Essential Concepts of Academic Writing

Rhetorical Aspects of Writing:

- Understanding the assignment
- Researching or refining a topic
- Constructing a thesis statement
- Synthesizing and integrating readings
- Deciding on a rhetorical strategy (ethos, logos, pathos)
- Developing ideas
- Supporting ideas
- Organizing ideas
- Clarifying ideas

Grammatical Aspects of Writing

- Transitions (between paragraphs or sentences)
- Sentence structure (run-on’s, comma splices, fragments, etc)
- Paragraph structure (unity, topic sentences, etc.)
- Integrating sources (grammatical aspects of quotations, paraphrases, summary, etc)
- Word usage (accuracy, correct meaning)
- Verb usage (verb tense, subject-verb agreement, passive voice, etc)
- Pronoun usage (pronoun-antecedent agreement, etc)
- Capitalization
- Spelling

Stylistic aspects of writing

- Citation (MLA rules)
- Tone / Diction
- Conciseness/wordiness

[Adapted from the Writing Self-Assessment and Writing Center Conference Form available on the Writing & Communication Center website]