Use this checklist to find out which parts of your written assignment still need work. In general, your paper/assignment is strong if it contains all of the following:

**THESIS**

- Clear
- Specific
- Debatable

**FORMAL LANGUAGE**

- Idioms, sayings, slangs, “I” and “you.”
- Problem words, e.g., “things,” “stuff,” “bad,” “good,” etc.
- Over-generalizations and stereotypes
- Punctuation and grammar
- Few “opinionated” or personal claims (unless stated otherwise)

**ACTIVE VOICE/PRESENT TENSE**

- Passive voice = weak
- Vague or suggestive language, weak openings
  - i.e., “It can be seen that,” “there is,” “there appears to be…”
- Active voice = strong, confident writing
- Paper states and asserts ideas with force

**STRUCTURE**

- Introduction, Body, Conclusion
- Hourglass Approach
- Can you underline the thesis?
- Can you underline each topic sentence?
## LOGICAL FLOW AND CONCISENESS

- ✓ Convoluted/wordy sentences; long paragraphs; “rambling”
- ✓ ALL paragraphs relate to thesis
- ✓ “To the point” style, clear relationships between paragraphs

## CITATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ✓ MLA, APA, Chicago 16th ed., or other approved style.
- ✓ Research is well-supported and referenced throughout
- ✓ Scholarly sources/data used
- ✗ Wikipedia, ‘Fox News’, other highly opinionated/controversial sources