Spring 2016

Writing 3: Ethical Argument

Summary of the Assignment.

This third paper of the semester is an ethical argument essay that follows guidelines established by

Carl Rogers. We will discuss what that means during class.

Write an argument that tries to change the reader's mind about the value of a person, an organization, or some other thing ("X"). In other words, you will argue whether or not something is

right or wrong, whether or not it does or doesn't have value, or whether you are for or against

something. Choose a controversial or problematic topic, one where people are likely to disagree

with your evaluation of X, are surprised by your evaluation, or are somehow intrigued by the fact that

you are opposing a common or expected view of X. This assignment should be at least 1000 words long.

Note: Some topics have been overused and should be avoided. Abortions, gun control, the death penalty, steroid use (to name a few) are clichés, which means it would be difficult to find anything

original to say about these topics. I suggest you look inside your major for possible topics.

Organization.

We will discuss the organization in class, but here is a rough outline:

The **introduction** establishes the topic; assume you are writing for an audience who will likely disagree with you. The **next section**, establishes the alternate viewpoint; use neutral language. The remaining **body paragraphs** follow several steps to establish your argument. The **conclusion** finds common ground between the two sides.

Research.

Evaluation Criteria.

1. Development: How well does this paper:

1.1 Discuss an original topic?

1.2 Speak to the needs of the unfamiliar reader?

1.3 Make good use of information from the articles?

1.4 Offer a convincing interpretation of the articles?

1.5 Offer a convincing rebuttal?

1.6 Offer an effective conclusion?

1.7 Demonstrate understanding of Rogerian theory?

2. Organization: How well does the paper:

2.1 Remain focused on the connection to the articles?

2.2 Utilize a title that previews the paper's contents?

2.3 Offer a thesis statement and background?

2.4 Follow an organizational pattern by using clear, direct topic sentences and/or headings?

2.5 Have paragraph divisions that make reading logical and easy?

2.6 Link from sentence to sentence with transitional devices?

3. Citations: How well does the paper:

3.1 Integrate direct quotes?

3.2 Attribute quotes and paraphrases?

3.3 Include a correctly formatted works cited?

3.4 Follow appropriate format for page numbers, heading, and bibliography?

4. Mechanics and Style: How free is the paper of:

4.1 Problems in spelling?

4.2 Problems in sentence construction?

4.3 Problems in usage?

4.4 Problems in punctuation?

4.5 Excess words?

4.6 "Be" verbs?