**Content Codes—Analytic/Argument**

**A.** Avoid choppiness in your writing. You likely have stacked several short sentences, used the same sentence starter, or left out crucial transitions.

**B.** Omit unnecessary words. This section has fluff, filler or is taking up space without saying anything new. Get to the point.

**C.** Stick to third-person pronouns. You’ve slipped unnecessary first- or second-person pronouns into your writing and have, therefore, hurt the power of your essay. Avoid these words: I, me, my, we, us, our, you, and your.

**D.** Don’t ask a rhetorical question in a formal essay. Rhetorical questions are a sign that the writer doesn’t know his/her mind. Instead, make bold, powerful statements.

**E.** Avoid clichés, tired phrases, and/or slang. In formal writing, use formal language while still keeping it fresh.

**F.** Limit the discussion in the paragraph to a single topic. You might need to develop separate paragraphs about multiple topics discussed in the paragraph, or you might need to eliminate irrelevant information and ideas.

**G.** Avoid confusing, contradictory, or imprecise language. I’m unclear about what you are trying to say. Clarify your wording or description. Maybe you used the wrong word(s), or you need to reorganize phrases or sentence. Maybe you need to replace pronouns with their referents.

**H.** Avoid unsure language (“may,” “might,” etc.) in formal writing; it makes you sound unsure about what your main idea/evidence/link and robs your essay of power. This is not the same as a qualifier.

**I.** Information is incomplete or inaccessible. For the analysis to work, provide your reader with more background.

**J.** Evidence (grounds) drawn from your examination of the topic is insufficient. Support your points with strong evidence.

**K.** Link or analysis (warrant) is weak or hard to follow. What is the insight you gained from your research or analysis? Dig deeper in your thinking and provide unique, compelling analysis. Revisit the essay prompt.

**L.** Frame the quote. Do not slap a quote into a body paragraph without providing the proper framing structure, including a transition and lead-in.

**M.** All resource material (whether quoted or paraphrased) must be cited in proper MLA format. You have either neglected to include your citation or you have improperly formatted your citation. Your essay must include a correctly formatted Works Cited page at the end.

**N.** Weak or missing thesis statement or topic sentence (claim/main idea). Thesis statement should make clear your main claim, insight or findings (spoil the ending!). Topic sentences should state the main idea of the paragraph and support the thesis statement.

**O.** Appropriate transition needed. Lead your reader from one idea to the next with suitable words and phrases that help them see where you are headed, how parts of the essay relate, and when you are wrapping up your analysis.

**P.** The last sentence of the paragraph should be a conclusion, a sentence that wraps everything up and gives your paragraph closure. This should stress (but reword) your paragraph’s first claim or main idea.