

Op-Ed Argument

One Final Appeal

General Description: Throughout the semester, you have written four essays, with each focused on a different aspect of effective writing. With the first paper, the Literacy Narrative, you engaged your readers with detailed descriptions, impactful word choice, and a strong narrative structure; in your Rhetorical Analysis essays, you identified the qualities of a purposeful argument that appealed to readers on various levels, allowing the author/speaker to accomplish their desired goals. With your Argumentative essay, you identified a specific audience and applied the previously learned skills stated above in order to craft a logic-driven argument on your chosen topic. The Op-Ed argument will continue to build upon these skills, requiring you to utilize all elements that lead to effective persuasion; in a concisely written piece, focused on a narrow audience, your goal is to employ the most effective rhetorical strategies to move and to motivate your reader to respond.

Objectives: Students will be able to apply learned traits of effective and impactful rhetorical inclusion to write in a manner that motivates and persuades an audience to grow or alter their understanding of an issue presently facing our community. Effective and concise word choice, organization, and incorporation of rhetorical strategies will be utilized to convey an understanding to a general audience **at the local or state level**.

In addition to the Op-Ed Essay, a formal metacognitive essay will be written to expound on your individual writing process and personal growth through this paper. In this metacognitive, you must respond to the following in an organized essay format:

1. A detailed summary of the *specific* process *you* followed to fulfill the requirements of this assignment, from its inception to completion. Focus in on the feedback you were given throughout the process during your peer responses or from your conference(s) with Mr. Slater, the revisions that you made, why you made them, and what you achieved as a result.
2. A self-awareness via your detailed struggles and achievements as produced by the process, and how you thrived in and/or overcame those elements. You should also focus on future plans; how will your struggles and achievements with this piece influence your approach to later writing? Essentially, how are you experiencing growth as a writer, and how do you plan to continue to grow as a writer.
3. A self-assessment delineating a score in *each* of the categories on the rubric, along with a clear justification and explanation for achievement, *and* an overall score based on the Rubric Conversion Chart.

Page Requirements: 650 words or less.

Format: Standard MLA Formatting; Times New Roman 12 or Calibri 11; Typed & Double Spaced

Submission Format: Two drafts will be submitted for this text; the 1st draft and the final version should both be submitted electronically via the links provided on Canvas **and** Printed for use in class. Failure to submit the final draft on time or to pass the assignment could result in failure of the course, per IPFW course requirements.

Percentage of 18-week Grade: 15%

Assessment: See Rubric

Each essay should have the following features:

- It should address a present-day challenge/issue/controversy that is relevant **to a local or state audience**.
- It should propose a solution, or at least a partial solution, to that problem. Your solution does not need to be a detailed policy program. Sometimes a good op-ed essay's solution is simply to suggest that we alter the way we think about a problem.
- It should draw on the historical facts and ideas about the challenge, so as to help justify the proposed solution.
- Each essay should be 650 words or fewer in length (typed double-spaced). Give your essay a brief, catchy title that hints at your actual argument, in the spirit of the headlines used for a newspaper's op-ed page.

TIP #1 - REGULAR READING IS ESSENTIAL FOR GOOD WRITING

To do well, you will need to read the local newspapers, review the Letters to the Editor, and watch the local news. Keeping abreast of current events will allow you to identify present-day issues that connect with our community. If you don't follow current events, you will have a hard time finding thoughtful connections between past and present.

TIP #2 - PROVIDE EVIDENCE

Each essay should contain **at least two references to a recent local news (paper or television) article** that reflects the present-day problem. If you want to write about a present-day issue that the local news is not covering, contact Mr. Slater to explain the issue and to receive approval (alternative media sources for your essay will be needed). For references to the local newscasts/newspapers, **provide the article title and date of publication** in a parenthetical citation next to your evidence. No Works Cited is needed.

TIP #3 – MEET YOUR READER'S NEEDS

Op-Ed writing must *grab the reader's attention quickly*. Newspapers and other similar sources are meant to be read quickly, and rarely are they ever read again. If an article is not interesting, readers generally will not bother finishing it.

For that reason, it is crucial that you begin with a good *lead*, an opening sentence that "hooks" readers immediately and makes them want to read on. A good lead tantalizes, informs, and sets the tone for the piece. **It can even be creative**. For instance, an editorial on gambling in the *Wall Street Journal* began with a paraphrase of Dr. Seuss: "I do like gambling, Sam-I-Am, I really like it, and I can. For I can do it in a plane, on a boat, at the track, and in the rain. I can do it in a casino, with the lottery, or with Keno."

The key is to understand your target audience: try to *think* like them, anticipate what they may not understand.