Clarity and Conciseness
These guidelines and examples will help you achieve clarity and conciseness, two characteristics of strong writing.

Avoid ambiguity. Use words that fit with your meaning exactly and convey your position precisely.

Vague: When I saw her tiny hands, I realized how small she was. [How tiny were her hands? How small was she?]
Exact: When I saw her delicate, doll-like hands, I realized that she stood a full head shorter than most other women.

Avoid using abstract and/or general words and phrases, such as nice, interesting, good, things, stuff, very, a lot and some. Use concrete and specific words as often as you can to provide your reader with the detail she or he needs to fully understand your meaning.

Vague: In Core 102, we studied a number of diverse, contemporary women writers.
[Which writers did you study?]
Exact: In Core 102, we studied the works of Alice Walker, Sandra Cisneros, and Amy Tan.

Design sentences that are direct and to the point. Avoid the passive voice, unless conventions of your textual form call for it, and edit out trite words and expressions, such as nature, manner, kind of, it seems that, as a matter of fact, in a very real sense, have a tendency to, and what I mean to say.

Wordy: In the event that there should be a fire, students should move in a quiet manner to the doors located at the back of the gym.
[Extra words make this sentence more difficult to understand.]
Concise: If a fire breaks out, students should quietly proceed to the doors at the back of the gym.

Wordy: Due to the fact that many students go home to empty houses, some type of after school program should be offered by the school.
[Extra words and passive construction make this sentence more difficult to understand.]
Concise: Since many students go home to empty houses, the school should offer an after school program.