ENGL 147 Guidelines (for students)

What your reader expects:

➢ Analysis:
- A clear argument that fits the scope of the assignment (ex: a one-page critical paragraph for close reading assignments).
- A logical argumentative flow of ideas
- Claims to support the main argument (1-2 for close readings; up to 4 for short essays).
- Textual evidence that supports your claims (i.e. integrate relevant quotes from the text, with appropriate citations). Be careful not to cite too much; in other words, when referring to the text or making a statement about it, you should support with textual reference. In essays, you are expected to use a secondary resource. This is meant to help you avoid generalizations and assumptions.
- A rather convincing/persuasive analysis. An example of a good analytical statement: "The repetitive use of water in this passage suggests a sense of purity and cleansing." [As opposed to "The author repeatedly uses the word 'water' in this passage, which suggests that water is an important element in this poem."] When you are thinking about the meaning and implications of what you are reading, then you are analyzing and being critical.

➢ Mechanics/Formatting/Style:
- A well-organized, coherent, and concise document: Present a clear main argument that would guide a logical pattern in your discussion (some may suggest the general to specific structure). Avoid wordiness and redundancy.
- Properly integrated quotations.
- A proofread document that is as free from grammatical mistakes as possible (Errors could affect the clarity of your arguments and ideas).
- Appropriate citations (MLA Citations style - 8th edition).

In your analysis, avoid:

➢ Analysis:
- Focusing on too many ideas (unrealistic for the scope of the assignment)
- Presenting an idea without unpacking or elaborating
- Making general assumptions and statements (historical generalizations)
- Summarizing the plot/passage instead of critically analyzing
- Lacking textual evidence or none at all

Do not use informal or colloquial language.