

ENGL 1010: English Composition I
Essay #2: Arguing a Position Essay

Arguing Positions

Reasoned arguing depends on giving reasons rather than raising voices. It demands that positions be supported rather than merely asserted. It also commands respect for the right of others to disagree with you as you may disagree with them. In the same way, the emphasis is on creating common ground with readers instead of squashing opponents. Argumentative writing is an act of communication rather than one of aggression. The aim is not to merely voice our own opinion but to examine it critically, which includes considering our own biases and assumptions.

Although it is not possible to prove that a position on most issues is absolutely right or wrong, it is possible through argument to convince others to accept or reject a particular position. To be convincing, not only must an argument present plausible reasons and solid support for its position, but it should anticipate readers' likely objections and opposing arguments, conceding those that are reasonable and refuting those that are not. Vigorous debate that sets forth arguments and counterarguments on all sides of an issue can advance everyone's thinking.

Directions

In this 4-6 page essay, take a position on a controversial issue on that directly affects you, someone you know, or a group/ organization/business in your community. Present the issue to readers and develop an argument for the purpose of confirming, challenging, or changing your readers' views on the issue. These arguments might be about local schools, a workplace, a local business or organization, a park or city structure, or a city service, for example. Think about the real things in your life that need attention. Your paper should include these components:

- A focused presentation of the issue that is fair and credible (placing the issue in context/framing it so that readers understand the scope)
- A clear position
- Plausible Reasoning and convincing evidence to influence the audience to reinforce, validate, and/or change their thinking on the claim, possibly encouraging or persuading specific actions/ideas
- Credibility established as thoughtful and fair
- A claim (thesis) that is strongly asserted or strongly implied (depends on whether you are addressing a receptive or hostile audience)
- Response to readers' concerns and questions that build a bridge of shared values. This includes an acknowledgement of opposing positions and objections. Counter-arguments if needed
- Careful citation of outside sources (Interviews)
- Organization through logically ordered reasons, explicitly signaling the stages of their argument

Advice for Topics

Again, when deciding on a topic for your argument, begin by thinking in terms of issues that directly relate to yourself, someone you know, or your community. This will help you to come up with a topic you will find more interesting and engaging.

Five pieces of advice to consider when picking a topic:

- 1) Choose something that could generate a conversation. (Multiple perspectives exist)
- 2) Your job is to make a reader THINK about your position on your topic and RESPECT your voice and perspective. (Even if they don't change their mind)
- 3) Be narrow in your choice of topics. Think of something that is meaningful to you but not so broad that the federal government is in charge.
- 4) Be able to phrase your idea into a clear "bumper sticker" statement. (i.e. "Abolish the Penny")
- 5) Be able to address the opposition. To support your own side, you need to understand what the other side thinks!

Restricted Topics

Pick local!! Pick something you care about!! The following topics are not allowed due to their size and scope: abortion, gun control, capital punishment, euthanasia/assisted suicide, how to fix the health care system, immigration, religious or spiritual arguments or positions (including creationism vs. evolution), drug legalization (including medicinal marijuana), changing the drinking age, legalization of gambling, ADHD causes and medications, breed specific legislation, steroids, and global warming/climate change.

Research Requirement

In addition, you will be required to incorporate **one outside source in the form of quotes to support the claim with evidence. First-hand research only please; do not replace this with information found on the internet or other second-hand research.** Evidence of this field research must be in the form of transcripts and notes from the interviews and observations and turned in with the final draft.

Format

All papers are to be typed and double-spaced. Use one-inch margins and include a heading containing the following in the upper left-hand corner of the first page: your name, the name and time of this class, and the date the paper is due. Each paper should have a title centered on the line below the last line of the heading. The upper right-hand corner of each page should contain

your last name and the page number. Make sure the print is clean and dark, and use standard font and size (Times New Roman 12).

Student

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English 1010

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Argument Essay

Although some people may argue that students should not multitask during class, there is a time and place for this to happen. College professors should not be able to manage what students do in class because college is the first place some people have freedom and some students work multiple jobs to be able to attend college.

Ever since I was a child, I have been taught respect, with my parents both being from the south it has always been yes ma'am or yes sir. So please keep that in mind as you read this essay, this is not out of disrespect to anyone.

College is a huge transition for students just leaving high school. They have their first glimpse of "freedom," for most students this will be the first time they will live on their own. In this transition a student is finally on their own to make their own decisions, they don't have their parents to tell them what to do and when to do it. So why should this be happening in the? Why should a college professor be micromanaging these students who have graduated high school and now are in their transition years to adulthood? This transition period is where students learn to be independent and fend for themselves.

Throughout a student's many years of school they learn the importance of deadlines and following directions in hopes we carry that into college. They have also learned their learning style and how to use manage their time. If they have professors who micromanage them, how will

they go work in the real world? Bosses will not micromanage everything they do, they won't be there to hold their hand and tell them what to do.

For many students college is not a luxury that they are just handed to them, it is something they have to work hard for. Sometimes things conflict in example work projects or meetings that conflict with school. In some instances a student will have a deadline for work as well as class so if there is in class work time a teacher shouldn't be able to micromanage what they are doing.

While talking to other students about this topic I heard feedback that was very similar. As I meet with a fellow UNO student who I attend class with regularly and who also pays for her education on her own. This student works two jobs, over 28 hours a week, to be able to afford school and the other luxuries in life. I started off by asking how she felt about strict teachers were during in class work time or free time when she is paying for the class out of her own pocket. She as I predicted she immediately slammed her hands with anger and said, "Why do they care what I'm doing during 'free time!!!!' I'm the one paying over 5,000 dollars a year to attend school here!" I then proceed to ask her for examples on times she felt this way, she talked about how in class if they are going over things in chemistry that she is very comfortable with and knows the material very well she will work on other homework or check her email and on multiple occasion she has gotten called out for this. She then explained the reason why she becomes frustrated with the situation.

She claimed that some teachers need to understand that school cannot always be our first priority all day everyday, especially when I am paying for my own education. Sometimes I have to skip a class or work on things for work because without work I wouldn't be able to attend the class due to lack of funds.

Students who in college have earned their freedom. College is the place where these students are transitioning to adulthood. These years are extremely important on getting them ready to be able to manage their time in their adult years at work.