Essays are graded according to the following scale:

10 (A+)  Writing suitable for publication or upper-division courses; Original and in-depth treatment of topic; considerable sophistication in style and vocabulary. [rarely given]

9 (A)  Excellence at a level to be expected of first-semester college freshmen but lacking the polish of an “A+” paper; Original and interesting treatment of topic (development of your own idea not just a summary of the problem or issue discussed); specifics (description, detailed examples, reasons, etc) supporting all general statements; balanced introduction and conclusion; transitions between sections and paragraphs; varied sentence patterns; appropriate word choice; no problems with grammar, mechanics, or usage.

8 (B)  Some originality of thought; some voice; adequate control of organization; support of generalizations by details, but by fewer or less appropriate details than in an “A” paper; perhaps a few cliches; perhaps some problems in grammar, mechanics, or usage, but not problems which distract from meaning.

7 (C)  Some structure, but superficial content; unsupported generalizations common; or some good content, but disorganized arrangement of ideas; connection between thesis and specific examples not fully elaborated; some distracting problems with grammar, mechanics or usage; wordy or choppy sentences

6 (D)  Some sense of opening and closure, but lacking in real organization; ideas disconnected; many distracting problems with word order, grammar, mechanics, or usage.

< 6 (F)  Assignment not done or short and undeveloped; ideas disorganized; serious errors in word order, grammar, mechanics, and usage.

Citing references and MLA formatting
These are added to the criteria when they are introduced in class…