

The Academic Argument

Overview: Arguments exist all around as persuasion is at work in the media, in our social interaction, and even in our internal monologues. If you learn what it takes to persuade effectively and ethically, you will have a bright, logical lens to look through as you view the world. The skills you will improve in this paper will not only help you in future writing assignments, they will also help you navigate the daily deluge of persuasive appeals you face daily.

Topic: In this paper, you will be building on your research question from the Annotated Bibliography. You will take your open research question about an issue in your future career field and alter it to now take a firm stance on that issue and argue for a particular outcome.

Purpose: To convince readers to consider your thesis. This does not mean you have to completely change your audience's mind, but you should show all sides of the argument and effectively address opposing viewpoints with strong support for your stance. Persuasion should be effective and logical.

Audience: The audience for this argument is academic so it includes your instructor, yourself, and professionals in your field who are engaged in conversations about the issue *and* who expect a clear, logical argument that remains focused on proving a claim. These readers expect that an argument is well researched and that it is supported with reasons and evidence. They want to see that you are familiar with the conversation on the issue and that your argument contributes to that conversation. In addition, such readers require full citations for all sources you use to exemplify your credibility.

Author. Present yourself as a knowledgeable, fair-minded, credible and, as appropriate, empathetic person. You do not need to be an expert on your issue to write an argument, but you do need to have confidence in what you *do* know about it and be able to illustrate your credibility through your tone and use of evidence. Show that you approach the issue with enthusiasm, curiosity, and an open mind.

Strategies: To achieve your purpose with your audience, be sure to:

- Conduct an effective research process by selecting the best sources for your argument, saving those sources on your computer or in hard copy form, and by annotating and summarizing your sources' arguments
- Be active in class. We will read sample arguments, discuss argumentation techniques, and work on writing this paper as a process.
- Spend time developing a thesis statement and reasons. Be sure you have gathered enough credible and convincing evidence so that you can support your reasons to convince your audience to accept your claim.
- Demonstrate understanding of Rogerian and Toulmin methods of argumentation.
- Rely on appeals to facts and reasons (*logos*) and character (*ethos*), avoiding logical fallacies. An appeal to emotion (*pathos*) will not likely be the strongest persuasive appeal for this paper, but you may choose to use it sparingly.
- Organize your argument and use appeals that suit the rhetorical situation.
- Become well-informed on other voices in the conversation, including viewpoints different from your own. Accurately and fairly represent and respond to such alternative viewpoints on the issue.

- Demonstrate that you have conducted effective inquiry into the issue by summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting appropriately and by documenting sources correctly in MLA style. This will bolster your character appeal with your audience.
- Give yourself enough time to draft.
- Take full advantage of the workshops and conferences.
- Take time to revise and polish your argument.

Details:

- The paper will be 6 pages (not including the works cited page), double spaced. It will have 1" margins and be typed in 12 point font.
- You are required to include at least 6 sources in your paper. There should be multiple perspectives explored in your sources. At least one of them should be a scholarly source. At least one should be an interview you conducted with someone knowledgeable about your topic. They should be the BEST sources, as you should analyze each of them as you did the sources for the AB.
- Your paper should be formatted according to MLA conventions. This includes MLA-style heading and page numbers, parenthetical citations within your paper for all sources used (quotes, paraphrases, facts, ideas, etc.) and a Works Cited page at the end of your paper. (See the Owl at Purdue website for help on formatting your paper.)
- This paper is worth 250 points, or 25% of your grade.

Due:

- Proposal: March 17
- First draft: Thursday, April 15
- Final draft: Tuesday, April 19