

Assignment 4: Argumentative Paper

Full paper DUE: Tuesday 08/11, in Turnitin.com, *by midnight*

SUBJECT

Utilize an Argumentative approach; discuss your findings concerning a controversial topic. The final goal of this project is to produce an *Argumentative* research paper which demonstrates understanding of the following:

- how to analyze an audience and select an appropriate academic style
- how to prepare a research paper, utilizing a variety of sources
- how to synthesize information from a variety of sources into a document

TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION

- An overwhelming majority of Americans are rapidly becoming over obese.
Laws need to put restrictions in place to help curb this disease.
- Professional athletes convicted of performance-enhancing drugs should not be considered eligible for any advancement or recognition for their accomplishments.
- *No other topics are possible.*
- *Note: Keywords are underlined to aid searches.*

SOURCES

You must use at least two sources. None of the material can come from the Internet. All material must be from periodicals, from books, or from online databases provided by the college.

- Sources must not be more than five years old.
- For information from sources, use in-text citations in the paper to indicate where you found the information, and you must have a list of works cited at the end of your paper for each source used.
- Include with your in-text citation signal phrases.
- For the works cited list, see *Bedford*, "Citing Sources in MLA Style."
- The paper may use more than two sources.

POINTS (each item worth 10 points)

1. Follow standard MLA guidelines:
 - heading/header
 - margins
 - Format ¶s/indent
 - double space
 - fonts
2. Create an interesting, intricate, descriptive introduction which clearly shows the main direction of your topic. Thesis stresses an argument mode.
3. Paragraphs are fully developed with clear purpose. All body paragraphs must have:
 - strong topic sentences
 - at least one quote or paraphrase from secondary evidence
 - use signal phrases *before* you quote; provide in-text notations *after* you quote
 - be decisive in subjective opinions
 - colloquial language is *not* permitted
 - use five or more sentences
 - all paragraphs should emphasize a logos analysis
4. Use secondary evidence from a database essay to show secondary opinions. Show parallelism throughout the discussion.
Visit **WCJC.edu**: select “**Library**” link > **Databases-Library Proxy Server** >
Enter appropriate fields to access school databases >
Newspaper & Current Topics> CQ Researcher
General Information > Academic Search Complete
General Information > SIRS Researcher
Incorporate proper signal phrases when quoting selections from the article.
5. Avoid use of first person, singular. Evidence is more important than your personal identity. Do not talk to the audience.
6. Conclusion shows the purpose behind the essay or explains what was learned without reviewing or repeating previous information. Use deductive methods. A preference can be shown in this paragraph.
7. Punctuation and spelling are used correctly.
8. Utilize correct grammar and sentence structures.
9. **Essay Length: 900 words.** Note: if the essay (not counting the heading) is under 900 words, student earns 0 (zero) points for this category.
10. Works Cited page is provided and set-up correctly.

Keep in mind this essay is more formal than the previous exercises.

Follow the format outlined in *The Bedford Guide for College Writers*, pp. 727-734.

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STAGES	Deadline Date	Points
1. Find two database articles on topic . <i>(Provide cover pages to instructor).</i>	08.05	10
2. Gather preliminary research; begin constructing paper.		
3. Provide preliminary intro paragraph and thesis statement (200-300 words). Follow standard MLA guidelines when turning in document.	08.06	25
4. Generate more in-depth research.		
5. Post 900 word document in <i>Turnitin.com</i> .	08.11	100

NOTE:

- Material turned in after deadline dates will lose ten points per day; if you are absent make sure someone turns in your paperwork. Material dropped off late and placed in my mailbox will *not* be accepted.
- Material cannot be e-mailed to the instructor.
- Any form of plagiarism, for *any* stage of the project, will result in zero points for the *full assignment*. Remember, when paraphrasing to utilize signal phrases and in-text notation.

ITEMS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Despite the fact these issues are controversial and despite the fact you will have an opinion on the topic, gather as much information (logos) to show the development of both sides to the issue; you are not generating an one-sided editorial. *You should seek out authorities on the subject and use appropriate ethos when discussing their various opinions.*
- Your sources of information must be non-biased and objective. However, due to the nature of the issues, your sources may show a strong preference for one side of the debate. Remember to balance out all opinions with a parallel approach. One source should be *pro*, the other *con*.
- The end result of the paper may propose an opinion or a resolution on the topic, however, the main goal is not to simply express your personal feelings or memories, but rather to methodically show you can gather and present research material.

Formula for a General Informative Paper (Modelled after Aristotelian Argument)

I. **The first paragraph** will state your position in the **thesis**.

Based on previous lectures, remember you need five sentences, or more, in every paragraph.

Likewise the opening paragraph:

- Assume your audience is on the other side of your discussion, but show good-will intentions.
- Introduces the overall topic of the paper by providing a brief history of problem.
- Informs reader of your point of view without use of first/second person.
- Provide a Division of Proofs: a brief outline of material (three points) you will present.
- Declare the main point(s) examined in the paper < **thesis statement**
The thesis statement should ultimately *hint* at your concluding paragraphs.
The thesis statement answers the questions why and/or how.

II. Stay focused on your topic throughout **body paragraphs**.

Confirmation

- Each paragraph opens with a topic sentence which explains some aspect the thesis.
- After each declaration you provide, include a quotation from a major resource to establish a sense of authority on your subject.
- Use **signal phrases** *before* you quote; provide **in-text notations** *after* you quote.
- Do not rely on secondary evidence (the critics) to simply express your own opinions. Formulate your opinions based on various statements the critics determine in their individual essays. Generally, it is best to show the various opinions you have found first *and then* formulate your own opinion about the material.
- In other words: **Research** is shown first, *then* **Review** of the material is shown.

Concession/Refutation

- Respond to opposing commentary that may be already raised by opposition. Provide a rebuttal and point out any necessary fallacies in your opponent's opinions.
- Always explain quoted/paraphrased material to show *how* it defends your thesis.
- Do not lapse into basic summary of the various articles.

III. **In your concluding paragraph(s)** do not summarize all of your main points; however, through **deductive reasoning** establish your most important concept in the closing section of the paper. Save your best evidence for last.

- Consider what all of your evidence shows when collected together.
- You can refer to the first paragraph/opening statement as well as main points, but be sure to restate information in new phrases. Be prepared to re-explain the point again to show *how* and *why* it is worthy of special notice.
- Peroration: provide a final appeal to shift your audience's focus.

It is important to realize the components of a well-written argument in order to see how it fulfills its functions. Likewise, by studying the elements and history of these forms of writing, you will begin to see how a *flawed* argument actually is very poorly written. (Such as the Internet trolls, the diverse ranting on blogs, and the various cable news' political pundits.)