A Checklist for Argument/Position Papers

☐ Is the claim or proposition – what the writer is trying to prove – clearly stated?

☐ Are all assertions supported by evidence?

☐ Is the evidence – facts, interpretations of facts, opinions – appropriate? Data should be accurate, recent, and sufficient. Cited sources should be reliable.

☐ Does the arrangement of evidence make sense? Does it emphasize the most important issues? Are there more effective ways of arranging the evidence?

☐ Are facts, statistics, examples, anecdotes, and expert opinions placed properly? Are they used in the appropriate context?

☐ Is the evidence carefully documented?

☐ Is the reasoning sound?

☐ Has the writer avoided all logical fallacies? (If you are unfamiliar with logical fallacies, refer to a writing textbook or handbook.)

☐ Are terms that might be controversial or ambiguous adequately defined?

☐ Have opposing arguments been considered and dealt with adequately?