question (or questions) clearly posed, early on? Are there any important questions raised by the paper, or implied theses, which are not answered or developed?

3. **Thesis.** Is the thesis—or theses—clearly stated, early on? Is each thesis persuasively supported?

4. **Historiography.** Are the research question and thesis situated in the context of the existing scholarly literature and debate on this topic? Does this historiographic overview tell the reader where this paper fits in the discussion?

5. **Background and Narrative.** Does the author provide necessary background information? Is there a brief and clear narrative that allows the reader to understand the story being told or event being investigated?

6. **Evidence.** Is the evidence used appropriate? Have recent sources been consulted, or does the bibliography seem rather dated? Are there sufficient primary sources used?

7. **Citation of Evidence.** Is the general number of citations sufficient, and are they clear?

8. **Analysis.** In general, is there a sufficient level of analysis, or does the paper spend too much time on narrative and description?

9. **Conclusion.** Is the concluding section satisfactory? Does it wrap up the arguments and make a case for the significance of the paper’s topic and theses (that is, answer the “so what” question)?

10. **Writing and grammar.** Is the writing clear, vigorous, grammatical, in the active voice?