English 1301
Argument Essay Assignment

Overview
Building on your informative synthesis essay, you will now develop an argumentative essay that takes a clear position on your topic. This assignment asks you to move from explaining multiple perspectives to advocating for a specific stance, using evidence to support your claims and addressing counterarguments.

Learning Objectives
- Develop a clear and focused argumentative thesis.
- Transform informative content into persuasive writing.
- Integrate source material to support your argument.
- Address counterarguments effectively.
- Apply proper APA formatting and citation practices.
- Revise content for a new rhetorical purpose.

Assignment Details
- **Length**: Minimum 4 full pages of text (excluding title and References pages)
- **Format**: APA 7th edition
- **Sources**: Minimum 4 sources required:
    o You may include up to 6 sources total.
        ▪ Required: The 4 sources used in your informative essay—at least 2 from our course readings.
        ▪ Optional: 2 additional credible sources of your choosing if you would like, but your paper should be sufficiently longer then
    o Brief statistics or definitions from other sources may be used without counting toward your source maximum.

Essential Components
1. **Introduction**: Engage readers and establish the controversy surrounding your topic. End with an argumentative thesis statement that clearly presents your position.

2. **Body Paragraphs**: Each paragraph should:
    o Begin with a claim that supports your thesis (topic sentence)
    o Present evidence from your sources
    o Explain how the evidence supports your claim
    o End with a sentence that reinforces your argument and transitions to the next paragraph

3. **Counterargument Section**: Acknowledge and respond to at least one opposing viewpoint, demonstrating the complexity of your topic while reinforcing why your position is more compelling.

4. **Conclusion**: Synthesize your main points, reinforce your thesis, and leave readers with final thoughts on the significance of your argument.

5. **References Page**: Properly formatted APA citations for all sources.

Evaluation Criteria

Your essay will be evaluated based on:
- Clarity and strength of argumentative thesis
- Effective use of evidence to support claims
- Logical organization and paragraph development
- Integration and citation of sources
- Acknowledgment and refutation of counterarguments
- Grammar, mechanics, and APA formatting
- Overall persuasiveness

Submission Requirements
- Final draft must be submitted as a Word document.
- Double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font.
- 1-inch margins
- APA 7th edition formatting throughout
- It is due during finals week, so **NO LATE PAPERS!**

Grading Rubric

Final grades will be assessed using the rubric on the following pages. Use this information as you work on your essay, review it, go over it with classmates and writing center tutors, or as an AI for feedback.

Just make sure the paper is yours—you voice matters, especially to me and especially at the end of the semester.

Criteria	Excellent (90-100%)	Proficient (80-89%)	Developing (70-79%)	Needs Improvement (Below 70%)	Missing
Thesis & Argument	Thesis is clear, specific, and argumentative. Presents a nuanced position with sophisticated reasoning. Claims build a compelling case.	Thesis is clear and argumentative. Position is evident with solid reasoning. Claims adequately support the argument.	Thesis is present but may be overly broad or simplistic. Position lacks some clarity. Claims somewhat support the argument.	Thesis is unclear, missing, or purely informative. Position is difficult to identify. Claims don't support a coherent argument.	
Evidence & Support	Evidence from all 4+ sources is relevant, credible, and strategically selected. Sources are seamlessly integrated with sophisticated analysis connecting evidence to claims.	Evidence from all required sources is relevant and credible. Sources are well-integrated with clear analysis connecting evidence to claims.	Evidence from most required sources is present but may be less relevant or poorly chosen. Source integration is mechanical with basic analysis.	Insufficient evidence and/or unreliable sources. Poor integration of sources with minimal or missing analysis.	
Organization & Structure	Logical flow with effective transitions between all paragraphs. Introduction engages readers and establishes context skillfully. Conclusion synthesizes arguments effectively and provides thoughtful implications.	Clear organizational structure with transitions between most paragraphs. Introduction establishes context adequately. Conclusion summarizes main points and offers closure.	Basic organizational structure with some abrupt transitions. Introduction provides some context. Conclusion restates thesis with minimal synthesis.	Disorganized structure lacking clear progression. Introduction lacks context. Conclusion is abrupt, missing, or merely repeats thesis.	
Counter-argument	Skillfully addresses opposing viewpoints with fairness and depth. Refutation is logical, respectful, and strengthens the overall argument.	Clearly acknowledges opposing viewpoints. Refutation is logical and adequately responds to counterarguments.	Mentions opposing viewpoints but may oversimplify them. Refutation is present but may be weak or dismissive.	Fails to acknowledge opposing viewpoints or presents them as strawmen. Refutation is missing or illogical.	

Criteria	Excellent (90-100%)	Proficient (80-89%)	Developing (70-79%)	Needs Improvement (Below 70%)	Missing
APA Format & Citations	Perfect APA formatting throughout. In-text citations and References page follow all APA 7th edition guidelines.	Minor APA formatting errors. In-text citations and References page follow most APA 7th edition guidelines.	Several APA formatting errors. In-text citations and References page have consistent patterns of error.	Major APA formatting errors. In-text citations and/or References page missing or severely flawed.	
Paragraph Development	Each paragraph has clear topic and concluding sentences that advance the argument. Paragraphs are cohesive, focused, and fully developed.	Most paragraphs have clear topic and concluding sentences. Paragraphs are generally cohesive and adequately developed.	Some paragraphs lack clear topic or concluding sentences. Paragraph unity or development is inconsistent.	Many paragraphs lack topic or concluding sentences. Paragraphs are underdeveloped or unfocused.	
Language & Style	Academic tone maintained throughout. Precise word choice and varied sentence structure. Language effectively persuades while maintaining objectivity.	Academic tone generally maintained. Mostly precise word choice with some sentence variety. Language is clear and appropriate.	Inconsistent academic tone. Some imprecise language or repetitive sentence structure. Language is sometimes unclear or inappropriate.	Inappropriate tone for academic writing. Imprecise language and simple sentence structure. Language impedes understanding.	
Grammar & Mechanics	Virtually error-free. Demonstrates mastery of standard written English.	Few minor errors that don't interfere with meaning.	Several grammatical errors that occasionally interfere with meaning.	Numerous errors that significantly interfere with meaning.	