

ENG 123 Assignment 2: Persuasive Essay Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

The second final project for this course is the creation of a **persuasive essay**.

"Put the argument into a concrete shape, into an image, some hard phrase, round and solid as a ball, which they can see and handle and carry home with them, and the cause is half won."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Persuasion is a constant in each and every one of our lives. No matter where we look, what we read, what we see, or who we interact with, we are inevitably going to encounter some form of persuasion. Advertisements want us to buy things. Newspapers and television want to convince us of what we should feel about events. We are put into positions where we must defend our thoughts and beliefs to others, and the process we apply is typically some form of persuasion.

Persuasive writing is one of the most powerful forms of writing—it has the ability to influence one's thoughts, and also the ability to change one's mind about a particular issue. The persuasive essay is an ideal opportunity to support an opinion on an issue utilizing researched facts and information. This also gives the chance to recognize that there is an opposing viewpoint to a position and to refute the opposing argument, noting that those who hold the opposing viewpoints are the intended audience of the piece.

In this assignment, you will write a persuasive essay that makes an argument about changes or a current issue in your major, in a major you are interested in pursuing, or in your field of work.

The project has **one milestone**, which will be submitted to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. This milestone will be submitted in **Module Five**. **The final submission is due in Module Seven.**

In this assignment, you will demonstrate your mastery of the following course outcomes:

- Develop stylistically appropriate writing that incorporates strategies for writing to a given audience, subject, and purpose
- Incorporate feedback from peer review for improving the quality and effectiveness of one's own writing
- Write informative introductions, coherent theses, well-developed, organized, and supported body paragraphs, and conclusions that are persuasive and supported by effective research
- Utilize appropriate research for developing a well-informed position through written composition

Prompt

For this essay, you identify an issue in your current major, a major you are interested in pursuing, or your field of work. You will then establish an argument and support that argument with research and relevant evidence.

Critical Elements

Specifically, the following critical elements must be addressed:

- I. **Introduction:** This is where readers will have a chance to get an idea of what your essay will be about and what you will prove throughout. Do not give all of your information away here, but give readers a sample of what is to come. Do not forget to review your writing plan to make sure you are hitting all of the points that you planned out, while also stating your claim.
 - A. Provides an **overview** of the issue you have selected, briefly describing main points and your argument.
 - B. Compose an engaging **thesis** that states the argument that you will prove and support throughout your essay. This statement will give direction to your essay and should be well thought out.
- II. **Body:** The body is your opportunity to describe and support your argument in depth. Make sure your thoughts and evidence are clear and organized in a way that is easy for readers to follow and understand.
 - A. Be sure that you write multiple paragraphs that are focused, clearly state their **intent**, and move logically from one to the other, building the thesis argument as the essay progresses.
 - B. Your **body paragraphs** should support your argument by combining thoughts and ideas with evidence from sources. There is no such thing as a right or wrong argument; the key is how it is supported and the quality of the evidence used.
 - C. Address and refute any **opposing viewpoints** to your argument. This is your chance to discredit any opposing views, thus strengthening your own.
- III. **Conclusion:** Think of the conclusion as a review of your argument. Use this section to restate your argument and remind readers of your supporting evidence. Think of this as your last chance to persuade readers to agree with you.
 - A. **Review** your argument. This section should consist of a review of your main points employed to support your argument. Think of this as your last chance to prove your point or your closing arguments.
 - B. Your conclusion should articulate **insights** about your argument established through your essay. This should follow logically from your essay, referring to key points or quotes used to support your argument.

Milestones

Assignment 2, Milestone 1: 5-6 Draft

In **Module Five**, you will submit a draft of your persuasive essay. At this point in the course, if you have completed the previous milestone guided activities, the text boxes should be combined and transformed into a draft. This milestone will help you address the [critical elements](#), which will ultimately inform your final submission of the persuasive essay. You have until the deadline to work on this draft. Whatever is completed by the deadline will be submitted to your instructor for grading and feedback. **This milestone is graded with the Assignment 2, Milestone 1 Rubric.**

Assignment 2 Submission: Persuasive Essay

In **Module Seven**, you will submit your persuasive essay in its final form. It should be a complete, polished artifact containing **all** of the [critical elements](#) associated with Assignment 2. It should reflect the incorporation of feedback gained throughout the course. **This assignment will be graded using the Assignment 2 Rubric (below).**

Assignment 2 Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Your persuasive essay must be 5–7 pages in length (plus a cover page and references) and must be written in MLA or APA format. Use double spacing, 12-point Times New Roman font, and one-inch margins. Include at least four references cited in MLA or APA format. This assignment will be completed through the interactive activity provided in your MindEdge eLearning materials and then submitted through Blackboard.

Instructor Feedback: This activity uses an integrated rubric in Blackboard. Students can view instructor feedback in the Grade Center. For more information, review [these instructions](#).

Critical Elements	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Not Evident	Value
Introduction: Overview		Provides an overview of the issue being analyzed and briefly describes main points of argument (100%)	Provides an overview of the issue being analyzed and briefly describes main points of argument but contains issues regarding accuracy (55%)	Does not provide an overview of issue being analyzed (0%)	7.5
Introduction: Thesis	Meets “Proficient” criteria and thesis is exceptionally clear and concise (100%)	Composes a thesis that states the argument that will be supported and proven throughout the essay (85%)	Composes a thesis but contains issues related to clarity or relevancy (55%)	Does not compose a thesis (0%)	7.5
Body: Intent		Writes multiple paragraphs that are focused, clearly state their intent, and build the thesis argument (100%)	Writes multiple paragraphs but writing does not build the thesis argument (55%)	Does not write multiple paragraphs (0%)	7.5

Body: Body Paragraphs	Meets “Proficient” criteria and supports argument with a masterfully constructed combination of thoughts and evidence (100%)	Body paragraphs communicate argument by combining thoughts and ideas with evidence (85%)	Body paragraphs communicate argument but do not combine thoughts and ideas with evidence (55%)	Does not communicate argument through body paragraphs (0%)	45
Body: Opposing Viewpoints	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates a keen insight of both sides of argument (100%)	Addresses and refutes opposing viewpoints in a way that strengthens the argument (85%)	Addresses and refutes opposing viewpoints but not in a way that strengthens the argument (55%)	Does not address or refute opposing viewpoints (0%)	7.5
Conclusion: Review	Meets “Proficient” criteria and response is clear and contextualized (100%)	Reviews claim and summarizes key supporting points of essay (85%)	Reviews claim and summarizes key supporting points but contains issues regarding alignment to the intent of the thesis (55%)	Does not review claim (0%)	7.5
Conclusion: Insights	Meets “Proficient” criteria and offers a nuanced insight into the relationship between the evidence and the claim (100%)	Articulates insights about argument established through the analysis, following argument logically, referring to key points or quotes used to support argument (85%)	Articulates insights about argument established through the essay, but does not follow argument logically or does not refer to key points or quotes used to support claim (55%)	Does not articulate insights about argument (0%)	7.5
Articulation of Response	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format (100%)	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization (85%)	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas (55%)	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas (0%)	10
Total					100%