The Practiced Writer

A Handbook for Academic, Professional, and Public Composition

By Kevin Caliendo

Rose State College

2nd Edition
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Acknowledgements

This book came about after a meeting I had about our composition program with Toni Castillo, our writing program director at Rose State College. I am grateful for her support and guidance throughout the composition of this textbook. It truly would not be possible without her. For some time, the writing program has had a goal of customizing a composition handbook for our courses that aligned course objectives and it was one of the greatest honors of my professional life to write a book that pursues that goal.

I would like to thank Dean Claudia Buckmaster and Dr. Frances Hendrix for securing the funding for this project and entrusting me with its completion.

This book builds on the success of textbooks written by professors in the Humanities Division. English Composition Review by Lori Morrow and Fundamental English Dianne Krob. I am grateful that they shared their experiences with me and gave me a model to follow.

Professors Dianne Krob, Toni Castillo, Noelle Merchant, and Chris Knox helped improve this book immeasurably with resources and ideas for content. Professor Krob took on the arduous task of formatting the book with a medievalist whose comfort zone with text was a Word document with 1 inch margins and 12-point type throughout. I would also like to thank Melissa Huffman in the Learning Resource Center who shared a number of invaluable resources that enhanced the textbook and will connect our students with the some of the best research material on the web. My thanks also to Ricki Wilson who added links to the the table of contents to facilitate easier navigation of the eBook version of the text.

I want to thank my students and all of the professors who piloted early versions of the book. Their feedback helped me adjust and enhance chapters to meet the needs of our students. I learned a great deal from them and any errors that remain are my own. I especially want to thank our talented students Brady Manek, Shyanne McLemore, Nathan Kelly, Jacob Robbins, Valerie Holzbaugh, Jordan Kouri, and Tyler Williams, who graciously allowed their work to be used as samples in this book.

As I bring the project to a close I wish to thank my wife and son. They have sacrificed time with me over this year and their love and support makes any professional success I achieve possible. Lastly, my heartfelt thanks go out to all of my colleagues for their support and friendship throughout the year. Writing a book can isolate you if you let it. My dissertation taught me that. The collegial and warm atmosphere of the Humanities Division doesn’t let that happen. I am proud to call Rose State home and am eternally grateful for the opportunity to present this textbook to you.
Welcome to Rose State composition, and thank you for choosing our college as part of your lifelong education journey. The English faculty here have worked diligently to make the Humanities Writing Program curriculum fit our students' distinct needs. This process has included years of interviews with Rose State students and faculty from all divisions on campus, examination of the curriculum used by other colleges in the state of Oklahoma and throughout the nation, research into best practices suggested by all major educational organizations, and detailed discussions with potential employers in order to determine what is most called for from composition classes. This handbook is a reflection of that work. It is designed to present the most important material, at the most affordable cost, and in the most accessible formats. Dr. Kevin Caliendo, author of *The Practiced Writer*, has tailored the material in this handbook to directly align with the overall objectives of the two composition classes at Rose State: ENGL 1113 and ENGL 1213.

I. Writing in college requires unique skills that most entering students have not learned in the past. This means all new college students need to develop the ability to recognize and use the conventions of academic and formal communication. Thus, our composition courses work to help students master the thinking, writing, and communication skills necessary to be successful in academia. To do this, we emphasize that you learn to do the following:

- Demonstrate understanding of writing as a process involving planning, inquiry, drafting, revision and editing, including how to research, select, organize, and analyze content
- Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, communication, and thinking that demonstrate the fundamental critical thinking skills of understanding, knowledge, evaluation, synthesis, analysis, and application
- Identify what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, including the conventions for integrating the quoted, summarized, and paraphrased ideas of others with one's own ideas
- Be able to choose among appropriate documentation systems; demonstrate skill using MLA and APA
- Use conventions of format, structure, voice, tone, and level of formality appropriate to the academic rhetorical situation to write complex thesis-driven essays of both shorter and longer lengths
- Demonstrate the competent use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, diction, and spelling
- Use a variety of technologies and media to conduct research, produce, publish, update, and collaborate in shared writing
- Construct effective arguments using relevant, credible evidence selection; students will demonstrate competency in applying conventions of the Aristotelian, Toulmin, and Rogerian argument models
- Demonstrate awareness of visual rhetoric

II. Much of the writing students do after completing college will take place in continually evolving work environments. This means all new college students need to develop the communication and thinking skills needed to successfully cope in those changing situations. Thus, our courses prepare students with the thinking, writing, and transformative learning skills necessary to be successful in the workplace environment. To do this, we emphasize that you learn to do the following:

- Practice reflective thinking skills needed for lifelong learning
- Indicate the ability to analyze and respond to a diverse array of professional rhetorical situations including the ability to read complex non-academic texts
- Practice working collaboratively with diverse groups of people
- Prepare for citizenship in diverse communities requiring active participation to improve the aesthetic, physical, economic, social, political, and intellectual environment
- Demonstrate the ability to apply critical and creative thinking skills beyond the academic rhetorical situation
- Demonstrate the ability to extend research and investigative skills into potential work environments
III. Rose State College provides higher education programs and services intended to foster lifelong learning, integrity, service, and diversity. This means we work to help our students develop the reflective thinking skills needed for self-authorship, also known as "agency," or the ability to act independently within a given environment and assume an amount of control and empowerment. Thus, our courses prepare students to take ownership of their personal and social roles through critical questioning and reframing of existing paradigms. To do this, we emphasize that you learn to do the following:

- Practice defamiliarization by looking at the familiar in new ways
- Demonstrate the ability to self-generate questions to reflect on and analyze how knowledge, beliefs and values are contextually understood
- Identify and examine assumptions underlying existing frames of reference
- Recognize language as a construct used to shape power structures
- Indicate awareness of the connections among individuals within a global society

Implementation of these objectives is divided between Composition I and Composition II. Detailed information on that division, what you may expect in each course, and some notes on the practice of *transformative learning* can be found in the syllabi that follow this introduction.

On behalf of all the Writing Program faculty, I wish you much success and enjoyment in your composition classes and encourage you to reach out to me personally, or to any of the composition specialists listed on our Writing Program website, any time you need help: www.rose.edu/content/academics/academic-divisions/humanities/writing-program/resources.

Antoinette Castillo  
Writing Program Administrator  
Rose State College

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Division: Humanities  
Course Prefix and Number: ENGL 1113

Course Title: English Composition I

Semester and Year Submitted: Spring 2016  
Credit Hours: 3

Prepared by: Antoinette Castillo, Sandra Keneda, Theresa Walther

Hours Per Week:  
Class: 3  
Lab: 0

Course Description (as it appears in Catalog)
ENGL 1113 is the first in a two-course sequence that integrates critical reading, thinking, writing, and other communication skills to prepare students to compose texts in both academic and professional career situations. In this first course, students will closely read and analyze texts focusing on cultural issues in both essays and other forms of rhetorical situation so that they may more thoughtfully reflect on their own culture and use the intellectual skills gained from that reflection in complex composition.

Prerequisite: ENGL 0123 or 0131, concurrent enrollment in ENGL 0143, or satisfactory assessment score for ENGL 1113.

Text(s):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Practiced Writer</td>
<td>Kevin Caliendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(in D2L, and available in print at the Rose State Bookstore)</td>
<td>&amp; Rose State Reader (in D2L)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rose State Reader</td>
<td>Rose State Writing Program faculty</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Copyright Date</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Level</td>
<td>varied</td>
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Supplemental Materials:  
Fundamental English, by Dianne Krob, is available free electronically in D2L and on the Writing Program website, or it can be purchased from the RSC Bookstore in print form as a workbook to help review grammar, punctuation, mechanics, language usage, and paragraph structure.

Outline for Remainder of Syllabus:

Rationale:
Students entering college, no matter how strong, need additional help developing the critical thinking skills necessary to write for all academic and other rhetorical situations. English Composition I, 1113, focuses student writing by critically analyzing written and visual texts to develop compelling arguments. Students will write documented essays using appropriate research citation styles. Students are also required to write other formal and informal assignments.

Expected Outcomes:
The student will demonstrate the ability to recognize and use the conventions of academic and formal communication, with emphasis on composing three-to-five-page essays in which the following are used appropriately: the writing process for planning, inquiry, thesis, drafting, revising and editing; rhetorical situation appraisal to employ ethos, pathos, logos and the conventions of standard English; recognition and avoidance of logical fallacies; effective use of major argument conventions, emphasizing position/major claim, supporting sub-claims, evidence, reasoning (warrants), refutation of counter-arguments; research methods emphasizing source evaluation; and document construction to become proficient in moving between APA and MLA style format.

The student will demonstrate the ability to recognize and use the communication and thinking skills needed to succeed in continually evolving work environments, with emphasis on the following: the connection between
academic and professional career rhetorical situations, incorporation of multimedia elements, providing digital access to audiences of the student's own completed texts, PowerPoint presentations, electronic communication forms such as email, phone texts, proposals, resumes, letters and reports.

The student will demonstrate the ability to use the reflective thinking skills needed for self-authorship through questioning and reframing of existing paradigms, with emphasis on the following: analyzing and discussing literary fiction and nonfiction, as well as visual texts, to critique the underlying assumptions, intentions, and values concerning cultural expressed in those texts. This process will include extensive examination of alternative points of view, including critical examination of the evidence and arguments supporting each one.

Methods of Instruction:
Becoming proficient with the technical skills of English is largely a matter of practice. With this in mind, class time will be heavily focused on activities, both in groups and as a class, that provide the necessary practice. Students will also frequently be given activities to complete outside of class, including online exercises and other optional Internet and computer-based instruction. Individual conferences with students are encouraged. Methods will vary by professor but may include lecture, class discussion, PowerPoint presentations, and audiovisual aids. Professors are encouraged to communicate the importance of class attendance to students and use the Early Alert system when needed.

Assessment (Including Critical Thinking Measurements):
To shape the content of student learning and essays, the course professor will incorporate a balanced combination of literary nonfiction and fiction texts from the course textbook or free online sites. These will be 6-12 separate texts and will focus on development of student academic voice, cultural and global awareness, and personal transformation.

25% Credit for the course grade will encompass work relevant to the three course "Expected Outcomes" above as the individual professor determines to be most effective. This work usually includes scaffolding assignments to help students with specific skills and assignments to help students further develop their individual voice as writers.

40% Credit for the course will be from two formal documented essays, emphasizing argument, each essay requiring three to five content pages and incorporating three to five sources.

25% One multimedia argument that requires 5% more content or effort on the part of the student than the two short documented essays completed for section III above. (See section 8d in the Keys to Successful Writing course textbook on multimedia argument if needed.) The assignment will incorporate visual argument, either through subject matter, format, or both. Some part of this assignment will be submitted on the RSC electronic platform in a forum in which it may be viewed by a larger audience than just the course professor (for example, the course discussion or blog areas).

10% During the class's scheduled final exam period, the student will complete the Humanities Division ENGL 1113 Final Exam. Professors may find information on these exams either in the Humanities Hub D2L site or from the writing program administrator. These essays will be submitted to the Humanities Division office along with final course grades. Note: Students must take and pass the final exam under proctored conditions in order to pass the class.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>English Composition II</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Prefix and Number</td>
<td>ENGL 1213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester and Year Submitted</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared by</td>
<td>Antoinette Castillo, Sandy Keneda, and Theresa Walther</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours Per Week:</td>
<td>Class 3, Lab 0</td>
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### Course Description (as it appears in Catalog)

ENGL 1213 is the second in a two-course sequence that integrates critical reading, thinking, writing, and other communication skills to prepare students to construct discourse in both academic and professional career situations. In this course, students continue to engage in close reading of textual and visual compositions; however, the construction of argument, and its role in public discourse, is emphasized. Students learn to write longer, more sustained arguments with more sophisticated logic, rhetorical skill, and critical complexity. Emphasis is placed on understanding the role of individuals as both readers and writers of global culture. Prerequisite: Successful completion of ENGL 1113 or equivalent.

### Prerequisites

Successful completion of English 1113

### Text(s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>The Practiced Writer (in D2L, and available in print at the Rose State Bookstore) &amp; Rose State Reader (in D2L)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Author</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

### Rationale:

English Composition II, 1213, furthers the critical thinking and analytical skills developed in English Composition I, 1113. Through more extensive research and analysis of written and visual texts, students will write more complex and sustained arguments using appropriate documentation styles. Composition II prepares students for writing and communication necessary for all academic and other rhetorical situations and prepares them to continue independent learning.

### Expected Outcomes:

All skills learned in Composition I will continue to be developed and refined in this second course in the composition series, and the following additions to those skills will be made:

1. The student will demonstrate the ability to use the more advanced logic and rhetorical skill needed to compose arguments which attempt to solve problems by finding common ground.
2. The student will demonstrate the ability to compose longer, more complex and original arguments over a sustained period of time. As part of this process, the student will first create a formal proposal appropriate to the student's academic and professional goals. The student will then conduct the research necessary to develop the proposal. This will be followed by use of advanced critical thinking skills to summarize primary and secondary research sources for annotated bibliography. At that time the student will be prepared to use the writing process to create an eight-to-ten content page, professionally...
formatted, sophisticated argument that attempts to solve a problem by finding common ground. This document will consider global implications in some way, and will be published for an audience broader than just the class professor.

3. The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze and discuss the arguments that are both implied and inferred in literary fiction and nonfiction, as well as visual texts, to critique the role of individuals as both readers and writers of global culture. This process will include extensive examination of alternative points of view, including critical examination of the evidence and arguments supporting each one.

**Methods of Instruction:**
Methods vary by professor, but may include lecture, class dialogue, small-group work, individualized skill units, audiovisual aids, and computer-enhanced learning. Individual conferences with students are strongly encouraged, so for up to two class sessions each semester, rather than meeting with the entire class, the professor may instead use that time to hold brief, scheduled individual meetings with the class's students (provided these meetings are structured and collectively replace the entire duration of the scheduled class period).

**Assessment (Including Critical Thinking measurements):**
I. To shape the content of student learning and essays, the course professor will incorporate a combination of literary fiction and non-fiction texts from the course textbook or free online sites. These will be 6-12 separate texts, and will focus on development of student academic voice, cultural and global awareness, and personal transformation.

II. 25% of the credit for the course grade will include work relevant to the course "Expected Outcomes" above as the individual professor determines to be most effective. This work usually includes scaffolding assignments to help students with specific skills and assignments to help students further develop their individual voice as writers.

III. 25% One to three short essays collectively totaling at least six content pages.

IV. Much of this course consists of the student completing a large project over an extended part of the semester. The goal is for the student to develop an area of inquiry in response to the course’s thematic focus, skillfully pursue that inquiry (including examination of global factors in the research), and then create an argument that attempts to solve the problem by finding common ground. All of the following should apply toward this semester-long endeavor:

   - 5% complete a formal proposal of approximately two pages
   - 5% construct an annotated bibliography of research sources that may be used in the paper, including no fewer than ten potential sources.
   - 30% compose a formal argument essay of eight to ten content pages, using a minimum of five sources from the annotated bibliography. The student may use either standard APA or MLA format for the document, as best fits the student's subject matter and major.

V. 10% During the class's scheduled final exam period, the student will complete the Humanities Division ENGL 1213 Final Exam. Professors may find information on these exams either in the Humanities Hub D2L site or from the writing program administrator. These essays will be submitted to the Humanities Division office along with final course grades. Note: Students must take and pass the final exam under proctored conditions in order to pass the class.
Transformative Learning

The Rose State Writing Program emphasizes transformative learning to create greater agency within the individual as a foundation for our curriculum. Using transformative learning theory, teachers focus on cultivating skills their students need to recognize social structures, identify the unarticulated premises upon which such structures rest, and then examine how the structures function in the students' own lives. The goal is to develop active reflective consciousness and is embedded in the belief that by using critically reflective practices to examine the self, individuals will achieve greater agency which may then improve society as a whole.

Columbia University Sociologist Jack Mezirow is credited with the articulation of transformative learning theory specifically for adult education. In *Transformative Learning*, Mezirow and his associates identify ten phases of learning that are involved in the transformative learning process:

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination
3. A critical assessment of assumptions
4. Recognition of a connection between one's discontent and the process of transformation
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and action
6. Planning a course of action
7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plan
8. Provisional trying of new roles
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective

(Mezirow 18)

In your composition classes, many structures are included to help promote transformative learning while also providing a practical framework for both academic and workplace composition. Material from literary nonfiction such as essays, news articles, and podcasts is included so that students have the opportunity to critically reflect on contemporary culture and their place in it. Readings from literary fiction such as poetry, short stories, and drama invite students to connect with and question all types of experiences regarding the human condition. An emphasis on global perspectives provides students with the chance to see both everyday life and momentous social issues from very differing points of view around the world. Most importantly, writing assignments ask students to use critical reflection and analysis to identify problems and then work to solve them in meaningful ways.

If you are interested in learning more about transformative learning or agency, check out some of these resources.

**In the Rose State Library:**


**Online:**


Resources for instructors

In addition to materials presented and linked in this textbook, you can find a number of supplemental teaching resources in the Rose State Brightspace D2L resource courses, including the Readers for both Composition I and II, sample detailed lesson plans, assignment sheets, specialized rubrics, quizzes, and more. Another Brightspace D2L resource is the Humanities Hub where you can find division syllabi, final exams, and professional training resources. For additional materials, you may also contact the Rose State Writing Program Administrator or Humanities Mentor.
Part I
Essential Composition Strategies
Chapter 1: Writing to Think and Writing to Learn

To be practiced means to be an “expert, typically as the result of much experience.” As you consult your English Composition syllabus, you will find course objectives that aim to foster competency and expertise. Many students find writing in the college classroom to be simultaneously a familiar and disorienting process. Students arrive to this class as experienced writers. Whether academic, professional, or casual, writing and reading comprise a significant part of our daily lives.

On the surface, nothing could be simpler than writing: You sit down, you pick up a pen or open a document on your computer, and you write words. However, anyone who has procrastinated or struggled with writer’s block knows that the writing process is more arduous, if not somewhat mysterious and unpredictable. People often think of writing in terms of its end product—the email, the report, the memo, essay, or research paper—all of which result from the time and effort spent in the act of writing. In this course, however, you will be introduced to writing as the recursive process of planning, drafting, and revising.

The college composition classroom is a unique space. First, the material you cover is interdisciplinary. You have the opportunity to study and discuss literature, non-fiction, scientific articles, government documents, laws, case studies, and events that impact our daily lives. You will likely leave this course a more informed and engaged member of your community. Second, the writing in college composition is likely more complex and rigorous than previous writing experience. You will build projects systematically with close attention to process, audience, purpose, and rhetorical analysis.

Writing Is Recursive

You will focus as much on the process of writing as you will on its end product (the writing you normally submit for feedback or a grade). Recursive means circling back; consequently, more often than not, the writing process will have you running in circles. You might be in the middle of your draft when you realize you need to do more brainstorming, so you return to the planning stage. Even
when you have finished a draft, you may find changes you want to make to an introduction. In truth, every writer must develop his or her own process for getting the writing done, but there are some basic strategies and techniques you can adapt to make your work a little easier, more fulfilling and effective.

**Developing Your Writing Process**

The final product of a piece of writing is undeniably important, but the emphasis of this course is on developing a writing process that works for you. Some of you may already know what strategies and techniques assist you in your writing. You may already be familiar with prewriting techniques, such as freewriting, brainstorming, clustering, and listing. You may already have a regular writing practice. Many other students, however, may need to discover what works through trial and error. Developing individual strategies and techniques that promote painless and compelling writing can take some time. So, be patient.

**Getting Started: Short- and Long-Term Planning**

At the beginning of the semester, establish a weekly routine for when you will study and write. A general guideline is that for every hour spent in class, students should expect to spend another two to three hours on reading, writing, and studying for tests. Therefore, if you are taking a biology course that meets three times a week for an hour at a time, you can expect to spend six to nine hours per week on it outside of class. You will need to budget time for each class just like an employer schedules shifts at work, and you must make that study time a priority.

That may sound like a lot when taking multiple classes, but if you plan your time carefully, it is manageable. A typical full-time schedule of fifteen credit hours translates into thirty to forty-five hours per week spent on schoolwork outside of class. All in all, a full-time student would spend about as much time on school each week as an employee spends on work. Balancing school and a job can be more challenging, but still doable.

In addition to setting aside regular work periods, you will need to plan ahead to handle more intense demands, such as studying for exams and writing major papers. At the beginning of the semester, go through your course syllabi and mark all major due dates and exam dates on a calendar. Use a format that you check regularly, such as your smartphone or the calendar feature in your e-mail.
The Practiced Writer

Tip
The two- to three-hour rule may sound intimidating. However, keep in mind that this is only a rule of thumb. Realistically, some courses will be more challenging than others, and the demands will ebb and flow throughout the semester. You may have trouble-free weeks and stressful weeks.

Exercise
Now that you have learned some time-management basics, it is time to apply those skills. For this exercise, you will develop a weekly schedule and a semester calendar.

1. Working with your class schedule, map out a week-long schedule of study time. Try to apply the “two- to three-hour” rule. Be sure to include any other nonnegotiable responsibilities, such as a job or child care duties.

2. Use your course syllabi to record exam dates and due dates for major assignments in a calendar (paper or electronic). Use a star, highlighting, or other special marking to set off any days or weeks that look especially demanding.

Assessing Process

Writing in a composition classroom is characterized by steps. For major projects, you will submit a number of benchmarks including (but not limited to) proposals, annotated bibliographies, research exercises, early drafts, peer reviews, and final drafts. In the previous section, you worked on activities for planning ahead for deadlines. Staying organized is crucial to avoid deadlines creeping up on you. As you move through the semester, it is also important to keep tabs of your own research and writing process. Factors such as your writing environment, the time of day, and external stress can influence the time it takes to complete a given task.

Do you need quiet to write? Do you write more effectively early in the morning, during the day, or at night? Some students complete assignments in short flurries of creativity. Others are steadier in their pace. There is no single “correct” method, but there are a few general points applicable to everyone:
Get sleep and plenty of rest.
• Take time away from writing and review drafts with fresh eyes.
• Take advantage of resources on your campus.
• Get to know your classmates and discuss and review projects outside of class to provide accountability and support.
• Visit the writing center on your campus.¹ The writing lab provides one-on-one feedback on any stage of a writing assignment from experienced writing instructors and also offers a quiet and comfortable place to work.

**Rhetoric and the Rhetorical Situation**

**Rhetoric** is defined as the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the use of figures of speech and other composition techniques. When we speak of writing in the college classroom, rhetoric is at the heart of things.

**History**

The most common place to find the word rhetoric in use today is during the 24/7 news cycle as a reference to political speech. In political contexts, rhetoric often refers to speech that is persuasive to an audience but lacking in meaningful content or sincerity. Ancient Greek rhetoricians would not be surprised to hear about this modern connotation for rhetoric. Socrates (in Plato’s *Dialogues*) and Xenophon were critical of a particular school of rhetoricians called Sophists who claimed to use rhetoric and philosophy to teach *arete* (excellence or virtue). Philosophers were critical of Sophists for their deceptive practices and high fees (Blackwell). However, rhetoric’s more neutral connotation as persuasive speech likewise has an ancient origin.

³ At Rose State College, the writing lab is located in Humanities, Room 137. Consult their website for hours and more information: [https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/writing-lab/]
The Practiced Writer

The medieval university, modelled on a classical Greek education, included rhetoric as a foundational topic of study along with grammar and logic. Those three subject areas comprised the Trivium, a medieval university’s introductory curriculum with roots dating back to Plato’s *Dialogues*. According to Sister Miriam Joseph, “Grammar is the art of inventing symbols and combining them to express thought; logic is the art of thinking; and rhetoric is the art of communicating thought from one mind to another; the adaptation of language to circumstance (3).

**Exercise**
Individually or in small groups, locate an example of the term “rhetoric” in popular media (an online news clip or article). Take some brief notes on the story to share your example with this class. What is the story about? Does the term “rhetoric” have positive or negative connotations in your example?

**The Rhetorical Situation**

The rhetorical situation is “any set of circumstances that involves at least one person using some sort of communication to modify the perspective of at least one other person” (“Rhetorical Situations”). The term essentially covers any scenario where one might use rhetoric and the context in which a text is written and read. The academic definition of the rhetorical situation developed over the past 100 years refines our application of the term through a focus on audience, specifically what your audience feels or believes.

Kenneth Burke, a 20th-century literary theorist, argued that rhetoric comprised a series of methods people can use to identify with each other in order to assess their perspectives. Burke went so far as to say “in pure identification there would be no strife” (25). By identifying with each other, individuals with opposing viewpoints meet on a “mediatory ground.” Burke uses this concept of pure identification, or perfect understanding of an opposing view, to set up his discussion of rhetoric, an operation suited for a world where perfect understanding is difficult or impossible—a space where division occurs.
In the composition classroom, identification through assessment of the rhetorical situation allows you to craft your message to your audience. This is a familiar concept in political circles where we see candidates speak to the needs and concerns individual states and communities. A presidential candidate might speak about coal jobs in West Virginia one week and oil and gas jobs in Oklahoma the next week. In academic writing, the rhetorical situation is often more subtle and determines which sources you choose and what reasons you develop to support a claim. Understanding the values, beliefs, and motivations of your audience can build a connection and move them towards agreement and change.

**Exercise**

Individually or in small groups brainstorm two opposing viewpoints on a controversial contemporary issue (e.g. climate change, healthcare reform, gun control, etc.). Assess this issue as a rhetorical situation. What are some specific beliefs that parties have about the issue? What factors motivate those views and beliefs? How might both parties tailor their messages to speak to those values?

**Rhetorical Analysis**

Rhetorical analysis is the evaluation of the effectiveness of a text through assessment of how individual elements of that text contribute to the success or failure of its argument. Methods of rhetorical analysis can be applied to written texts but also visual, oral, or other kinds of arguments. To facilitate rhetorical analysis, it is helpful to break a text down into its appeals. An author chooses rhetorical appeals strategically to appeal to a particular audience.

The rhetorical triangle is a useful formulation for organizing rhetorical appeals that classically comprise most arguments. The first surviving textual reference to these rhetorical appeals appears in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* in the 4th century BCE, and we can recognize their Greek roots in a number of modern words.
Logos is an appeal to logic. The nature of evidence, types of sources, and the structure of the argument all comprise logos.

Pathos is an appeal to emotion or an appeal to an audience’s values or beliefs. We find pathos as a root in the modern English words “sympathy” and “empathy.” Assessment of pathos accounts for the feelings of the audiences and any assumptions an author makes about background and knowledge.

Ethos is an appeal to the writer’s credibility. The root is found in the modern English word “ethics.” When assessing ethos look for evidence of a writer’s credentials and clarity of phrasing and purpose.

Ideas for Writing

Advertising is a fruitful genre of argument for rhetorical analysis because it communicates directly to identifiable audiences with a clear purpose (usually to sell a product). For this assignment, choose an advertisement (a print ad or TV/web commercial and write a short rhetorical analysis (2-3 pages). Your analysis should employ the following strategies:

1. Summarize the advertisement. Offer your reader basic information (who, what, where, and when) along with a systematic and detailed account the ads content as a foundation for analysis. Aim to provide vivid details.
2. Highlight any aspects of the advertisement that reveal its targeted audience
3. Describe the ad in relation to other ads of the same type
4. Identify and describe the advertisement’s rhetorical appeals (logos, ethos, and pathos)
5. Finally, assess the effectiveness of the ad. Are the rhetorical appeals in the advertisement developed and balanced? If unbalanced, does the choice seem strategic?

Key Takeaways

- Take careful stock of your syllabus for deadlines and project benchmarks
- Write deliberately and reflectively to assess and refine your process
- Take advantage of the resources on your campus such as the writing lab
- The formal study of rhetoric has its origins in ancient Greece and remains a lively and evolving field
- Rhetoric is speech and writing designed to persuade an audience
• All texts have a context, a rhetorical situation that is influenced by the beliefs of the audience, history, bias, and a number of other factors
• Arguments use a combination of rhetorical appeals

**Works Cited**


**ATTRIBUTION**

Chapter 2: Becoming a Critical Reader

Critical reading is an analytic activity whereby a reader assesses language, values, assumptions to move towards an interpretation of underlying meaning and connections. Non-critical reading is the process of learning what a text says about a topic, to make sense of its ideas on a factual level, a process of understanding that is linear and engagement with the ideas is limited largely to memorization. For the critical reader, the facts of the text are one portrayal of information to be scrutinized and compared with other information. This chapter outlines the concepts necessary to read a text critically through a general overview of stages of reading and applications of active reading strategies that allow you to systematically assess a text.

Stages of Reading

Your college courses will sharpen both your reading and your writing skills. Most of your writing assignments—from brief response papers to in-depth research projects—will depend on your understanding of course reading assignments or related readings you do on your own. Additionally, it is difficult, if not impossible, to write effectively about a text that you have not understood. Even when you do understand the reading, it can be hard to write about it if you do not feel personally engaged with the ideas discussed.

This section discusses strategies you can use to get the most out of your college reading assignments. These strategies fall into three broad categories:

- Previewing
- Knowledge Integration
- Recall

Stage 1: Previewing

Have you ever stayed up all night cramming just before an exam? Or found yourself skimming a detailed memo from your boss five minutes before a crucial
meeting? The first step in handling college reading successfully is *previewing*. This involves managing your time, setting a clear purpose for your reading, and developing expectations for the scope and aim of a text.

**Managing Your Reading Time**

For now, focus on setting aside enough time for reading and breaking your assignments into manageable chunks. If you are assigned a seventy-page chapter to read for next week’s class, try not to wait until the night before to get started. Give yourself at least a few days and tackle one section at a time.

Your method for breaking up the assignment will depend on the type of reading. If the text is very dense and packed with unfamiliar terms and concepts, you may need to read no more than five or ten pages in one sitting so that you can truly understand and process the information. With more user-friendly texts, you will be able to handle longer sections—twenty to forty pages, for instance. Also, if you have a highly engaging reading assignment, such as a novel you cannot put down, you may be able to read lengthy passages in one sitting.

As the semester progresses, you will develop a better sense of how much time you need to allow for the reading assignments in different subjects. It also makes sense to preview each assignment well in advance to assess its difficulty level and to determine how much reading time to set aside.

**Setting a Purpose**

The other key component of planning is *setting a purpose*. Knowing what you want to get out of a reading assignment helps you determine how to approach it and how much time to spend on it. It also helps you stay focused during those occasional moments when it is late and when you are tired, and relaxing in front of the television sounds far more appealing than curling up with a stack of journal articles.

Sometimes your purpose is simple. You might just need to understand the reading material well enough to discuss it intelligently in class the next day. However, your purpose will often go beyond that. For instance, you might also read to compare two texts, to formulate a personal response to a text, or to gather ideas for future research. Here are some questions to ask to help determine your purpose:

- **How did my instructor frame the assignment?** Often, your instructors will tell you what they expect you to get out of the reading. For example:
Read Chapter 2 and come to class prepared to discuss current teaching practices in elementary math.
Read these two articles and compare Smith’s and Jones’s perspectives on the 2010 health care reform bill.
Read Chapter 5 and think about how you could apply these guidelines to running your own business.

• **How deeply do I need to understand the reading?** If you are majoring in computer science and you are assigned to read Chapter 1, “Introduction to Computer Science,” it is safe to assume the chapter presents fundamental concepts that you will be expected to master. However, for some reading assignments, you may be expected to form a general understanding but not necessarily master the content. Again, pay attention to how your instructor presents the assignment.

• **How does this assignment relate to other course readings or to concepts discussed in class?** Your instructor may make some of these connections explicitly, but if not, try to draw connections on your own. (Needless to say, it helps to take detailed notes both when in class and when you read.)

• **How might I use this text again in the future?** If you are assigned to read about a topic that has always interested you, your reading assignment might help you develop ideas for a future research paper. Some reading assignments provide valuable tips or summaries worth bookmarking for future reference. Think about what you can take from the reading that will stay with you.

**Tip**
College instructors often set aside reserve readings for a particular course. These consist of articles, book chapters, or other texts that are not part of the primary course textbook. Copies of reserve readings are available through the university library; in print; or, more often, online. When you are assigned a reserve reading, download it ahead of time (and let your instructor know if you have trouble accessing it). Skim through it to get a rough idea of how much time you will need to read the assignment in full.
Developing Reading Expectations

Preliminary analysis allows you to focus your reading and determine the scope and aim of a text through an investigation of features outside of the contents of the text itself. The headnotes, abstract, table of contents, and other prefatory material, sometimes called *front matter*, show the critical reader what to expect from a text and can also aid in focusing research. Titles can be misleading, and the abstract and table of contents can confirm that the text is what you expected. For example, if you were researching affordable housing and looking for an article on shipping containers converted into houses, it is likely that search results would yield articles about containers as a data structure in computer science. Research keywords can have multiple meanings and reviewing an abstract can save time by helping you filter out irrelevant articles. Furthermore, for any text, spending time with the preview stage can pay dividends. For an academic book, the table of contents and introduction can also reveal which sections of a book are most relevant to your research project.

Digital resources available through your campus library can greatly assist the preview stage, allowing a preliminary review of a text before you even download or print it.¹ *EBSCOhost* search results include an abstract that summarizes the article along with a brief description of the author.² Assessing the author(s) as part of your preview stage allows you to assess the reputation and credentials of the author.

Previewing an author can be invaluable for assessing bias and tone in a text. In researching fossil fuels, an oil company lobbyist will have a much different perspective than an activist working with Greenpeace. Most affiliations are more ambiguous but nevertheless can be revealing. For example, in Figure 2, the detailed record page for this article shows that the author is an economics professor. Paired with the abstract, we can expect an account of rent control that is scholarly and heavy on data, as opposed to what you might find in a human-interest story from a news station.

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¹ See the “Resources” page on the Rose State College library page for the library catalogue and online databases. ([https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/library/](https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/library/))

² See Chapter 9 for more on locating sources using library resources.
Stage 2: Knowledge Integration

You have blocked out time for your reading assignments and set a purpose for reading. Now comes the challenge: making sure you actually understand all the information you are expected to process. Some of your reading assignments will be fairly straightforward. Others, however, will be longer or more complex, so you will need a plan for how to handle them.

For any expository writing—that is, nonfiction, informational writing—you first comprehension goal is to identify the main points and relate any supporting details to those main points. Because college-level texts can be challenging, you will also need to monitor your reading comprehension. That is, you will need to stop periodically and assess how well you understand what you are reading. Finally, you can improve comprehension by taking time to determine which strategies work best for you and putting those strategies into practice.

Monitoring Your Comprehension

Finding the main idea and paying attention to text features as you read helps you figure out what you should know. Just as important, however, is being able to figure out what you do not know and developing a strategy to deal with it.
Textbooks often include comprehension questions in the margins or at the end of a section or chapter. As you read, stop occasionally to answer these questions on paper or in your head. Use them to identify sections you may need to reread, read more carefully, or ask your instructor about later.

Even when a text does not have built-in comprehension features, you can actively monitor your own comprehension. Try these strategies, adapting them as needed to suit different kinds of texts:

- **Summarize.** At the end of each section, pause to summarize the main points in a few sentences. If you have trouble doing so, revisit that section.

- **Ask and answer questions.** When you begin reading a section, try to identify two to three questions you should be able to answer after you finish it. Write down your questions and use them to test yourself on the reading. If you cannot answer a question, try to determine why. Is the answer buried in that section of reading but just not coming across to you? Or do you expect to find the answer in another part of the reading?

- **Do not read in a vacuum.** Look for opportunities to discuss the reading with your classmates. Many instructors set up online discussion forums or blogs specifically for that purpose. Participating in these discussions can help you determine whether your understanding of the main points is the same as your peers’.

These discussions can also serve as a reality check. If everyone in the class struggled with the reading, it may be exceptionally challenging. If it was a breeze for everyone but you, you may need to see your instructor for help.

**Exercise**

Choose any text that that you have been assigned to read for one of your college courses. In your notes, complete the following tasks:

1. Summarize the main points of the text in two to three sentences.

2. Write down two to three questions about the text that you can bring up during class discussion.
Stage 3: Recall

The recall stage differentiates understanding from use and is often best accomplished with your pen, stylus, keyboard, or touch screen. When you can recall a text, you are able to synthesize what you read and discuss it within overlapping social, historical, or other contexts. The recall stage is analytical, and strong readers bring a number of questions to the text:

- What is the writer asserting?
- Does the text offer facts, opinions, or a mixture?
- Are there places in the text where the argument breaks down?
- In what ways does the text align or differ from other texts you have read?

Recall also allows readers to contextualize what they read. All texts emerge from historical, cultural, and material circumstances. The importance of these contexts is clearly visible in literature. An understanding of slavery is essential to a close reading of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. The challenges James Joyce faced in publishing Ulysses and subsequent bans for obscenity illustrate the social norms of early 20th century. Likewise, the original publication of the novel in serial form or

Tip

Students are often reluctant to seek help. They feel like doing so marks them as slow, weak, or demanding. The truth is, every learner occasionally struggles. If you are sincerely trying to keep up with the course reading but feel like you are in over your head, seek out help! Speak up in class, schedule a meeting with your instructor, or visit the Rose State reading lab for assistance.

The Rose State College Reading Lab, located in the Humanities Building room 117, provides individualized instruction for students seeking to improve their reading skills. Students at any reading level can improve reading accuracy, fluency, and vocabulary. For more information on the RSC Reading lab visit https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/reading-lab/.

Figure 6: Textual Studies is the discipline within the humanities concerned with the production, circulation, and reception of texts.
changes made by editors and publishers represent levels of textual understanding deeper than the words on the page.

For scholarly works, material conditions might include how widely a text was published. Databases such as WorldCat list how many libraries worldwide own a book or subscribe to a journal, a useful piece of information when assessing a text’s influence.

**Taking It to the Next Level: Active Reading Strategies**

Now that you have acquainted (or reacquainted) yourself with useful planning and comprehension strategies, college reading assignments may feel more manageable. You know what you need to do to get your reading done and make sure you grasp the main points. However, the most successful students in college are not only competent readers but active, engaged readers.

**Using the SQ3R Strategy**

One strategy you can use to become a more active, engaged reader is the SQ3R strategy, a step-by-step process to follow before, during, and after reading. You may already use some variation of it. In essence, the process works like this:

- **Survey** the text in advance.
- **Form questions** before you start reading.
- **Read** the text.
- **Recite** and/or **record** important points during and after reading.
- **Review** and **reflect** on the text after you read.

Before you read, you survey, or preview, the text. As noted earlier, reading introductory paragraphs and headings can help you begin to figure out the author’s main point and identify what important topics will be covered. However, surveying does not stop there. Look over sidebars, photographs, and any other text or graphic features that catch your eye. Skim a few paragraphs. Preview any boldfaced or italicized vocabulary terms. This will help you form a first impression of the material.

Next, start brainstorming questions about the text. What do you expect to learn from the reading? You may find that some questions come to mind immediately based on your initial survey or based on previous readings and class discussions. If not, try using headings and subheadings in the text to formulate questions. For instance, if one heading in your textbook reads “Medicare and Medicaid,” you might ask yourself these questions:
• When was Medicare and Medicaid legislation enacted? Why?
• What are the major differences between these two programs?

Although some of your questions may be simple factual questions, try to come up with a few that are more open-ended. Asking in-depth questions will help you stay more engaged as you read.

The next step is simple: read. As you read, notice whether your first impressions of the text were correct. Are the author’s main points and overall approach about the same as what you predicted—or does the text contain a few surprises? Also, look for answers to your earlier questions and begin forming new questions. Continue to revise your impressions and questions as you read.

While you are reading, pause occasionally to recite or record important points. It is best to do this at the end of each section or when there is an obvious shift in the writer’s train of thought. Put the book aside for a moment and recite aloud the main points of the section or any important answers you found there. You might also record ideas by jotting down a few brief notes in addition to, or instead of, reciting aloud. Either way, the physical act of articulating information makes you more likely to remember it.

After you have completed the reading, take some time to review the material more thoroughly. If the textbook includes review questions or your instructor has provided a study guide, use these tools to guide your review. You will want to record information in a more detailed format than you used during reading, such as in an outline or a list.

As you review the material, reflect on what you learned. Did anything surprise you, upset you, or make you think? Did you find yourself strongly agreeing or disagreeing with any points in the text? What topics would you like to explore further? Jot down your reflections in your notes. (Instructors sometimes require students to write brief response papers or maintain a reading journal. Use these assignments to help you reflect on what you read).

Using Other Active Reading Strategies

The SQ3R process encompasses a number of valuable active reading strategies: previewing a text, making predictions, asking and answering questions, and summarizing. You can use the following additional strategies to further deepen your understanding of what you read.
• **Connect what you read to what you already know.** Look for ways the reading supports, extends, or challenges concepts you have learned elsewhere.

• **Relate the reading to your own life.** What statements, people, or situations relate to your personal experiences?

• **Visualize.** For both fiction and nonfiction texts, try to picture what is described. Visualizing is especially helpful when you are reading a narrative text, such as a novel or a historical account, or when you read expository text that describes a process, such as how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

• **Pay attention to graphics as well as text.** Photographs, diagrams, flow charts, tables, and other graphics can help make abstract ideas more concrete and understandable.

• **Understand the text in context.** Understanding context means thinking about who wrote the text, when and where it was written, the author’s purpose for writing it, and what assumptions or agendas influenced the author’s ideas. For instance, two writers might both address the subject of health care reform, but if one article is an opinion piece and one is a news story, the context is different.

• **Plan to talk or write about what you read.** Jot down a few questions or comments in your notebook so you can bring them up in class. This also gives you a source of topic ideas for papers and presentations later in the semester. Discuss the reading on a class discussion board or blog about it.

**Extra Reading Strategies**

**S-RUN-R**

• Survey – preview
• Read – write the heading in your notes and read the selection
• Underline – underline or highlight the important information
• Notes – take notes on the key information
• Review – use an active study strategy to review the information

**MUSCLE READING**

• Phase 1 (Before you read)
  ❖ Preview
    ▪ Survey the entire assignment
    ▪ Look at the table of contents
    ▪ Flip through the pages of the text
    ▪ Keep preview short
    ▪ Read summary statements
    ▪ Read chapter headings
    ▪ Look for familiar concepts
• Inspect drawings, charts, tables, and photographs

❖ Outline
  ▪ Study textbook chapter outlines or sketch your own
  ▪ Section titles/headings can serve as major/minor topics
  ▪ Outlining time will vary

❖ Question
  ▪ Ask what you want from the assignment
  ▪ Write down a list of questions
  ▪ Turn chapter headings into questions
  ▪ Make questions playful and creative

• Phase 2 (While you read)
  ❖ Read
    ▪ Reflect on what you already know
    ▪ Be here now!
    ▪ Avoid marathon reading sessions
    ▪ Set shorter goals for difficult reading
    ▪ Stay focused
    ▪ Visualize the material
    ▪ Read it out loud
    ▪ Get a “feel” for the subject
    ▪ Remember your questions

❖ Underline
  ▪ Annotate your books
  ▪ Create signals for reviewing
  ▪ Avoid underlining too soon
  ▪ Underline less than 10% of the text
  ▪ Write in the margins

❖ Answer
  ▪ Write down the answers to your questions
  ▪ Fill in your outline
  ▪ Write new questions to ask your instructor in class
  ▪ Be a detective

• Phase 3 (After you read)
  ❖ Recite
    ▪ Talk about what you have just read to yourself or someone else
    ▪ Test your recall of underlined information
    ▪ Tell friends and family about what you are learning whenever you can
Review

- Review within 24 hours
- Use your notes to fill in missing pieces
- Recite main points again
- This review can be short

Review again

- Review weekly or monthly
- Look over your notes
- Read highlighted parts of your text
- Recite complicated points
- Be prepared and you can review anytime, anywhere
- Consider re-reading difficult material

Preview, Study-Read, and Review (PSR)

- Stage One: Preview
  - Preview Step 1: Skim the Reading
  - Preview Step 2: Develop Questions and Predict Answers
  - Preview Step 3: Recall Prior Knowledge

- Stage Two: Study-Read
  - Study-Read Step 1: Ask and Answer Questions
  - Study-Read Step 2: Monitor Your Reading
  - Study-Read Step 3: Determine Main Ideas
  - Study-Read Step 4: Cross-Reference Prior Knowledge

- Stage Three: Review
  - Review Step 1: Return to Main Idea Statements
  - Review Step 2: Organize Material for Retrieval

Ideas for Writing

Choose another text that you have been assigned to read for a class. Use the SQ3R process to complete the reading. (Keep in mind that you may need to spread the reading over more than one session, especially if the text is long.) Be sure to complete all the steps involved. Then, in a short essay reflect on how helpful you found this process. How useful did you find it? How does it compare with other study techniques you have used?
Helpful Reading and Learning Links

Reading Links

http://www2.isu.edu/success/strategies/handouts.shtml

http://www.campusexplorer.com/college-advice-tips/D0A561C3/College-Reading-Strategies-Read-Analyze-Remember/

http://success.oregonstate.edu/learning/reading-strategies-tips


http://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/ready-for-college-reading/

http://ww2.nscc.edu/depart/testing/ctreview.htm

http://www.criticalthinking.org/

http://www.criticalreading.com/critical_reading.htm

http://www.pactiss.org/resources/powerpoints-video-and-other-media/witch.mp4/view

http://ww25.curriculuminstitute.org/

http://www.reading.org/general/AboutIRA/Governance/Mission.aspx

http://www.prefixsuffix.com/

https://quizlet.com/latest

http://dictionary.reference.com/

http://www.thesaurus.com/browse/words

http://worldwidewords.org/

http://wordsmith.org/

http://www.gcflearnfree.org/reading

http://www.vocabulary.com/

Learning Links

A Classic Method for Studying Texts: SQ3R - Dartmouth College

Active Reading Strategies – Princeton University

Rapid Reading – Cornell University

Concept Mapping – Cornell University

Guide to Reading Primary Sources – University of Pennsylvania

Key Takeaways

• Be deliberate and systematic as a reader by emphasizing process
• Preview a text by assessing all available front matter and prefatory material
• Leverage online resources within databases to preview a text
• Assess the background and credentials of authors
• Be an active reader by taking notes and bringing questions to the text
• Consider a text’s historical and material conditions and always be aware that a text reflects its context
• Discuss readings with classmates and use college resources such as the Reading Lab to assess and improve your skills as a reader

Works Consulted


Chapter 3: Conventions of Academic Discourse

What is academic discourse?

“Academic discourse, which is historically grounded, includes all lingual activities associated with academia, the output of research being perhaps the most important. The typicality of academic discourse is derived from the (unique) distinction-making activity which is associated with the analytical or logical mode of experience” (Patterson & Weideman 2013).

As a college student, you are entering an academic discourse community, but as you encounter academic writing in textbooks, journal articles, and assignments you may find that the conventions of this community are implicit. You pick them up as you go. This chapter aims to demystify that process so that you can effectively assess and respond to research and ideas.

The advice in this section is about observing basic grammatical conventions that typify an academic writing style. It is not about referencing or citation rules, which will be covered in a later chapter.

The process of academic writing

All writing is tailored to an audience, and academic writing is no different. Part of reaching a particular audience involves using conventions of style and grammar that meets that audience’s conscious and unconscious expectations. However, academic discourse is not set in stone. There are variations by discipline and publication type. This is common in other types of writing as well. For example, newspapers are an example of how one area of writing practice (journalism) can have many variations in discourse. News, opinion, and sports sections have their own conventions and these are similar as you move from one newspaper to the next.

Academic essays require their own type of formality that typically places the writer in the background, and allows the exposition of a carefully worked argument to come to the fore. As students advance through their academic lives, courses in their disciplines introduce conventions specific to that discipline and its publications. This short guide is not intended to offer an exhaustive account of these formal characteristics but general tips applicable to most types of academic writing.
The fundamental goal of academic writing is clarity. Write clearly, concisely, and try to avoid long, awkward clauses that risk losing the interest or attention of the reader. Your immediate audience will likely be your peers and your instructor, who will be conversant with many of the theories and terminologies specific to your project. However, don't rely on a showy display of 'jargon'—again, clarity of argument and an incremental exposition of the research findings will provide the most accessible means of communicating your message. The most important unit in academic writing is the paragraph, the group of sentences that systematically introduces and develops your ideas.

**What is a paragraph?**

Paragraphs are the building blocks of papers. Many students define paragraphs in terms of length: a paragraph is a group of at least five sentences, a paragraph is half a page long, etc. In reality, though, the unity and coherence of ideas among sentences is what constitutes a paragraph. A paragraph is defined as “a group of sentences or a single sentence that forms a unit” (Lunsford and Connors 116). Length and appearance do not determine whether a section in a paper is a paragraph. For instance, in some styles of writing, particularly journalistic styles, a paragraph can be just one sentence long. Ultimately, a paragraph is a sentence or group of sentences that support one main idea. In this chapter, we will refer to this as the “controlling idea,” because it controls what happens in the rest of the paragraph.

**Understand the structure of paragraphs**

A paragraph tends to develop a single idea or unit of meaning and a series of paragraphs form an essay. An 'academic' style for paragraphs might observe some of the following:

- *The length of the paragraph.* Vary the length to avoid monotony; however, on average you will probably find that between two to three paragraphs per page (double spacing) are sufficient. Paragraphs offer natural pauses, and very long passages threaten to lose the reader's attention.

- *Write sentences with clear topics and paragraphs with a clear aim.* Paragraphs often begin by stating the topic idea, and end by linking back to the overall theme. Keep in mind that each paragraph has a focus and it is clearly evident in the paragraph. If the theme is held back and not
stated until the reader reaches the end of a section, the reader may have lost the focus of why this particular piece of research is crucial to the study. During the stages of rewriting, look for points where the argument has become separated from the main thesis, and if necessary conclude some of your paragraphs by referring back to this so that it has a clear relationship with the topic.

- **Write unified paragraphs.** Use words and phrases to link sentences and paragraphs together, such as *although, however, in contrast.* These phrases work to imply change, to supplement, or to conclude. Be careful not to use them needlessly in order to fill gaps.

- **Use alternatives to common words.** This is a basic principle for all forms of writing, and helps to avoid monotony. The most frequent use of this will be when using pronouns (I, he, she, we, it, they, that) to replace the subject of a sentence. Related to this is the concept of 'elegant variation', which some view as rhetoric or studied avoidance for the sake of clear exposition. The best approach is to balance your writing with synonyms, but not to avoid repeating terms when they are important to the expression of your argument.

**How do I decide what to put in a paragraph?**

Before you can begin to determine what the composition of a particular paragraph will be, you must first decide on a working thesis for your paper. What is the most important idea that you are trying to convey to your reader? The information in each paragraph must be related to that idea. In other words, your paragraphs should remind your reader that there is a recurrent relationship between your thesis and the information in each paragraph. A working thesis functions like a seed from which your paper, and your ideas, will grow. The whole process is an organic one—a natural progression from a seed to a full-blown paper where there are direct, familial relationships between all of the ideas in the paper.

The decision about what to put into your paragraphs begins with the germination of a seed of ideas; this “germination process” is better known as brainstorming. There are many techniques for brainstorming; whichever one you choose, this stage of paragraph development cannot be skipped. Building paragraphs can be like building a skyscraper: there must be a well-planned foundation that supports what you are building. Any cracks, inconsistencies, or
other corruptions of the foundation can cause your whole paper to crumble.

So, let’s suppose that you have done some brainstorming to develop your thesis. What else should you keep in mind as you begin to create paragraphs?

**Every paragraph in a paper should be**

- **Unified**—All of the sentences in a single paragraph should be related to a single controlling idea (often expressed in the topic sentence of the paragraph).
- **Clearly related to the thesis**—The sentences should all refer to the central idea, or thesis, of the paper (Rosen and Behrens 119).
- **Coherent**—The sentences should be arranged in a logical manner and should follow a definite plan for development (Rosen and Behrens 119).
- **Well-developed**—Every idea discussed in the paragraph should be adequately explained and supported through evidence and details that work together to explain the paragraph’s controlling idea (Rosen and Behrens 119).

**How do I organize a paragraph?**

There are many different ways to organize a paragraph. The organization you choose will depend on the controlling idea of the paragraph. Below are a few possibilities for organization, with examples.¹

**Narration**:

A narrative paragraph tells a story. You provide relevant details of when and where events occurred as well as who was present. Chronological order is an important organizing principle of narration paragraphs, although many writers flash back or flash forward. The key is to provide your readers with clues when they leave a linear chronology.

**Example:**

I knew I hadn’t studied as much as I should. I wasn’t prepared for this test. History has always been a strong subject for me but when it comes to a multiple-choice test on medieval European history, you either

¹ For more on paragraph development, see chapter 16 of *Fundamental English*. See the RSC Writing Program website and click “Textbooks” on the left (https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/academic-divisions/humanities/writing-program/)
know it or you don’t. Life got the best of me this week. On Monday, my ride never showed up and I missed the review. That review would have been helpful. I knew I would be cramming for that test and could use some direction. I worked late on Tuesday. That was a night I found myself missing my job at the coffee shop. I used to be able to study on my downtime. My new job is too busy for that. It’s a little tough to read about Charlemagne while taking orders for Chicken Parmesan. I got home at 11:00pm. Exhausted but not yet defeated, I fired up the Keurig, pulled the string on my banker’s lamp and hit the books. All the study guides, tweets, and Facebook shares say not to cram all night for a test but there was no way I’d sleep anyway. I secured a more reliable ride on Wednesday morning and gave it my best shot. When the grade alert popped into my inbox I hesitated to open it. 82. Well that could have been worse. Cramming saved my neck, which felt appropriate since we’re covering the French revolution next week.

**Description:**
Description paragraphs provide specific details about what something looks, smells, tastes, sounds, or feels like. Organize spatially, in order of appearance, or by topic. Descriptive paragraphs can help immerse your reader in the world of the text.

**Example:**
Trisha stirred the large stock pot of stew, watching as flashes of bright orange carrot and stark white potato danced around, occasionally peeking through the thick brown liquid as it bubbled and steamed. The stew had a strong, spicy scent, and when she ventured a taste, Trisha was immediately struck by a slap of red cayenne pepper and a bold tanginess that reminded her of the sauce served at her favorite steakhouse. The stew was hot on her tongue, and even the small amount she had taken was enough to warm her throat as it slid down. As she leaned forward, the steam made her face equally warm, and the soft sound of roiling bubbles tickled her ears. It wouldn’t be long now until the dish was ready, and the thought made her stomach give a small grumble of anticipation.

**Process:**
Explain how something works, step by step. Perhaps follow a sequence—first, second, third. Factors to consider when writing a process paragraph include considerations for audience and goals. Know your audience. Are there any steps in the process that go without saying? When instructing someone how to change
a car battery, do you have to tell him to open the hood? Use the topic sentence to state the goal of the process. Let the reader know going in what the end result will be. This is not the best type of paragraph in which to inject suspense.

Example:
Making a good cup of tea is exquisitely simple. First, the teapot is heated by filling it with water that has just come to a boil. This water is then discarded, and one teaspoon of loose tea per cup is placed in the teapot (the exact amount may vary according to taste). Fresh water that has just come to a boil is poured into the pot. A good calculation is six ounces of water for each cup of tea. The tea must now steep for three to five minutes; then it is poured through a strainer into a cup or mug. A pound of loose tea will yield about two hundred cups of brewed tea. Using a tea bag eliminates the strainer, but it is still best to make the tea in a teapot so that the water stays sufficiently hot. The typical restaurant service—a cup of hot water with the tea bag on the side—will not produce the best cup of tea because the water is never hot enough when it reaches the table and because the tea should not be dunked in the water; the water should be poured over the tea. Although tea in a pot often becomes too strong, that problem can be dealt with very easily by adding more boiling water (Scarry & Scarry 422)

Classification:
Classification paragraphs begin with a main idea and discuss subcategories of that topic, comparing and contrasting them with each other. Be sure to follow a discernible logic (e.g. largest to smallest; cheapest to most expensive)

Example:
There are three different types of rock music, alternative rock, classic rock, and hard rock, also known as metal. Alternative rock features a steady bass drum laying down the beat, with easy flowing guitar riffs over the top. The bass line is toned down, and the lyrics are sung with intensity an authority. Depending on the song, the guitars can either be acoustic guitars or electric guitars. Classic rock combines a steady driving bass drum sound, with high snare overtones, steady and often repeating guitar riffs, and an intensive bass line. The guitars are, more often than not, all electric guitars, and distortion is rarely used. The lyrics are sung with style and enthusiasm. Hard rock, or metal, features a hard-rolling bass drum with an abundant amount of cymbal work. This style of rock uses several electric guitars with heavy distortion to bring a very intense sound. A hard, intense, driving bass line rounds out the style. The lyrics aren’t really sung so much as screamed. It doesn’t matter what
your preference is, each different style of rock music is unique on its own.

**Illustration:**
An illustration paragraph explains a general statement by means of more specific examples. Choosing effective examples is crucial as they build interest and add precision to your writing.

**Example:**
Most people have special places where they go to relax and find inspiration. For example, my most relaxing and inspirational place to be is at Riceville Bridge. It is a peaceful pull-off area past Belt, Montana just before entering the Sluicebox, state park. My family and I have spent many times there. When I was younger my sister and I learned how to swim in Belt Creek at Riceville Bridge. My grandma is buried outside of Belt at the Belt cemetery, so when I want to get away I usually go out to Riceful Bridge and sit by the calming, peaceful Belt Creek. The sound of the rapid flowing creek, birds in the background, and the smell of fresh air makes me look back and remember all of the fun and exciting memories I have had with my family out there. It is also very peaceful to me because I feel like my grandma is watching over me, protecting me, and letting me know that life is sometimes very difficult but to never give up. Sometimes, life for me is very difficult and frustrating. That’s when I turn to Riceful Bridge, because I know that I can sit out there and talk to myself and vent things out and feel like I have some type of connection with the atmosphere. It is by far my most relaxing and inspirational place to be because I feel very comfortable and wanted there.

**Exercise**
Individually or in groups, choose a type of paragraph that best suits each of the following topic sentences and explain why.

1. Deforestation has a direct effect on global food supplies.
2. My trip to Great Britain was one of the most important times in my life.
3. Moving your files to a new computer is easy and painless.
4. There are several popular genres of video games.
5. Nothing can compare to Opening Day at a Major League Baseball stadium
Adopting a suitable writing style

As mentioned earlier, acquiring the ability to write academic essays is a developmental process that improves during the course of your studies. This overlaps with other criteria which mark your passage as a student—your developing subject knowledge and confidence in thinking critically. In order to identify some concepts of academic discourse, it would be useful to look at a few examples and examine some aspects of the underlying grammar.

It is usually easier to identify clear, concise writing by looking at examples of sentences which are confusing and misleading. One key area of difficulty for students, when writing “academic discourse,” is the use of active and passive voice in sentence construction. Essentially, these aspects of sentence composition affect the ordering of the relationship between the subject, object and verb elements. Passive constructions can often be spotted by noticing the use of the verb “to be” with the past participle of a transitive verb, as well as the use of multiple prepositions. Here is an example:

“The necessary method of identifying the cause for the social groupings to operate was determined.”

Prepositions are shown in italics, and the sentence concludes with a typical past participle construction; “was determined.” The above sentence could be written using a more active voice, which places the past participle at the beginning of the sentence and reduces the number of prepositions:

“We analysed the cause of the social groupings with an appropriate method.”

The above example may be extreme, but it highlights some basic grammatical principles which, if followed, help to present academic research clearly and coherently. For many students, writing under other pressures, spending time converting all passive constructions into active phrases will be excruciating and
needless. In fact, there is often a tendency to use passive constructions when the writer is not quite sure of how to express a particular idea or concept, or has only partially conceptualized the principle of research to be discussed. (Passive constructions can also be used inappropriately as filler to make up word count.)

Take time to reflect on your key themes and create a flowchart or other schematic aid to guide you through the overall plan of your work (as discussed earlier). This will help concentrate your writing, keep you on track, and minimize the risk of “over-writing” by compiling loose arguments with too many passive constructions.

There is an important caveat here. Passive constructions are abundant in academic writing, and an essay full of active sentences will not translate into a recognizable academic essay. As in most things, a considered balance to your writing, and a reflective approach, will aid in communicating your results most effectively.

**Some other grammatical issues**

This section is a useful overview of grammatical usage and style. It is important to stress that these are not ‘rules’, nor a prescriptive type of grammar that all academics adhere to, but they are a set of points with which you should be aware of and with which will improve academic discourse:

- *Leave out needless words.* Try to avoid phrases such as “It can be seen at this point of the enquiry that...” Again, you will find examples of these phrases in journals and textbooks; however, for the sake of clarity in your own work, it is better to keep a limit on them.

- *Use specific terms rather than abstractions.* Show your mastery of technical concepts relevant to your discipline, but try not to over-complicate the explanations of these terms in relation to your research.

- *Limit the use of adverbs and adjectives.* Control the use of those adjectives which create a sense of vagueness when describing your research findings. Although questions of objectivity/subjectivity are crucial to social science research, evaluation via academic discourse is
carried out through the exposition of the research, rather than through qualifying statements.²

- **Choose words with precision.** This sounds obvious, but if you are not clear about the choice of words then your reader may get the impression that you have not thought enough about the topic under discussion.

- **Avoid groups of adjectival nouns.** As with the use of passive constructions, you will see examples of this in academic discourse; however, with a little reworking you can eliminate some of the more extreme forms. For example, rather than writing “media distribution policy examination group,” you could write “group to examine media distribution policy.” The first example might legitimately be a group slogan; however, when used in written form, it is awkward and may lose the reader’s interest.

- **Misplaced modifiers.** These occur in many forms of writing, and derive from our tendency to use such forms in speech, where the meaning is easier to understand through other contexts. Words like only, just, nearly, are often placed into sentences at points that create ambiguity. In academic discourse, their presence creates vagueness and potential confusion. For example, “We only read the two transcriptions from the police files’ could be written as ‘We read only the two transcriptions from the police files.” This seems like a minor change, but it makes an important difference in emphasis.

- **Dangling modifiers.** This happens when the modifying phrase improperly modifies part of the sentence. This often happens with gerund and participial phrases. For example, “Reading the reports on global poverty, the conclusions were convincing.” Taken literally, if the sentence’s subject is “conclusions,” the modifying phrase does not have a target! You will probably understand the meaning of this sentence; however, it is not exactly clear about the relationship between the two parts, the participial phrase (which starts the sentence) and the modifying phrase. They could be describing different actions. An alternative might be “Reading the reports on global poverty, we found the conclusions convincing.” This makes explicit the relationship between each part of the sentence because the “we” subject identifies who is reading the reports.

² For a review of parts of speech, see Chapter 1 of *Fundamental English*. See (https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/academic-divisions/humanities/writing-program/)
• *Squinting modifiers.* This is due to the adverb’s tendency to roam across the sentence. Again, its presence may not radically alter the sentence, although it does create more ambiguity by looking towards different parts of the sentence. For example, “The theme was discovered often during the initial literature search.” Here, *often* seems to look both ways and creates an uncertain sense of movement across the sentence. A simple way to make *often* modify *discovered* (the intention of the phrase) would be to write “The theme was often discovered during the initial literature search.”

There are many more points of grammar which identify academic discourse. Remember, if the clarity of your exposition is blunted, then your project will not achieve its full potential in communicating your research. Therefore, be aware of the norms of academic discourse, incorporate them where you can, and be vigilant when writing your essay.

Try to follow the process of writing in stages, and work through your essay at each of these stages by reiterating your argument, presenting your research, and clarifying your interpretations of this research. It was stated at the beginning of this section, the “rules” of academic discourse are not prescriptions made to curtail your creativity, but rather a set of conventions that situate you as a student within an academic community. Be confident about your own research, write with care, and enjoy this opportunity to present your findings. Good writing cannot make up for inadequate research, but it is important get the most value out of the process of discovery.

**Writing Across Disciplines on Campus**

Academic writing conventions vary substantially according to discipline—that is, whether one is working in the humanities, the social or natural sciences, or business.

**Key Concepts**

Writing is often classified into *genres*: Categories or types of writing, including analytical, creative, explanatory, interpretive, and persuasive (among many others).

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3 For more on modifiers, see Chapter 8 of *Fundamental English.* See (https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/academic-divisions/humanities/writing-program/)
Academic writing in a college setting can generally be divided into three main genres: writing in the humanities, writing in the sciences, and writing in business. Each genre has its own specific requirements in terms of style, content, and format.

**Writing in the Humanities**

Academic writing in the humanities explores questions that deal with human values. The ultimate goal in writing in the humanities is to explain or understand the human experience—to use writing as a tool to reflect upon life. The "humanities," as a discipline, includes not only literature, but also philosophy, ethics, performing arts, fine arts, and aspects of anthropology, cultural studies, foreign languages, and linguistics. In a humanities class, you might be asked to analyze a poem, a performance or play, a painting, a film, or even a musical work. Writing in the humanities usually seeks to analyze, interpret, argue, and explain thoughts, reactions, ideas, and emotions.

**Advice from Professors Teaching in the Humanities Division at Rose State College**

**English**

Students in English classes will often be asked to write essays of varying lengths that focus on using critical thinking to develop original ideas, which they will then argue using traditional essay conventions. Formatting and documentation is usually done in MLA style. Some specialized classes will involve creative writing in the form of short fiction, drama, and poetry.

**Mass Communication**

Students in the MCOM program must complete weekly writing assignments, with Introduction to Mass Media students using APA Style and any other MCOM class using Associated Press Style (AP). Assignments in the introductory course are about two pages and must contain proper citations of reliable sources/scholarly articles. Students in all other MCOM writing courses write articles in newspaper format (AP Style, single-spaced, etc.).

**Modern Languages**

Students in language classes will write about everyday topics. Beginning students will use models to create their writing. Capstone language students write a comparison/contrast essay based on a cultural topic. MLA style is used in language classes.

**Philosophy**

Some tips for writing philosophy papers:

1. Avoid stylistic synonyms.
Often people use synonyms to avoid repetition or “dryness.” Rather than use the term “mind,” a writer might be tempted to use “heart,” “self,” “soul,” etc. throughout the work. This is not a virtue in philosophical writing. If you use a term in any specialized way, you should stick with that term throughout so that it is clear each time that you mean to refer to precisely the same idea or concept.

(2) Define terms.
For any word you use in a specialized way, take the time to formulate a definition and present that definition before proceeding to use the word in your argument. Be sure to stick to that meaning of the term throughout your work.

(3) Logos is best.
Philosophy focuses heavily on reasons, evidence, and measurable argumentation. Persuasive techniques that rely on tone or emotional appeals are not a virtue of philosophical writing and should largely be avoided.

(4) Use sign-posting.
Philosophical argumentation can be complicated. It is a good idea to give the reader reminders (“sign posts”) about where you are in the “roadmap” of your argument. “Next, I will consider two objections to this argument.” “The second reason the objection fails is...”

(5) First person is welcomed.
Whereas other fields consider use of first-person expressions informal or unwelcome, in philosophy many uses of the first person can be a virtue of a strong philosophy paper. This is especially true when stating your thesis. Many philosophy papers published in peer-reviewed academic journals include somewhere in the first paragraph of the paper a sentence like “In this paper I will argue that...”.

**Theatre**
Students in Theatre are asked to write play reviews which ask the student to use analysis in an objective manner to report the relative success or failure of a given production. There are generally two such papers due for each theatre class focusing on the course’s goals and objectives.
Writing in the Sciences

Science writing includes writing in two main categories—natural sciences and social sciences. In each genre, the writing focuses on informing readers of new discoveries and assisting them in discovering truth through facts and firm, detailed data.

Research-based writing in the sciences typically uses a formal tone, employs a third-person voice, and avoids personal references and needless adjectives. Depending on the assignment, you might also write an analytical, explanatory, or persuasive paper in any of these fields for a popular or professional audience. Writing in the sciences focuses on informing the reader of new discoveries and assisting readers in discovering truth through facts and solid data provided in detail.

Advice from Professors Teaching in the Engineering and Sciences Division at Rose State College

Natural Sciences

Natural sciences include physical sciences such as biology, chemistry, engineering, geology, and physics. This type of writing is generally concise and includes genres such as lab reports and reviews of scientific literature.

Biology and Microbiology

Students will write research papers using APA formatting and documentation, and they should know how to cite and when to cite. In answering short questions, students need to write complete sentences. The ability to find quality resources is important: students should be able to sort through (and not use) bad/non-educational websites and instead know how to find (and use) primary literature journals. Copying verbatim is cheating. Use of tools such as “Grammarly” to check grammar and punctuation, and use of tools for citing references, such as the references tool in Microsoft Word, is recommended.

Chemistry

Students will use Technical Writing Literature citation and American Chemical Society (ACS) citations and must write in a precise and concise manner. I often tell students...“It is not how much you say, it is what you say.” They must write in 3rd person and use past tense without sentences becoming bullet statements. Also, they should not fear putting their own words and thoughts on paper.
Environmental Science, Meteorology, and Earth Science
Students must know how to research for peer reviewed articles. They will write lab reports using technical writing and annotations in APA format.

Mathematics
Applied mathematicians usually write lab reports, proposals, technical documents, etc. For their career they will need a technical writing course. Some students have projects in which they write about their experiences with math, do final papers and presentations, and write summary papers. When research and documentation are required, either MLA or APA is usually accepted. Students must also be able to write clear, concise, and informative professional emails.

Physics and Engineering
Physics and Engineering students need to know how to write technical reports, including how a report is formatted and the level of detail that should be contained in the report. The main emphasis is not to use simple tense and simple present tense; instead they use past tense in the form of, for example, “The mass of ... was measured using digital scale.” APA formatting is used. Students are encouraged to write in a precise and concise manner. I often tell students, “It is not how much you say but what you say.” They must write in 3rd person point of view and use past tense without sentences becoming bullet statements. Also, they should not fear putting their own words and thoughts on paper.

Advice from Professors Teaching in the Social Sciences Division at Rose State College

Social Sciences
The social sciences focus on human behavior and societies. They involve documenting actual events as they happen. Categories of social science include psychology, anthropology, political science, sociology, education, and history.

Criminal Justice
Students may be asked to use either MLA or APA style documentation. Assignments will reinforce writing principles already in place.

Family Services and Child Development
Use APA style documentation and pay close attention to in-text citations, syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling.
Health and Sports Sciences
Students will write reflection papers, journals, lab reports, essay-journal reviews and other assignments using APA format. These writings should accurately use in-text citations, syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

History
Use Chicago Manual of style/Turabian in footnotes or end notes. First names should not be used when writing about people in history, and writing should stay in past tense. If a date is involved, it should be placed at the beginning of a sentence. Conditional tense for verbs (might have--would have) is passive voice and should not be used. Instead, use action verbs, which are active voice and much more direct, bold, and concise. These will help you express exactly what you mean more clearly. Check definitions for your word choices to make sure they actually mean what you think they mean. Do not repeat what you read or retell the story--synthesize your collected information, using primary sources when available, and be thoughtful and analytical while demonstrating your knowledge and understanding of your chosen topic. Writers should also refrain from the first and second person narrative.

Native American Studies
Avoid the "I feel," "I believe," or, rather, just avoid the informal "I" "we" "you" generally. No contractions should be used, and writers should avoid absolute/broad generalization words like "Always" and "Never"; redundant and overused clutch words or phrases such as...."It is obvious," "Clearly," or "Anyone can see"; redundant pairs like "end result," "past history,"; avoid the word "It," and say what you mean with a noun; avoid sweeping adjectives such as "Extraordinary," "Amazing," "Outstanding," etc.; No casual or emotional language.

Psychology
Students should use formal language, understand the role of opinion in science writing, correctly use APA documentation (including in-text citations) and know when to cite and how to paraphrase. Students should quote minimally, and use precise, technical language instead of broad, generic terms. They should also understand how to research and retrieve journal articles.

Political Science
Students may be asked to use MLA, AP, or APSA styles of documentation, emphasizing use of news articles, journal articles, texts, and period original documents. They should know how to properly cite sources, use proper grammar and punctuation, have strong reading comprehension, and be able to
effectively communicate ideas in writing using critical thinking and analytical skills.

**Sociology**
Students may be required to write using APA, MLA, or ASA formats using conventions of professional writing and formal communication.

**Writing in the Health Sciences**

The Health Sciences Division is a separate area of academic study at Rose State that focuses on the medical professions such as nursing, respiratory therapy, dental hygiene, phlebotomy and many more. Writing for these areas uses many of the same conventions as the natural sciences.

**Advice from Professors Teaching in the Health Sciences Division at Rose State College**

**Dental Hygiene**
APA style is used to write article reviews, reflections from lab, and reports on topics and research of those topics. Examples include a cultural diversity report and clinical type assignments.

**Health and Sciences—Immunology, Immunohematology, Pathogenic Microbiology**
Students will write research papers, assignments, and case studies. Emphasis is placed on applying critical thinking to writing composition.

**Medical Terminology, Microbiology, Human Anatomy, and Medical Lab Technology**
Microbiology uses whatever format a journal requires, often American Society for Microbiology style (ASM). Students will use technical writing skills (especially 3rd person), including in-text citations and more formal tone. They must use planning and proofreading or outlining. They write fact sheets and help with preparing posters by summarizing into bullet points and using visual materials to enhance content—without plagiarizing! Complete sentences are expected in response to questions, along with effective grammar and spelling.

**Nursing**
Writing in the nursing profession uses APA format, and includes reference lists and citing. Students must understand copyright in order to avoid plagiarism and
be able to write in their own words using effective grammar, paragraphing, spelling, and sentence structure (no run-on sentences or fragments). They must understand the difference between a professional paper and an essay, and be able to stay on task following criteria or a rubric. Writing tasks in classes are diverse, including the following: computer charting, narrative charting, professional reports, self-reflections, resumes, letters of application to employers, 2-3 page papers, online discussion responses to assignments, summarizing professional documents, journals, short professional behavior papers using professional journals, case studies and care plans, documented nursing narratives, nursing notes, professional reports on meetings attended, clinical directions, and concise charting.

Radiology
Writing is done in American Medical Association format (AMA). Technical writing skills, including the ability to read, accurately paraphrase, and synthesize scientific research without plagiarizing is important.

Respiratory Therapy
Students will need to be able to document narrative patient reports and write summaries of research articles.

Writing in Business
Business writing often means explaining a situation, event, or change in order to compel the reader toward a very specific action. Format is key to a well-written business document because its structure needs to allow the reader to quickly find particular sections and a contact person who can answer further questions. Writing in business can include memos, cover letters, resumes, project reports, proposals, thank-you letters, emails, and business plans. While adherence to conventional grammar, spelling, and punctuation is important in every discipline, business writing places the greatest emphasis on mechanics. Writing in business often means explaining a situation, event, or change to compel the reader toward a very specific action.
Advice from Professors Teaching in the Business & Information Technology Division at Rose State College

Business Administration, Management, Human Resources, Economics, Finance, and Accounting
Most classes will use APA documentation. Among other things, students will write article reviews and must be able to summarize well. Plagiarism, whether intentional or not, must not occur.

Computer Information Technology and Cyber Security
Students may use MLA or APA documentation. An in-depth understanding of plagiarism and how to avoid it is important. Students will write reports and article reviews.

Emergency Management
Students should be prepared to write research projects, discussion postings, and critical thinking statements.

Paralegal Studies
Students may use the Association of Legal Writing Directors Style Manual. They will write short and long documents, all of which must be polished and have excellent spelling and grammar.

Exercise
In small groups discuss an upcoming writing assignment from another class. If you have the assignment sheet, see in what ways that assignment aligns with the characteristics of that discipline as described above.

Key Takeaways
- Academic discourse follows a series of complex but knowable conventions
- Consider content, audience, and purpose carefully when choosing an organizational pattern for paragraphs
- Paragraphs should be unified and well-developed regardless of their organizational pattern.
• A strong knowledge of parts of speech helps to develop an academic tone and style
• Every discipline and fields within disciplines have unique writing conventions, although many do share some universal characteristics

Works Cited and Consulted


CITATIONS AND ATTRIBUTIONS
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Chapter 4: Planning and Drafting

When we undertake a writing project, we have to start somewhere. Previous chapters have discussed critical reading and academic writing as a genre. This chapter delves into the practical concerns of a project. An effective approach is to break a project up into multiple steps, typically called the writing process. This chapter offers tips to help refine all of the activities required to bring a project to completion rather than fixating on the final draft due weeks or months from now (hopefully not days).

More than the particular methods we use, it is curiosity that ultimately drives a project. If given options for a project, choose something that interests you. Projects are much more manageable if we are passionate about the material. Also, go into a project with an open mind and willingness to continually reflect and revise what you have produced at any stage of the process.

Formulating a Thesis

A thesis is the main assertion a writer wants the reader to accept or understand. Most writing assignments in college composition, along with many writing assignments in other courses, are thesis-driven arguments, meaning that the thrust of the discussion within the essay and the included evidence explores a central claim (the thesis). A strong thesis reveals your topic and approach. Paying

Essay One: Taking a Position

The position essay assignment gives the writer the opportunity to learn about a particular topic of relevance, to analyze the issue, and to communicate the analysis in writing. The writer should also be prepared to invest a significant effort using the entire writing process—from discovery to editing. The final paper must be at least 750-1250 words or 3-5 content pages in length, incorporate support from among three and five outside sources (one or two of which may come from our textbook readings) and demonstrate correct use of MLA format and documentation.

Focus

Consider the readings you have examined concerning the issue of culture and identity, the student analyses of those readings that have been posted on our D2L site, and the discussions we have had about the issue of culture and identity in class. Then, assert an original position of your own.

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1 For more on formulating a thesis, consult the Rose State Writing Lab web page: https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/writing-lab/
careful attention to wording in the assignment prompt can help guide you towards a thesis. Consult the prompt above:

There are a number of clues in this prompt that focus your preparation for this essay. First, the prompt indicates that the approach is analysis. Analysis is a detailed examination of elements and structure. This differs from summary where you briefly cover the main points of a reading. In this project, you extrapolate meaning from a variety of sources and communicate your perspective through writing. Second, the prompt directs you to analyze an issue related to culture and identity based on assigned readings. A limited scope of readings brings you closer to a thesis statement. Last, the prompt directs you to participate in a structured writing process.

In a composition classroom, these benchmarks are often submitted and/or graded but the intention is to provide you with a model for writing you can bring with you to other courses and projects.

**Exercise: Drafting an arguable thesis**

A good thesis is focused on an object of study rather than a claim about the world or society at large and should introduce key words that guide analysis. Individually or in small groups, formulate a focused, arguable thesis based on one of the following general topics:

1. Wind energy
2. Tax reform
3. Immigration
4. College tuition

Example: Although many assume that free college tuition would raise taxes, close examination of the issue reveals that free tuition to two-year colleges could be provided to eligible students while maintaining current levels of taxation.

**Testing your thesis**

You can test your thesis statement’s arguability by asking the following questions:

- **Does my thesis only or mostly summarize my source?**
  
  If so, try some of the exercises above to articulate your paper's conceptual problem or question.
• Is my thesis arguable --can it be supported by evidence in my source(s), and is it surprising and contentious?
  If not, return to your sources and practice the exercises above.

• Is my thesis about my primary source or case study, or is it about the world?
  If it’s about the world, revise it so that it focuses on your primary source or case study. Remember you need solid evidence to support your thesis. (Scott)

Pre-writing methods

The term “pre-writing” conjures up a lot of strange activities and practices. You’ve probably tried many different prewriting strategies in the past, and may have a good idea of what works for you and what doesn’t. Keep in mind, that the kind of writing project you’re working on can impact how effective a particular technique is to use in a given situation. Prewriting has many benefits. You can use prewriting to develop a preliminary thesis and refine it. Prewriting can generate content that you can edit and use later. It can also help to structure ideas. The method of prewriting you use should be aligned with your purpose.

Freewriting

Setting a goal for a short amount of time (5 minutes or 10 minutes are good options); just write anything that comes to mind related to your topic. The goal

Freewriting sample

I grew up eating a lot of typical Midwestern food (some might call it bland): meatloaf, steak, potatoes, vegetables from a can. My father was of Italian descent from New York so there were also a lot of Italian dishes, usually on the weekends. I grew up in Ohio and don’t recall going out to a lot of “exotic” restaurants. I never had Chinese food until college and other than Taco Bell I don’t remember a lot of Mexican food as a kid. It was not until we moved to Texas that I tried Mexican food/Tex Mex. I liked it but I cannot say at this stage in my life that I made a lot of connections between food and identity. It was not until I started taking Spanish in middle schools that I started to make those connections. There were pictures of different foods and drinks in the textbook for vocabulary practice. Food seemed to represent a different way of life in some ways.

2 For more on prewriting methods, consult the Rose State Writing Lab’s web page: https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/writing-lab/
is to not worry about what comes out of your pen, if handwriting, or keyboard, if typing. Instead, just free your mind to associate as it wishes. It’s amazingly productive for rich ideas, and it’s nice not to have to worry about spelling and grammar.

In the example above, the writer is beginning to discuss food and identity, but this passage is largely built around recollections of past experiences with food. A writer can draw from this content in an essay but perhaps not directly. Free writing is useful for generating ideas. We see a few key moments: a perception that food early in life lacked variety, some key moments where he was exposed to new foods, and an educational experience where a personal connection between food and identity was first established.

**List-making**

If you’re a list-maker by nature, there’s no reason not to harness that for academic writing purposes. Jot notes about major ideas related to the subject you’re working with. This also works well with a time limit (e.g. 10 minutes). After you’ve had time to reflect on your list, you can rearrange it in hierarchical order, and create a basic outline quite simply.

**List sample**

1. Typical Midwestern food
2. Food and identity
3. Weird foods
4. First experiences with Mexican food
5. Academic understanding of food
6. Cultural appropriation
**Clustering**

Also known as “mapping,” this is a more visual form of brainstorming. It asks you to come up with topic ideas, and draw lines to connect ideas and figure out sub-categories and related ideas. You can end up with a quite extensive “bubble cloud” as a result. This also works well within a time limit, like 10 minutes.

![Clustering Sample](image)

**Questioning**

The way to find answers is to ask questions—seems simple enough. This applies to early-stage writing processes, just like everything else. When you have a topic in mind, asking and answering questions about it is a good way to figure out directions your writing might take.

**Outlines**

For an essay question on a test or a brief oral presentation in class, all you may need to prepare is a short, informal outline in which you jot down key ideas in the order you will present them. This kind of outline reminds you to stay focused in a stressful situation and to include all the good ideas that help you explain or prove your point.
For a longer assignment, like an essay or a research paper, many college instructors require students to submit a formal outline before writing a major paper as a way to be sure you are on the right track and are working in an organized manner. A formal outline is a detailed guide that shows how all your supporting ideas relate to each other. It helps you distinguish between ideas that are of equal importance and ones that are of lesser importance. You build your paper based on the framework created by the outline.

Formal outlines require the following format:

- Place your introduction and thesis statement at the beginning, under Roman Numeral I.
- Use Roman numerals (II, III, IV, V, etc.) to identify main points that develop the thesis statement.
- Use capital letters (A, B, C, D, etc.) to divide your main points into parts.
- Use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.) if you need to subdivide any As, Bs, or Cs into smaller parts.
- End with the final Roman numeral expressing your idea for your conclusion.

Sample outline

Here is what the skeleton of a traditional formal outline looks like for a 3-5 page analysis essay on culture and identity (see prompt above). The indentation helps clarify how the ideas are related.

I. Thesis: The foods we eat as children shape our identity, and food is an important point of access to learn about other cultures.

II. Discussion of my background with food.
   a. Italian American dishes
   b. Typical Midwestern “American food”

III. These foods shaped my identity in ways I wasn’t aware of
   a. My perception of “weird” foods or habits
      i. The reaction when my sister became a vegetarian
   b. Economic factors influence our views of food
      i. Luxury foods
      ii. “exotic foods”

IV. My time in college in Chicago changed my views on food and culture
   a. Exposure to many new types of food
      i. Indian
      ii. Korean/Chinese
      iii. Ethiopian
   b. Discuss connections between food and culture
Thinking About Your Audience

When you’re in the process of writing a paper, it’s easy to forget that you are actually writing TO someone. Whether you’ve thought about it consciously or not, you always write to an audience: sometimes your audience is a very generalized group of readers, sometimes you know the individuals who compose the audience, and sometimes you write for yourself. Keeping your audience in mind while you write can help you make good decisions about what material to include, how to organize your ideas, and how best to support your argument.

To illustrate the impact of audience, imagine you’re writing a letter to your grandmother to tell her about your first month of college. What details and stories might you include? What might you leave out? Now imagine that you’re writing on the same topic but your audience is your best friend. Unless you have an extremely cool grandma to whom you’re very close, it’s likely that your two letters would look quite different in terms of content, structure, and even tone.

Isn’t my instructor my audience?

Yes, your instructor is probably the actual audience for your paper. Your instructors read and grade your essays, and you want to keep their needs and perspectives in mind when you write. However, when you write an essay with only your instructor in mind, you might not say as much as you should, or say it as clearly as you should, because you assume that the person grading it knows more than you do and will fill in the gaps. This leaves it up to the instructor to decide what you are really saying, and she might decide differently than you expect. For example, she might decide that those gaps show that you don’t know and understand the material. Remember that time when you said to yourself, “I
don’t have to explain communism; my instructor knows more about that than I do” and got back a paper that said something like “Shows no understanding of communism”? That’s an example of what can go awry when you think of your instructor as your only audience.

Thinking about your audience differently can improve your writing, especially in terms of how clearly you express your argument. The clearer your points are, the more likely you are to have a strong essay. Your instructor will say, “He really understands communism—he’s able to explain it simply and clearly!” By treating your instructor as an intelligent but uninformed audience, you end up addressing her more effectively.

**How do I identify my audience and what they want from me?**

Before you even begin the process of writing, take some time to consider who your audience is and what they want from you. Use the following questions to help you identify your audience and what you can do to address their wants and needs.

- Who is your audience?
- Might you have more than one audience? If so, how many audiences do you have? List them.
- Does your assignment itself give any clues about your audience?
- What does your audience need? What do they want? What do they value?
- What is most important to them?
- What are they least likely to care about?
- What kind of organization would best help your audience understand and appreciate your project? What do you have to say (or what are you doing in your research) that might surprise your audience?
- What do you want your audience to think, learn, or assume about you?
- What impression do you want your writing or your research to convey?
- How much should I explain?

This is the hard part. As we said earlier, you want to show your instructor that
you know the material. However, different assignments call for varying degrees of information. Different fields also have different expectations. (*For more about what each field tends to expect from an essay, see the Writing Center handouts on writing in specific fields of study.)*

The best place to start figuring out how much you should say about each part of your paper is in a careful reading of the assignment. We give you some tips for reading assignments and figuring them out in our handout on how to read an assignment. The assignment may specify an audience for your paper; sometimes, the instructor will ask you to imagine that you are writing to your congressperson, for a professional journal, to a group of specialists in a particular field, or for a group of your peers. If the assignment doesn’t specify an audience, you may find it most useful to imagine your classmates reading the paper, rather than your instructor.

Now, knowing your imaginary audience, what other clues can you get from the assignment? If the assignment asks you to summarize something that you have read, then your reader wants you to include more examples from the text than if the assignment asks you to interpret the passage. Most assignments in college focus on argument rather than the repetition of learned information, so your reader probably doesn’t want a lengthy, detailed, point-by-point summary of your reading (book reports in some classes and argument reconstructions in philosophy classes are big exceptions to this rule). If your assignment asks you to interpret or analyze the text (or an event or idea), then you want to make sure that your explanation of the material is focused and not so detailed that you end up spending more time on examples than on your analysis. (*If you are not sure about the difference between explaining something and analyzing it, see our handouts on reading the assignment and analyzing it.*)

Once you have a draft, try your level of explanation out on a friend, a classmate, or a Writing Center tutor. Get the person to read your rough draft, and then ask her to talk to you about what she did and didn’t understand. (Now is not the time to talk about proofreading stuff, so make sure she ignores those issues for the time being). You will likely get one of the following responses or a combination of them:

If your listener/reader has tons of questions about what you are saying, then you probably need to explain more. Let’s say you are writing a paper on piranhas, and your reader says, “What’s a piranha? Why do I need to know about them? How would I identify one?” Those are vital questions that you clearly need to answer in your paper. You need more detail and elaboration.

If your reader seems confused, you probably need to explain more clearly.
Subsequently, if he says, “Are there piranhas in the lakes around here?” you may not need to give more examples, but rather focus on making sure your examples and points are clear.

If your reader looks bored and can repeat back to you more details than she needs to know to get your point, you probably explained too much. Excessive detail can also be confusing because it can bog the reader down and keep her from focusing on your main points. You want your reader to say, “So it seems like your paper is saying that piranhas are misunderstood creatures that are essential to South American ecosystems,” not, “Uh… piranhas are important?” or, “Well, I know you said piranhas don’t usually attack people, and they’re usually around 10 inches long, and some people keep them in aquariums as pets, and dolphins are one of their predators, and…a bunch of other stuff, I guess?”

Sometimes, it’s not the amount of explanation that matters, but the word choice and tone you adopt. Your word choice and tone need to match your audience’s expectations. For example, imagine you are researching piranhas; you find an article in National Geographic and another one in an academic journal for scientists. How would you expect the two articles to sound? National Geographic is written for a popular audience; you might expect it to have sentences like “The piranha generally lives in shallow rivers and streams in South America.” The scientific journal, on the other hand, might use much more technical language because it’s written for an audience of specialists. A sentence like “Serrasalmus piraya lives in fresh and brackish intercoastal and proto-arboreal sub-tropical regions between the 45th and 38th parallels” might not be out of place in the journal.

Generally, you want your reader to know enough material to understand the points you are making. It’s like the old forest/trees metaphor. If you give the reader nothing but trees, she won’t see the forest (your thesis, the reason for your paper). If you give her a big forest and no trees, she won’t know how you got to the forest (she might say, “Your point is fine, but you haven’t proven it to me”). You want the reader to say, “Nice forest, and those trees really help me to see it.” (*Our handout on paragraph development can help you find a good balance of examples and explanation.*)
Reading your own drafts

Writers tend to read over their own papers pretty quickly, with the knowledge of what they are trying to argue already in their minds. Reading in this way can cause you to skip over gaps in your written argument because the gap-filler is in your head. A problem occurs when your reader falls into these gaps. Your reader wants you to make the necessary connections from one thought or sentence to the next. When you don’t, the reader can become confused or frustrated. Think about a time when you read something and you struggle to find the most important points or what the writer is trying to say.

Putting yourself in the reader’s position

Instead of reading your draft as if you wrote it and know what you meant, try reading it as if you have no previous knowledge of the material. Have you explained enough? Are the connections clear? This can be hard to do at first. Consider using one of the following strategies:

- Take a break from your work—go work out, take a nap, take a day off. This is why the Writing Center and your instructors encourage you to start writing more than a day before the paper is due. If you write the paper the night before it’s due, you make it almost impossible to read the paper with a fresh eye.
• Try outlining after writing—after you have a draft, look at each paragraph separately. Write down the main point for each paragraph on a separate sheet of paper, in the order you have put them. Then look at your “outline”—does it reflect what you meant to say, in a logical order? Are some paragraphs hard to reduce to one point? Why? This technique will help you find places where you may have confused your reader by straying from your original plan for the paper.

• Read the paper aloud—we do this all the time at the Writing Lab, and once you get used to it, you’ll see that it helps you slow down and really consider how your reader experiences your text. It will also help you catch a lot of sentence-level errors, such as misspellings and missing words, which can make it difficult for your reader to focus on your argument.

These techniques can help you read your paper in the same way your reader will and make revisions that help your reader understand your argument. Then, when your instructor finally reads your finished draft, he or she won’t have to fill in any gaps. The more work you do, the less work your audience will have to do—and the more likely it is that your instructor will follow and understand your argument.

Key Takeaways
• A thesis moves beyond summary to reveal what you want an audience to learn or understand about an issue
• A strong thesis can draw from texts and other types of evidence
• There are many forms of prewriting that serve different purposes for a writer
• The knowledge and beliefs of your likely audience shapes your presentation of material
• Building time into your writing process for multiple drafts can help improve your performance

Works Cited and Consulted

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Prewriting Strategies

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Chapter 5: Revision Strategies

Every time you revise your work substantially, you will be conducting three distinct functions in the following order: reviewing for purpose, editing and proofreading, and making a final overview. Revision is one of the most neglected aspects of the writing process. Project fatigue and pushing assignments to the deadline can shrink the time you spend on editing and proofreading as distinct steps. However, if you can build your skills in these areas, it can pay off for you as a writer. Prose written with clarity and confidence and free of surface level errors will stand out in an academic or professional setting.

Reviewing for Purpose

Although you will naturally be reviewing for purpose throughout the entire writing process, you should read through your first complete draft once you have finished it and carefully reconsider all aspects of your essay. As you review for purpose, keep in mind that your paper must be clear to others, not just to you. Try to read through your paper from the point of view of a member of your targeted audience who is reading your paper for the first time. Make sure you have neither failed to clarify the points your audience will need to have clarified nor over-clarified the points your audience will already completely understand.

Revisiting Your Statement of Purpose

Self-questioning is a useful tool when you are in the reviewing process. In anticipation of attaching a writer’s memo to your draft as you send it out for peer or instructor review, reexamine the six elements of the triangle that made up your original statement of purpose (voice, audience, message, tone, attitude, and reception):

- **Voice**: Does it sound like a real human being wrote this draft? Does my introduction project a clear sense of who I am? Honestly, would someone other than my paid instructor or assigned peer(s) read beyond the first paragraph of this essay?
Audience: Does my writing draw in a specific set of readers with a catchy hook? Do I address the same audience throughout the essay? If I don’t, am I being intentional about shifting from one audience to another?

Message: Are my main points strong and clear? Do I have ample support for each of them? Do my supporting details clearly support my main points?

Tone: Am I using the proper tone given my audience? Is my language too casual or not professional enough? Or is it needlessly formal and stiff sounding? Does my tone stay consistent throughout the draft?

Attitude: Will my organization make sense to another reader? Does my stance toward the topic stay consistent throughout the draft? If it doesn’t, do I explain the cause of the transformation in my attitude?

Reception: Is my goal or intent for writing clear? How is this essay likely to be received? What kind of motivation, ideas, or emotions will this draft draw out of my readers? What will my readers do, think, or feel immediately after finishing this essay?

Exercise

Individually or in groups, evaluate one of the assigned readings from your course according to the model above. Write one or two sentences to describe the voice, audience, message, tone, attitude, and reception of the work. In what ways does this line of questioning deepen our understanding of the text?

Handling Peer and Instructor Reviews

In many situations, you will be required to have at least one of your peers review your essay (and you will, in turn, review at least one peer’s essay). Even if you’re not required to exchange drafts with a peer, it’s essential at this point to have another pair of eyes view your paper, so find a classmate or friend and ask them to look over your draft. In other cases, your instructor may be intervening at this point with ungraded but evaluative commentary on your draft. Whatever the system, before you trade your draft for review, use your answers to the questions in “Reviewing for Purpose” to tweak your original statement of purpose, giving a clear statement of your desired voice, audience, message, tone, attitude, and reception.
Also, consider preparing a descriptive outline showing how the essay actually turned out and comparing that with your original plan, or consider writing a brief narrative describing how the essay developed from idea to execution. Finally, include any other questions or concerns you have about your draft so that your peer reader(s) or instructor can give you useful, tailored feedback. These reflective statements and documents could be attached with your draft as part of a writer’s memo. Remember, the more guidance you give your readers, regardless of whether they are your peers or your instructor, the more they will be able to help you.

When you receive suggestions for content changes from your instructors, try to put aside any tendencies to react defensively, so that you can consider their ideas for revisions with an open mind. If you are accustomed only to getting feedback from instructors that is accompanied by a grade, you may need to get used to the difference between evaluation and judgment. In college settings, instructors often prefer to intervene most extensively after you have completed a first draft, with evaluative commentary that tends to be suggestive, forward-looking, and free of a final quantitative judgment (like a grade). If you read your instructors’ feedback in those circumstances as final, you can miss the point of the exercise. You’re supposed to do something with this sort of commentary, not just read it as the justification for a (nonexistent) grade.

Sometimes, peers think they’re supposed to “sound like an English teacher,” so they fall into the trap of “correcting” your draft, but in most cases, the prompts used in college-level peer reviewing discourage that sort of thing. In many situations, your peers will give you ideas that will add value to your paper, and you will want to include them. In other situations, your peers’ ideas will not really work into the plan you have for your paper. It is not unusual for peers to offer ideas that you may not want to implement. Remember, your peers’ ideas are only suggestions, and it is your essay, and you are the person who will make the final decisions. If your peers happen to be a part of the audience to which you are writing, they can sometimes give you invaluable ideas. If they’re not, take the initiative to find outside readers who might actually be a part of your audience.

When you are reviewing a peer’s essay, keep in mind that the author likely knows more about the topic than you do, so don’t question content unless you are certain of your facts. Also, do not suggest changes just because you would do it differently or because you want to give the impression that you are offering ideas. Only suggest changes that you seriously think would make the essay stronger.
Editing and Proofreading

When you have made some revisions to your draft based on feedback and your recalibration of your purpose for writing, you may now feel your essay is nearly complete. However, you should plan to read through the entire final draft at least one additional time. During this stage of editing and proofreading your entire essay, you should be looking for general consistency and clarity. Also, pay particular attention to parts of the paper you have moved around or changed in other ways to make sure that your new versions still work smoothly.¹

Although you might think editing and proofreading isn’t necessary since you were fairly careful when you were writing, the truth is that even the very brightest people and best writers make mistakes when they write. One of the main reasons that you are likely to make mistakes is that your mind and fingers are not always moving along at the same speed nor are they necessarily in sync, so what ends up on the page isn’t always exactly what you intended. A second reason is that, as you make changes and adjustments, you might not totally match up the original parts and revised parts. Finally, a third key reason for proofreading is because you likely have errors you typically make and proofreading gives you a chance to correct those errors.

¹ For more on editing and proofreading, see the Rose State College Writing Lab website at https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/writing-lab/ or visit them in room 137 of the Humanities Building.

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Exercises

1. Find multiple drafts of an essay you have recently completed. Write a descriptive outline of at least two distinct drafts you wrote during the process.

2. For a recently completed essay, discuss how at least one element of your statement of purpose (voice, audience, message, tone, attitude, or reception) changed over the course of the writing process.

3. With your writing group, develop five questions you think everyone in your class should have to answer about their essay drafts before submitting them for evaluation from a peer or your instructor.
Editing and proofreading can work well with a partner. You can offer to be another pair of eyes for peers in exchange for their doing the same for you. Whether you are editing and proofreading your work or the work of a peer, the process is basically the same. Although the rest of this section assumes you are editing and proofreading your work, you can simply shift the personal issues, such as “Am I...” to a viewpoint that will work with a peer, such as “Is she...”

As you edit and proofread, you should look for common problem areas that stick out. There are certain writing rules that you must follow, but other more stylistic writing elements are more subjective and will require judgment calls on your part.²

Be proactive in evaluating these subjective, stylistic issues since failure to do so can weaken the potential impact of your essay. Keeping the following questions in mind as you edit and proofread will help you notice and consider some of those subjective issues:

- **At the word level:** Am I using descriptive words? Am I varying my word choices rather than using the same words over and over? Am I using active verbs? Am I writing concisely? Does every word in each sentence perform a function?

- **At the sentence level:** Am I using a variety of sentence beginnings? Am I using a variety of sentence formats? Am I using ample and varied transitions? Does every sentence advance the value of the essay?

- **At the paragraph and essay level:** How does this essay look? Am I using paragraphing and paragraph breaks to my advantage? Are there opportunities to make this essay work better visually? Are the visuals I’m already using necessary? Am I using the required formatting (or, if there’s room for creativity, am I using the optimal formatting)? Is my essay the proper length?³

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² There are a number of excellent resources online for finding common errors. A particularly excellent resource is Purdue’s Online Writing Lab (OWL). See https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/561/02/.

³ For more on subjective and stylistic editing see “Revising for Cohesion” at https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/561/04/.
Formatting

In English Composition, you will be writing essays using MLA (Modern Languages Association) or APA (American Psychological Association) formatting. This handbook covers each of these citation styles in detail. MLA can be found in Chapter 12; APA is found in Chapter 13. These chapters address the particulars of citation and document preparation, but for the purposes of revision there are a few general guidelines to follow:

- Meticulously account for the use of all sources by either adding citations as you write for through clear place-holders that you replace later with citations
- Use quotation marks for all quoted material
- Place your list of sources (Works Cited in MLA and References in APA) on a separate page as part of the same file as your essay, rather than as a separate file
- Check that all sources cited within the document appear on the works cited page/reference list
- Double check that your heading and headers conform to your formatting guidelines
- If you use an online bibliography manager be sure to change the font/size to match the rest of your document as these often retain formatting from their site when pasted into your document
- Double check citations for accuracy against your handbook and/or style sheet

Exercise:

Bring a copy of a previous piece of writing to class of approximately one page in length. Meticulously edit and proofread the document, aiming to improve both mechanics and style. Finally, compare your editing and proofreading results to those of three classmates. Categorize the suggested revisions and corrections as objective standards of correctness or subjective matters of style.
Making a Final Overview

While you are managing the content of your essay and moving things around in it, you are likely to notice isolated issues that could recur throughout your work. To verify that these issues are satisfactorily dealt with from the beginning to the end of your essay, make a checklist of the issues as you go along. Conduct isolated checks of the whole paper after you are finished editing and proofreading. You might conduct some checks by flipping through the hard-copy pages, some by clicking through the pages on your computer, and some by conducting searches with Microsoft Word (click edit and find or ctrl + f).

Remember to take advantage of all the editing features of the word processing program you’re using, such as spell check and grammar check. In most versions of Word, for instance, you’ll see red squiggly lines underneath misspelled words and green squiggly lines underneath misuses of grammar. Right click on those underlined words to examine your options for revision.

The following checklist shows examples of the types of things that you might look for as you make a final pass (or final passes) through your paper. It often works best to make a separate pass for each issue because you are less likely to miss an issue, and you will probably be able to make multiple, single-issue passes more quickly than you can make one multiple-issue pass.

✓ All subheadings are placed correctly (such as in the center or at the beginning of a page).
✓ All the text is the same size and font throughout.
✓ The page numbers are all formatted and appearing as intended.
✓ All image and picture captions are appearing correctly.
✓ All spellings of proper nouns have been corrected.
✓ The words “there” and “their” and “they’re” are spelled correctly. (Or you can insert your top recurring error here.)
✓ References are all included in the citation list.
✓ Within the citation list, references are all in a single, required format (no moving back and forth between MLA and APA, for instance).
✓ All the formatting conventions for the final manuscript follow the style sheet assigned by the instructor (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicago Manual of Style [CMS], or other).

This isn’t intended to be an all-inclusive checklist. Rather, it simply gives you an idea of the types of things for which you might look as you conduct your final check. You should develop your unique list that might or might not include these same items.

Key Takeaways

- You should review for purpose while you are writing, after you finish your first draft, and after you feel your essay is nearly complete.
- Use self-questioning to evaluate your essay as you are revising the purpose. Keep your voice, audience, message, tone, attitude, and reception in mind as you write and revise.
- When you are reviewing a peer’s essay, make only suggestions that you think will make the essay stronger. When you receive reviews from instructors or peers, try to be open minded and consider the value of the ideas to your essay.
- Edit and proofread your work since it is easy to make mistakes between your mind and your typing fingers, as well as when you are moving around parts of your essay.
- Trading a nearly final version of a draft with peers is a valuable exercise since others can often more easily see your mistakes than you can. When you edit and proofread for a peer, you use the same process as when you edit and proofread for yourself.
- As you are editing and proofreading, you will encounter some issues that are either right or wrong, and you simply have to correct them when they are wrong. Other more stylistic issues, such as using adequate transitions, ample descriptive words, and enough variety in sentence formats, are subjective. Besides dealing with matters of correctness, you will have to make choices about subjective and stylistic issues while you proofread.
- Often a good way to make sure you do not miss any details you want to change is to make a separate pass through your essay for each area of concern. You can conduct passes by flipping through hard copies, clicking through pages on a computer, or using the “find” feature on a computer.

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4 MLA and APA are covered later in this handbook (Chapters 12 and 13). For information on Chicago style, see www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. There are a number of other citation styles you may be asked to use. The Writing Lab at Rose State (room 137 of the Humanities Building) can help you locate and use the appropriate style sheet.
• You should conduct a final overview with isolated checks after you are finished editing and proofreading the final draft.
• As you are writing, make a checklist of recurring isolated issues that you notice in your work. Use this list to conduct isolated checks on the final draft of your paper.

LICENSES AND ATTRIBUTIONS
CC LICENSED CONTENT, SHARED PREVIOUSLY

Chapter 6—Major Argument Conventions

The purpose of argument in writing

The idea of an argument often conjures up images of two people yelling and screaming in anger. In writing, however, an argument is very different. An argument is a reasoned opinion supported and explained by evidence. To argue in writing is to advance knowledge and ideas in a positive way. Written arguments often fail when they employ ranting rather than reasoning.

Most of us feel inclined to try to win the arguments we engage in. On some level, we all want to be right, and we want others to see the error of their ways. More times than not, however, arguments in which both sides try to win end up producing losers all around. The more productive approach is to persuade your audience to consider your opinion as a valid one, not simply the right one.

The structure of an argumentative essay

The following five features make up the structure of an argumentative essay:

1. Introduction and thesis
2. Opposing and qualifying ideas
3. Strong evidence in support of claim
4. Style and tone of language
5. A compelling conclusion

Creating an Introduction and Thesis

The argumentative essay begins with an engaging introduction that presents the general topic. The thesis typically appears somewhere in the introduction and states the writer’s point of view. There are many approaches you can take to provide your reader with an engaging introduction. The best introductions begin with a hook to build interest in the topic and open the reader’s mind to your approach to the material. For example, if you were writing an essay about raising the minimum wage, you might start with a short anecdote that profiles a family
struggling to live month to month on a minimum wage job. You could also start
your essay with a statistic related to your topic or a compelling quote from one
of your sources. Each of these methods frames the material for your reader.

Chapter 4 discussed formulating a thesis. Ideally, when you set pen to paper (or
keystrokes to screen) for your introduction, you are building an opening
paragraph around a well-formulated preliminary thesis. The thesis should guide
the framing of the rest of the introduction by highlighting the points your
opening will emphasize. For example, if you are going to discuss the economic
benefits of immigration reform, your opening might focus on hard numbers. If
you are looking at the human cost, you might open with a profile of an
undocumented family living and working in the United States.

**Tip**
Avoid forming a thesis based on a negative claim. For example, “The hourly
minimum wage is not high enough for the average worker to live on.” This is
probably a true statement, but arguments should make a positive case that
affirms something. Instead of arguing something “is not...”, an argument
essay is stronger when it asserts something “is...” Returning to the example
above, a stronger thesis could focus on how the hourly wage is low or
insufficient.

**Exercise**
Individually or in small groups formulate a hook (opening) for an essay on
each of the following topics:

1. Minimum wage reform
2. Immigration
3. Renewable energy

How does each hook frame further discussion of the topic for the reader?
Where would the introduction go from here? What additional work would be
needed to set up the thesis statement?
Acknowledging opposing ideas and limits to your argument

Because an argument implies differing points of view on the subject, you must be sure to acknowledge those opposing ideas. Avoiding ideas that conflict with your own gives the reader the impression that you may be uncertain, fearful, or unaware of opposing ideas. Thus, it is essential that you not only address counterarguments but do so respectfully as well.

Try to address opposing arguments earlier rather than later in your essay. Rhetorically speaking, ordering your positive arguments last allows you to better address ideas that conflict with your own, so you can spend the rest of the essay countering those arguments. This way, you leave your reader thinking about your argument rather than someone else’s. You have the last word.

Acknowledging points of view different from your own also has the effect of fostering more credibility between you and the audience. They know from the outset that you are aware of opposing ideas and that you are not afraid to give them space.

It is also helpful to establish the limits of your argument and what you are trying to accomplish. In effect, you are conceding early on that your argument is not the ultimate authority on a given topic. Such humility can go a long way toward earning credibility and trust with an audience. Audience members will know from the beginning that you are a reasonable writer, and audience members will trust your argument as a result. For example, in the following concessionary statement, the writer advocates for stricter gun control laws, but she admits it will not solve all of our problems with crime:

> Although tougher gun control laws are a powerful first step in decreasing violence in our streets, such legislation alone cannot end these problems since guns are not the only problem we face.

Such a concession will be welcome by those who might disagree with this writer’s argument in the first place. To effectively persuade their readers, writers need to be modest in their goals and humble in their approach to get readers to listen to the ideas. Certain transitional words and phrases aid in keeping the reader oriented in the sequencing of an argument. Some of these phrases are listed here:
Phrases of Concession

- although
- granted that
- of course
- still
- though
- yet

Exercise

Using a current or recent essay topic, compose a short paragraph that defines limits on your argument and acknowledges opposing ideas. For example, if you are advocating tighter gun control measures you might discuss how laws in a large city might differ significantly from those of a rural community.

Bias in writing

Everyone has various biases on any number of topics. For example, you might have a bias toward wearing black instead of brightly colored clothes or wearing jeans rather than formal wear. You might have a bias toward working at night rather than in the morning, or working by deadlines rather than getting tasks done in advance. These examples identify minor biases, of course, but they still indicate preferences and opinions.

Handling bias in writing and in daily life can be a useful skill. It will allow you to articulate your own points of view while also defending yourself against unreasonable points of view. The ideal in persuasive writing is to let your reader know your bias, but do not let that bias blind you to the primary components of good argumentation: sound, thoughtful evidence and a respectful and reasonable address of opposing sides.

The strength of a personal bias is that it can motivate you to construct a strong argument. If you are invested in the topic, you are more likely to care about the piece of writing. Similarly, the more you care, the more time and effort you are apt to put forth and the better the final product will be.

The weakness of bias is when the bias begins to take over the essay—when, for example, you neglect opposing ideas, exaggerate your points, or repeatedly insert yourself ahead of the subject by using the pronoun “I” too often. Being aware of all three of these pitfalls will help you avoid them.
The use of the pronoun I in writing

The use of I in writing is often a topic of debate, and the acceptance of its usage varies from instructor to instructor. It is difficult to predict the preferences for all your present and future instructors, but consider the effects it can potentially have on your writing.

Be mindful of the use of I in your writing because it can make your argument sound overly biased. There are two primary reasons:

1. Excessive repetition of any word will eventually catch the reader’s attention—and usually not in a good way. The use of I is no different.

2. The insertion of I into a sentence alters not only the way a sentence might sound but also the composition of the sentence itself. I is often the subject of a sentence. If the subject of the essay is supposed to be, say, smoking, then by inserting yourself into the sentence, you are effectively displacing the real subject of the essay into a secondary position. In the following example, the subject of the sentence is underlined:

   Smoking is bad.
   I think smoking is bad.

In the first sentence, the rightful subject, smoking, is in the subject position in the sentence. In the second sentence, the insertion of I and think replaces smoking as the subject, which draws attention to I and away from the topic that is supposed to be discussed.

*Remember to keep the message (the subject) and the messenger (the writer) separate.
The use of you in writing

Second-person point of view, which directly addresses the reader, works well for giving advice or explaining how to do something. A process analysis paper would be a good choice for using the second-person point of view, as shown in this paragraph:

In order to cook chili, you will acquire a number of ingredients. There are many recipes for chili, but the basics ingredients are ground beef, kidney beans, tomato sauce, salt, pepper, and a number of other spices depending on your taste. First of all, you should cook the beef in a frying pan. Next, while the beef is cooking, you mix the other ingredients into a large sauce pan or crock pot. Last, you should stir the chili occasionally until it is hot and ready to serve.

Note: Academic writing generally avoids second-person point of view in favor of third-person point of view. Second person can be too casual for formal writing, and it can also alienate the reader if the reader does not identify with the idea.

Developing sound arguments

Use the following checklist to develop sound arguments in your essay:

1. An engaging introduction
2. A reasonable, specific thesis that is able to be supported by evidence
3. A varied range of evidence from credible sources
4. Respectful acknowledgement and explanation of opposing ideas
5. A style and tone of language that is appropriate for the subject and audience
6. Acknowledgement of the argument’s limits
7. A conclusion that will adequately summarize the essay and reinforce the thesis

Fact and Opinion

Facts are statements that can be definitely proven using objective data. The statement that is a fact is absolutely valid. In other words, the statement can be pronounced as true or false. For example, $2 + 2 = 4$. This expression identifies a true statement, or a fact, because it can be proved with objective data.

Opinions are personal views, or judgments. An opinion is what an individual believes about a particular subject. However, an opinion in argumentation must
have legitimate backing; adequate evidence and credibility should support the opinion. Consider the credibility of expert opinions. Experts in a given field have the knowledge and credentials to make their opinion meaningful to a larger audience.

For example, you seek the opinion of your dentist when it comes to the health of your gums, and you seek the opinion of your mechanic when it comes to the maintenance of your car. Both have knowledge and credentials in those respective fields, which is why their opinions matter to you. But the authority of your dentist may be greatly diminished should he or she offer an opinion about your car, and vice versa.

In writing, you want to strike a balance between credible facts and authoritative opinions. Relying on one or the other will likely lose more of your audience than it gains.

The word “prove” is frequently used in the discussion of argumentative writing. Writers may claim that one piece of evidence or another proves the argument, but proving an argument is often not possible. No evidence proves a debatable topic one way or the other; that is why the topic is debatable. Facts can be proved, but opinions can only be supported, explained, and persuaded.

The Classical Structure of Argument

Classical or Aristotelian argument is based on the persuasive speeches of ancient Greek and Roman orators. It offers a systematic approach to argument structure that helps engage the audience and places an ordered structure on complex ideas. Elements of this structure are likely familiar and they provide a helpful framework for organizing your ideas. The main parts of persuasive speech are shared below, along with more familiar names and explanations.

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1 See p. 238 of the appendix for a sample classical argument essay, “A Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift. For more on classical argument, see also http://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/organizing-your-argument/organizing-your-argument-aristotelian/
Organization plan for an argument in with a classical structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction (Exordium)</th>
<th>Attention grabber often built around a memorable scene. This establishes why the audience should pay attention to this issue.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Background (Narratio)</td>
<td>Provides the background and context the audience needs to understand the issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposition (Partitio)</td>
<td>The thesis that establishes the position of the writer and previews the points to follow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proof (Confirmatio)</td>
<td>Presents reasons, sub-claims, and evidence. Each reason is supported and tied to values and beliefs held by the audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refutation (Refutatio)</td>
<td>Anticipates and refutes opposing arguments. Points to weaknesses in opposing views and may also concede some strengths of opposing views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion (Peroratio)</td>
<td>Summarizes the most important points. Makes a final appeal to values, motivations, and feelings that are likely to encourage the audience to identify with the argument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise
Read “A Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift (p. 238 of the appendix) and in a small group label the elements of classical argument listed below:

- Exordium
- Narratio
- Propositio
- Partitio
- Confirmatio
- Confutatio
- Peroratio

Writing an Argumentative Essay

Choose a topic that you feel passionate about. If your instructor requires you to write about a specific topic, approach the subject from an angle that interests

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2 Material adapted from open sources at Baylor University and Excelsior College.
you. Begin your essay with an engaging introduction. Your thesis should typically appear somewhere in your introduction, usually towards the end.

Start by acknowledging and explaining points of view that may conflict with your own to build credibility and trust with your audience. Also, state the limits of your argument. This too helps you sound more reasonable and honest to those who may naturally be inclined to disagree with your view. By respectfully acknowledging opposing arguments and conceding limitations to your own view, you set a measured and responsible tone for the essay.

Make your appeals in support of your thesis by using sound, credible evidence. Use a balance of facts and opinions from a wide range of sources, such as scientific studies, expert testimony, statistics, and personal anecdotes. Each piece of evidence should be fully explained and clearly stated.

Make sure that your style and tone are appropriate for your subject and audience. Tailor your language and word choice to these two factors, while still being true to your own voice.

Finally, write a conclusion that effectively summarizes the main argument and reinforces your thesis.

**Major claims, main points, and sub-claims**

Your thesis maps out the direction you will take in your argument. For example, the sample below argues, “The logging of old-growth forests should be prohibited because it is unnecessary, will destroy a delicate and valuable ecosystem, and because these rare forests are a sacred trust.” The thesis reveals the central claim: logging old-growth forests should prohibited. That claim is supported by three main points: it is unnecessary, it will destroy a delicate and valuable ecosystem, and these forests are a sacred trust. The structure of the thesis statement (central claim + main points) previews the structure of the essay, where each claim will comprise a section.
Central Claim: Logging old-growth forests should be prohibited
   1. Main point: Logging them is unnecessary
   2. Main point: Logging them is destructive
   3. Main point: The forests are a sacred trust

Individual sections of the essay built around the main point will be supported by sub-claims. Sub-claims are claims specific to each main point and reinforce the validity of each main point with evidence and commentary. They answer the following question from your reader: What support do you have for that claim? Each sub-claim bolsters its major claim and the claims gets increasingly specific as they move from central claim to main point to sub-claim. Let’s return to the previous diagram and add sub-claims for one of our main points:

Central Claim: Logging old-growth forests should be prohibited
   • Main Point: Logging them is unnecessary
      o Subclaim: New growth forests meet our lumber needs
      o Subclaim: Recycling reduces the demand for lumber

The sample below frames its main points and sub-claims in well-structured paragraphs that incorporate evidence from outside sources. The essay also acknowledges limitations and presents and responds to counter-arguments. The labels below illustrate these elements.
Argumentative Essay Example

Brady Manek
Professor Caliendo
ENGL 1113
18 Nov. 2016

Salvaging Our Old-Growth Forests

It's been so long since I've been there I can't clearly remember what it's like. I can only look at the pictures in my family photo album. I found the pictures of me when I was a little girl standing in front of a towering tree with what seems like endless miles and miles of forest in the background. My mom is standing on one side of me holding my hand, and my older brother is standing on the other side of me, making a strange face. The faded pictures don't do justice to the real-life magnificence of their forest in which they were taken—the Olympic National Forest— but they capture the awe my parents felt when they took their children to the ancient forest.

Today these forests are threatened by the timber companies that want state and federal governments to open protected old-growth forests to commercial logging. The timber industry's lobbying attempts must be rejected because the logging of old-growth forests is unnecessary, because it will destroy a delicate and valuable ecosystem, and because these rare forests are a sacred trust.

It is simply unnecessary to log old-growth forests to supply the world's lumber. According to environmentalist Mark Sagoff, we have plenty of new-growth forest from which timber can be taken (89–90). Recently, there have been major reforestation efforts all over the United States, and it is common practice now for loggers to replant every tree that is harvested. These new-growth forests, combined with extensive planting of tree farms, provide more than enough wood for the world's needs. According to forestry expert Robert Sedjo (qtd. in Sagoff...
90), tree farms alone can supply the world’s demand for industrial lumber. Although tree farms are ugly and possess little diversity in their ecology, expanding tree farms is far preferable to destroying old-growth forests.

Moreover, we can reduce the demand for lumber. Recycling, for example, can cut down on the use of trees for paper products. Another way to reduce the amount of trees used for paper is with a promising new innovation, kenaf, a fast-growing, 15-foot-tall, annual herb that is native to Africa. According to Jack Page kenaf has long been used to make rope, and it has been found to work just as well for paper pulp (158).

Another reason to protect old-growth forests is the value of its complex and very delicate ecosystem. The threat of logging to the northern spotted owl is well known. Although loggers say people before owls,” ecologists consider the owls to be warnings, like canaries in mine shafts that signal the health of the whole ecosystem. Evidence provided by the World Resource Institute shows that continuing logging will endanger other species. Also, Dr. David Brubaker, an environmentalist biologist at Seattle University, has said in a personal interview that the long-term effects of logging will be severe. Loss of the spotted owl, for example, may affect the small rodent population, which at the moment is kept in check by the predator owl. Dr. Brubaker also explained that the old-growth forests also connect to salmon runs. When dead timber falls into the streams, it creates a habitat conducive to spawning. If the dead logs are removed, the habitat is destroyed. These are only two examples in a long list of animals that would be harmed by logging of old-growth forests.

Finally, it is wrong to log in old-growth forests because of their sacred beauty. When you walk in an old-growth forest, you are touched by a feeling that ordinary forests can’t evoke. As you look up to the sky, all you see branch after branch in a canopy of towering trees. Each of
these amazingly tall trees feels inhabited by a spirit; it has its own personality. "For spiritual bliss take a few moments and sit quietly in the Grove of the patriarchs near Mount Rainier or the redwood forests of Northern California," said Richard Linder, environmental activist and member of the National Wildlife Federation. "Sit silently," he said, "and look at the giant living organisms you're surrounded by; you can feel the history of your own species." Although Linder is obviously biased in favor of preserving the forests, the spiritual awe he feels for ancient trees is shared by millions of other people who recognize that we destroy something of the world's spirit when we destroy ancient trees, or great whales, or native runs of salmon. According to Al Gore, "We have become so successful at controlling nature that we have lost our connection to it" (p.96 in Slegoff). We need to find that connection again, and one place we can find it is in the old-growth forests.

Those who promote logging of old-growth forests offer several reasons to consider. First, forest industry spokesmen tell us the forest will regenerate after logging is finished. The logging industry clear-cuts forests on a 50-80 year cycle, however, those ecosystems would take as many as 250 years to fully regenerate. At most, the replanted trees will reach only one-third the age of the original trees. Because the same ecosystem cannot rebuild if the trees do not develop full maturity, the plants and animals that depend on the complex ecosystem, with its incredibly tall canopies and trees of all sizes and ages, cannot survive.

Another argument used by the timber industry, as forestry engineer D. Alan Rockwood has said in a personal correspondence, is that "an old-growth forest is basically a forest in decline...the biomass is decomposing at a higher rate than tree growth." According to Rockwood, preserving old-growth forests is "wasting a resource" since the land should be used to grow trees rather than let the old ones slowly rot away, especially when harvesting the trees
before they rot would provide valuable lumber. However, the timber industry looks only at the
trees, not at the incredibly diverse bio-system which the ancient trees create and nourish. The
mixture of young and old-growth trees creates a unique habitat that logging would destroy.
Perhaps the main argument used by the logging industry is economic: logging old-growth forests
will provide jobs. This is a powerful argument deserving of our consideration. In an era where so
many industries are in decline, preserving and growing jobs is crucial. Restrictions on logging in
areas such as the Pacific Northwest could have devastating economic effects. However, old
growth logging is not a solution for long-term job stability and growth. According to Peter
Morrison of the Wilderness Society, all the old-growth forests in the Gifford Pinchot National
Forest would be gone in three years if it were opened to logging (v). Logging will remain an
important industry in the United States but new, managed forests offer a better solution for
industry stability.

The old-growth forests are part of the web of life. If we cut this delicate strand of the
web, we may end up destroying the whole. Once the old trees are gone, they are gone forever.
Even if foresters replanted every tree and waited 250 years for the trees to grow to ancient size,
the genetic pool would be lost. We'd have a 250-year-old tree farm, not an old-growth forest. If
we want to maintain a healthy earth, we must respect the beauty and sacredness of the old-
growth forests.

Works Cited
Toulmin’s Argument Model

Stephen Toulmin, an English philosopher and logician, identified elements of a persuasive argument. These elements give useful categories by which an argument may be analyzed.³

Claim

A claim is a statement that you are asking the other person to accept. This includes information you are asking them to accept as true, or actions you want them to accept and enact.

Many people start with a claim, but then find that it is challenged. If you just ask me to do something, I will not simply agree with what you want. I will ask why I should agree with you. I will ask you to prove your claim. This is where “grounds” become important.

Grounds

The grounds (or data) is the basis of real persuasion and is made up of data and hard facts, plus the reasoning behind the claim. It is the ‘truth’ on which the claim is based. Grounds may also include proof of expertise and the basic premises on which the rest of the argument is built.

The actual truth of the data may be less than 100%, as much data are ultimately based on perception. We assume what we measure is true, but there may be problems in this measurement, ranging from a faulty measurement instrument to a biased sampling.

It is critical to the argument that the grounds are not challenged because, if they are, they may become a claim, which you will need to prove with even deeper information and further argument.

Information is usually a very powerful element of persuasion, although it does affect people differently. Those who are dogmatic, logical, or rational will more likely to be persuaded by factual data. Those who argue emotionally and who are highly invested in their own position will challenge it or otherwise try to ignore it. It is often a useful test to give something factual to the other person that disproves their argument, and watch how they handle it. Some will accept it without question. Some will dismiss it out of hand. Others will dig deeper,

³ See appendix (p. 244) for sample Toulmin essay.
requiring more explanation. This is where the warrant comes into its own.

**Warrant**

A warrant links data and other grounds to a claim, legitimizing the claim by showing the grounds to be relevant. The warrant may be explicit or unspoken and implicit. It answers the question “Why does that data mean your claim is true?”

The warrant may be simple, and it may also be a longer argument with additional sub-elements including those described below.

Warrants may be based on *logos, ethos or pathos*, or values that are assumed to be shared with the listener.

In many arguments, warrants are often implicit and hence unstated. This gives space for the other person to question and expose the warrant, perhaps to show it is weak or unfounded.

**Exercise:**

Find warrants which will interpret the data to support the claim in the following passages:

1. **Claim:** Government policies have helped to establish more minority owned businesses. **Data:** The NYT reports that more minorities own businesses today than ever before. **Warrant:**

2. **Claim:** Any American can grow up to be president. **Data:** Bill Clinton came from a poor town in a poor state to be president. **Warrant:**

3. **Claim:** Public schools promote racial tension in their effort to provide America's children with a good education. **Data:** There's a lot of racial tension in many schools these days. **Warrant:**
**Backing**
The backing (or support) consists of evidence that supports the type of reasoning employed by the warrant.

**Qualifier**
The qualifier indicates the strength of the leap from the data to the warrant and may limit how universally the claim applies. They include words such as “most,” “usually,” “always,” or “sometimes.” Arguments may hence range from strong assertions to generally quite floppy ones with vague and often rather uncertain kinds of statements.

Another variant is the “reservation,” which may give the possibility of the claim being incorrect. For example, “Unless there is evidence to the contrary, hearing aids do no harm to ears.” Qualifiers and reservations are often used by advertisers who are constrained not to lie. Thus, they slip “usually,” “virtually,” “unless” and so on into their claims.

**Rebuttal**
Despite the careful construction of the argument, there may still be counter-arguments that can be used. These may be rebutted either through a continued dialogue, or by pre-empting the counter-argument by giving the rebuttal during the initial presentation of the argument.

Any rebuttal is an argument in itself and thus may include a claim, warrant, backing and so on. It also, of course, can have a rebuttal. Thus, if you are presenting an argument, you can seek to understand both possible rebuttals and also rebuttals to the rebuttals. ⁴

**Exercise**
Analyze an article you were assigned for class using the Toulmin method. Identify the claim, grounds, warrant, backing, qualifiers, and rebuttals. Are there any warrants that are unstated? What steps could the author take to strengthen the argument using the Toulmin schema?

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Key Takeaways

- The purpose of argument in writing is to convince or move readers toward a certain point of view, or opinion.
- An argument is a reasoned opinion supported and explained by evidence. To argue, in writing, is to advance knowledge and ideas in a positive way.
- A thesis that expresses the opinion of the writer in more specific terms is better than one that is vague.
- It is essential that you not only address counterarguments but also do so respectfully.
- It is also helpful to establish the limits of your argument and what you are trying to accomplish through a concession statement.
- To persuade a skeptical audience, you will need to use a wide range of evidence. Scientific studies, opinions from experts, historical precedent, statistics, personal anecdotes, and current events are all types of evidence that you might use in explaining your point.
- Make sure that your word choice and writing style is appropriate for both your subject and your audience.
- You should let your reader know your bias, but do not let that bias blind you to the primary components of good argumentation: sound, thoughtful evidence, and respectfully and reasonably addressing opposing ideas.
- You should be mindful of the use of “I” in your writing because it can make your argument sound more biased than it needs to.
- Facts are statements that can be proven using objective data.
- Opinions are personal views, or judgments, that cannot be proven.
- In writing, you want to strike a balance between credible facts and authoritative opinions.
- The Toulmin model of argumentation can help emphasize unstated assumptions (warrants) that are necessary for the audience to consider your position.

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Chapter 7—Visual Arguments

There is no denying that images are powerful. In any text we encounter, it is often the visual elements that stick with us. You can see the power of images in advertising and journalism. Companies guard their trademarks and control their use. Social media platforms are built around sharing images and memes; humorous images that combine text and pictures and spread rapidly online represent a significant way that people process information and respond to issues today. Our ability to quickly download and share images worldwide on phones, computers, and tablets shapes how we relate to each other and how we process world events. This chapter offers a brief overview of how images communicate meaning and how to leverage them in your own academic writing to effectively communicate your positions to your audience.

Visual Rhetoric

Visual rhetoric refers to “the way that images communicate meaning and persuade viewers” (Thonney 188). Research indicates it is important for writers to use images to develop and reinforce ideas they wish to convey. A recent study of a detergent ad found that readers tended to base their interpretation of the advertisement based on the image when the image and texts contradicted each other: “The ad stated that the detergent should not be used to wash children’s sleepwear, yet the image on the detergent bottle shown in the ad depicted a mother and baby” (188). Viewers rated the detergent safe for children despite the clear instructions in the text.

In advertising, journalism, music, and even book publishing, the image can make or break the endeavor. There are countless iconic album covers, and these maintain relevance even in the era of digital music. The images on album covers are carefully chosen by artists and producers to convey a theme or message about their music. Whether the image on the album is simple or complex, the audience will come to associate that image with the artist and the music. For example, in 2017 American rapper and songwriter Kendrick Lamar released an album titled “DAMN” with a picture of Lamar in a plain white t-shirt looking down away from the camera with a look that conveys focus with hints of fatigue.
The Practiced Writer

and dejection.¹ The album title is featured in prominent red letters on the top along with a parental advisory sticker in the bottom right. Upon its release the album artwork received a lot of attention online and generated a series of memes that repurposed the artwork. Through the proliferation of this imagery online, it is likely that many people unfamiliar with Lamar’s music will nonetheless come to recognize the image.

Ideally images will complement texts, and this occurs both through the objects in the image and factors such as color, size, and layout. Consider the two examples below:

Both are images of a beach but clearly elicit different emotions from the audience. The image on the left would be appropriate for a vacation advertisement, while the image on the right could work for a public service announcement about littering. A writer could also use both images to convey the difference between expectation and reality when visiting a beach.

Exercise
Individually or in small groups locate an advertisement that uses an image to effectively complement a text and answer the following questions:

1. How does the image convey meaning to the audience, and in what ways does it complement any textual elements?

2. Do any details of the image give clues about the audience of the advertisement?

3. Find an advertisement for a similar product. In what ways is it similar to or different from your original image?

¹ You can find an image of the cover art here: https://s3.amazonaws.com/hiphopdx-production/2017/04/Kendrick-Lamar-DAMN-album-cover-featured-827x620.jpg
Using visual elements to strengthen arguments

To this point we have discussed images in popular culture. Academic arguments use images in similar strategies to reinforce and develop ideas for the audience. The visuals in academic arguments often include technical vocabulary and precise data. Presenting that data in charts and tables clarifies the material and creates a credible and scholarly ethos for the writer. Adding visual elements to a persuasive argument can often strengthen its persuasive effect. There are two main types of visual elements: quantitative visuals and qualitative visuals.

Quantitative visuals

Quantitative visuals present data graphically and visually. They allow the audience to see statistics spatially. The purpose of using quantitative visuals is to make logical appeals to the audience. For example, sometimes it is easier to understand the disparity in certain statistics if you can see how the disparity looks graphically. Bar graphs, pie charts, Venn diagrams, histograms, line graphs and infographics are all ways to present quantitative data in visual and/or spatial dimensions.

Qualitative visuals

Qualitative visuals present images that appeal to the audience’s emotions. Photographs and pictorial images are examples of qualitative visuals. Such images often try to convey a story, and seeing an actual example can carry more power than hearing or reading about the example. For example, one image of a protestor can have more of an emotional impact than pages dedicated to describing that same situation in writing.
Use pictures in conjunction with text. As in a set of instructions, the imagery increases understanding of the task, in addition to decreasing confusion that may arise from text that stands alone.

When using a picture to help portray how to perform a task, it is your responsibility to make sure the picture matches up with the text. You must explain the picture using text, and, vice versa, explain the text using a picture. Also, viewers will accomplish the task more often when the picture appears how it would if they were watching the task, not necessarily if they were experiencing it.

For example, if your task was explaining how to do a backflip, you wouldn’t want the pictures at an angle where the viewer is looking through the eyes of the gymnast performing the backflip. You would want the pictures to be from someone watching the event so that the viewer isn’t confused by what he can’t see (such as where gymnast’s feet are when he’s looking at her hands). It’s the simple things that make or break a document when using pictures. Think and re-think the pictures you are using and how someone seeing them for the first time will react to them.

For example:

![Figure 13: Backflip in 5 easy steps](image)

**How a Finished Product Should Look**

When textual information does not capture the essence of what you are trying to describe, try putting an actual photo of what you are trying to describe in the document. This type of picture enables you to come as close to reality as possible. Make sure your pictures are in color and of high quality. Black and white photos tend to blur easily on paper and lack the detail needed to fully understand a photo. Images cut down on excessive use of describing words. “A picture is worth a thousand words” relates to this situation.
Be sure to use the text wrap abilities of most word processors. A well-placed picture with clean text wrapping can make an otherwise overwhelming block of text seem reasonably approachable. Looking at 25 pages of block format, justified alignment, plain black text is one of the most boring ways to see a report. A picture can liven up a report, make it more memorable, and help clarify the report all in one motion.

**Map Out an Object, Place, or Process**

An example of these types of pictures can be found in an automotive manual or a science textbook. This can be anything from a picture of a machine to an example of how photosynthesis works. Arrows and labels can be used in order to show where everything is and how the process takes place. The picture should include a big enough background so that the reader can locate the area in relation to objects around it.

Photographs can also play a major role in connecting with the audience. They are useful in multi-cultural situations when a shared written language may not exist. Pictures can speak louder than words and usually portray the message quicker. It is very important to keep the first initial reaction in mind when choosing the image you will place within your document. Be sure to avoid photos that may have several meanings, or the true meaning may be unclear. In order to avoid this type of situation, put yourself in the audience that you are writing for, and try to be unbiased when you view the image. Better yet, test the image on someone who does not know much about your photo’s topic and ask them what message the photo sends to them.

Do not rely too heavily on pictures though. Pictures and text should be used simultaneously in order to give the audience the most accurate direction. Pictures can offer a great break from words, but are not always as useful to get a point across as words are.

Figure 14: An image such as this can show the environmental toll of fossil fuels while emphasizing the need for power in the modern world
Software Can Tremendously Increase Photograph Effectiveness

There are many photo editing programs for computers that can be utilized to bring out the right angle, zoom, view, and color of a photo. Some of the most popular photo editing software includes Photoshop, Corel, and Image Smart. Many computers now come with basic image editing software, which allows one to adjust color, brightness, crop, and other basic edits.

Cropping

Cropping is an essential key feature that allows you to enlarge the area of the photo you want the reader to see, while omitting the background and obsolete areas of the background. Cropping is equivalent to looking at an image under a microscope where you can focus on the areas you want the readers to see the clearest. However, this can decrease image quality and make the image hard to see. When possible, it is best to use images that need little to no editing.

Make sure that images are of high image resolution (300 dpi for print, 72 dpi for screen) and the proper format before inserting into your document. Typically, sticking with images from original sources, such as a camera or other .jpg or .tif files, is best.

If you find your photograph is not using the right coloring, computer programs such as Photoshop, Corel, etc. will allow you to adjust the color balance and light in many different variations. This is an important feature, especially when the photograph was not professionally taken or lacks the appropriate lighting for the setting. Be careful not to over- or under-expose the photography.

Labeling

Labeling is also another feature you can do in a computer program. You can insert boxes with text and arrows into a photograph in order to label key details. Labeling your photographs keeps the information you are trying to convey to the reader clear.

These computer programs may take some time to become familiar with how they work. It might be necessary to take a course or tutorial on how to use them to their full advantages, but it’s worth it for all the features these programs have. There are some free tutorials available on the Internet or through the actual program.
Exercise
Complete the following steps for a current or future essay project.

1. Using a word processor (Microsoft Word or Google Docs), create a chart or table to represent data from one of your sources. Note: these tools can be found on the insert menu of the software.

2. Find an image that evokes an emotional response related to your topic. Write a caption to explain the image. Note: you can right click on an image within Microsoft Word and choose to “add a caption” on the menu.

3. Compare the image to the graphical element you created. How do they convey the information differently? What are the advances and disadvantages of each image for your project?

Key Takeaways

- Visual rhetoric deals with the way that images convey meaning to viewers.
- Technology has made images widely available and reproducible.
- When presented with text and an image, an audience will often form a more lasting impression of the material from the image.
- Advertising uses images strategically based on audience and purpose.
- Images on album covers, books, and video games are an integral part of those works as artistic objects.
- Academic writing uses images to enhance, clarify, or reinforce arguments.
- Images in academic writing are either qualitative (e.g. pictures) or quantitative (e.g. charts and graphs).

Work Cited


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Chapter 8—Logical Fallacies

The methods of argumentation described in Chapter 6 respond to the uncertainty of real-world arguments. It is rare in our everyday encounters with minor and major controversies and debates to find arguments that are absolutely conclusive. While we can assess whether an argument is persuasive to a particular audience, we cannot usually say that it proves its case.

Real-world arguments can be better understood in the context of probabilities rather than mathematical certainty. We can judge arguments on a scale of persuasiveness and non-persuasiveness. Assessments along these lines are subjective. Sometimes, faulty logic is easy to spot in an argument. In many cases, it can be tough to pinpoint the problem but you nonetheless “know” the argument is flawed. Arguments can be deceptively persuasive, particularly to an unwary or emotionally charged audience. Chapter 8 provides a guide for avoiding and analyzing these faulty arguments.

Formal Logic and Enthymemes

In formal logic, it is possible to have absolutely conclusive arguments. Formal logic relies on the use of syllogisms, which are logical arguments that apply deductive reasoning to reach a conclusion based on two or more premises.\(^1\) If the premises are valid, we can know with certainty that the conclusion is also valid. One important note is that validity does not necessarily equal truth. In the example below, the syllogism leads to a conclusion that we can accept with absolute certainty, but in many real-world scenarios, the relationship between validity and truth is more complicated and syllogisms represent a starting point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid Syllogism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major premise:</strong> All Chow Chows are dogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minor premise:</strong> Chewie is a Chow Chow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion:</strong> Therefore, Chewie is a dog.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) For more on syllogisms, see [http://www.speaking.pitt.edu/student/public-speaking/reasoning.html](http://www.speaking.pitt.edu/student/public-speaking/reasoning.html)
The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BCE) theorized this type of three-part rhetorical syllogism, also called an enthymeme. In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle referred to enthymemes as “the strongest of rhetorical proofs” (I.1.11), and he described three types:

- syllogism with an unstated premise
- syllogism based on signs
- syllogism where the audience supplies the premise
- visual enthymemes

**Syllogism with an unstated premise**
A shortened form of a syllogism, this enthymeme leaves out at least one premise or conclusion.
Example: Chewie is a dog because he is a Chow Chow.

**Syllogism based on signs**
Aristotle argues that syllogisms can be based on signs rather than absolute facts. Signs in this case are defined as “things [that] are so closely related that the presence or absence of one indicates the presence or absence of the other” (“Reasoning”).

Example: Since she runs marathons, she has a lot of endurance.
Example: Since he struck oil on his property, he will soon be wealthy.

In both cases, it is probably true that people who run marathons have endurance and people who strike oil on their land acquire wealth. However, you can see in these examples the qualities are not as *absolute* as Chow Chow or dog from the earlier example. We can only say that these enthymemes are *probably true* because the runner might have taken a rest every mile and the property owner may not be able to extract the oil for some unknown reason.

**Syllogism where audience supplies the premise**
This enthymeme relies on the audience to provide an unstated assumption and only functions when the writer or speaker has a clear sense of the audience’s assumptions and beliefs.

Example: The Cleveland Browns had a typical season; therefore, they lost most of their games.

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2 A fourth category of enthymeme theorized by later scholars based on Aristotle (Smith).
The idea that a typical Cleveland Browns season involves losing many games is an assumption that might be held by an audience. An avid or even casual football fan would likely know the Browns are historically unsuccessful.

**Visual Enthymemes**

This type of enthymeme posits that words are not the only form of expression that can constitute an enthymeme because an audience can help construct meaning from images in a visual argument.

In figure 15, we can decode the argument from the image through its connotations. The hands reaching into the image are wearing suits, which strongly implies corporate or government interests. The money flying from the individual’s hand implies reckless spending. The stamp on the head indicates manipulation of thought on smoking. Organized as a syllogism, the argument might look as follows:

**Major premise:** Corporations influence behavior.

**Minor premise:** People smoke and abuse prescription drugs despite the costs and health risks.

**Conclusion:** Corporations influence people who abuse prescription drugs and smoke.

**Exercise**

In small groups or individually, write an example of the four types of enthymemes discussed above: syllogism with an unstated premise, syllogism based on signs, syllogism where the audience supplies the premise, and a visual enthymeme.

**Logical fallacies**

Logical fallacies occur when the stated premise of an argument fails to adequately support its conclusion. These breakdowns in logic can occur for a variety of reasons. It is crucial for writers to ensure both that their arguments avoid these fallacies and that the research used to support arguments avoids
these pitfalls as well. The list below is not exhaustive but accounts for some of the more common fallacies we encounter.

**Ad Hominem**

(Attacking the person) This fallacy occurs when, instead of addressing someone's argument or position, you irrelevantly attack the person or some aspect of the person who is making the argument. The fallacious attack can also be directed to membership in a group or institution.

*Examples:*

- Student: Hey, Professor Moore, we shouldn't have to read this book by Freud. Everyone knows he used cocaine.
- Socrates' arguments about human excellence are rubbish. What could a man as ugly as him know about human excellence?
- Yeah, I think everyone's opinion counts on moral matters like that, but that Lila sleeps around with anything. I know of at least one marriage she's broken up, so why should her opinion count on anything, much less morality?
- Marx's theories about the ideal society are bunk. The guy spent all his time in the library.
- We cannot approve of this recycling idea. It was thought of by a bunch of hippie communist weirdos.

**Appeal to Ignorance**

This fallacy occurs when you argue that your conclusion must be true because there is no evidence against it. This fallacy wrongly shifts the burden of proof away from the one making the claim.

*Examples:*

- Him: "C'mon, hook up with me tonight." Her: "Why should I?" Him: "Why shouldn't you?"
- Since you haven't been able to prove your innocence, I must assume you're guilty.
- You know that scientists can't prove that UFO's do not visit the Earth, so it makes sense to believe in them.
- Even the atheist Freud admitted that the existence of God can't be disproved, so we have good reason to continue to believe in him.
I guess I didn't get the job. They never called me back.

**Begging the Question**

The fallacy of begging the question occurs when an argument’s premises assume the truth of the conclusion instead of supporting it. In other words, you assume, without proof, the stand/position or a significant part of the stand that is in question. Begging the question is also called “arguing in a circle.” This fallacy is also commonly called *circular reasoning* or *circular argument*.

*Examples:*
- Erica: "How do you know that the bible is divinely inspired?" Pedro: "Because it says right in the third chapter of II Timothy that ‘all scripture is given by divine inspiration of God’."  
- Celibacy is an unnatural and unhealthy practice since it is neither natural nor healthy to exclude sexual activity from one’s life.  
- Thoughts are not part of the physical world since thoughts are, in their nature, non-physical.  
- Happiness is the highest good for a human being since all other values are inferior to it.  
- Smoking causes cancer. The smoke from cigarettes is a carcinogen.

**Confusion of a Necessary Condition with a Sufficient Condition**

A causal fallacy occurs when you assume that a necessary condition of an event is sufficient for the event to occur. A necessary condition is a condition that must be present for an event to occur. A sufficient condition is a condition or set of conditions that will produce the event. A necessary condition must be there, but it alone does not provide sufficient cause for the occurrence of the event. Only the sufficient grounds can do this. In other words, all of the necessary elements must be there.

*Examples:*
- Juan: "How do you think you'll do on our philosophy exam tomorrow?" Monique: "Great, I read all the books." Juan: "Yeah but do you understand this stuff?" Monique: "I said I read all the books, didn't I?"
- Don’t let all the talk about the necessity of exercise to a long life mislead you. Jim was a jock during all his very short life.  
- Who said food keeps us alive? Tom died a few days ago, and he was not short of good food.  
- I don’t know why the car won’t run; I just filled the gas tank.  
- Why don’t you want to spend your life with me? I love you, and am I not good to you?
Post hoc ergo propter hoc (Latin: "after this, therefore because of this")
A fallacy that states, “Since event X followed event Y, event Y must have been caused by event X.” This is a tempting fallacy common in media and research because temporal (time) sequence can suggest causality. The heart of the fallacy is a conclusion based solely on order of events rather than other conditions that could produce a result.

Examples:

- I wore my lucky jersey and the Reds won. Therefore, I’m going to wear this jersey for every game.
- Since I’ve stopped smoking, we haven’t had an argument. Who knew the answer could have been so simple?
- The stock market is through the roof since the election. This president really took charge of the economy. Non-Sequitur

This fallacy occurs when a conclusion does not follow from its premises but is nonetheless claimed to be true. In argumentation, this typically occurs when the evidence presented is irrelevant or adds little support to the conclusion.

Examples:

- My friend had a problem with his laptop. That company makes the worst computers.
- They hit the jackpot on the slot machines by rotating to four different machines. The strategy for winning is to use multiple slot machines.
- There were record snows in Colorado in May. Global warming is a hoax.

Equivocation
The fallacy of equivocation occurs when a key term or phrase in an argument is used in an ambiguous way, with one meaning in one portion of the argument and then another meaning in another portion of the argument.

Examples:

- I have the right to watch "The Real World." Therefore, it's right for me to watch the show. So, I think I'll watch this "Real World" marathon tonight instead of studying for my exam.
- The laws imply lawgivers. There are laws in nature. Therefore, there must be a cosmic lawgiver.
- God: "One million years to me is a second." Man: "What about one million dollars, my Lord?" God: "A penny." Man: "May my Lord give me a penny?" God: "No problem, just a second."
- Noisy children are a real headache. Two aspirin will make a headache go
away. Therefore, two aspirin will make noisy children go away.

- A warm beer is better than a cold beer. After all, nothing is better than a cold beer, and a warm beer is better than nothing.

**False Dilemma**

When you reason from an either-or position and you haven't considered all relevant possibilities, you commit the fallacy of false dilemma. This fallacy is also commonly called bifurcation or the either-or fallacy.

*Examples:*

- America: Love it or leave it.
- Death is nothing to fear. It is either annihilation or migration.
- Be my friend or be my enemy.
- Are you a Republican or a Democrat?

**Faulty Analogy**

This fallacy consists in assuming that because two things are alike in one or more respects, they are necessarily alike in some other respect.

*Examples:*

- Medical Student: "No one objects to a physician looking up a difficult case in medical books. Why, then, shouldn't students taking a difficult examination be permitted to use their textbooks?"
- People who have to have a cup of coffee every morning before they can function have no less a problem than alcoholics who have to have their alcohol each day to sustain them.
- Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer on why he accepted Louis Farrakhan's call to African-American men to take part in the 1996 Million Man March on Washington, D.C.: "If somebody has a cure for cancer, would you reject it because it was somebody you may not like who came up with it?"
- To say humans are immortal is like saying a car can run forever.
- During the Cold War, Congressman Charles Rose (Democrat, North Carolina) answered (in part) the arguments of those opposed to government-sponsored research to develop "remote-viewing," the ability to see a distant place telepathically, by stating, "It seems to me that it would be a hell of a cheap radar system. This country wasn't afraid to look into the strange physics behind lasers and semiconductors, and I don't think we should be afraid to look into this."
Irrelevant or False Authority

The fallacy of irrelevant authority is committed when you accept without proper support for his or her alleged authority, a person's claim or proposition as true. Alleged authorities should only be used when the authority is reporting on his or her field of expertise, the authority is reporting on facts about which there is some agreement in his or her field, and you have reason to believe he or she can be trusted. Alleged authorities can be individuals or groups. The attempt to appeal to the majority or the masses is a form of irrelevant authority. The attempt to appeal to an elite or select group is a form of irrelevant authority.

Examples:

- Brad Pitt was seen wearing Designer Bob's sunglasses, so they must be the best sunglasses to wear.
- There is nothing to be learned from the East, for Gilbert Ryle, the great British philosopher, once said, “Nothing but the sun rises in the East.”
- Nobody is a better judge than public opinion.
- Pacifism is a good idea because the brilliant scientist Einstein advocated it.
- Mom, why can't I get my tongue pierced? Everyone else is doing it.

Red Herring

This fallacy consists in diverting attention from the real issue by focusing instead on an issue having only a surface relevance to the first.

Examples:

- Son: "Wow, Dad, it's really hard to make a living on my salary." Father: "Consider yourself lucky, son. Why, when I was your age, I made only $40 a week."
- Senator Clark: "Why are you not willing to support the antiabortion amendment? Don't you have any feelings at all for the unborn children whose lives are being indiscriminately blotted out?" Senator Rich: "I just don't understand why you people who get so worked up about lives being blotted out by abortion don't have the same feelings about the thousands of lives that are blotted out every year by the indiscriminate use of handguns. Is not the issue of the sanctity of human life involved in both issues? Why have you not supported us in our efforts at gun-control legislation?"
- Student: "The opinions of the students are completely ignored in the process of determining both curricular changes and social programs. The students should have a much greater voice in campus governance because we have a very great stake in this institution, and we think that we have a positive contribution to make." Professor: "The faculty are the ones who need a greater voice. Professors can be fired"
without explanation, and they have no control over who is promoted or given tenure. Their opinions about budgetary allotments are completely ignored. Why aren't you concerned about the injustice the faculty is experiencing?"

- Daughter: "I'm so hurt that Todd broke up with me, Mom." Mother: "Just think of all the starving children in Africa, honey. Your problems will seem pretty insignificant then."

- Ms. Olive has objected to my views on capital punishment by trying to show that the taking of human life, legally or illegally, cannot be ethically justified. But the matter is really simple, isn't it? Murderers certainly aren't ethically justified in taking the lives of their victims. Does anyone ever think of the poor victim?

**Slippery Slope**

In a slippery slope argument, a course of action is rejected because, with little or no evidence, one insists that it will lead to a chain reaction resulting in an undesirable end or ends. The slippery slope involves an acceptance of a succession of events without direct evidence that this course of events will happen.

*Example:*

- We can't permit the sale of marijuana by doctor's prescription because that will lead people to believe it's an acceptable drug; this will open the floodgates to the complete legalization of the drug for use by every pothead in the country.

- Today late for ten minutes, tomorrow late for an hour, and then someday you will simply cease to show up.

- Earlier this year in New York, a cop killed a pedestrian on the following reasoning: Oh! Here is a man who is scratching his head in public. He is so rude! Next, he will pick his nose. Then when he gets on the bus, he will put his germs on the handrail. The next moment an inadvertent child's mouth will touch it. And then the child will get sick. Then, his whole family will get sick as well. There will be an outbreak of disease in the city! The cop could not bear thinking any further, and fired his gun.

- People who drink more than six alcoholic beverages a day are more likely to have health problems than people who do not drink alcohol. After one drink, people lose their ability to make good decisions and end up drinking more and more until they are drinking more than six drinks each day. Therefore, all consumption of alcohol should be banned.

- If Texas adopts a personal income tax, I'm moving away. An income tax at the state level is just a first step to communism.
Unwarranted or Hasty Generalization
This fallacy occurs when we make a generalization on the basis of insufficient evidence. This may occur when we rely on too small of a sample or an unrepresentative sample to support the generalization.

Example:
- Children of faculty are brats. I baby-sit for one of my professors, and his children are spoiled and demanding.
- Bald men are smart. You see, my brother is bald, and he is a genius.
- Japanese is so easy. Everything was a piece of cake on the first day of the class.
- I was going to buy a new Honda, but my uncle had one back in the '70's and it was small and noisy and very uncomfortable. I don't think I want an uncomfortable car, so I'll buy something else.
- I know this will be a horrible class. They tell me the professor is old. Old professors are unable to talk with today's college students.

Straw Person
This fallacy occurs when, in attempting to refute another person's argument, you address only a weak or distorted version of it. Straw person is the misrepresentation of an opponent's position or a competitor's product to tout one's own argument or product as superior. This fallacy occurs when the weakest version of an argument is attacked while stronger ones are ignored.

Examples:
- Pro-choice is absurd. How could anyone support killing an innocent human being?
- Egalitarianism is wrong because it is the same as communism.
- It's appalling to me that the people who oppose the death penalty believe the lives of convicted murderers are more important than the lives of their victims. This alone shows that the opponents of capital punishment are wrong.
- Senator Jackson is anti-woman. After all, he voted against anti-pornography legislation, so he is in favor of the sexual and violent exploitation of women.
Exercise
1. In groups in class or on d2l, review the fallacies discussed in Chapter 8 and discuss how they are used in the advertisements you encounter online (Facebook ads or web pop-ups/banner ads are a good place to look).

2. Locate a specific advertisement that employs a logical fallacy discussed in Chapter 8. Explain how this advertisement exemplifies the fallacy.

3. How can a knowledge of fallacies help consumers to make informed decisions about their purchases? Other than advertising, where are some likely spaces and situations where we encounter fallacies in our daily lives?

Key Takeaways
- Syllogisms are logical arguments that apply deductive reasoning to reach a conclusion based on two or more premises.
- Enthymemes are three-part rhetorical syllogisms, and their composition is heavily dependent on audience and purpose.
- You can extrapolate syllogisms from many images.
- Logical fallacies occur when the stated premise of an argument fails to adequately support its conclusion.
- Learning logical fallacies is useful both when writing arguments as something to be avoided and when evaluating arguments as something to be critiqued.

Works Cited


LICENSING AND ATTRIBUTIONS

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Chapter 9—Professional Career
Rhetorical Situations

Professional communication in written form requires skill and expertise. From text messages to reports, how you represent yourself with the written word counts. Writing in an online environment requires tact and skill, and an awareness that what you write may be there forever. From memos to letters, from business proposals to social media, PowerPoints, and résumés, your written business communication represents you and your company: your goal is to make it clear, concise, and professional.

Texting

Whatever digital device you use, written communication in the form of brief messages, or texting, has become a common way to connect. It is useful for short exchanges, and is a convenient way to stay connected with others when talking on the phone would be cumbersome. Texting is not useful for long or complicated messages, and careful consideration should be given to the audience.

It is often said that you can tell how old someone is by how he or she inputs a phone number on a cell phone. If the person uses his or her thumb while holding the digital device, that person may have been raised on video games and may be adept at one-handed interfaces. If he holds the digital device with one hand and inputs the number with the other, he may be over thirty, or may be less comfortable with some technological devices.

Of course, there is no actual correlation between input and age, but it is a useful example to use when considering who your audience is when writing a text message. If the person is a one-hander, and knows all the abbreviations common to texting, you may be able to use similar codes to communicate effectively. If the person is a two-hander, you are better off using fewer words and spelling them out. Texting can be a great tool for connecting while on the go, but consider your audience and your company, and choose words, terms, or abbreviations that will deliver your message.
TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE BUSINESS TEXTING

• Know your recipient; “? % dsct” may be an understandable way to ask a close associate what the proper discount is to offer a certain customer, but if you are writing a text to your boss, it might be wiser to write, “what % discount does Murray get on $1K order?”

• Anticipate unintentional misinterpretation. Texting often uses symbols and codes to represent thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Given the complexity of communication, and the useful but limited tool of texting, be aware of its limitation and prevent misinterpretation with brief messages.

• Contacting someone too frequently can border on harassment. Texting is a tool. Use it when appropriate but don’t abuse it.

• Unplug yourself. Do you feel constantly connected? Do you feel lost or “out of it” if you don’t have your cell phone and cannot connect to people, even for fifteen minutes? Sometimes being unavailable for a time can be healthy—everything in moderation, including texting.

• Don’t text and drive. Research shows that the likelihood of an accident increases dramatically if the driver is texting behind the wheel (Houston Chronicle, 2009). Being in an accident while conducting company business would reflect poorly on your judgment as well as on your employer.
Email

Electronic mail, usually called e-mail, is quite familiar to most students and workers. It may be used like text, or synchronous chat, and it can be delivered to a cell phone. In business, it has largely replaced print hard copy letters for external (outside the company) correspondence, as well as taking the place of memos for internal (within the company) communication (Guffey, 2008). E-mail can be very useful for messages that have slightly more content than a text message, but it is still best used for fairly brief messages.

Many businesses use automated e-mails to acknowledge communications from the public, or to remind associates that periodic reports or payments are due. You may also be assigned to “populate” a form e-mail in which standard paragraphs are used, but you choose from a menu of sentences to make the wording suitable for a particular transaction.

E-mails may be informal in personal contexts, but business communication requires attention to detail, awareness that your e-mail reflects you and your company, and a professional tone so that it may be forwarded to any third party if needed. E-mail often serves to exchange information within organizations. Although e-mail may have an informal feel, remember that when used for business, it needs to convey professionalism and respect. Never write or send anything that you wouldn’t want read in public or in front of your company president.

Memos

A memo (or memorandum, meaning “reminder”) is normally used for communicating policies, procedures, or related official business within an organization. It is often written from a one-to-all perspective (like mass communication), broadcasting a message to an audience, rather than a one-on-one, interpersonal communication. It may also be used to update a team on activities for a given project, or to inform a specific group within a company of an event, action, or observance.

Memo Purpose

A memo’s purpose is often to inform, but it occasionally includes an element of persuasion or a call to action. All organizations have informal and formal communication networks. The unofficial, informal communication network within an organization is often called the “grapevine,” and it is often characterized by rumor, gossip, and innuendo. On the grapevine, one person
may hear that someone else is going to be laid off and start passing the news around. Rumors change and transform as they are passed from person to person, and before you know it, the word is that they are shutting down your entire department.

One effective way to address informal, unofficial speculation is to spell out clearly for all employees what is going on with a particular issue. If budget cuts are a concern, then it may be wise to send a memo explaining the changes that are imminent. If a company wants employees to take action, they may also issue a memorandum. For example, on February 13, 2009, upper management at the Panasonic Corporation issued a declaration that all employees should buy at least $1,600 worth of Panasonic products. The company president noted that if everyone supported the company with purchases, it would benefit all (Lewis, 2009).

While memos do not normally include a call to action that requires personal spending, they often represent the business or organization's interests. They may also include statements that align business and employee interest, and underscore common ground and benefit.

**Memo Format**
A memo has a header that clearly indicates who sent it and who the intended recipients are. Pay particular attention to the title of the individual(s) in this section. Date and subject lines are also present, followed by a message that contains a declaration, a discussion, and a summary.

In a standard writing format, we might expect to see an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. All these are present in a memo, and each part has a clear purpose. The declaration in the opening uses a declarative sentence to announce the main topic. The discussion elaborates or lists major points associated with the topic, and the conclusion serves as a summary.

**Five tips for effective business memos**

**Audience orientation**
Always consider the audience and their needs when preparing a memo. An acronym or abbreviation that is known to management may not be known by all the employees of the organization, and if the memo is to be posted and distributed within the organization, the goal is clear and concise communication at all levels with no ambiguity.
**Professional, formal tone**

Memos are often announcements, and the person sending the memo speaks for a part or all of the organization. While a memo may contain a request for feedback, the announcement itself is linear, from the organization to the employees. The memo may have legal standing as it often reflects policies or procedures, and may reference an existing or new policy in the employee manual, for example.

**Subject emphasis**

The subject is normally declared in the subject line and should be clear and concise. If the memo is announcing the observance of a holiday, for example, the specific holiday should be named in the subject line—for example, use “Thanksgiving weekend schedule” rather than “holiday observance.”

**Direct format**

Some written business communication allows for a choice between direct and indirect formats, but memorandums are always direct. The purpose is clearly announced.

**Objectivity**

Memos are a place for just the facts, and should have an objective tone without personal bias, preference, or interest on display. Avoid subjectivity.
MEMO

To: All Employees
From: Larry Ogawa, President, University of State
Date: February 14, 2009
Subject: Future Expenditure Guidelines

After careful deliberation, I have determined it is necessary to begin the initial steps of a financial stewardship program that carries UState through what appears to be a two-year cycle of a severe state shortfall in revenue and subsequent necessary legislative budget reductions.

Beginning February 9, 2009, the following actions are being implemented for the General Fund, Auxiliary Fund, and Capital Fund in order to address the projected reductions in our state aid for the remainder of this year 2008–09 and for next year 2009–10.

1. Only purchases needed to operate the university should be made so that we can begin saving to reduce the impact of 2009–10 budget reductions.
2. Requests for out-of-state travel will require approval from the Executive Committee to ensure that only necessary institutional travel occurs.
3. Purchases, including in-state travel and budget transfers, will require the appropriate vice president’s approval.

Please understand that we are taking these prudent steps to create savings that will allow UState to reduce the impact of projected cuts in expected 2009–10 legislative reductions. Thank you for your cooperation, and please direct any questions to my office.

Reports

Reports are documents designed to record and convey information to the reader. Reports are part of any business or organization; from credit reports to police reports, they serve to document specific information for specific audiences, goals, or functions. The type of report is often identified by its primary purpose or function, as in an accident report, a laboratory report, a sales report, or even a book report.

Reports are often analytical, or involve the rational analysis of information. Sometimes, they simply “report the facts” with no analysis at all, but still need to
communicate the information in a clear and concise format. Other reports summarize past events, present current data, and forecast future trends. While a report may have conclusions, propositions, or even a call to action, the demonstration of the analysis is the primary function. A sales report, for example, is not designed to make an individual sale. It is, however, supposed to report sales to date, and may forecast future sales based on previous trends. This chapter is designed to introduce you to the basics of report writing.

**Types of reports**

Reports come in all sizes, but are typically longer than a page and somewhat shorter than a book. The type of report depends on its function. The function of the report is its essential purpose, often indicated in the thesis or purpose statement. The function will also influence the types of visual content or visual aids, representing words, numbers, and their relationships to the central purpose in graphic, representational ways that are easy for the reader to understand. The function may also contribute to parameters like report length (page or word count) or word choice and readability.

“Focusing on the content of your longer business documents is not only natural but necessary because doing so helps ensure complete, correct information” (Bovee & Thill, 2010).

Reports vary by function, and they also vary by style and tradition. Within your organization, there may be employer-specific expectations that need to be addressed to meet audience expectations. This chapter discusses reports in general terms, focusing on common elements and points of distinction, but reference to similar documents where you work or additional examination of specific sample reports may serve you well as you prepare your own report.

**Informational or analytical report?**

There are two main categories for reports, regardless of their specific function or type. An informational report informs or instructs and presents details of events, activities, individuals, or conditions without analysis. An example of this type of “just the facts” report is a police accident report. The report will note the time, date, place, contributing factors like weather, and identification information for the drivers involved in an automobile accident. It does not establish fault or include judgmental statements. You should not see “Driver was falling down drunk” in a police accident report. Instead, you would see “Driver failed sobriety tests and breathalyzer test and was transported to the station for a blood sample.” The police officer is not a trained medical doctor and is therefore not licensed to make definitive diagnoses, but can collect and present relevant information that may contribute to that diagnosis.
The second type of report is called an analytical report. An analytical report presents information with a comprehensive analysis to solve problems, demonstrate relationships, or make recommendations. An example of this report may be a field report by a Center for Disease Control (CDC) physician from the site of an outbreak of the H1N1 virus, noting symptoms, disease progression, steps taken to arrest the spread of the disease, and to make recommendations on the treatment and quarantine of subjects.

**White papers**

The white paper was first used to describe official government documents and projected its authority to address a specific issue. In the business world, the term has been expanded to include any document that states a position for proposing a solution to a problem to someone outside of an organization. As you can imagine, this is a popular genre of document in marketing because it can describe how a project meets a need for current and potential customers.

**Verb Tense**

Especially for those in technical fields who typically write scientific reports and coordinate their own research findings with those of other researchers, decisions about the proper verb tense to use in a given situation can be befuddling. A quote by Groucho Marx is instructive here, as Groucho once quipped: “I have had a perfectly wonderful evening, but this wasn’t it.” Because Groucho employs the perfect tense here (using “have had,” which suggests both present and past), he correctly notes that the wonderful evening could have been on any other night in his life.

The first rule of thumb is to word your sentences in such a way that verb tenses are simple and consistent. The easiest way to simplify context for both yourself and your reader is to use present tense when possible because it is automatically reader-friendly and readily understood. However, there is obviously more to this issue.

An accepted practice is that scientific truths, facts, and things happening during the reading of a paper can be treated best in present tense.

- Nickel is generally deposited from sulfate, sulfate-chloride, or sulfamate electrolytes with or without additives.
- This paper evaluates material deformation in the brittle and ductile regimes.
Your own findings or experimental procedures, the actual experimental procedures and results of others, and physically past events should usually be treated as simple past tense.

- A drop of HNO3 was added to bring the distilled water to pH 3.

- In the 1930s, it was fashionable for scientists to write memos only in the passive voice.

Future tense (using “will” or “shall” with a verb) is usually reserved for those things not yet completed. This tense is most useful when you want to talk about future events.

- Copper use will become more sophisticated as new exploration technologies and new extraction techniques develop.

Finally, the perfect tense (using “has,” “have,” or “had” as a helping verb) comes in handy when you are writing about a “double time”—that is, when you need to stress that one thing happened before another, or that something began in the past and was continued thereafter.

- This particular radiometer has been used since 1985.

- Scientists had argued about the existence of molecules for centuries before it was universally agreed that matter was discrete rather than continuous.

Contrary to what some writers think, you certainly may switch verb tense within a paragraph (even within a sentence, for that matter); you simply must be certain that the context implied by the verb tense matches the intended meaning.

### Using Active Verbs

When composing, we often automatically make lazy choices, especially when choosing verbs. We feel enticed by generic all-purpose verbs such as “deal with” or “show,” which on the surface can sound snappy and technical. However, the more these verbs are used in a particular paper, the more meaningless they become. Even in journal articles, these verbs put in a shocking number of appearances and return for many unsolicited encores. Yet these words convey
no analytical meaning at all and are barely informational. Much to the reader’s frustration, “deal with” and “show” are often merely thinly disguised excuses for much more active analytical verbs such as theorize, suggest, imply, propose. For the reader, “Cheswick dealt with” or “Figure 4 shows” are far less meaningful than “Cheswick hypothesized” or “Figure 4 represents.” As always, you should choose exact words in favor of nonspecific ones, especially when you can use an active verb.

In technical writing, learning to deploy active verbs on the page is one of the most obvious and easiest ways to improve your style. Active verbs—whether in present or past tense—are especially meaningful as you describe work that another author or you have completed or are in the process of completing. As a rule, you should try to choose active verbs in the following circumstances:

1. As you prepare a literature review, where your job is to describe the work of others in concise, analytical terms

   Phillip Bennett (2008) proposes a mechanism explaining increased silica solubility in the presence of two small organic acids.

2. As you interpret your own experimental work, where your job is to explain observed trends

   The results of this study challenge findings from similar studies about analyte concentration varying with sample location.

3. As you present a thesis or objective statement, where your job is to forecast information that will follow in the paper

   This study characterizes wetlands by their water chemistry and postulates that water chemistry varies with water source and wetland type.

4. As you refer to figures, tables, or equations, where your job is to define the purpose of the figure, table, or equation

   Figure 4 depicts grain growth that occurred after the ceramic was sintered for three hours.

What follows is a substantial list of active verbs. Journal articles were scanned to see how the best authors described their work or the work of others. Each of these words is packed with individual, analytical meaning. When using this list,
be sure to choose the best verb for the situation—verbs such as “construct,” “challenge,” and “extrapolate” are obviously completely different from each other, so you must use them with meaningful care.

**Active verbs that describe work and analytical thinking**

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**Social Media, Blogs, and Social Networking**

Blogs started as online journals kept by a few individuals written as a leisure activity and posted online for public viewing, and they have transformed the way people, businesses, and media outlets communicate with the public. Short for web log, blogs allow people to communicate on specific topics to a targeted or general audience. For example, when a computer company announces a new laptop or tablet, you will notice that the various accessory and peripheral companies will post blog entries talking about the new hardware and their company’s plans to create products designed for it. Nearly every major news outlet devotes a section of its website to the blogs and includes contributors from within the company or even opens the space to the general public. Many companies also have internal blogs that address news and initiatives within the company.
Microblogging is a sub-category of blogging that allows users to share small snippets of data in real time. Twitter is the best-known platform for blogging. On twitter, users are limited to 140 characters although images, gifs, and links do not count towards the total. Micro-blogging allows you to ask or answer questions, give input on projects, and post comments about proposals or presentations. For example, academic and business conferences will typically have a hashtag that allows Twitter users to quickly filter and read perspectives on conference presentations (Example: #wwdc (Worldwide Developers Conference).

With any of these platforms, writing principles such as audience and purpose are crucial. You want to aim for clarity in your sentences, even on sites with truncated prose such as Twitter. There is a learning curve for hashtags, acronyms, and even emojis, but when you grow up with these technologies, they can feel like second nature. When adapting your blogging and social media writing to a professional setting, it is always critical to maintain professionalism. Posting inappropriate or hostile language online can reach a wide audience quickly and reflect poorly on an individual or organization. As with any kind of writing, respect and kindness go a long way to effectively calm heated emotions and cultivate an environment that is pleasant for everyone.

**Exercise**

1. Individually or in small groups think of three distinct social media platforms and compare their positive and negative aspects when used in a professional setting.
2. Compose a sample social media post for a fictional product of your choosing on each of the platforms you discussed for question 1.

**Writing effective PowerPoint presentations**

PowerPoint is a presentation program developed by Microsoft that was been an integral part of business, government, and education since it was first developed the 1990s. There are a number of similar software platforms today, most notably Keynote (a Mac application) and...
Google Slides, a web-based presentation program. You may have experience with PowerPoint in business or the classroom, either as a presenter or audience member. If so, you likely have some impressions of what does and does not work in a PowerPoint presentation.¹

**PowerPoint Design Tips**
- Keep it simple by avoiding superfluous content
- Limit animations to subtle and professional transitions rather than elaborate slide effects
- Use high quality, high resolution images you take yourself or cite from sources, being sure to follow documentation rules
- Have a visual theme but consider branching out from default templates as those have likely been seen many times by your audience
- Use color well with a pleasant mix of cool (blue and green) and warm (orange and red) colors.

**PowerPoint content tips**
- Consider the rhetorical situation, including topic, purpose, audience, and presentation length
- Adopt a clear organizational strategy (example: anecdote, data, plan of action)
- Use slide content as a compliment to an oral presentation and not a mirror of it (i.e. do not read directly from each slide to the audience)
- Ask questions on slide to engage the audience
- Limit bullet points and text with short cogent lists that complement the oral presentation
- Practice your delivery of the material so you are not locked on to the slides during the presentation

**Exercise**
Compose a PowerPoint presentation based on one of your recent or current essay projects. Your instructor may have you present these to the class or submit them for homework without a presentation. Regardless, you should design the presentation with a specific audience and presentation length in mind (example: speaking to a group of college students for 15 minutes). Use the tips above to compose a presentation that is visually engaging, informative, and interesting.

¹ For free tutorials on using presentation software, see [https://support.office.com/en-us/article/PowerPoint-training-40e8c930-cb0b-40d8-82c4-bd53d3398787](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/PowerPoint-training-40e8c930-cb0b-40d8-82c4-bd53d3398787)
Résumés

A résumé is a document that summarizes your education, skills, talents, employment history, and experiences in a clear and concise format for potential employers. The résumé serves three distinct purposes that define its format, design, and presentation:

- To represent your professional information in writing
- To demonstrate the relationship between your professional information and the problem or challenge the potential employer hopes to solve or address, often represented in the form of a job description or duties
- To get you an interview by clearly demonstrating you meet the minimum qualifications and have the professional background help the organization meet its goals

An online profile page is similar to a résumé in that it represents you, your background and qualifications, and adds participation to the publication. People network, link, and connect in new ways via online profiles or professional sites like LinkedIn. In many ways, your online profile is an online version of your résumé with connections and friends on public display. Your MySpace and Facebook pages are also often accessible to the public, so never post anything you wouldn’t want your employer (current or future) to read, see, or hear. This chapter covers a traditional résumé, as well as the more popular scannable features, but the elements and tips could equally apply to your online profile.

Main parts of résumé

Regardless of the format, employers have expectations for your résumé. They expect it to be clear, accurate, and up to date (Bennett, 2005). This document represents you in your absence, and you want it to do the best job possible. You don’t want to be represented by spelling or grammatical errors, as they may raise questions about your education and attention to detail. Someone reading your résumé with errors will only wonder what kind of work you might produce.

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2 Career Services at Rose State College has a number of useful job search resources, including links to résumé builders and job sites. See [https://www.rose.edu/content/business-community/job-center/employment-resources/](https://www.rose.edu/content/business-community/job-center/employment-resources/)
that will poorly reflect on their company. There is going to be enough competition, so you don’t want to provide an easy excuse to toss your résumé at the start of the process. Do your best work the first time.

Résumés have several basic elements that employers look for, including your contact information, objective or goal, education and work experience, and so on. Each résumé format may organize the information in distinct ways based on the overall design strategy, but all information should be clear, concise, and accurate (Simons & Curtis, 2004).

**Contact Information**

This section is often located at the top of the document. The first element of the contact information is your name. You should use your full, legal name even if you go by your middle name or use a nickname. There will plenty of time later to clarify what you prefer to be called, but all your application documents—including those that relate to payroll, your social security number, drug screenings, background checks, fingerprint records, transcripts, certificates or degrees—should feature your legal name. Other necessary information includes your address, phone number(s), and e-mail address. If you maintain two addresses (e.g., a campus and a residential address), make it clear where you can be contacted by indicating the primary address. For business purposes, do not use an unprofessional e-mail address like sexiluvr93@hotmale.com or tutifruti@yafoo.com. Create a new e-mail account if needed with an address suitable for professional use.

**Objective**

This is one part of your résumé that is relatively simple to customize for an individual application. Your objective should reflect the audience’s need to quickly understand how you will help the organization achieve its goals.

**Core Qualifications**

This is a crucial part of most résumés today because it can align specific skills and qualifications with the job you are seeking. For a teacher, this might be courses taught and for a software engineer, it might be particular operating systems and software proficiencies.

**Education**

You need to list your education in reverse chronological order, with your most recent degree first. List the school, degree, and grade point average (GPA). If there is a difference between the GPA in your major courses and your overall...
GPA, you may want to list them separately to demonstrate your success in your chosen field. You may also want to highlight relevant coursework that directly relate to the position.

**Work Experience**

5. List in reverse chronological order your employment history, including the positions, companies, locations, dates, duties, and skills demonstrated or acquired. You may choose to use active, descriptive sentences or bullet lists, but be consistent. Emphasize responsibilities that involved budgets, teamwork, supervision, and customer service when applying for positions in business and industry, but don’t let emphasis become exaggeration. This document represents you in your absence, and if information is false, at a minimum you could lose your job.

**Exercise**

1. It is common today to use résumé builders online to create a résumé. Use one of the résumé builders from the Rose State College career services page to compose a résumé ([https://www.rose.edu/content/business-community/job-center/employment-resources/](https://www.rose.edu/content/business-community/job-center/employment-resources/)).

2. LinkedIn is “a social networking site designed specifically for the business community. The goal of the site is to allow registered members to establish and document networks of people they know and trust professionally.” Visit linkedin.com and answer the following:

   - How does LinkedIn differ from other social media sites you might use (Facebook, twitter, Instagram)? Focus on design and layout.
   - How has social media influence how we look for jobs and network?

**Note on cover letters**

Many job applications require a cover letter and it can make a different between getting and interview or not. The goal of a cover letter is to provide additional information on your skills and expertise. You should tailor the document to the particular job you are applying for. Do not simply repeat the information from
your resume. Rather, market your credentials as a “fit” for that particular position.³

**Sample Résumé**

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**Ryan Bochenek**  
123 Main Street, San Francisco, CA 94122  
Home: 000-000-0000 | Cell: 000-000-0000  
email@example.com

**Objective**  
To further enhance my technical knowledge in Ruby, Perl, PHP, C, C++, IIS, .Net, C#, Apache, and Git as a DevOps Engineer and contribute positively to organizational development.

**Core Qualifications**  
- Experienced with Interpreted Languages including Perl and Python  
- Understands Compiled languages including C, C++, C#, and JAVA.  
- Strong use of Shell scripting languages including BASH for Linux and Mac platforms and PowerShell for Windows systems  
- Facility with development methodologies including Agile  
- Excellent configuration management using Puppet Chef and Ansible

**Education**  
Bachelor of Science Degree - Computer Information Systems  
2004  
California Pacific University, New Cityland, CA

**Experience**  
DevOps Engineer  
8/1/2012 - 7/1/2017  
Google  
New Cityland, CA

- Worked within the Cloud for integration processes.  
- Performed DevOps for Linux Mac and Windows platforms.  
- Focused on automation and integration.  
- Monitored developed applications and fixed bugs.  
- Wrote code and designed continual updates.

**References**  
Available upon request

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³ For more on cover letters and samples see  
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/549/01/
Key takeaways

- Professional communication comprises a variety of print and digital media
- Professional writing should be clear, concise, and professional
- Memos are used to communicate policies, procedures, and official business within an organization
- Memos should be concise, direct, and objective
- Verb tense choice should be a deliberate decision based on context and the principle of consistency
- Use descriptive, active verbs when possible to convey meaning within concise sentences
- Blogs and social media are transforming how we consume media and interact as professionals
- Carefully planning design and content is a key to effective PowerPoint presentations
- Résumés are a formulaic genre of writing where attention to detail and conventions are crucial

References


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Chapter 10—Research: Joining the Conversation

What Is Research?

At its most basic level, research is anything you must do to find out something you didn’t already know. That definition might seem simple and obvious, but it contains some key assumptions that might not be as obvious. Understanding these assumptions is going to be essential to your success in this course (and in your life after college), so they will be spelled out here.

First, research is about acquiring new information or new knowledge, which means that it always begins from a gap in your knowledge—that is, something you don’t know. More importantly, research is always goal-directed: that is, it always begins from a specific question you need to answer (a specific gap in your body of information that you need to fill) in order to accomplish some particular goal. If you are a very focused, driven person, this will seem obvious to you because you are probably already quite aware of yourself as someone who goes after the information you need to accomplish your goals. If you tend to be more laid-back and open to whatever experiences life brings you, you may not be as conscious of yourself as a goal-directed finder of information, but this chapter will help you recognize the ways in which research is already embedded in your life.

Research (definition 1) = Anything you have to do to find out something you didn’t already know.

Research Question = Your one-sentence statement of the thing-you-don’t-know that motivates your research.

Sometimes, the answer to your question or the information needed to fill your knowledge gap already exists in exactly the form you need. For example:

1. Does Columbus, Ohio, have a commercial airport?

The answer to this turns out to be yes, and the time to find the answer is about ten seconds. A Google search of “airports in Ohio” produces as its first hit a Wikipedia entry titled “List of airports in Ohio.” A quick glance at this document
shows that Columbus does indeed have a commercial airport, and that it is one of the three largest airports in Ohio.

2. Do any airlines offer direct flights from Kansas City to Columbus?

The answer to this appears to be no, and the time to find the answer is about two minutes. Using Travelocity.com and searching for flights from MCI (Kansas City International Airport) to CMH (Port Columbus International Airport) gets the message “We’ve searched more than 400 airlines we sell and couldn’t find any flights from Kansas City (MCI) ... [to] Columbus (CMH).” Doing the same search on Expedia.com and Orbitz.com yields the same answer. There appear to be no direct flights from Kansas City to Columbus, Ohio.

Often, however, the questions we need to have answered are more complicated than this, which means that answer comes with some assembly required.

1. What’s the best way to get from Kansas City to Columbus, Ohio?

To answer this question requires a two-stage process of gathering information about travel options and then evaluating the results based on parameters not stated in the question. We already know that it is possible to fly to Columbus although no direct flights are available. A quick look at a map shows the route is also a relatively straightforward drive of about 650 miles to Columbus. That’s the information gathering stage. Now we have to evaluate the results based on things like cost, time and effort required, practicality given the purpose of the trip, and the personal preferences of the traveler. For a business traveler for whom shortest possible travel time is more important than lowest cost, the final decision may be very different than for a college student with a large dog.

Although all three questions require information gathering, for the purposes of this course we are going to call questions like #1 and #2 “homework questions” (because you can find the answer just by going to a single reference source and looking it up) and save the designation “research question” for questions like #3 for which developing a fully functional answer requires both gathering relevant information and then assembling it in a meaningful way.

For the purposes of this course, research (definition 2) is the process of finding the information needed to answer your research question and then deriving or building the answer from the information you found.
Finding Sources

In order to effectively find sources, you first need to plan your search. Consult your assignment criteria sheet and any other documents associated with the project. In English composition, many of the class activities lay the foundation for your search. There are two important general questions at this early stage: “What do I know about the topic?” and “What do I need to know?” These simple questions prepare the next step because in answering them you can produce keywords that will aid in locating sources, and you can determine what kinds of sources you need.

Example
Topic: Affordable housing

What do I know about the topic?
I know that there is a shortage of affordable housing in many parts of the country and this that is made worse by wage stagnation and gentrification.

What do I need to know?
I do not know the scope of this problem and do not know enough about solutions that have been proposed or tried around the country.

That brief example reveals several key words that will be useful when searching for sources, including “affordable housing,” “wage stagnation,” and “gentrification.” It is the combination of these and related terms that will facilitate effective research. Furthermore, the questions show what types of sources are needed. “Scope of the problem” is an answer that shows the need for statistical evidence. Looking at solutions that have been proposed might lead you to statements from lawmakers or current and pending legislation.

Consult your assignment sheet for details on source requirements because it will often list the number and types of sources required (example: 3 sources from library databases). Using keywords you identified in pre-writing and preliminary research, you can start locating sources. This chapter provides an overview of online research from the library resource page and commercial search engines.
Library resource page

Rose State College’s library resource page includes a number of useful resources and should be the central hub for most of your research in your courses. The library catalogue and databases allow you to pull in resources from hundreds of locations with a single search.

Library Catalog

A simple search with your key words is often the best place to start when searching the catalog but take some time to learn the various menus and manipulate your results.¹ You can limit searches by year, format, or search for specific titles and authors, a useful feature when you get deeper into a research project and start looking for specific sources.

¹ You can reach the RSC library catalog at http://rose.worldcat.org
Exercise
Perform a search using the library catalog.
1. How many of the sources on the first few pages seem relevant to your project. How can you tell?
2. Now manipulate your search by trying various menu options for dates and format. What effect does this have on your search results?

Online Databases

A database is a structured set of data held in a computer, especially one that is accessible in various ways. You will likely use databases in your professional life as they are commonly used to manage lists of customers, patients, inventory, or any other kind of data. For our purposes, databases are collections of academic resources drawn from individual journals, websites, and government documents.\(^2\)

![Choose Databases](https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/library/resources/online-databases/)

Figure 24: Rose State subscribes to a number of databases. EBSCOhost provides an excellent collection of general and specialized databases and the best way to familiarize yourself with the options is to practice with them.

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\(^2\) You can access RSC library databases at [https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/library/resources/online-databases/](https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/library/resources/online-databases/). To access the databases off campus, you must first log on to a campus computer each semester. If you are unable to come to campus, call the Reference Desk at 405-733-7543. Be prepared to provide your first and last name, student ID number and birthdate.
Figure 25: Detailed records of database searches include links to full text documents, a summary called an abstract, and options to save, print, or cite the source.

Figure 26: The EBSCOhost pdf viewer allows you to navigate, print, or save the document. If printing in a lab, be mindful of printing policies and costs.
Commercial Search Engines

A search engine is a software system designed to search for information on the World Wide Web. Google is the most recognizable search engine. Other examples include Bing and Yahoo. Search engines are an inseparable part of our online lives, and Google alone receives approximately 3.5 billion searches per day for an average of 40,000 search queries per second (“Internet Live Stats”).

When using a search engine, a number of factors influence the results you see. Complex algorithms evaluate the number and quality of links to a site. Searches are increasingly tailored to the accounts of individual users. While Google and other search engines yield a high volume of hits for any given search, you will
likely have to sift through more irrelevant or unreliable sources than when using library databases.

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**Affordable Housing - CPD - HUD - HUD.gov**
https://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/
Affordable Housing. Who Needs Affordable Housing? Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.

**Affordable Housing Online**
https://affordablehousingonline.com/
Search over 6229000 low income apartments in 77500 low income housing complexes nationwide. Find your local housing authority and apply for an open ...

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**Google Scholar and Google Books**

Google scholar is a specialized search engine within Google that “provides a simple way to broadly search for scholarly literature. From one place, you can search across many disciplines and sources: articles, theses, books, abstracts and court opinions, from academic publishers, professional societies, online repositories, universities and other web sites” (“About”). A search in Google scholar helps limit your searches to academic sources, but many of the sources will be previews or snippets locked behind a “pay wall.” These can still be useful as you can try to locate the full source through your library databases or with the help of a reference librarian.

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3 Google scholar can be found at [https://scholar.google.com](https://scholar.google.com)
4 Reference librarians are available at the reference desk in the RSC learning resource center or you can text your question using Text-A-Librarian: Text **rosie** to **66746** and follow the instructions. Message and data rates may apply. Text **STOP** to **66746** to opt-out. Text **HELP** to **66746** for help.
Evaluating Sources

Sources you gather from commercial search engines are not necessarily regulated for quality or accuracy, so it is important for you as the researcher to evaluate your sources. A common perspective on Internet sources is that anyone can publish anything they wish. This is true for the web in general, but your web searches will also produce material from websites with a more rigorous editorial process. To be certain the material you cite is reliable, consider whether it includes the following:

Authorship
- Is the name of the author or creator listed?
- What are the credentials of the author?
- Is the page affiliated with an organization?
- What does the URL tell you about the source, if anything?

Purpose
- Who is the intended audience? (example: the general public or experts)
- What is the purpose of the site? (example: information, persuasion, sales)

Objectivity
- Is the author’s point of view objective?
- Could the author’s affiliation introduce bias? (example: an oil company executive commenting on the safety of a pipeline)

Accuracy
- Does the source cite other sources?
- Are the sources of factual information clearly listed and easily accessible?
- Has the information been reviewed or gone through an editorial process?

These are important questions to ask for any source, not just sources you find through Google or Bing. Library databases are powerful tools that allow you to filter and tailor search results to your needs. You can even limit results to peer

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5 For more on evaluating sources see http://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/research-guides/evaluating-internet-content
reviewed articles. However, as a researcher and writer you are placing your reputation into the hands of your sources, and it is vital to ensure those sources are reliable and you integrate them into your project.

It is important to approach research as a hunt for knowledge rather than as an attempt to find information that will support the thesis and positions you already hold. In Composition II, your professor will especially emphasize that you include research from sources outside the U.S. Getting a global perspective can often open up new paths of inquiry and provide ideas and viewpoints that may significantly change your own understanding. At the very least, inclusion of research from areas other than the U.S. can help you avoid cultural bias and prevent readers from seeing your ideas as narrow or provincial.

**Integrating Research**

Once you have compiled your sources and notes, you move on to the important business of integrating sources. How you present your information to your reader is just as crucial as the information itself. Successful writing that uses research strategically presents and comments on sources. The name of this chapter is “Joining the Conversation” and that is a productive model for your task. In conversational speech, information needs context to be effectively understood. You have to frame your points for your audience. There are three ways to integrate sources into your writing.⁶

**Methods**

1. **Direct Quotes**

   - Should present the exact words from a source
   - Should be used when the statement is impactful or precise
   - Should be used when the source was written by an expert on the topic

2. **Paraphrasing**

   - Rephrasing someone else’s ideas in your own words
   - Should use used to maintain flow in your essay
   - Can be used when discussing concepts or definitions

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⁶ This chapter provides an overview of methods for integrating sources. For instructions on citing sources, see chapter 12 (MLA) and chapter 13 (APA).
3. Summarizing

- Summaries provide an overview of the main idea of a large block of text
- Should provide readers who have never read the original text a clear understanding for it.

For each of the methods above, you should consider how the source fits into your paragraph. As we saw in Chapter 3, a strong paragraph is built around a clear topic sentence, support, and transitions. The support offered by your source should clearly point back to the topic you established and the length of the citation; whether a quote or paraphrase should be a deliberate decision.

Exercise

Write a summary or paraphrase of the paragraph below.

"Beginning in 1952, television caused structural as well as superficial changes in American politics. That year, delegates of both parties were warned that the probing television lenses could capture every movement they made in their chairs. They were admonished to be careful about what they said to one another lest lip readers pick up the conversation from the television screen. Women delegates were cautioned against affronting blue-collar viewers by wearing showy jewelry" (Donovan and Scherer 21).

Framing

Frame sources to introduce research to your reader and discuss its importance. Commentary on the sources allows the writer to demonstrate why a particular source was chosen and how it addresses a concept in the paper. Signal phrases aid in framing material by presenting a source and creating distance between a source and your commentary on it. The verb you choose for a signal phrase can help convey the author’s position and also set up your response to it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledges</th>
<th>Contends</th>
<th>Insists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adds</td>
<td>Declares</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addresses</td>
<td>Disputes</td>
<td>Observes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argues</td>
<td>Emphasizes</td>
<td>Points out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asserts</td>
<td>Endorses</td>
<td>Reasons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Believes | Grants | Rejects
---|---|---
Claims | Illustrates | Reports
Comments | Implies | Responds

*Figure 9: Some examples of signal phrases*

## Sample

**Paraphrase**

Milgram (1974) claims that people's willingness to obey authority figures cannot be explained by psychological factors alone. In an earlier era, people may have had the ability to invest in social situations to a greater extent. However, as society has become increasingly structured by a division of labor, people have become more alienated from situations over which they do not have control.

**Source Material**

The problem of obedience is not wholly psychological. The form and shape of society and the way it is developing have much to do with it. There was a time, perhaps, when people were able to give a fully human response to any situation because they were fully absorbed in it as human beings. But as soon as there was a division of labor things changed.

**APA Reference List Citation**


## Avoiding Plagiarism

In college writing you are required to draw on the words and ideas of others. Scholarship entails readings, understanding, and incorporating published material. When you borrow from a source you are responding to and extending arguments. Giving credit for that borrowed material gives authors credit for their work, situates your argument in reference to a body of knowledge, and allows your readers to pursue their own knowledge of a topic by seeking out the sources that shaped your work. This section reviews what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

**Rose State College statement on academic integrity**

Rose State College expects students to understand and follow basic standards of honesty and integrity. Plagiarism, cheating, and any other form of academic dishonesty in the preparation of one’s assignments or during the performance of any examination are strictly forbidden. Assisting anyone to engage in any of the
violations described in this section qualifies as academic dishonesty. All rules and standards of academic integrity apply to all electronic and digital media.  

**What is plagiarism?**

“Plagiarism” means using another’s work without giving credit. If you use others’ words, you must put them in quotation marks and provide a parenthetical citation to identify your source. You must also include citations when using others’ ideas, even if you have paraphrased those ideas in your own words.

“Work” includes the words and ideas of others, as well as art, graphics, computer programs, music, and other creative expression. The work may consist of writing, charts, data, graphs, pictures, diagrams, websites, movies, TV broadcasts, or other communication media.

The term “source” includes published works – books, magazines, newspapers, textbooks, websites, movies, photos, paintings, plays – and unpublished sources (e.g., materials from a research service, blogs, class handouts, lectures, notes, speeches, other students’ papers).

Using words, ideas, computer code, or any work without giving proper credit is plagiarism. Any time you use information from a source, of any kind, you must cite it.  

**Preventing Plagiarism**

Correctly citing your sources is a big key to avoiding plagiarism and will be covered in Chapter 11 (MLA) and Chapter 12 (APA). Students in composition courses will learn how to use both MLA and APA; however, there are many types of documentation systems (Chicago, American Medical Association, etc.) All have their own common concerns and practices that govern them all. Writing Across Disciplines on Campus in Chapter 3 illustrates how academic writing conventions vary substantially according to discipline—that is, whether one is working in the humanities, the social or natural sciences, or business.

However, there is one overarching concept for these styles that helps ensure you avoid plagiarism. Each instance where you borrow directly from a source

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7 For complete statement on academic integrity, see the RSC student handbook, https://www.rose.edu/media/5551/rsc-2015-2016-student-handbook-txt_new.pdf

8 Adapted from “Avoiding Plagiarism,” University of California, Davis.
The Practiced Writer

requires an in-text citation and a citation on a works cited page or reference list with full publication information. For example:

**In-text citation**

Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263).

**Work Cited**


The in-text citation shows that the Wordsworth quote can be found on page 263, and the author’s name signals to the reader that that the publication information can be found on the accompanying works cited entry at the end of the essay.

Technical application of citation styles is a crucial part of avoiding plagiarism, and tracking your research throughout the entire research process is equally important. When taking notes from sources, make a careful account of what material you are taking from the sources. Using MLA or APA citations in your notes and preparing a reference list throughout the process can help you track your sources and can save you a lot of time later in the research process.

*Figure 30: Tracking sources today is often a combination of digital and print methods and the key is to find the right combination that ensures accuracy while making efficient use of your time.*
Examples:

PARAPHRASE VS. PLAGIARISM

Original Source: ‘[A totalitarian] society...can never permit either the truthful recording of facts, or the emotional sincerity, that literary creation demands. ... Totalitarianism demands...the continuous alteration of the past, and in the long run... disbelief in the very existence of objective truth.’ (qtd. in Bowker 337)


Student Version A – Plagiarism

A totalitarian society can never permit the truthful recording of facts; it demands the continuous alteration of the past, and a disbelief in the very existence of objective truth.

The student has combined copied pieces of the author’s language without quotation marks or citations.

Student Version B -- Improper paraphrase, also plagiarism

A totalitarian society can’t be open-minded or allow the truthful recording of facts, but instead demands the constant changing of the past and a distrust of the very existence of objective truth (Orwell).

The student has woven together sentences and switched a few words (“open-minded” for “tolerant,” “allow” for “permit”) has left out some words, and has given an incomplete and inaccurate citation.

Student Version C -- Appropriate paraphrase, not plagiarism

Orwell believed that totalitarian societies must suppress literature and free expression because they cannot survive the truth, and thus they claim it does not exist (Bowker 336-337).

This student has paraphrased using her own words, accurately reflecting and citing the author’s ideas.

Student Version D -- Quotation with cite, not plagiarism

In his biography of George Orwell, Gordon Bowker discusses the themes of 1984, quoting a 1946 essay by Orwell: “‘Totalitarianism demands ... the continuous alteration of the past, and in the long run ... a disbelief in the very existence of objective truth’” (337).

The student introduces the source. Verbatim words are in quotation marks, omitted words are marked by ellipses, and both the book used and the original source of the quote are cited.
Key Takeaways

- Research is the process of finding the information needed to answer your research question and then deriving or building the answer from the information you found.
- The library resource page is often the best place to start your research.
- Commercial search engines can produce a variety of high quality sources, but these sources must be evaluated for quality.
- Evaluating a source involves questioning factors such as authorship, purpose, objectivity, and accuracy.
- You can integrate sources with direct quotations, paraphrases, and summaries.
- Avoiding plagiarism requires careful record keeping.

Works Cited


LICENSES AND ATTRIBUTIONS
CC LICENSED CONTENT, SHARED PREVIOUSLY
What is MLA?

MLA is an editorial style recommended by the Modern Languages Association (MLA) for preparing scholarly manuscripts and research papers in the arts and humanities, which includes English, literature, humanities, communications, religion, art, theatre, and a number of other disciplines. MLA provides a series of standardized rules for formatting (heading, margins, line spacing, etc.) and rules for citing ideas and facts borrowed from other sources as quotations, paraphrases, and summaries.

Formatting rules

Since its first edition in 1951, a principle of MLA has been to provide guidelines that allow writers to create uniform documents. Simply put, this means that a stack of essays written in MLA will look the same. Uniform headers, margins, and fonts address the practical needs of editors, printers, and instructors. Check your assignment sheet to see if your instructor has specific requirements for the format of a research paper. The most common formatting for MLA is presented here.

Margins

Set margins at one inch at the top and bottom and both sides of the text. The document should be formatted for submission as an 8½ by 11-inch document, a standard sized sheet of paper in the United States. This gives you a printable area of 6½ by 9 inches. Even in the digital age where online submissions are more common, you nevertheless should follow these conventions.
Text formatting

Choose a readable typeface (e.g. Calibri) with a standard size of 12 points. Left justify the document (notice the shaded icon below) and double-space the entire research paper, including quotations, notes, and the works cited page.

![Figure 32: You can set fonts and sizes from the home menu.](image)

Note: Double-spacing is a setting that might not be selected by default in your word processor. This simple two-step process enables double-spacing at the start of your project and avoids formatting headaches later on.

![Step 1: Click format at the top of the screen in Microsoft Word](image)

![Step 2: Select double for line spacing and set the before and after numbers to 0.](image)

Heading and title

MLA essays do not include title pages but instead include all identifying information on the first page. In the top left corner of the page type your name, your instructor’s name, the course number, and the date on separate lines. On the next double-spaced line, center your title in plain text (no italics, bold, or underline). The essay will start on the next double-spaced line with an indentation of one-half inch (one Tab.)

Be sure to put thought into your essay title. Remember that an essay title is rhetorically significant. Avoid titles such as “Research Paper” or “Climate Change.” Choose a title that reflects both your topic and approach. Consider the research methods we covered in Chapter 10. The title of articles was a major component used to find sources as you looked for titles that aligned with your

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1 Always check with your professor
keywords. Your essay title should likewise reflect one or more of your topic keywords.

**Sample MLA essay first page**

Ina Sample  
Mrs. Alamia  
English II – S  
18 April 2016

There Will Come Harsh Destruction

Like many science fiction writers, Ray Bradbury frequently explores the world as he sees it in a technologically advanced future. One such text, "There Will Come Soft Rain," portrays an ordinary day in the future in which the height of technological advancement has been reached and everything, even a house, is automated for the ultimate convenience of humans. While most people delight in modern technology and overcoming Bradbury's understated in

Figure 32: Make note of the double-spacing throughout the document. Extra spacing anywhere in the document should be avoided.

**Running head with page numbers**

Number all pages consecutively throughout the research paper in the upper right hand corner. In addition, you should write your last name next to the page number. Rather than doing this manually, put the word processor to work for you to place your heading on every page. Page numbers can be inserted with the following three steps:

1. Click page number from the insert menu.
2. Select "top of page" and "right" for page number placement.
3. Click next to page number, click the space bar once, and type your last name.

**Exercise**

Open a new Microsoft Word document (or Google Docs) and compose a template first page of an MLA document. After reviewing your file for accuracy based on the descriptions in this chapter, save it for use with future MLA essays.
In-text citations

MLA uses two complementary features to indicate borrowing from a source in any form: a brief in-text citation and a Works Cited citation with full publication information. The 8th edition of the MLA handbook describes the goals of in-text citations as “brevity and clarity, guiding the reader as unobtrusively as possible to the corresponding entry in the Works Cited list” (227). A typical in-text citation is comprised of the element that comes first in the entry on the works cited list, the author’s last name or the title of the work for anonymous sources.

Example
According to Naomi Baron, reading is “just half of literacy. The other half is writing” (194). One might even suggest that reading is never complete without writing.

or

“Reading is “just half of literacy. The other half is writing” (Baron 194). One might even suggest that reading is never complete without writing.

Work Cited

The example above includes two types of in-text citations. In the first example, the author’s name is in the sentence; therefore, the parenthetical citation only includes the page number of the source. In the second example, the author is not mentioned in the sentence, so the parenthetical citation includes the author’s name and the page number. Notice that there is no comma between the author’s name and page number and that the punctuation for the in-text citation goes on the outside of the parentheses.

For sources without a named author, list the title of the source in parentheses, and if no page number is present you can omit it.

Example
Despite an apparent decline in reading during the same period, “the number of people doing creative writing—of any genre, not exclusively literary works—increased substantially between 1982 and 2002” (Reading 3).

Work Cited
The goal of in-text citations is to provide enough information to direct the reader to the corresponding Works Cited entry and, if possible, locate where the reader can find the information within the source. The most common location marker is the page number, but MLA includes a number of variations. For example, time-based media should include a reference to the range of time of the cited information.

Example
“The lure of Mars is the possibility that it wasn’t always such a harsh and barren place. From orbit, we see ancient signs of water flowing across the surface” (“Mars: Dead or Alive?” 00:06:27-37).

Exercise
Locate three sources for your research paper and compose a properly formatted in-text citation for each of the following:
1. A paraphrase where you mention the author in the sentence.
2. A direct quote
3. A paraphrase where you do not mention the author in the sentence.

Works Cited Guidelines
The Worked Cited page identifies all of the sources you borrow from in the body of your research paper. Each works cited entry is comprised of a number of core elements listed in a specific order. The 8th edition of MLA is structured to adopt a consistent approach to citation, regardless of medium. The overview below is intended to serve as a description of the rationale for Works Cited entries rather than an exhaustive list of every type of source.

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2 For a more detailed list of MLA examples consult https://www.rose.edu/media/6201/mla-2016-8th-edition-handout.pdf
As of the 8th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, all citations follow a standard format, with elements omitted if they do not apply to the source:

Author/creator. Title of source. Title of container, Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location.

**Principles of MLA citations**

1. All sources, regardless of format, have a series of “core elements,” basic information that lets your reader know where your information came from, and these are listed above.

2. Every source will contain some combination of the core elements, but not all sources will contain all core elements. Core elements not relevant to the work should be omitted.

3. An important concept in the 8th edition of MLA style is the concept of “containers,” which describe how the source was published or made available to readers. For sources within a larger work, such as a text within an anthology, the larger whole is identified as the container.

**MLA container examples**

- A short story (the source) might be published in a book (the container)
- A printed book (the source) would have only a Title of Source, and not a Title of Container
- An article (the source) has a container if published in a journal
- A web article (the source) has a container if published on a host site

**Gathering citation information**

To compose a Works Cited entry, you must first gather the necessary publication information; the location information depends on the type of source. A book will include the author, title, publisher, and year of publication. Periodicals...
often include this information on the first page. Websites are more irregular and sometimes require more digging. When you locate publication information, it is crucial to place elements in the correct order when you compose citations. A number of resources can assist with this (see figure 4).

**MLA works cited examples of common source types**

Below are some examples of how to cite different sources, but keep in mind that all citations follow the above “core elements” format. The list represents the most common types of sources you might encounter but is not intended to be exhaustive.

**Book with an author and an editor (note that the editor is included in the “other contributors” position)**


**Journal article from an online database (note here that there are no “other contributors”)**


**Online periodical article with no author (note how the author information is simply omitted because it is not available)**


**Page on a Website or blog post (note that the version and number are omitted here because this source has neither)**

Personal Interview (note that only three of the nine core elements are present here)

Sha-Mena Jackson. Personal Interview. 7 July 2014.

Exercise
Locate three sources for your research paper, with one each of the following types:
1. A book
2. A periodical (print or online)
3. A page on a website

Compose MLA works cited citations for each one based on the model above

MLA Handbook

The MLA handbook is available in print and as an e-book for around $12. It is worth considering purchasing if you have a major in a discipline likely to use MLA frequently. The free resources linked in this chapter are sufficient to use MLA, but given that the new edition was recently released, this handbook will be current for several more years and includes guidelines and resources beyond what are described here that are useful in upper division humanities classes and when preparing documents for publication.
Citation generators

There are a number of free citation generators available that can create a Works Cited page for you. Microsoft Word has a built-in bibliography feature. There are also a number of web-based options. The library databases described in chapter 10 also include options to cite individual resources.

With any citation generator, be sure that you convert the font and size to match the rest of your document and that it is consistent with all other Works Cited page formatting guidelines.

Works Cited page formatting

In most respects, the works cited page is formatted the same as the rest of your research paper. You should double space throughout and use the same font and size as the text as the rest of the document. Include the works cited page on its own page at the end of the document. Do not submit a works cited page as a separate file. You should think of it as part of the complete document. Follow these steps to compose a Works Cited page:

1. Hit Ctrl + Enter to open a new page on your document
2. Center the words “Works Cited” (without the quotation marks)
3. On a double-spaced line below “Works Cited,” write or paste your first Works Cited entry. Entries should be in alphabetical order.
4. Indent the second and subsequent lines of each citation. (OR, you could click on “paragraph” in the tool bar, select “Special,” and click on “hanging” to automatically set up the rest of the works cited page.)

See example below for a properly formatted MLA works cited page:

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3 For instructions on using Word to generate a bibliography, see https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Add-a-citation-and-create-a-bibliography-17686589-4824-4940-9c69-342c289fa2a5
4 See KnightCite (http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/) and EasyBib (http://www.easybib.com)
Works Cited


*Figure 12: MLA Works Cited page sample*
Shyanne McLemore
Professor Walther
English Composition 1
29 November 2016

Victoria’s Secret “A Body for Everybody”

Victoria’s Secret changed its original slogan reading “The Perfect Body” to “A Body for Everybody” after receiving criticism from its customers. But is this new slogan any better than the previous? American society has a set image of what a woman is supposed to look like based on her body and beauty. In Victoria’s Secret’s advertisement, women who are larger than the average model size are being body shamed because the ad does not include a variety of body shapes and sizes. The advertisement created by Victoria’s Secret degrades women who do not meet society’s high standards of the “perfect” or “ideal” body image.

Fig. 1. The importance of wording on the advertisement from Victoria’s Secret. “A Body for Everybody” Campaign, 2014, www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/11/06/victorias-secret-perfect-body-campaign_n_6115728.html
Victoria’s Secret’s ad displays multiple slender and beautiful women on their campaign image with a slogan reading “A Body for Everybody” (see fig. 1) which, in turn, claims that Victoria’s Secret has a bra for every type of body but the bra sizes range only so far. According to “The Angel Bra Guide,” Victoria’s Secret bras only go up to a DDD. The quotation on the advertisement could possibly be interpreted as Victoria’s Secret having a bra for every bust size. In most cases, this may lead consumers to believe the bra they may purchase will fit their unique bust type because of the way the slogan is worded. Victoria’s Secret’s customers vary in body sizes, but they may still want the bras because the models look so beautiful in them and consumers want to obtain the model’s body characteristics. Regardless, most consumers continue to shop at Victoria’s Secret because it is such a popular and well-liked store.

The advertisement also indicates that Victoria’s Secret models possess society’s version of the “perfect” or “ideal” body. The visual image contains women of similar slender figures with absolutely no variety of body shape. Victoria’s Secret strategically places slim models on the advertisement to appeal to women of all sizes because most women fanaticize about looking like a Victoria’s Secret model. Often, consumers will believe if they purchase bras from Victoria’s Secret, they will then resemble the models in the advertisement photo.

Additionally, when Victoria’s Secret first released its campaign the slogan read “The Perfect Body,” and when other companies discovered this, they retaliated. According to Nina Bahadur of The Huffington Post, one of these companies was the underwear brand Dear Kate, who released their own version of “The Perfect Body” ad (see fig. 2) which featured women of all sizes. The retaliation from this company and other women influenced Victoria’s Secret to change their campaign slogan to “A Body for Everybody,” which is still a body shaming campaign. Companies such as Lane Bryant also promote bigger bust sizes and are accepting of
the plus size body unlike Victoria’s Secret. According to “F G & H Bra Sizes,” Lane Bryant’s bras can fit bust sizes up to an H. These companies advocate all women in a positive way that does not body shame them.

Fig. 2. The retaliation of Dear Kate underwear company to Victoria’s Secret’s, “A Body for Everybody” Campaign, 2014, www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/11/06/victoria-secret-perfect-body-campaign_n_6115728.html

Although Victoria’s Secret advertisement body shames women, others may disagree. Some could interpret this advertisement as being motivational to women in search of their image of the “perfect” or “flawless” body. Individuals could also argue many women who shop at Victoria’s Secret typically are women of smaller builds because its advertisements and commercials incorporate women of the standard “model” body. In return, women may believe that only people who are considered “skinny” are permitted to shop there. However, body shaming is a more valid argument because the advertisement does not display women of different shapes and sizes.

This advertisement has an unstated claim that is considered a logical fallacy. It is directed towards women with a desire to look like Victoria’s Secret models. For example, the campaign ad displays women in bras and panties who have thin, beautiful, and attractive figures. Women
want to be the models on the advertisements and will try to purchase something that gets them closer to that mental image. Victoria’s Secret uses an ethical approach by using America’s appeal to consumerism by influencing women to buy their bra claiming that their bras fit all body types. This advertisement also creates a logical appeal by captivating a woman’s desire to be attractive and they suggest a way to do that by purchasing their merchandise. Furthermore, Victoria Secret uses an emotional appeal by implying that buying its bras will satisfy a woman’s emotional need to feel accepted in society.

A woman’s desire is to look like a model on a Victoria’s Secret advertisement. This campaign ad, shows an image of multiple slender and attractive women with a slogan reading “A Body for Everybody,” which leads women to want to purchase their merchandise because it claims to have a bra for every type of bust size. This print advertisement clearly is an example of how consumers, in this case women, can be misled by advertisements.
Works Cited


Key Takeaways

- MLA is an editorial style for preparing scholarly manuscripts and essays in the arts and humanities
- MLA provides rules for formatting and citations
- MLA uses in-text citations and complimentary citations with full publication information on a Works Cited page
- In-text citations are comprised of a reference to the author (or title for anonymous sources) and a reference to the page number or location of the material within the source (i.e. a time stamp on a video)
- Works Cited citations are comprised of core elements listed in a specific order
- Citation generators can assist you to compose a Works Cited page but should be checked carefully
Chapter 12—A Guide to APA Style

What is APA?

APA is a set of guidelines for the preparation of manuscripts developed by the American Psychological Association (APA). Originally limited to the discipline of psychology, the style is now used in a number of other fields including business, science, sociology, and nursing. Much like MLA, these rules facilitate uniformity that allows for manuscripts to be easily evaluated or converted for publication.

Also, similar to MLA, APA provides standardized rules for formatting and citations. APA has some details that differ from MLA, but the two styles are similar enough that moving between them can be accomplished with the aid of resources and attention to detail.

Moving between citation styles

Chapters 11 and 12 provide an overview of MLA and APA style, the two citation styles you will use in English Composition courses and throughout much of your coursework. There are a number of other styles as well (Chicago, AP, IEEE, AMA) that may be taught as you move into higher level, discipline specific courses. However, with any citation style, the key is to familiarize yourself with basic principles and resources that will assist you to cover the finer details of the style (e.g. placement of commas, periods, title formats). Note: The Rose State College Writing Lab, located in the Humanities Department, has information on other documentation styles used by different departments.

Both APA and MLA use parenthetical citations to identify sources and direct the reader to full publication information found on a reference list or works cited page. To move between APA and MLA involves making slight adjustments to the parenthetical citation and the reference list entry. Common features include parenthetical citations and the need for citations for direct quotes, paraphrases, and summaries. The citation styles differ in the placement of core elements in reference list citations and in the inclusion of the year of publication in in-text citations in APA (see below).

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1 Given the similarity of document preparation in APA and MLA, instructions on setting margins, inserting page numbers, etc. are not included (see chapter 11 for those instructions) although formatting details and samples are still provided.
Formatting rules

Your essay should be typed, double-spaced on standard sized paper (8½” by 11”) with 1” margin. The font should be 12 points and highly readable (APA recommends Times New Roman). Include a page header on every page with the page number in the upper right and the title of your essay in capital letters on the left side of the heading. This running header should be a shortened version of your title, no more than 50 characters in length.

APA documents have four major sections: Title Page, Abstract, Main Body, and Reference list.

Title Page
The title page should include the title of your paper, your name, and your institutional affiliation. The page header should be flush with the left side of the page with page numbers flush with the right. The header on the title page includes a unique header that looks as follows:

Running head: TITLE OF YOUR PAPER

Pages after the title page omit “running head” and look like this:

TITLE OF YOUR PAPER

Instructions in Microsoft Word for using different headers

1. On the View tab, select the Print Layout document view.

2. Double click the header area of the document.

3. On the Header & Footer Tools Design tab, in the Options group, select the check box for Different First Page.

4. In the First Page Header box at the top of page 1, type Running head: and then your abbreviated title.

5. Go to page 2 of your document and delete the phrase Running head.

6. On page 1, Running head will remain in your first page header, and only your abbreviated title will appear on subsequent pages.
Abstract

Beginning on a new page, center the word “Abstract” followed by a concise summary of your essay of between 150 and 250 words. Depending on the scope and length of your project, an abstract may or may not be required, so be sure to check with your instructor. The abstract should also include keywords that could be used to locate your essay in a database search. Abstracts are usually created, using present tense verbs, after the essay has been drafted; for example, “This essay explains....”

An abstract is a single paragraph, without indentation, that summarizes the key points of the manuscript in 150 to 250 words. The purpose of the abstract is to provide the reader with a brief overview of the paper.

Keywords: writing, template, sixth, edition, APA, format, style, self-discipline
Main Body
The body of the essay starts on a new page. Center your title at the top of the page and start your first paragraph one double-spaced line below the title. The body of the essay should be left-justified, double-spaced, and new paragraphs should be indented one-half inch.

Reference List
The reference list should appear at the end of your paper. It provides full publication information for all of the sources cited within the document. Center the word “References” (minus the quotation marks) at the top of the document, and provide each citation in alphabetical order flush with the left side for each first line of the citation and indented one-half inch for each subsequent line. See reference list examples below for details on formatting individual types of sources.

Exercise
Compose a title and abstract template in APA. Use the models and instructions above to ensure the correct spacing and layout. Save this document and use it for future essays.

In-text citations
APA uses parenthetical citations that provide a brief reference to the author of the work and year of publication. Page numbers are also included for direct quotations.

Example: (Nau, 2014, p. 142)

How to Cite a Direct Quote

Example
Gibaldi (2003) indicates that, “Quotations are effective in research papers when used selectively” (p. 109).

Remember that “[q]uotations are effective in research papers when used selectively” (Gibaldi, 2003, p. 109).

In 2003, Gibaldi wrote that, “Quotations are effective in research papers when used selectively” (p. 109).
Note: If a quotation is 40 words or more, omit quotation marks and use a block format in which the quotation is indented about ½ inch (or 5 spaces) from the left margin.

**How to cite summaries or paraphrases**

Even if you put information in your own words by summarizing or paraphrasing, you must cite the original author or researcher and the date of publication. You are also encouraged to provide a page or paragraph number; check with your instructor to see if page numbers are required.

**Example**

Within the research paper, quotations will have more impact when used judiciously (Gibaldi, 2003).

**How to cite information If no page numbers are available**

If a resource contains no page numbers, as can be the case with electronic sources, then you cannot include a page number in the parentheses. However, if the source indicates paragraph numbers, use the abbreviation “para” and the relevant number in the parentheses. If the paragraph number is not visible, cite the heading and the paragraph number following it.

**Example**

As Myers (2000, para. 5) aptly phrased it...
(Beutler, 2000, Conclusion, para. 1)

**How to cite an indirect source**

Sometimes an author writes about research that someone else has done, but you are unable to track down the original research report. In this case, because you did not read the original report, you will include only the source you did consult in your References. The words “as cited in” in the parenthetical reference indicate you have not read the original research.

**Example**

Fong’s 1987 study (as cited in Bertram, 1996) found that older students’ memory can be as good as that of young people, but this depends on how memory is tested. [Do not include Fong (1987) in your References; do include Bertram (1996).]
The Practiced Writer

Visuals

Insert images, tables, charts, and graphs where appropriate. Consider “visual” arrangement and appeal. Below an image, provide the following information in a caption:

*Figure #.* Identifying name of image. From First Initial. Middle Initial. Last Name of Author of Document, *Source*, Year, page #.

**Example**

*Figure 1.* Diagram of the brain. From R. J. Sternberg, *Psychology*, 2004. p.91.

**Exercise**

Locate three sources for a current or upcoming project and compose a properly formatted in-text APA citation for each of the following:
1. A paraphrase where you mention the author in the sentence
2. A direct quote
3. A paraphrase where you do not mention the author in the sentence
4. An indirect source using the abbreviation qtd. in described above

**Reference List Citations**

This list below contains examples of the most commonly used resources. It serves as a guide to demonstrate the “basic” principles of citation (in-text and on the Reference page). You may need to look at more than one example to cite a source. For example, if you are using a Database Journal Article with six authors, the “Database Journal Article” will give you a model of the source type, but the example lists only “two” authors. You should skim down to the “notes” under “Books with Three to Five Authors” for information about citing six authors.

**IMPORTANT NOTE**: Pay close attention to punctuation and mechanics (i.e. commas, periods, capitals, italics, etc.); these are important components of citing sources.²

² List of references adapted for inclusion in this chapter from “APA Reference Sheet” composed by Professor Noelle Merchant and hosted by the RSC library. Available here: [https://www.rose.edu/media/3562/updated_apa_style_sheet.pdf](https://www.rose.edu/media/3562/updated_apa_style_sheet.pdf)
Database Journal Article

Author Last Name, First Initial. Middle Initial., & Last Name, First Initial. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Journal, vol(issue), page numbers. doi*

**Example**


*If the doi is not available, replace with “Retrieved from” and the URL of the database.*

Newspaper Article (Database or Online)

Author Last Name, First initial. (Year, Month Day). Title of article. *Title of Newspaper. Retrieved from URL*

**Example**


Document on Website

Author Last Name, First Initial. (Year, Month Day). Title of document. *Website.* Retrieved Month Day, Year, from URL.

**Example**

Print Book by One Author

Author Last Name, First Initial. Middle Initial. (Date). Title of the book, only first word capitalized. Place of publication: Publisher.

Example


Print Book by Two to Seven Authors

Author Last Name, First Initial. Middle Initial, & Author Last Name, First Initial. Middle Initial (Date). Title of the book only first word capitalized (xth ed.). Place of publication: Publisher.

Example


APA Publication Manual

The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association is more than 400 pages of rules, guidelines, and exceptions. Only a fraction of the material has been covered here, but this chapter describes the most relevant features of APA for college-level essays. If your major frequently uses APA, you might consider purchasing the APA manual. However, there are a number of comprehensive, free resources online. Purdue’s Online Writing Lab (OWL) expands upon the samples shown here.³

Citation generators

There are a number of free citation generators available that can create a Reference list for you. Microsoft Word has a built-in bibliography feature.⁴

Figure 36: The citation menu in EBSCOhost can generate an APA citation that you can copy and paste onto your Works Cited Page.

³ See https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
⁴ For instructions on using Word to generate a bibliography, see https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Add-a-citation-and-create-a-bibliography-17686589-4824-4940-9c69-342c289fa2a5
There are also a number of web-based options. The library databases described in Chapter 10 also include options to cite individual resources.

**Sample APA Essay**

Consumerism and American Bulion’s *Invest in Something Real*

Nathan Kelly

Rose State College

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Abstract

This essay analyzes the commercial Invest in Something Real paid for by American Bullion. American Bullion is an investment company that transfers IRA and 401K investment accounts into Gold IRAs for its clients. This analysis defines the purpose of this advertisement and the premises it reveals about consumerism, as well as analyzing the tactics used in the propaganda and how they are incorporated and used in attracting the target audience.
Invest in Something Real

Consumerism and Invest in Something Real

Imagine, for a moment, that you are an average American white collar worker: 65 years old, married with three children and no major debts. You have been a hard, honest worker supporting your family for forty years and have finally saved enough through your IRA to retire comfortably. Your coworkers throw you a retirement party, and you wave the workforce goodbye with a smile on your face and not a worry in the world. You go to the bank to make a final withdrawal in cash, and everything falls apart. Years of investments yield nearly nothing and what you thought you had is worthless. This scenario is the greatest fear of millions of middle class consumers in America. The advertisement created by American Bullion is a perfect example of consumerism: a company selling their product by arguing they are able to protect America’s retirees from their greatest fear, losing their lifetime investments.

Opening Scene

The opening scene of the advertisement portrays a story beginning in a bank, with the focus being an older couple at the register beneath a large sign that says “Fourth National BANK.” This shot is relatively quick and sets the tone and creates the atmosphere: a darkened lobby with light flooding through the windows and sounds of a busy office (see Figure 1). Already ethos is being established and presented to the audience by creating a familiar atmosphere that allows the viewers to step into the story.
Consumer Couple

The next shot displays an average consumer couple, as the clerk behind the counter congratulates them on their retirement (see Figure 2). Here, the commercial’s target audience is being shown the commercial itself: consumer couples around the age of 65 who are cashing out their IRA accounts. Pathos begins here as the viewers can immediately place themselves in the story and relate to the couple’s feelings. The soft, excited smiling couple waits in anticipation to receive their life’s investments in hand to carry them into their golden years. Although they are meant to represent a retirement couple, they are clearly younger than expected, appearing to be in their mid to late fifties rather than in their late sixties and early seventies. Again, pathos is being developed here as viewers can romanticize themselves as younger and more vibrant, drawing them further into the storyline.

By this time in the ad, the spectators are immersed in the story and can subconsciously relate to the consumer couple on the screen. At this point, the cashier leaves the counter to retrieve the couple’s investments in cash. When she returns, she begins placing items on the
counter that is intentionally hidden from the camera. The camera instead focuses on the couple’s faces, as their smiles quickly fade into disbelief (see Figure 3). This creates a feeling of uneasy anticipation in the audience as pathos is further developed.

**Use of Ethos**

After anticipation is created, the camera focuses on the counter to reveal stacks of blank, white paper cut in the shape of dollar bills, which clearly holds no real value (see Figure 4). Several long, tense seconds are spent as the couple looks in horror at the worthless paper, and eerie music begins to grow louder and louder in the background. The young cashier seems oblivious to the couple’s reactions, and instead comments “That’s it; don’t spend it all in one place.” The words hang in the air as the audience feels the full effect of disappointment and fear that the consumers in the commercial are feeling. The scene then closes as words appear on the screen that begs the question, “What’s really in your retirement account?” (see Figure 4).

![Image of retirement account question](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmBCqG7QyY)

**Commercial Message**

As viewers are left to ponder everything that has happened in the last 45 seconds and how it relates to them, the scene suddenly changes. Shiny gold bars and coins fall and strike the ground. A great thud is heard to illustrate the weight and solidity of the gold as the first claim of the advertisement appears in bold words over the gold “Invest in something real” (see figure 5).
The entire commercial comes to make the point that cash investments are not reliable, while gold is a safe and solid investment. The commercial comes to a close with the American Bullion logo and phone number to further encourage viewers to contact the company.

**Price of Gold**

Contrary to the commercial’s logical reasoning, however, gold is not as reliable as American Bullion would have consumers believe. When this commercial first aired in 2011, the price of gold was still recovering from an all-time low in 2006 (see Figure 6). The price was climbing and gold appeared to be the perfect investment option. However, shortly after, the price of gold began to drop again. Although it was gradual at first, the price of gold today has fallen 55% from 2011. This logical fallacy disrupts the entire claim and, because the advertisement provides no rebuttals or qualifications, invalidates the claim.

![Invest in something real.](image-url)

**Figure 5. Invest in something real.** From American Bullion, 2011. [Invest in Something Real](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AN4thu06RyY)

![Gold Price Chart](image-url)

**Figure 6. Price of gold.** From NASDAQ, Latest Price & Chart for COMEX Gold 100 oz. 2015. [NASDAQ price chart](https://www.nasdaq.com/market/quotes/gc1/e/y?timeframe=1y)
Conclusion

The claim made by American Bullion in its commercial is very clear: gold is a safe and reliable investment option. They use a story to create extremely strong pathos and place viewers into a situation where a very real fear is faced. An alternate conclusion to the scenario presented by American Bullion could have been offered with the couple exchanging their gold for cash, rather than leaving the bank with blank paper. Although the logic behind the advertisement’s claim is not sound, it is geared to creating an ethical and emotional response in consumers, which it does very well.
References

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANdDa9gPcYf

Retrieved November 15, 2015, from
Key Takeaways

- APA is an editorial style for preparing scholarly manuscripts and essays in the social sciences, business, nursing, and a number of other fields
- APA guidelines include formatting and citations
- APA references are comprised of parenthetical citations that include the author and date of publication
- Reference list citations offer full publication information and their format varies by the type of source
Part II
Advanced Composition Strategies
Chapter 13—Writing Sustained Arguments

Part II of this handbook addresses advanced strategies for English composition. One of the most prominent aspects of English Composition II is the development of sustained arguments. A sustained argument is an argument that shows a capacity to “keep going.” Rather than making a single point about an issue, a sustained argument is a multi-faceted approach that draws from research to develop examples and explanations that consider audience and any nuance and complexity of the issue. Projects of this type tend to be longer than essays you may have written in the past. In order to sustain your momentum and for the project to sustain the interest of the reader, it is necessary to craft an approach that engages you and the reader in complex commentary and debate.

This chapter presents descriptions and tips for all stages of the writing process. Many of these steps may comprise part of formal essay assignments. In English Composition II, your major essay is an 8-10 content-page sophisticated argument that attempts to solve a problem using common ground. Leading up to that project, you will compose a research proposal and annotated bibliography. These and other benchmarks are submitted throughout the semester. In your other courses these project benchmarks may not be assigned. The instructor assigns the essay and students are expected to prepare and develop the project largely independently or with a single rough draft submission. English composition is where practiced writers can hone a systematic method for academic and career writing that will carry them through future projects of any scope, from research papers to journal articles to books and major projects in their professional and personal lives.

Writing with authority

When academics write, they join a conversation. They do not only use previous research, they engage it, challenge it, and extend it. As you start projects in Composition II, you are participating in that process. You are an academic writer. By the end of English Composition II, you will be able to create the ethos of someone familiar with academic arguments.
Sustained academic arguments build on logic and rhetorical skills you used to compose arguments in previous academic work. The pre-writing process is largely the same. You develop a research question and arguable thesis structured around a central claim, main points, and sub-claims. Paragraphs are formed in similar ways around topic sentences, support, and transitions. The pre-writing (chapter 4) and research (chapter 10) are largely the same. However, in previous essays you typically wrote short, focused projects that aimed to advance a single point of view in opposition to an opposing view. Sustained arguments tend to be more nuanced and complex.

An academic argument is an evidence-based defense of a non-obvious position on a complex issue. The solution to an academic argument would not fit on a bumper sticker. Protest movements draw on simple slogans and arguments to get their point across. For example, a protest addressing climate change might include signs advocating climate justice. “Climate justice now” is a slogan that is a call to action. It brings awareness to the problem. Protests can be striking and powerful. They can spark change. However, the argument in the protest sign is not specific. An academic argument might make a similar call to action that frames the problem and maps solutions. Climate justice is a social justice approach to climate change that presents the problem as an ethical and political issue rather than a purely environmental and physical issue. An academic argument on this area of inquiry requires the writer to account for the history of the issue and contextualize the problem. The essay might focus on the actions of governments or corporations and may have a local or global focus. The central claim could define and justify climate justice as a concept, discuss the disproportionate effects of climate change on vulnerable communities, or argue for specific policy change.

Types of claims

An effective thesis statement is built around a central claim. Before you proceed to develop an essay, it is valuable to reflect on the nature of the claim(s) you wish you make about your issue. These claims should not be thought of as rigid categories but frameworks to focus your commentary and pursue your goals.
Academic arguments create new knowledge and the types of claims you choose determine what type of knowledge your essay will create.

**Claims of fact or definition**
A claim of fact or definition should center on a debatable fact or definition. You can test whether a definition is debatable by envisioning a reasonable counterargument. For example, food insecurity is a term with a recorded definition, but the definition has ambiguity. The USDA defines food insecurity as “the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.” There is an opportunity to pin this definition down with more precision and in doing so you introduce the possibility that someone might disagree. Does nutritious food mean fresh fruits and vegetables? Do canned or frozen vegetables meet that standard?

**Claims about cause and effect**
As with claims of definition, claims of cause and effect need to be opinionated and debatable. No one could reasonably disagree that smoking causes lung cancer. The evidence is overwhelming. However, you could argue whether high taxes on cigarettes reduce smoking. You could pursue that argument for evidence on tax rates compared to smoking rates. An opposing view could look for other factors behind decreased smoking rates, such as awareness of health risks or laws banning public smoking. As with any academic argument the goal here is not to move forward your claim at the exclusion of all others but to establish one explanation that advances our body of knowledge and may operate in concert with other explanations.

**Claims about solutions or policies**
Claims about solutions propose a specific course of action to address a problem. These claims often work in conjunction with claims of definition. For a description of a solution or policy to be effective the audience must recognize and understand the problem you seek to address. For example, once you establish that food insecurity is a problem, you can propose a solution such as urban gardening or expansion of the social safety net.

**Claims about value**
Claims about value establish someone or something as the best or a superior example of its category. For example, you might argue that a college education is a good investment (i.e. college is the best path to success for most people). Opposing views could point to skilled trades or the military as viable alternatives.
The existence of viable counterarguments is a strength of these types of claims, not a weakness. The goal of academic arguments is not unencumbered victory but the advancement of a perspective within a network of complex ideas.

**Exercise**
Individually or in small groups come up with a potential general area of inquiry. Compose one of each of the four types of claims above for that area. Which do you feel is has the most potential for an academic argument? Could any claims be combined? Explain.

**Planning Your Project**

Sustained argument is a term that speaks to the complexity and interplay of claims that comprise these arguments. Sustained arguments also tend to be longer than other types of writing. Complexity and length are issues you should plan for. Each step of a research project requires time and attention. Careful planning helps ensure that you will keep your project running smoothly and produce your best work. Set up a project schedule that shows when you will complete each step. Think about how you will complete each step and what project resources you will use. Resources may include anything from library databases and word-processing software to interview subjects and writing tutors.

To develop your schedule, use a calendar and work backward from the date your final draft is due. Generally, it is wise to divide half of the available time on the research phase of the project and half on the writing phase. For example, if you have a month to work, plan for two weeks for each phase. If you have a full semester, plan to begin research early and to start writing by the middle of the term. You might think that no one really works that far ahead, but try it. You will probably be pleased with the quality of your work and with the reduction in your stress level.

**EXERCISE 1**
- Working backward from the date your final draft is due, create a project schedule. You may choose to write a sequential list of tasks or record tasks on a calendar.
- Check your schedule to be sure that you have broken each step into smaller tasks and assigned a target completion date to each key task.
- Review your target dates to make sure they are realistic. Always allow a little more time than you think you will actually need.
Plan your schedule realistically, and consider other commitments that may sometimes take precedence. A business trip or family visit may mean that you are unable to work on the research project for a few days. Make the most of the time you have available. Plan for unexpected interruptions, but keep in mind that a short time away from the project may help you come back to it with renewed enthusiasm. Another strategy many writers find helpful is to finish each day’s work at a point when the next task is an easy one. That makes it easier to start again.

**Staying Organized**

Although setting up a schedule is easy, sticking to one is challenging. Even if you are the rare person who never procrastinates, unforeseen events may interfere with your ability to complete tasks on time. A self-imposed deadline may slip your mind despite your best intentions. Organizational tools—calendars, checklists, note cards, software, and so forth—can help you stay on track.

Throughout your project, organize both your time and your resources systematically. Review your schedule frequently and check your progress. It helps to post your schedule in a place where you will see it every day. Both personal and workplace e-mail systems usually include a calendar feature where you can record tasks, arrange to receive daily reminders, and check off completed tasks. Electronic devices such as smartphones have similar features.

Organize project documents in a binder or electronic folder, and label project documents and folders clearly. Use note cards or an electronic document to record bibliographical information for each source you plan to use in your paper. Tracking this information throughout the research process can save you hours of time when you create your references page.

Backups should be part of any well-organized approach to research. Students are expected to plan for problems with technology. You do not want to find yourself in a situation where you lose work you have already done, whether
it is in the research, planning, or drafting stage. You cannot afford to lose that time. Cloud backups such as Google Docs and Dropbox offer free tiers of storage that offer more than enough space to host your essay and all supporting files. Microsoft OneDrive and Apple iCloud have these services as well. One advantage of all of these services is that they can sync files between multiple devices and some even have version history that allows you to access previous versions of a file if you accidentally save over it. Physical media provides an extra layer of security for your work. Backups to a thumb drive or good old-fashioned paper help ensure that you avoid the stress of losing your work to technology. Computers fail. Websites crash. Planning ahead makes sure these events are not catastrophic to your work.

**Exercise**

Some people enjoy using the most up-to-date technology to help them stay organized. Other people prefer simple methods, such as crossing off items on a checklist. The key to staying organized is finding a system you like enough to use daily.

In small groups, discuss your preferred organizational method. How do you keep track of deadlines? What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of your method?

**Choosing an area of inquiry**

When you choose an area of inquiry for an academic essay, you are making a major commitment. Your choice will help determine whether you enjoy the lengthy process of research and writing—and whether your final paper fulfills the assignment requirements. If you choose your focus hastily, you may later find it difficult to work with your area of inquiry. By taking your time and choosing carefully, you can ensure that this assignment is not only challenging but also rewarding.

Writers understand the importance of choosing an area of inquiry that fulfills the assignment requirements and fits the assignment’s purpose and audience. Your interest in this area is also crucial. You instructor may provide a list of suggested areas of inquiry or ask that you develop one on your own. In either case, try to identify an area of inquiry that genuinely interest you.

After identifying potential areas of inquiry, you will need to evaluate your ideas and choose one focus to pursue. Will you be able to find enough information? Can you develop a paper about this area that presents and supports your original ideas? Is the focus too broad or too narrow for the scope of the assignment? If
so, can you modify it so it is more manageable? You will ask these questions during this preliminary phase of the research process.

**Identifying potential areas of inquiry**

Sometimes, your instructor may provide a list of suggested topics. If so, you may benefit from identifying several possibilities before committing to one idea. It is important to know how to narrow down your ideas into a concise, manageable thesis. You may also use the list as a starting point to help you identify additional, related issues. Discussing your ideas with your instructor will help ensure that you choose a manageable focus that fits the requirements of the assignment.

**Narrowing your focus**

Once you have a list of potential areas, you will need to choose one as the focus of your essay. You will also need to narrow that focus. Most writers find that the areas of inquiry they listed during brainstorming or idea mapping are broad—too broad for the scope of the assignment. Working with an overly broad issue, such as sexual education programs or popularized diets, can be frustrating and overwhelming. Each area has so many facets that it would be impossible to cover them all in a college research paper. However, more specific choices, such as the pros and cons of sexual education in kids’ television programs or the physical effects of the South Beach diet, are specific enough to write about without being too narrow to sustain an entire research paper.

A good paper that includes research provides focused, in-depth information and analysis. If your focus is too broad, you will find it difficult to do more than skim the surface when you research it and write about it. Narrowing your focus is essential to making your area of inquiry manageable. To narrow your focus, explore your issue in writing, conduct preliminary research, and discuss both the issue and the research with others.

**Formulating a Research Question**

In forming a research question, you are setting a goal for your research. Your main research question should be substantial enough to form the guiding principle of your paper—but focused enough to guide your research. A strong research question requires you not only to find information but also to put together different pieces of information, interpret and analyze them, and figure out what you think. As you consider potential research questions, ask yourself
whether they would be too hard or too easy to answer.

To determine your research question, review the freewriting you completed earlier. Skim through books, articles, and websites and list the questions you have. Include simple, factual questions and more complex questions that would require analysis and interpretation. Determine your main question—the primary focus of your paper—and several sub-questions that you will need to research to answer your main question.

**Constructing a Working Thesis**

A working thesis concisely states a writer’s initial answer to the main research question. It does not merely state a fact or present a subjective opinion. Instead, it expresses a debatable idea or claim that you hope to prove through additional research. Your working thesis is called a working thesis for a reason—it is subject to change. As you learn more about your focus, you may change your thinking in light of your research findings. Let your working thesis serve as a guide to your research, but do not be afraid to modify it based on what you learn.

**Creating a Research Proposal**

A research proposal is a brief document that summarizes the preliminary work you have completed. Your purpose in writing it is to formalize your plan for research and present it to your instructor, supervisor, or potential funder of a project you are proposing for feedback. In your research proposal, you will present your leading research question, related sub-questions, and working thesis. You will also briefly discuss the value of researching this area and indicate how you plan to gather information. Proposals are a common genre throughout academia and the professional world. Academic conferences ask for proposals from potential presenters. They also are found in grant applications and businesses. A business proposal might describe a project or initiative within a company to convince them to allocate resources towards your project. The unifying features of proposals are that they describe both what you have done and what you plan to do and they tend to synthesize complex, specialized material for a more general audience. Your goal is to convey your idea and convince an audience to support and possibly fund it.
Suggested length for the proposal in English Composition II is 3-4 typed, double spaced pages. Your proposal should be as long as it needs to be to describe your research area and strategy in some detail. The assignment sheet and sample below outline a typical proposal for an argument essay in English Composition II.

**Formal Proposal Assignment Sheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal Proposal Assignment Sheet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Introduce your Area of Inquiry and describe its Projected Value</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduce your research area and explain why you have chosen it — the source of its interest or importance for you. Describe what you anticipate to be the value of your research project—for others, as well as yourself. Write your proposal for a general, uninformed audience. (In your discussion you may wish to answer: Why is this research project of interest to you and worth doing? What do you hope to gain from it? How do you think you and/or others may be able to use or benefit from your research findings?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>II. State your Leading Research Question and Working Hypothesis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• State the leading Research Question that you propose to pursue for your research project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• State your Working Hypothesis—that is, propose an initial response to that leading Research Question (your leading assumption based on exploratory research and thinking) which you plan to open to question, investigate and test through your research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>III. Describe your Research Strategy</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Your goal is to convince your reader that you have a well-defined point of departure for your research project and a clear sense of direction as you launch into your research in earnest, supported by substantial, promising exploratory research and serious preliminary thinking and reading about your focus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| • What do you need to find out through your research? Provide an organized list of the important questions raised by your area, key terms and concepts to be defined and explained, and relevant inferences and assumptions that you hold about your issue and that you will open to question and investigation. Your lists of questions and assumptions should be grouped or organized logically into related categories and major lines of inquiry relevant to and supportive of your leading Research Question and Working Hypothesis. Your lists should demonstrate that you have already conducted thorough and thoughtful exploratory research, reading, and thinking on your area—i.e., you know enough about your focus now to frame good questions and recognize major lines of inquiry. |

| • How and where will you look for answers? [Don’t just respond, "In the library."] In this section of your Research Proposal, identify the key search terms—subject headings and key words—which define your investigation and which you will use to find sources on your area. Draw upon your preliminary research so far on your focus, describe key answers and ideas already gained on the issue, identify the types of primary and secondary sources you plan to investigate, and illustrate your points by referring to some specific representative source titles listed among your sources. Based upon your library explorations, your own hunches and ideas, and any other useful resources, describe further plans you have formulated for finding the necessary sources and evidence for your research project, and answers to your research questions. |
Sample Proposal

Proposal for Untangling the Gun Control Debate

Jacob Robbins
Rose State College
Proposal for Untangling the Gun Control Debate

I. Topic Introduction

I’ve chosen firearms as the topic of my essay. Specifically, I’m interested in the stalemate over gun control versus 2nd Amendment rights. I feel like this discussion is important to us not just as a nation, but as a species. But it’s been obfuscated. What are the facts? Where do these statistics come from? Why is the issue so polarized? How did the two sides get this way? And are they even debating the right issues? I hope to answer these questions by getting all the facts in one place for analysis, then to use those findings to propose a solution.

II. Leading Question and Working Hypothesis

The question guiding my inquiry is, “Do we actually have a gun problem in the US, or has this topic been distorted by gun control advocates? If it is the latter, how can we solve the problem?”

Their reliance on emotional appeals and zealous pursuit of uncompromising solutions like total gun bans leads me to suspect that they’re not being truthful in their campaigning. I feel like this is doing us all a disservice by distracting us from more serious problems, like mental health. Two-thirds of gun deaths in the US are suicides. I doubt all those people would overcome their suicidal ideations if only someone were to take away their guns.

I also feel like a much greater social issue is being ignored in that 85% or so of non-suicide gun deaths involve a pistol and many of those take place in poor urban communities, often among members of deprivileged communities, implying to me a
socioeconomic or even racial dimension to the problem that normally isn’t addressed
by the major parties to the debate on guns, which often focus on “assault rifles” and
similar scary terminology.

Then there’s the case of normal gun owners. People who own guns as a
collector’s hobby, or shoot for sport, or hunt to alleviate some stress on their grocery
budget, or people who own guns for home defense, are all at risk of losing the ability
to pursue these interests because of special interest groups painting them as part of a
problem that, as mentioned previously, is much more common in poor urban areas
than the suburbs or rural Midwest, and typically involve handguns rather than rifles.

Finally, some concern must be directed towards the pro-gun side. The NRA
refuses to budge on even the most palatable and well-received gun control measures.
Are they being just as irrational as the anti-gun side or is this position the result of
decades of giving an inch on the gun control issue and then seeing the gun control
lobby demand a mile more?

III. Research Strategy

Above, I’ve covered a lot of points, but I feel confident that I can keep the topic
focused. The overarching goal is to quantify the actual number of guns in our
country and determine what their role is in our society. Gun control groups versus
gun advocates, mental health, and poverty are all just examples of how guns fit into
our society. They’re tools. So, what tasks do people use them to accomplish?

In order to answer these questions, I’ll need to research the following areas:

- The political climate on guns.
  - Where did the pro- and anti-gun lobbies come from?
PROPOSAL FOR UNTANGLING

o What are their goals and by what means do they pursue them?
o How have they evolved, particularly as they interact?
o How have they shaped the current discourse on the topic?
o Are they honest with the facts?

- What even are the facts?
o How many guns are there in the US?
o How many guns does the average owner possess?
o What’s the breakdown by type of gun?
o How are these guns used in crime?
- Are guns a motivator in crime, or just a tool?
o Who commits gun violence?
o What are their circumstances?
  - Poverty? Mental illness?
- Time and space permitting, I’d also like to touch on the ethics of the
  issue.
o Should law-abiding gun owners be punished for actions of
  criminals? (Blackstone’s Formulation?)
  o Is impeding access to guns for normal citizens even going to have
    any effect on ownership rates by those who most misuse guns?
o Can gun control even be effective in the era of 3D printing?
o Would those who still wish to commit violence not just find
  alternative means, like the Tsarnaevs did when they bombed the
PROPOSAL FOR UNTANGLING

Boston Marathon with pressure cookers, or as Timothy McVeigh did when he bombed the Murrah Building?

- Is the mental health dimension to this problem of greater importance than most suspect because of the rapid advance of technologies with potential to cause greater and greater harm?
  - How long before a drone with a bomb is flown into a sensitive location and detonated? And what does gun control do to prevent that?

This is a lot of information to track down, but much of it is collected and analyzed already by groups like the BJS, FBI, CDC, etc. I plan to make extensive use of government information on rates of gun ownership, gun crime, mental illness, poverty, etc.

For the gun lobby positions, I'll obviously go right to them for their claims, but I'll also see what fact-checking groups have said about the comments made by these groups as well as compared their claims to the data I'll be gathering myself.

The most difficult research will likely be in the niche examples like "How many households supplement their food supply by hunting?", which I may try to resolve by, for example, going to a hunting advocacy community and drawing on their in-group knowledge of their own area of interest.

The ethical concerns present a similar problem but I believe those points can be supported logically. For example, I will investigate the progress in 3D metal printing,
check to see how effective current 3D printed firearm are, find out how many 3D printers are in private use across the United States, etc.

My final format will be APA.

IV. Sources Sampled


Annotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography provides specific information about each source you have used. As a researcher, you have become an expert on your area of inquiry and have the ability both to explain the content and to assess the usefulness of your sources for those not in the know. Think of your paper as part of a conversation with others interested in the same things you are; the annotated bibliography allows you to tell readers what to check out, what might be worth checking out in some situations, and what might not be worth spending the time on. It’s kind of like providing a list of good movies for your classmates to watch and then going over the list with them, telling them why this movie is better than that one or why one student in your class might like a particular movie better than another student would. You want to give your audience enough information to understand basically what the movies are about and to make an informed decision about where to spend their money based on their interests.

Annotated bibliographies are a common genre across a range of disciplines. Individual requirements may vary but annotations typically consist of two elements that will be blended together:

- A Works Cited page in MLA, APA, Chicago or another assigned format that lists all of the research sources you have found and evaluated thus far for your project
- A 3-4 sentence-long mini-evaluation immediately following each of these source’s citation that shows how and why this source will be useful to your project (or not). This evaluation should include your interpretation of the source’s thesis or overall focus.

Annotated bibliography: the process

Creating an annotated bibliography draws on a number of skills: effective critical reading, summary, concise exposition, analysis, and informed library research. The document is a set of highly structured notes that you can share with an audience. The first step is to locate and record citations from books, periodicals and websites that relate to your area of inquiry.\(^6\) Second, briefly examine each item. You are not necessarily looking for

\(^6\) See chapter 10 for an explanation of research methods.
sources that only confirm your view about the area. You are looking for a range of opinions. It is also helpful to look for more sources than you plan to use. It is much easier to winnow down a list of too many sources than to be up against a deadline and be two or three sources short of the project requirement. Third, cite the item in the correct documentation style. Last, write a concise annotation that summarizes the theme and scope of the resource, discusses the authority and background of the author, comments on the intended audience, compares the source to other works you have examined, and explains how the work illuminates your issue.

Annotations for the annotated bibliography assignment in ENGL 1213 consist of four elements:

• Citation (write it just as it would appear on your works cited page or reference list—MLA or APA style)
• Thesis or claim of the source material
• Commentary on source’s credibility for your intended audience, including authority, audience, and evidence provided to support the author’s thesis or claim (see chapter 10 on evaluating sources)
• Note how this source might be useful for your argument

The sample below is a properly formatted APA annotated bibliography for ENGL 1213. Each annotation is labeled and demonstrates a knowledge of the source and offers ideas on its application for the essay.

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7 Most databases offer a citation menu to easily facilitate this step.
Sample Annotated Bibliography

Untangling the Gun Control Debate:

Breaking the Stalemate

Jacob Robbins

Rose State College

2017
Untangling the Gun Control Debate: Breaking the Stalemate

Annotated Bibliography

**Citation:** Brady Campaign [BradyCampaign]. (2016, April 7). *Alice PSA - Brady Campaign - Generation Lockdown.* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://youtu.be/GIDrQ8He7Gk

**Thesis or Claim:** Kids do not understand the dangers posed by guns, so innocent play can turn deadly if guns are not secured when children are nearby.

**Text Summary:** A student group associated with the Brady Campaign called Operation Lockdown made a video of Alice from Alice in Wonderland walking past the table with the “Drink Me” label to a cabinet with a gun inside, which she accidentally uses to shoot herself with. A voiceover remarks that over a third of American homes have guns, and urges parents to ask their neighbors if they have guns accessible near where their kids play.

**How it may be useful:** This video serves as a good example of the kind of ads the pro-control side of the gun discussion uses. It also juxtaposes tragedy with innocence to strike emotional chords while offering up an otherwise very reasonable issue for consideration. This video is also a direct response to the NRA Fairy Tales, one of which is cited here as well.

**Citation:** Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence. (2017, March 1). Retrieved from Brady Campaign: http://www.bradycampaign.org/

**Thesis or Claim:** The Brady Campaign claims that we should do more to prevent the 32,000 deaths the United States suffers every year as a result of gun violence.

**Text Summary:** The Brady Campaign has a goal to cut gun deaths in the United States by half by 2025 using a three-pronged approach. It wants to expand “Brady background checks” to all
BREAKING GUN CONTROL STALETE

gun sales; to stop “bad apple gun dealers” they claim supply 90% of criminal guns in the US but account for only 5% of sellers; and to inspire a national conversation on the dangers of guns in the home in order to minimize misuse of guns.

In support of their background checks, the Brady Campaign claims their computerized background checks have stopped over 3 million felons, domestic abusers, and mentally ill people from buying guns, but that 40% of all gun sales occur in “no questions asked” transactions. They also claim that the “bad apple gun dealers” ignore these checks even when the system warns them a buyer is dangerous.

In order to affect far-reaching cultural change, the Brady Campaign claims 1.7 million children live in homes with loaded, unlocked guns, and that nearly two-thirds of gun deaths result from guns in the home. As a response, the Brady Campaign has multiple programs intended to encourage social change.

How this source may be useful: The Brady Campaign is probably the most well-known gun control group in the United States. Their views and behaviors represent that entire side of the discussion well so this source would be invaluable for representing the gun control side.


Thesis or Claim: Cooley analyzes years of Noam Chomsky’s work with a focus on the decline in media ethics and its impact on education and the rest of society.

Text Summary: Cooley asserts that it is increasingly obvious that the media serves the elite, and does so at the expense of everyone else. He compares the current trends in popular media to
those of its own icons, like Cronkite and Murrow, in order to criticize it for failing to educate its audience responsibly. According to Cooley, Chomsky’s work is capable of helping the media right its course.

The body of the paper covers topics such as threats to democratic expression in the media and how misinformation in the media harms public discourse by feeding people incorrect data. From there it introduces Chomsky and turns its focus to Chomsky’s ideas as they pertain to education, which is less relevant here.

**How it may be useful:** The subject matter pertains directly to the core of my paper. Chomsky is a wonderful source, but the time and energy required to effectively consume, digest, and apply his body of work myself would be far beyond the constraints of this project. So, in this case I will trust a Ph.D. from New England University to accurately represent Chomsky in this peer-reviewed paper.

**Citation:** Foucault, M. (1970, December 2). *The Order of Discourse*. Collège de France.

**Thesis or Claim:** Foucault discusses the structure of public discourse. Most useful to us here are his points concerning control of discourse via procedures of exclusion.

**Text Summary:** The first exclusion mentioned is *prohibition*, in which the subject matter of a discourse is forbidden. This could be a topic, a speaker, or an event. The second exclusion is *rejection*, whereby one’s speech is disregarded as null and void. It is treated as untrue, unimportant, and worthless. Third is the opposition between true and false. Foucault argues that a will to know, or *will to truth*, rests upon an institutional support that reinforces it through pedagogy and application. I do not want to misinterpret Foucault but I believe his angle may be that our “truths” are contingent upon the knowledge of our cultures and social systems, and that
we pick, choose, or pursue certain paths of discourse in accordance with prior notions of true and false, implicitly excluding some discourse that is either "untrue" in contemporary thought or outside of its bounds.

Foucault argues that this exclusion has grown over the centuries to the point of slowly consuming the other two.

**How this may be useful:** Control of discourse is the core aim of propaganda. Foucault’s analysis directly addresses the motivation of groups on both sides of the problem I am addressing. Rejection is perhaps the most useful of the three exclusions to bring up, as both sides have a tendency to disregard the other as crackpots or zealots.

I believe “gun nut”, for example, may be an example of this exclusion being applied to gun rights supporters by gun control supporters.

**Citation:** Hamilton, A. (2016, January 14). *Little Red Riding Hood (Has a Gun).* Retrieved from
NRA Family: https://www.nrafamily.org/articles/2016/1/13/little-red-riding-hood-has-a-gun

**Thesis or Claim:** Little Red Riding Hood would be a very different story were Red and her grandmother armed.

**Text Summary:** The story is a retelling of Little Red Riding Hood in which the Big Bad Wolf attempts to larc Red off the path but is scared away by her rifle, and upon attempting to invade Red’s grandmother’s house, finds her grandmother with a shotgun, which she holds him with until Red arrives. The wolf remarks that he hates families that learn to protect themselves. They tie the wolf up and the lumberman shows up expecting to have to rescue them, only to find that
“they had already rescued themselves” and takes the wolf away. Red and her grandmother enjoy
soup and tea and reflect on how happy and secure they feel, being able to protect themselves.

**How it may be useful:** This is a good example of how the pro-gun side places great emphasis on
self-sufficiency and champions the equalizing power of firearms. The choice to repurpose a
classic fairy tale also presents several issues to examine.

**Citation:** Harris, S. (2013, January 2). *The Riddle of the Gun*. Retrieved from Sam Harris:
http://www.sanharris.org/blog/item/the-riddle-of-the-gun

**Thesis or Claim:** Harris argues that rather than new gun control laws, we as individuals should
all assume some responsibility for public safety.

**Text Summary:** Harris, being an educated liberal, breaks with his peers on the issue of gun
control and becomes something of a centrist. Harris has concerns about the average person
walking the street with a firearm, and acknowledges the numerous correlations guns have with
accidental shootings, crimes of passion, and suicide. But he is also realistic about police response
time and the equalizing power of a firearm. He claims that if someone is kicking down your
doors, there is usually no way police could get to you before the intruder does. He comments that
a gun-free world is one in which “the advantages of youth, size, strength, aggression, and sheer
numbers are almost always decisive,” and that in such a world a big guy with a knife could do a
lot of harm any bystanders would have few means of responding.

He cites Steven Pinker on the decline in violence overall and comments on how the media can
make rare events seem like bigger issues than they actually are. He explores a few statistics as
well.
How this may be useful: Harris is a good example of the kind of discourse I would rather be having on the topic of guns. He is rational, moderate, realistic, and thorough in his arguments, with a greater emphasis on fact than feeling. He touches on the topic of media distortion, which is key to this paper, and also addresses both sides of the debate from his position at the center, though he spends many more words on the pro-control side than the gun rights side.


Thesis or Claim: Hirschman proposes that the right to bear arms may be the semiological basis for the American social contract as a result of the original conflicts between settlers, indigenous peoples, and the British crown, making gun control efforts extremely difficult, if not impossible. The explicit thesis is, however, that private firearms are bought and used at points in which the social contract has fallen through, with respect to personal safety and property rights.

Text Summary: The author applies social contract theory to the use of guns in American society from the Revolution to the present day. Hypothesizing that private gun use is focused around collapses in the social contract, she specifies two recurring narratives in American history. The first is perception of chaos, represented by hostile indigenous people, criminals, runaway slaves, gangs, terrorists, dangerous wildlife, etc. The second is perception of tyranny, be it foreign, federal, state, or local. These claims arise chiefly from modern popular depictions of guns.

How it may be useful: The paper provides an overview of mostly pro-gun narratives from the 1600s to today, focusing on how persistent, powerful, and fundamental the narrative actually is, to the point that it may be central to the greater American social contract. This resonates strongly
with the pro-gun notion that America was “founded by the gun” and that the gun is therefore an integral part of the American identity.


Thesis or Claim: The author claims that the current binary approach to the gun control versus gun rights debate is unproductive and suggests a number of ways to appeal to both sides.

Text Summary: Greg Keidan spoke with a number of facilitators and thought leaders about strategies and practices that most encourage civil and constructive dialog, with an ultimate goal of minimizing victimization by guns.

A few of his key strategies were as follows:

- Avoid oppositional framing. I.e., gun control versus gun rights.
- Validate all sides of the topics and demonstrate to them an understanding of their positions and concerns.
- Utilize lines of questioning that provoke personal, emotional responses.
- Make sure every voice has a chance to be heard.
- Put ground rules in place for the discussion and enforce them.

How it may be useful: Keidan drew on the experiences of a group of efforts to produce guidelines for constructive discourse. I think this information may be useful for proposing effective ways to handle the topic of guns in public discourse.
BREAKING GUN CONTROL STALEMATE


Thesis or Claim: The segment used here pertains to the pros and cons of disarming a state’s populace.

Text Summary: Machiavelli argues that a state’s strength can be measured by its ability to field an army and hold a front, not just defend its major population centers, but that this same strength is volatile and could potentially be turned against the state, the nobility, or even itself. He remarks that some states, such as France or Venice, believe that disarming the public is required for the public to live safely, and to protect the state revolution. However, this inevitably weakens the state by rendering the populace impotent, forcing the state to employ foreign mercenaries in its defense.

How this may be useful: Machiavelli helps establish historic roots in this discussion, having written this around the year 1500. The topics are also just as relevant today as they were then. You can raise the point that if you disarm the public, the only people left with the guns are agents of the state. This may be especially useful for addressing the left-leaning reader who decries police abuse of private citizens while also supporting restrictions on private firearms. For the patriotic reader, it could expose them to the fact that gun rights are not uniquely American.


Text Summary: John Masters tries to give global perspective to the U.S. gun debate by presenting information on firearm laws from Canada, Australia, Israel, the United
Kingdom, Norway, and Japan. He does not take a position himself in the article, but instead compares the narrative of how each country’s laws came to be.

**How this source may be useful:** Although I may not directly use this information in my argument, it provides me with an understanding of how gun control narratives have worked in other countries. *The Atlantic* is a widely respected and generally unbiased news source, and Masters has a background in national security and works for the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations, so the material is credible.

**Citation:** *Means Matter*. (2017, March 1). Retrieved from Harvard School of Public Health: https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter

**Thesis or Claim:** The Harvard School of Public Health believes that while much attention is paid to why people take their own lives, how they do it is also significant. They advocate for a “means reduction” approach that aims to prevent suicides by reducing a suicidal person’s access to the most lethal means of taking their own lives.

**Text Summary:** The Harvard School of Public Health mission is to promote suicide prevention groups whose activities reduce a suicidal person’s access to the most lethal means of suicide. It does not seem to be a broadly anti-gun group, as it seeks to work with gun-owner organizations to prevent suicide.

The organization claims that many suicide attempts are spur-of-the-moment reactions to crises, that 96% of suicide attempters who survive do not go on to die by suicide later, that access to firearms correlates with suicide, and that youth suicides with guns are typically owned by the parent.
How this source may be useful: Adjacent to Harvard Medical School, the Harvard School of Public Health is likely to be respected by readers and their data is readily presented for examination. They also seem non-biased, speaking in terms they believe appeal to those on both sides of the gun control debate, which is valuable for a common ground essay.
Key Takeaways

- An academic argument is an evidence-based defense of a non-obvious position on a complex issue.
- Academic arguments create new knowledge and the type of claims you choose determine what type of knowledge your essay will create.
- It is important to plan a realistic schedule for completing a long academic essay.
- Choose an area of inquiry that meets assignment criteria and also can sustain your interest.
- A research proposal is a brief document that summarizes the preliminary work you have completed.
- An annotated bibliography provides specific information about each source you have used, commenting both on the content of the source and how you plan to use it in your essay.

LICENSES AND ATTRIBUTIONS

CC LICENSED CONTENT, SHARED PREVIOUSLY

Chapter 14—The Resistant Audience and Common Ground

Goals and outcomes
In chapter 1, we defined rhetoric as the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing. The promise of English Composition II is to build advanced rhetorical skills, but what does that mean? Previous work you’ve undertaken in your academic career likely identified a series of binary views. You adopt one view and aim to convince an audience that your account of the issue is more persuasive than your opponent. Such a formulation easily facilitates an orderly structure whereby you support individual claims and sub-claims, respond to counterarguments (likely in a distinct section), and remind your readers of your perspective in a succinct conclusion. Chapter 13 introduced the idea that real-world scenarios are often more nuanced and complex than that. That is not to say that your previous work was easy or simplistic. However, when you unpack the complexity of an area of inquiry, you will find that new methods are needed to position yourself to effectively speak on the issue.

Advanced rhetoric is characterized by features both of science and art. As a science, rhetoric investigates, analyzes, and defines. It is orderly and systematic. You build a body of knowledge on an area of inquiry and can speak from an informed position. As an art, rhetoric is an application of creative skill and imagination. It connects with humanity on an emotional level and seeks to benefit human kind. The essays you work on and the perspectives you develop in this course affect real people. These social problems and controversies do not exist in an aloof academic space of the mind. There are real events, experiences, and struggles that impact our daily lives. Your work as an academic writer is important and more than a number in a gradebook. If undertaken with seriousness and rigor, the skills you build here will impact your life and others by equipping you with skills to be informed, engaged, and influential.

Resistant audience and common ground
This chapter deals with addressing a resistant audience and finding common ground. When you investigate controversial issues of public interest, you will find that perspectives on the issue can vary widely. People have different views on causes, characteristics, and solutions for the problem, while others may believe that the
problem doesn’t truly exist at all. For any research project, crafting an approach that fully addresses all of these complex and overlapping groups is not feasible. Instead, a writer must be strategic about audience and purpose.

Rhetorical analysis and persuasion allow a writer to demonstrate the complexity surrounding public issues and work towards solutions. This requires the writer to describe the background of an issue and account for those affected by it. Who has the capacity to influence the situation? Does that power reside in an official position (e.g. a lawmaker or business owner) or is it more widely dispersed (e.g. voters and the general public)? Where does your perspective fall among the existing ideas and approaches to the issue? A focus on those affected by an issue allows for a writer’s analysis to cut through propaganda and hyperbole surrounding an issue. Thorough research that seeks both objective data and subjective direct knowledge allows a writer to get at the heart of things. Once a writer can argue from an informed position, the underlying assumptions driving ideas come into view. From there, a writer can decide who to persuade and how to go about it.

Public discourse is full of passionate, entrenched positions on issues. Changing minds can be difficult or impossible for a resistant or indifferent audience. However, what a writer can achieve is meaningful engagement and an exploration of shared values. A well-crafted argument can give the audience pause to consider an oppositional view and perhaps even adopt parts of it.

This is a good moment to make an important distinction that should inform your writing as you pursue areas of inquiry along these lines. When developing essays in English Composition II, one goal is to pursue common ground. Common ground is opinions or interests shared by two parties. This is not the same thing as middle ground, an area of compromise or agreement between tow extreme positions. If you are arguing for single-payer Medicare style health coverage for all and an opposing view argues for a free market solution with little to no government intervention, your goal is not to “meet in the middle.” First, that is an unlikely outcome as the middle ground requires both parties to dramatically change their position. Instead, an approach emphasizing common ground analyzes what drives beliefs and looks for a shared value. One free market approach is to broaden certification options for healthcare providers. In theory, this results in a larger supply of doctors and nurses, which could lower costs. Addressing high healthcare costs is an area of shared concern where both parties can potentially find common ground.
Example
Writer’s position:
The United States should adopt a single-payer healthcare system, which coverage guaranteed for every citizen.

Opposing view:
The government should have a reduced role in healthcare and the industry should operate by free market principles.

Common ground:
Spiraling healthcare costs are a major problem facing the industry and increasing the supply of doctors, nurses, and facilities could curb costs.

Stakeholders

Stakeholder is a term and theory borrowed from business and professional writing that differentiates audience, a term that encompasses everyone, from those who are affected by an issue. Stakeholder theory is a theory of business ethics that addresses morals and values as an essential component of organizational management. Stakeholder theory responds to a conventional theory of business called shareholder theory, which posits that organizations primarily have a duty to increase profits for owners and shareholders—their needs come first. Stakeholder theory argues for corporate social responsibility that accounts for the importance of other parties including employees, customers, communities, governmental bodies, political groups, etc.

In academic arguments, accounting for stakeholders provides a useful framework for assessing who enacts policies and who is effected by those policies. Once you’ve explained the relevant history or background of an area of inquiry, you can identify the stakeholders (individuals or groups invested in or affected by the issue). For each stakeholder, you should identify who they are, what they believe, and why they believe it. In so doing, you get a sense of who is involved or invested in the issue and why they act on or react to the issue as they do. In some cases, the stakeholder may be unaware of the impact of the issue on them. For example, citizens of a town may not know how legislation elsewhere in the state regarding mining operations might impact their drinking water.
Exercise

1 Consider the following scenario: The Federal Government is considering a proposal to close an army base and shift resources to a different location as a cost-saving measure. How are each of the following stakeholder groups effected? Where does power reside in the scenario? What mechanisms does each group have to enact change?

Stakeholders:
- Congressional and military leaders
- Soldiers
- Contractors
- Business owners and employees
- Local civic leaders
- Taxpayers

Shorter and longer arguments

Stakeholders and multiple points of view are areas that can differentiate short essays from longer ones. Accounting for complex and overlapping groups effected by your issue requires more depth than writing to a single audience. Most projects in composition classes, especially early in the course, are between three and six pages in length. In English composition II you will write an 8-10 page paper. As an instructor, I know the two questions on many students’ minds when an essay is assigned: (1) How long does it have to be? (2) When is it due? Both are crucial questions. I remember as a student my perspective on essay length was that length=time. Three-page essays were a relief. Ten-page essays seemed daunting.

Early in my academic career, I viewed essay length how I view running today. I would rather run 3 miles than 10. It is not even a question. However, if I ever begin to take running seriously, ten miles might be more rewarding, but running ten miles is not something more people can do without training. Planning your diet, hydration, time of day, and route become more important at longer distances. It is the same with writing. Longer essays require more planning.

The sample essay below is a well-written short essay advocating education reform to create a better environment for introverted students. As you read the essay make note of the thesis, support, audience, and presentation of opposing views.
Sample short essay

Running Head: FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE?

Should Community College be Free?

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to determine whether or not community college should be free. The method of Rogerian argument is used to explain both major sides of the issue. One side supports free community college and the other side opposes free community college. Those who support free community college, as well as those who proclaim students should work for their college education, have justifications for their opinion regarding the problem. This issue has been debated for several years, and it is time for a solution. Free community college may be attainable; however, it will require several stipulations. A solution to the dispute of whether or not community college should be free is to establish a GPA cutoff and a progress limit for students to obtain free community college.
Should Community College be Free?

What would happen if community college were free to all students? Would it be beneficial or would it be catastrophic? For most people a free college education sounds like a dream come true. No one would be required to pay for tuition or books, and college would suddenly be accessible to everyone. In a utopian world, free college would appear ideal; however, is it suitable for our real world? Free community college would provide students with an equal opportunity to receive a college education, but students who receive that free education could be perceived as overly entitled. An important point to consider is how free is defined in this context. Free community college would include all tuition, books, and fees. The debate of whether or not community college should be free has been present for years; therefore, it is time to establish a solution for this issue.

There are two main sides regarding the issue of free community college: those who support free community college and those who oppose the idea. It is important to realize that both sides share common values on the issue, regardless of whether one believes community college should be free or not. Both sides believe that having a college education can be beneficial. Another aspect that concerns both sides is how money is being spent and where it is coming from. Finally, people on both sides also care about their place in society, and how education impacts that.

Many strongly oppose free community college because they believe it would hinder students by causing them to become less determined. They argue that some students would take free college for granted, and students may not work as hard anymore to earn a degree. Those in opposition to free community college emphasize it is important for people to learn that most things will not be acquired free of charge. Nearly all things in life require tremendous effort. Free
college may cause many students to feel entitled to a higher education due to the fact that it would be complimentary. If students pay for their education with their own money they are more likely to excel in school. This is because people are more likely to spend their own money wisely. On the other hand, if it is another person’s money, students are more likely to spend it carelessly.

People who oppose free community college also express concern about the economy. They claim free community college would profoundly hinder the economy by creating unnecessary additional taxes. If college is free, students may take advantage of the system by not completing work on time or flunking classes, and then it would be a waste of other people’s money. According to data analyst and Forbes writer Christopher Denhart, students will naturally take longer to finish their degree if it is free (2014). On the other hand, if community college is not free, students will probably be more focused on school since they must pay for it. Thus, paying the cost of a college education for someone who is not entirely dedicated would be an unnecessary waste of money.

Many people also oppose free community college because they believe it would hinder students by significantly decreasing the value of a higher education. They point out that there is a reason not everyone can attend college. College is intended to be difficult; otherwise, it would not be considered an honor to earn a degree. As harsh as it sounds, they argue, not everyone is meant for college. People who complete college are not superior to others; however, they have the motivation and competence to earn a higher education. If made free, community college could be perceived as an extension of K-12 and could lose its value as the hard work it takes to earn a degree could become practically meaningless. American essayist Amy Butcher reinforces this position when she argues that degrees that cost nothing could also be valued as nothing by
employers (2015). One main purpose of going to college is to increase knowledge and to become one more valuable to employers. Those against free community college are concerned that employers would no longer have a way to choose the most valuable employee if everyone had the opportunity to free college.

On the other side of this complex issue, there are many people who support free community college. They argue all citizens should be provided with an equal opportunity to receive a college education. In the year of 2015, over six million students were enrolled at a community college in the United States (Community College FAQs). Of those students, thirty percent eventually dropped out (Beeclestead, 2017). This was often due to a lack of funding. If a substantial number of students begin community college but must leave due to finances, is it truly equitable and good for our society? Supporters of free community college believe that every student should have an equal opportunity to earn a college degree, right?

In fact, supporters of free community college argue that it is in society’s best long-term interest to provide free college to all those who wish to attempt it because ultimately those who succeed will pay enough in taxes to more than make up for what taxpayers spent to help them through college. The Rand Corporation, a U.S. based nonprofit research organization, claims their research proves that “More highly educated people contribute more in taxes . . . Those with more education draw less from social support programs . . . More educated people are less likely to incur incarceration costs . . . [and] Raising students’ level of education yields net benefits to the public” (Li, 2009). Based on this and similar information, supporters of free community college argue providing it is in everyone’s best interest.

A famous motivational speaker, Jim Robin, once stated, “Personal value is the magnet that attracts all good things into our lives. The greater our value, the greater our reward” (Jimenez,
2016). Those who support free community college argue that this is an important concept. Society correlates a college degree closely with one’s own self-worth and success in life. They believe that everyone needs more opportunity to attend college, because whether or not, having a college degree can influence public perception of one’s worth in society.

A resolution to this important issue may be attainable. A solution to this everlasting debate could be to offer community college for free to all students, but only with strong stipulations to establish a GPA cutoff and a mandatory progress limit to maintain quality and work ethic for those participating. An example of this already in place for students below the poverty line in the form of is the Satisfactory Progress Limit, a set of standards that the federal government already requires for economically challenged students to receive and maintain financial aid (Student Financial Aid and Scholarships). I propose modifying their model to offer free community college to all students who maintain a 2.5 GPA and who finish their program at a certain rate. The GPA cutoff should be a 2.5 because students must be consistently strong performers to obtain free community college in a way that will benefit society. Students should also have to successfully complete 75% of the classes in which they enroll, and pass a minimum of at least two classes each semester. A progress limit will ensure that students do not fall behind in their degree program or waste time in classes they don’t care about. Having a strict GPA requirement and progress limit would hopefully filter out students who do not take their education seriously and will allow those who are motivated to excel in school.

Students of all ages would be welcome to free community college, assuming they maintain the requirements. If students’ GPA falls below the cutoff or if they do not complete two classes each semester, the students will be on probation and will have one semester to improve their GPA. The probation period should not be longer than a semester because the
FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE?

students may fall too behind to finish their degree program on time. If students exceed the probation period, they will be responsible for paying for the remainder of their college education.

Offering free tuition, books, and fees will benefit community college students by giving them an equal opportunity to be successful. Having clear rules will ensure that dedicated students will be rewarded for their diligent work while those who lack dedication will lose funding but can still pursue education at their own expense if they wish. Free community college will ultimately provide a more valuable group of educated citizens and taxpayers, so this solution will truly benefit both community college students and our society.
References


Exercise
1. Who is the audience of the essay?
2. How does the essay incorporate counter-arguments?
3. How might this essay change if it required 5 more sources and were double the length?
4. How would the essay change if you were to rework it around the concepts of common ground and stakeholders?
From project parts to essay whole

Chapter 13 describes the assignments that you will compose in preparation for your argument essay. Your extended argument should grow out of these benchmarks (the proposal and annotated bibliography) as well as informal class and independent writing activities (pre-writing and notes). How specifically do you use these preliminary projects to compose an academic essay? Below are comparisons between passages in the proposal and annotated bibliography first introduced in chapter 13 and the final academic essay they helped produce.

Proposal sample
I’ve chosen firearms as the topic of my essay. Specifically, I’m interested in the stalemate over gun control versus 2nd Amendment rights. I feel like this discussion is important to us not just as a nation, but as a species. But it’s been obfuscated. What are the facts? Where do these statistics come from? Why is the issue so polarized? How did the two sides get this way? And are they even debating the right issues? I hope to answer these questions by getting all the facts in one place for analysis, then to use those findings to propose a solution.

Compare that passage to the text of the academic essay:

Academic essay opening
It is hard to imagine a conversation more divisive in recent years than the one occurring around gun violence in the United States. Images of school shootings and protesters waving American flags immediately spring to mind. With nearly as many guns as there are people in the United States, this issue is of immediate importance to all of us. And it has been for many years, yet it never seems to go anywhere. The conversation is passionate and very public, yet it rarely manages to have a meaningful effect on our lives. Perhaps we could break this stalemate and accomplish more if those on both sides engaged in the conversation with a better understanding of the issue, of themselves, and of each other. After all, both parties have the same motive: Safety. Both sides want to live in a safer world, and to see their loved ones thrive.

The opening of the essay establishes the importance of the issue mentioned in the proposal. The essay emphasizes that a better understanding is needed, a goal expressed in the proposal. On question raised later in the proposal is, “Where did the pro- and anti-gun lobbies come from?” The essay addresses that question.
Academic essay sample
The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence is perhaps the most well-known gun control advocacy group in the United States. Named for James Brady, an assistant to President Ronald Reagan, who was wounded in a shooting in 1981, the Brady Campaign has worked for decades to reduce the number of shootings in the United States.

A well-written formal proposal brings to light the key questions the essay will answer, and seeking a comprehensive answer to the questions rather than simple ones the writer is able to demonstrate the complexity of the issue.

Academic essay sample
However, not all gun rights groups are politically conservative, nor do they affiliate themselves with the NRA, despite its obvious clout. The Pink Pistols are an example of such a group. It is open to all, with a focus on “building bridges” from the gun community to others, particularly sexual minorities.

The example above demonstrates that the pro-gun lobby is not a monolithic conservative entity under the control of the NRA. The motivation and rationale for gun ownership and the politics that drive those beliefs vary. The writer is able to leverage this complexity to solidify a goal of the project first established in the proposal to foster dialogue.

Academic essay sample
This may seem like an insurmountable difficulty on a topic such as this, given that the solutions sought by both sides are directly contradictory to one another. We cannot very well arm the public and simultaneously diminish the number of firearms in private possession. However, the goal here is not to arrive at such a solution, but to nurture a fruitful dialogue that enables us to create and tailor even better solutions to this problem.

Of course, the project is also built around research and the annotated bibliography took the first steps to plan how sources would contribute to the argument.

Annotated bibliography sample
Citation: Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence. (2017, March 1). Retrieved from Brady Campaign: http://www.bradycampaign.org/
How this source may be useful: The Brady Campaign is probably the most well-known gun control group in the United States. Their views and behaviors represent that entire side of the discussion well so this source would be invaluable for representing the gun control side.
The writer is able to use the official website of the Brady Campaign to describe one of the most well-known gun control advocacy groups in the country. Establishing the Brady Campaign, along with the NRA, allows the writer to establish how these groups argue passionately for their causes but engage in polarizing rhetoric that obscures meaningful dialogue.

**Exercise**

Review the sample below and answer the following:

1. Which stakeholders are mentioned in the essay? Are there any implicit or unstated stakeholders the essay does not address?

2. The essay posits that the goal is to foster meaningful dialogue that cuts through the charged rhetoric on gun control rather than achieving a solution to the problem. What types of common ground could be achieved through the dialogue the author describes?

3. Review the proposal and annotated bibliography posted in their entirety in Chapter 13. Identify two passages not mentioned here from each that directly contributed to the sample essay.

4. Compose an outline based on the sample draft below. For each paragraph write an original one sentence summary. You will end up with a list of number sentences corresponding to the number of paragraphs. What comments can you make about the structure of the essay? Why might this be a useful activity for writers?
Sample Common Ground Essay

Mediating the Discourse around Firearms

Jacob Robbins
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Abstract

Most Americans have a personal stake in the issue of gun violence, and many seem to support equitable solutions to the problem. However, the topic is dominated by hostility and fear. This paper looks at some of the main participants in the debate and how they conduct themselves within it, their failures, and how they might interact more effectively in order to enact positive social change.
Mediating the Discourse over Firearms

It is hard to imagine a conversation more divisive in recent years than the one occurring around gun violence. In democratic nations around the globe, laws vary widely and the debate on those laws can often be heated (Masters, 2016). Here in the United States, images of school shootings and protesters waving American flags immediately spring to mind. With nearly as many guns as there are people in the United States, this issue is of immediate importance to all of us. And it has been for many years, yet it never seems to go anywhere. The conversation is passionate and very public, but it rarely manages to have a meaningful effect on our lives. Perhaps we could break this stalemate and accomplish more if those on opposing sides engaged in the conversation with a better understanding of the issue, of themselves, and of each other. After all, both gun rights advocates and gun control advocates have the same motive: Safety. Both sides want to live in a safer world, and to see their loved ones thrive.

This is not as binary an issue as many seem to believe. Because of the shared values concerning safety, many people actually support elements of several groups, including both gun control groups and gun rights groups. Major gun control groups, such as the Brady Campaign and the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence (CSGV), support more thorough gun control measures and tend to believe that firearms present a clear danger to those in their vicinity. They place an emphasis on impulsive use of firearms, made possible by immediate access to guns, as a considerable public health risk. They question whether the utility of firearms outweighs those risks.
PropONENTS OF GUN RIGHTS, however, believe that firearms are the most potent, effective, and immediate way for individuals to protect themselves and their loved ones. They place strong emphasis on the Second Amendment and the role of firearms in American history. They also typically favor self-sufficient solutions and independence, believing that individuals should take responsibility for their own safety rather than rely on other people, including police, to be there for them. They hold that the vulnerabilities imposed by gun control are more dangerous than the continuation of current trends in gun violence in the United States. Many of them believe that this holds particularly true with regards to transgressions by the government and by criminal elements, both of which are groups they claim would be unaffected by an increase in gun regulations.

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence is perhaps the most well-known gun control advocacy group in the United States. Named for James Brady, an assistant to President Ronald Reagan, who was wounded in a shooting in 1981, the Brady Campaign has worked for decades to reduce the number of shootings in the United States. Among its many tactics for achieving this overarching goal is the use of propaganda. Figure 1 is such an example. In *Alice PSA - Brady Campaign - Generation Lockdown*, a school group associated with the Brady Campaign called *Generation Lockdown* presents the familiar story of Alice in Wonderland, but includes a gun in the setting for the curious girl to stumble upon. Given her
tendency to misuse any new trinket or substance she encounters, the outcome is predictably tragic, with Alice accidentally shooting herself while looking down the barrel of the gun as the white rabbit watches on in horror. The ad ends with a call for parents to make sure children do not play anywhere a gun may not be properly secured. The ad first brings the seriousness of firearm accidents into the lighthearted tale of Alice, and then applies that unnerving juxtaposition to the idea of the viewer’s own children finding themselves in an identical situation were they to play somewhere with access to a loaded gun.

The Coalition to Stop Gun Violence (CSGV), formed in 1974 and made up of 47 national organizations, is an example of more aggressive gun control rhetoric. The CSVG attempts to use advertising and social media to hold elected officials accountable for gun violence. In their “Stand Up to ‘Stand Your Ground’” public service announcement (Figure 2), they reenact the shooting of Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman, with special focus on the numerous people who claimed to have looked out their windows during and after the confrontation. In doing this, the video implies that we are all onlookers to a crime as we allow Stand Your Ground laws, which permit the use of deadly force during life-threatening confrontations even if one has the option to retreat, to remain in effect in 26 states. The ad concludes with the Zimmerman character raising his hands for police while standing amidst 26...
bodies, each labeled as one of the states with Stand Your Ground laws.

A common target of ad campaigns by these two groups is The National Rifle Association (NRA). Founded in 1871 initially to train citizens to be better marksmen, particularly during war, the NRA was largely a hobby group in its early years. However, following gun control legislation in the 1970s, it established a lobbying arm called the NRA Institute for Legislative Action, followed shortly by a political action committee called the Political Victory Fund. An electoral coup within the organization saw moderates displaced from leadership positions following accusations of weakness or a lack of commitment to the cause of supporting gun rights in the United States. The NRA’s began opposing all gun control legislation shortly thereafter and has become known as one of the more influential special interest groups in American politics today (Achenbach, Higham, & Horwitz, 2013).

The Alice in Wonderland PSA by the Brady Campaign mentioned previously is a response to an NRA publication. In Little Red Riding Hood (Has a Gun), written by NRA Family collaborator Amelia Hamilton, the story of Little Red Riding Hood is reimagined to consider how the story may have unfolded differently had Red and her grandmother been armed (Figure 3). When the Big Bad Wolf initially approaches Red, her rifle scares him away. He subsequently approaches her grandmother’s house, but rather than making a meal of her, he is stopped in his tracks by the click of a shotgun’s hammer being pulled back. Red’s grandmother holds

the wolf until Red shows up, at which point they subdue the wolf as he remarks that he hates families to take steps to protect themselves. The Huntsman shows up to save them but finds “they had already saved themselves.”

Of course, not all gun rights groups are politically conservative, nor do they affiliate themselves with the NRA, despite its obvious clout. The Pink Pistols are an example of such a group. It is open to all, with a focus on “building bridges” from the gun community to others, particularly sexual minorities. They emphasize lawfully-owned, legally-concealed firearms for sexual minorities, with a motto of “Armed queers don’t get bashed.” Their goal is to arm and train enough sexual minorities that those seeking to perpetrate violence against individuals in the LGBTQ community will have to think twice, in case their intended victims are armed and capable of protecting themselves. Protection of marginalized groups, such as the LGBTQ community, is typically a primary concern of the very same people who tend to back gun control legislation. It is a contradiction, in many cases, but one that demonstrates the commonalities among both gun control and gun rights groups.

LGBTQ individuals make up a growing number of victims of hate crimes in the United States (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2015). Considering that LGBTQ people constitute about 20% of hate crime victims, most gun control advocates would probably be supportive of a transwoman in the Deep South keeping a handgun in her purse for self-defense. A 2015 Gallup poll found that most Americans believe that more concealed weapons would make the nation safer. However, that same Gallup poll also found that 80% of Americans support universal background checks on firearm purchases.
It seems that most people can find some points of agreement with each side of the discussion. Most Americans support the Constitution and the Second Amendment, just as most Americans support robust background checks on firearm purchases. Why, then, are we having such trouble reaching a consensus on these issues? Why are even small pieces of gun control legislation stonewalled in the legislature by gun rights groups and why does common gun control rhetoric vilify guns and demonize gun owners themselves? The answers to these questions are not completely clear. However, a significant factor is perhaps the role corporations and large organizations play in the discussion. The conversation is framed by the ongoing debate between influential groups like the NRA and the Brady Campaign, whose agendas and feelings do not necessarily reflect those of the public, but merely the specific, niche interests that their financial backers direct them to support or attack.

In order to begin communicating constructively to find solutions to these problems, the public must first look at their own beliefs with skepticism. The cultivation of unique personal views would have to overtake the dissemination of tailored narratives developed by large organizations. After addressing the personal conflicts at the heart of this topic for so many, people could then be ready to undertake a shift in attitude towards opposing views as well, with an aim to find compromise. If we can examine our own views for defects, and appreciate the strengths in the beliefs of others, we should all be able to acknowledge that everyone's feelings are valid, regardless of whether they align with our own ideas or not. In doing so, the common ground on virtually any issue is more likely to become apparent and we may make progress on those issues even if we do not all agree on every single topic.
This may seem like an insurmountable difficulty on an issue such as guns in America, given that the solutions sought by the major opposing sides are directly contradictory to one another. We cannot very well arm the public and simultaneously diminish the number of firearms in private possession. The first step in solving the problem, however, is to nurture a fruitful dialogue that enables us to create and tailor even better solutions to this problem.

A favorable format for this dialogue may be Jürgen Habermas’s ideal speech situation. This rests on his theory that there are three domains of communication: (1) the technical, in which individuals relate to their environments through speech acts, (2) the practical, in which individuals relate to one another through speech acts, and (3) the emancipatory, in which individuals relate to power through speech acts (Habermas, 1971, p. 19). The basic tenets are inclusiveness, equality, and the absence of coercion. That is, every competent individual is free to participate openly and honestly in the discussion, without fear of social reprisal or peer pressure (Habermas, 1990).

Using Habermas’s format, all participants are free to make or question any assertion, and to express their feelings without fear of judgment or concern for censorship. In the context of the gun control dialogue in the United States, this would require both sides to acknowledge one another’s thoughts and feelings on the issue, which would then prompt open, respectful, and inclusive dialogue of these motivations. Undertaking this first step alone would represent a leap forward in progress. With the motives and goals of each side laid bare, without social or financial pressure obfuscating the interaction, we could then begin discussing solutions that appeal to both sides.
We must not forget how fortunate it is that so many people are so passionate about such a wide range of issues. This raises the discordant discourse of the dialogue surrounding firearms into even sharper contrast by urging us to imagine the good that could be done if the two sides worked together rather than against one another. There is no group that supports gun violence. There is no lobby that supports misuse of firearms. There are no ad campaigns in favor of mass shootings. Those who love guns and support the Second Amendment want to avoid needless death just as much as those who seek to achieve that goal through gun control. By having a positive discussion, in which the perspectives, experiences, and values of all parties are acknowledged, we can begin to make progress not just on the issues of gun control and gun rights, but on every contentious topic currently challenging us as a species.
References


Rogerian Argument, a method

Rogerian Argument developed from the work of American psychologist Carl Rogers. Unlike many other approaches to argument, which in general attempt to prove the author’s position is right and the opposing position is wrong, the Rogerian method focuses on finding common ground among people with opposing views in order to solve a problem. It is a composition strategy used in all fields of study to effectively resolve controversial issues while avoiding polarizing conflicts.

The argument has a conversational tone, and develops specific structural components.

1. The introduction uses a neutral tone to provide background on a controversial issue and is followed by a thoughtful, fair summary of the problem. It usually highlights the major positions in the issue, makes clear why all participants are stakeholders, and closes with emphasis on why it is important to resolve the issue (instead of a statement of thesis).

2. Next, still using a neutral tone, the writer discusses the contexts in which each major position on the issue is valid (usually beginning with the position with which the writer most disagrees although this is not indicated in the writing). The goal is to present each side of the argument in such a way that those who hold the positions feel their perspective is fully understood, so they are willing to move to compromise.

3. The argument is then presented from the writer’s own position, using effective logic, reasoning, and evidence, but with particular focus on stating the contexts in which the writer’s position would be valid. The writer's thesis is generally stated at the beginning or end of this section.

4. The conclusion does not require readers to give up their own position. Instead, the concluding elements make clear how opponents would benefit from moving closer to the author’s position by adopting at least some elements of that position. Emphasis is placed on demonstrating how the two positions may complement each other through shared common values and that each may benefit the other through compromise or an alternative solution that can account for a wider variety of contexts.
Rogerian introduction

The following is an example an introduction to a Rogerian argument. The topic is racial profiling. The author uses a literary work to open a discussion of the issue. The poem exemplifies the controversy the author will discuss. A Rogerian introduction aims to establish the controversy rather than stating the author’s position directly.

In Dwight Okita’s “In Response to Executive Order 9066,” the narrator — a young Japanese-American — writes a letter to the government, who has ordered her family into a relocation camp after Pearl Harbor. In the letter, the narrator details the people in her life, from her father to her best friend at school. Since the narrator is of Japanese descent, her best friend accuses her of “trying to start a war” (18). The narrator is seemingly too naïve to realize the ignorance of this statement, and tells the government that she asked this friend to plant tomato seeds in her honor. Though Okita’s poem deals specifically with World War II, the issue of race relations during wartime is still relevant. Recently, with the outbreaks of terrorism in the United States, Spain, and England, many are calling for racial profiling to stifle terrorism. The issue has sparked debate, with one side calling it racism and the other calling it common sense.

Account of all sides

After the introduction, a Rogerian essay shows the major sides to the debate being addressed to show those views are understood. Typically, a Rogerian essay leads this section with the view the writer most disagrees with.

In “The Danger of Political Correctness,” author Richard Stein asserts that, “the desire to not offend has now become more important than protecting national security” (52).

This statement sums up the beliefs of those in favor of profiling in public places. The writer of this essay disagrees strongly with this but commentary on the rationale for that view demonstrate that the opposing view is understood.

Writer’s position

The structural theory underpinning Rogerian argument is that once the opposing sides have heard a reasonable account of their positions they are ready to listen to the writer’s point of view. This is the section that should present the strongest evidence. In this example, the writer might focus on the issue from the point of view of those who are profiled.
Recently an award-winning economist was interrogated on a plane as a suspected terrorist. What did he do to raise suspicion? He did not engage in small talk and was marking in a notebook using strange symbols (math formulas). He had curly hair, olive skin and a foreign accent. These factors were enough for a passenger to suspect the man was up to no good. It was also enough for the airline to interrogate him. While this may seem like a small inconvenience, the paranoia that drives baseless accusations of wrong doing based on race place an undue burden on these individuals and can become dangerous when sanctioned by the state.

**Rogerian conclusion**

Since the goal of Rogerian argument is to find a common ground between two opposing positions but this does not mean compromising your views. In the example above, all sides of the racial profiling issue want the U.S. A solid Rogerian argument acknowledges the desires of each side, and tries to accommodate both. Again, using the racial profiling example above, both sides desire a safer society, perhaps a better solution would focus on more objective measures than race; an effective start would be to use more screening technology on public transportation. This potentially moves the opposing side to your position in a way that addresses their primary concern (safety) without resorting to racial profiling.

Your conclusion should also:
- Bring the essay back to what is discussed in the introduction
- Tie up loose ends
- End on a thought-provoking note

*The following is a sample conclusion:*

Though the debate over racial profiling is sure to continue, each side desires to make the United States a safer place. With that goal in mind, our society deserves better security measures than merely searching a person who appears a bit dark. We cannot waste time with such subjective matters, especially when we have technology that could more effectively locate potential terrorists. Sure, installing metal detectors and cameras on public transportation is costly, but feeling safe in public is priceless.
Note on the Rogerian thesis

The most difficult aspect of Rogerian arguments for students is the placement of the thesis statement. Most models of argumentation you have used in the past demand an early thesis to announce your point of view. In Rogerian argument, the thesis emphasizes a common ground solution, so it typically appears very late in the paper after multiple positions on the issue have been explained. The delayed thesis is a deliberate rhetorical strategy. Despite this important structural change, you should still employ traditional argument conventions to support major claims, main points, and sub-claims (see Chapter 6).

The Rogerian method of argument—along with Toulmin, Classical argument or any other model—is a model you use as a writer to solve complex problems but these should not be viewed as rigid formulas. Use methods as a framework but adapt your methods to meet the needs of your audience and pursue your purpose.

Key Takeaways

- Advanced rhetoric is characterized by features both of science and art
- Rhetorical analysis and persuasion allow a writer to demonstrate the complexity surrounding public issues and work towards solutions
- In academic arguments, accounting for stakeholders provides a useful framework for assessing who enacts policies and who is effected by those policies
- Your extended argument should grow out of these benchmarks (the proposal and annotated bibliography) as well as informal class and independent writing activities (pre-writing and notes)
- Rogerian argument is one method that allows for us to pursue common ground.

LICENSES AND ATTRIBUTIONS

CC LICENSED CONTENT, SHARED PREVIOUSLY
Appendix

Rose State College Resources

Writing Lab

HU Room 137

The Rose State Writing Lab provides one-on-one help with any Rose State writing project at no charge. It's open to all students; no referral is required.

Phone: (405) 733-7384

https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/writing-lab/

Writing Program

The RSC Writing Program website includes information on classes we offer, a writing workshop schedule, and free e-book copies of textbooks for writing courses including *English Composition Review* and *Fundamental English*, each of which provide a number of resources for grammar, mechanics, and sentence formation.

https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/academic-divisions/humanities/writing-program/

CLICK

Through providing an innovative learning environment that is supportive, individualized, engaging, and cohesive, CLICK TEAM is committed to helping Rose State College students create a successful, meaningful, and useful educational experience.

Phone: (405) 733-7386

https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/programs-certifications/click-team/

ESL Learning

HU Room 130

Every semester, Rose State offers free English as a Second Language (ESL) workshops, classes and tutoring for both students and members of the community. Our main goal is to help students who are non-native speakers of English be successful in their course work here. However, we also welcome high school students preparing for future college admission and other members of the greater Oklahoma City community who simply wish to improve their English language skills.

https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/programs-certifications/esl-learning/
**Reading Lab**

The Rose State Reading Lab provides one-on-one, individualized instruction for students seeking to improve their reading skills. They work with RSC students who are currently enrolled in reading classes, as well as those who are not. [https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/reading-lab/](https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/reading-lab/)

**Learning Resource Center**

The LRC is comprised of the following main service areas:

- The Library includes access to circulating and non-circulating materials, textbook reserves, group study rooms, reading/study areas, and an open computer lab. It is located on the east end of the Main campus, building 5 on the campus map: [https://www.rose.edu/campus-map](https://www.rose.edu/campus-map)

- **Academic Innovation** provides instructional design and technology support to faculty who wish to build quality on-campus, online and blended courses. This is the area that administers and manages the Brightspace (by D2L) integrated learning platform. They also support the operation of the Rose eLearn Support Helpdesk.

- **Academic Testing** administers tests at the request of instructors for math and science courses, Internet and hybrid classes, make-up tests for campus courses, advanced standing tests, and computer proficiency exams. Correspondence testing is done by arrangement only and requires special permission.

- **The Tutoring Center** provides tutoring services for most general education courses to all Rose students and to local high school students as tutors are available. The Tutoring Center is located on the south side of the 2nd floor.

- **Academic Outreach** primarily serves high school students from area high schools and incarcerated students at state correctional centers who are enrolled in college courses. Academic Outreach is located on the north side of the 2nd floor.

- **Special Services** including Counseling and Disability Services, provide assistance to students and faculty in arranging appropriate accommodations and offering counseling services. Special Services is located on the north side of the 1st floor.

**Citation Help**

[https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/library/resources/citing-your-sources/](https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/library/resources/citing-your-sources/)
**Plagiarism Prevention Resources**
https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/library/resources/plagiarism-prevention/

**Online Tutoring**
Through a partnership with Tutor.com, Rose State College offers free online assistance that connects students one-to-one with subject-expert tutors for assistance in most general education courses. Online tutoring service can be accessed from any Internet-enabled computer or mobile device. **Students must be logged into their course on Brightspace (d2l) to access the service.** Students are allowed up to four sessions per week. This online tutoring service also provides real-time and drop-off writing assistance.
(https://www.rose.edu/content/academics/student-resources/learning-resources-center/tutoring-center/online-tutoring/)
**Grading**

Grading in English Composition I and II will generally follow the Rose State College Composition Program Writing Evaluation Standards listed below. Note: Individual professors may have some variation, so check your syllabus and d2l course page for grading details. ([https://www.rose.edu/media/5944/grading-rubric-revision-2016.pdf](https://www.rose.edu/media/5944/grading-rubric-revision-2016.pdf))

### Rose State College Composition Program Writing Evaluation Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content (30%)</th>
<th>Excellent (30 points)</th>
<th>Skillful (25 points)</th>
<th>Competent (20 points)</th>
<th>Improvement Needed (15 points)</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Standard (0 points)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Content Development</strong></td>
<td>Exceptionally well-presented and argued in accordance with the objectives of the assignment. Ideas are very detailed, well-developed, and supported with numerous specific examples and details.</td>
<td>Well-presented and argued in accordance with the objectives of the assignment. Ideas are detailed, well-developed, and supported with several specific examples and details.</td>
<td>Fairly well-presented and argued in accordance with the objectives of the assignment. Some ideas are detailed, developed, and supported, but others lack the support needed to adequately defend the author’s position.</td>
<td>Weak presentation of argument or not in accordance with the objectives of the assignment. Ideas lack the support and specific details needed to adequately defend the author’s position. Only vague generalities are used.</td>
<td>Author’s position is neither clear nor supported. Argument is unclear, confusing, and difficult to comprehend.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Organizational Elements (30%)</th>
<th>Excellent (30 points)</th>
<th>Skillful (25 points)</th>
<th>Competent (20 points)</th>
<th>Improvement Needed (15 points)</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Standard (0 points)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>The introduction creates an excellent sense of purpose appropriate to the audience and includes an exceptional attention-grabbing beginning by using a combination of techniques.</td>
<td>The introduction skillfully creates a sense of purpose appropriate to the audience and includes a strong attention-grabbing beginning by using one technique.</td>
<td>The introduction makes an attempt to engage the interest of the reader, but the attention-grabbing technique is undeveloped.</td>
<td>The introduction creates a weak sense of purpose or is not appropriate to the audience. A clear attention-grabbing technique is not employed.</td>
<td>The introduction is missing or too brief to evaluate.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis or Major Claim</strong></td>
<td>There is an excellent, intellectually complex thesis that provides unity and coherence throughout the document.</td>
<td>There is a strong thesis that provides unity and coherence throughout the document.</td>
<td>There is a competent thesis that provides unity and coherence throughout the document.</td>
<td>There is a weak thesis, lacking originality or focus, which provides only limited unity and coherence throughout the document.</td>
<td>There is no clear thesis or major claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body Paragraph Structure</strong></td>
<td>All body paragraphs have a clear topic sentence or subclaim. The overall body of the document is developed using an excellent organizational strategy appropriate to the rhetorical situation. Appropriate transitional elements are used throughout the essay.</td>
<td>All body paragraphs have a clear topic sentence or subclaim. The overall body of the document is developed using a skillful organizational strategy appropriate to the rhetorical situation. Appropriate transitional elements are used throughout the essay.</td>
<td>Most body paragraphs have a clear topic sentence or subclaim. The overall body of the document is developed using a competent organizational strategy appropriate to the rhetorical situation. Transitional elements are clearly evident, but a few more are needed to effectively move the reader from one idea to the next.</td>
<td>Some body paragraphs have a clear topic sentence. The overall body of the document has weak development, uses an ineffective organizational strategy for the rhetorical situation. Transitional elements are used sparingly.</td>
<td>Organizational strategy is ineffective or not present.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion</strong></td>
<td>The conclusion provides an excellent closure by purposefully tying all ideas presented in the document.</td>
<td>The conclusion provides skillful closure by tying all ideas presented in the document without excessive reliance on summary or formulaic language.</td>
<td>An attempt at closure is present, but includes formulaic language or technique, relies on more summary, or introduces new material.</td>
<td>The conclusion is too underdeveloped to provide an adequate sense of closure.</td>
<td>The conclusion is missing or not apparent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Work</td>
<td>Excellent 10 points</td>
<td>Skillful 8 points</td>
<td>Competent 7 points</td>
<td>Improvement Needed 5 points</td>
<td>Does Not Meet Standard 0 points</td>
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<td>A wide variety of scholarly sources is used in accordance with the guidelines for this essay; extensive research work is evident.</td>
<td>A sufficient variety of scholarly sources is used in accordance with the guidelines for this essay.</td>
<td>Sources are used in a limited scope. A wider variety of scholarly resources is needed to strengthen paper.</td>
<td>Only one type of source is used. Over-reliance on the Internet is evident.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integration of Research</td>
<td>All sources are well-integrated and support claims argued in the paper; information is logically placed and enhances the argument.</td>
<td>Most sources are well-integrated and support claims argued in the paper; information is logically placed and enhances the argument.</td>
<td>Fewer than half of the sources are well-integrated or support claims argued in the paper; information is often not logically placed and therefore does not usually enhance the argument.</td>
<td>Sources may be present, but not evident due to incorrect integration. Depending on the severity of this issue, the entire essay could receive no credit due to plagiarism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documentation (10%)</td>
<td>All citations, both text and visual, are done in the correct format with no errors.</td>
<td>While some citations, both text and visual, are done correctly, most contain at least one error.</td>
<td>Fewer than half of the citations, both text and visual, are done in the correct format. Most contain more than one error.</td>
<td>None of the citations are done in the correct format. Unintentional plagiarism is evident.</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-text Citation</td>
<td>All sources are documented correctly on the Works Cited or Reference page. The Works Cited or Reference page is formatted correctly.</td>
<td>Fewer than two documentation errors occur on the Works Cited or Reference page; the Works Cited or Reference page typically follows proper formatting.</td>
<td>Fewer than four documentation errors occur on the Works Cited or Reference page.</td>
<td>Works Cited or References page includes more than four documentation errors or major formatting issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Works Cited/References Page</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics (20%)</td>
<td>No mechanical errors are made in areas such as spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar. Appropriate use of formal language for a college-level essay occurs throughout.</td>
<td>1 or 2 mechanical errors, in spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar occur.</td>
<td>3 or 4 mechanical errors in spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar occur. The writing may have minimal errors in formal language such as misuse of the first and second person.</td>
<td>5 or 6 mechanical errors in spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar occur. The essay may rely on casual language rather than formal academic language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Number of errors in spelling, language usage, punctuation, and grammar make the essay difficult to comprehend.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Score</td>
<td>Excellent 90 or more</td>
<td>Skillful 80 or more</td>
<td>Competent 70 or more</td>
<td>Improvement Needed 60 or more</td>
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Classical argument example

A Modest Proposal

For preventing the children of poor people in Ireland, from being a burden on their parents or country, and for making them beneficial to the publick.¹

By Jonathan Swift (1729)

It is a melancholy object to those, who walk through this great town, or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads and cabbin-doors crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags, and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in stroling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants who, as they grow up, either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country, to fight for the Pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I think it is agreed by all parties, that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers, and frequently of their fathers, is in the present deplorable state of the kingdom, a very great additional grievance; and therefore whoever could find out a fair, cheap and easy method of making these children sound and useful members of the common-wealth, would deserve so well of the publick, as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.

But my intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the children of professed beggars: it is of a much greater extent, and shall take in the whole number of infants at a certain age, who are born of parents in effect as little able to support them, as those who demand our charity in the streets.

As to my own part, having turned my thoughts for many years, upon this important subject, and maturely weighed the several scheme[s] of our projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their computation. It is true, a child just dropt from its dam, may be supported by her milk, for a solar year, with little other nourishment: at most not above the value of two shillings, which the mother may certainly get, or the value in scraps, by her lawful occupation of begging; and it is exactly at one year old that I propose to provide for them in such a manner, as, instead of being a charge upon their parents, or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for the rest of their lives, they shall, on the contrary, contribute to the feeding, and partly to the cloathing of many thousands.

There is likewise another great advantage in my scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children, alas! too frequent among us, sacrificing the poor innocent babes, I doubt, more to avoid the expanse than the shame, which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast.

¹ For web version, see Project Gutenberg offers 58,167 free ebooks to download.
The number of souls in this kingdom being usually reckoned one million and a half, of these I calculate there may be about two hundred thousand couple whose wives are breeders; from which number I subtract thirty thousand couple, who are able to maintain their own children, (although I apprehend there cannot be so many, under the present distresses of the kingdom) but this being granted, there will remain an hundred and seventy thousand breeders. I again subtract fifty thousand, for those women who miscarry, or whose children die by accident or disease within the year. There only remain an hundred and twenty thousand children of poor parents annually born. The question therefore is, How this number shall be reared, and provided for? which, as I have already said, under the present situation of affairs, is utterly impossible by all the methods hitherto proposed. For we can neither employ them in handicraft or agriculture; they neither build houses, (I mean in the country) nor cultivate land: they can very seldom pick up a livelihood by stealing till they arrive at six years old; except where they are of towardly parts, although I confess they learn the rudiments much earlier; during which time they can however be properly looked upon only as probationers: As I have been informed by a principal gentleman in the county of Cavan, who protested to me, that he never knew above one or two instances under the age of six, even in a part of the kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that art.

I am assured by our merchants, that a boy or a girl before twelve years old, is no saleable commodity, and even when they come to this age, they will not yield above three pounds, or three pounds and half a crown at most, on the exchange; which cannot turn to account either to the parents or kingdom, the charge of nutriments and rags having been at least four times that value.

I shall now therefore humbly propose my own thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed, is, at a year old, a most delicious nourishing and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricasie, or a ragoust.

I do therefore humbly offer it to publick consideration, that of the hundred and twenty thousand children, already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle, or swine, and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore, one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining hundred thousand may, at a year old, be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune, through the kingdom, always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump, and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends, and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt, will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

I have reckoned upon a medium, that a child just born will weigh 12 pounds, and in a solar year, if tolerably nursed, encreaseth to 28 pounds.
I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children.

Infant's flesh will be in season throughout the year, but more plentiful in March, and a little before and after; for we are told by a grave author, an eminent French physician, that fish being a prolific dyet, there are more children born in Roman Catholic countries about nine months after Lent, the markets will be more glutted than usual, because the number of Popish infants, is at least three to one in this kingdom, and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage, by lessening the number of Papists among us.

I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, labourers, and four-fifths of the farmers) to be about two shillings per annum, rags included; and I believe no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat, when he hath only some particular friend, or his own family to dine with him. Thus the squire will learn to be a good landlord, and grow popular among his tenants, the mother will have eight shillings neat profit, and be fit for work till she produces another child.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may fle the carcass; the skin of which, artificially dressed, will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.

As to our City of Dublin, shambles may be appointed for this purpose, in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers we may be assured will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the children alive, and dressing them hot from the knife, as we do roasting pigs.

A very worthy person, a true lover of his country, and whose virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased, in discoursing on this matter, to offer a refinement upon my scheme. He said, that many gentlemen of this kingdom, having of late destroyed their deer, he conceived that the want of venison might be well supply'd by the bodies of young lads and maidens, not exceeding fourteen years of age, nor under twelve; so great a number of both sexes in every country being now ready to starve for want of work and service: And these to be disposed of by their parents if alive, or otherwise by their nearest relations. But with due deference to so excellent a friend, and so deserving a patriot, I cannot be altogether in his sentiments; for as to the males, my American acquaintance assured me from frequent experience, that their flesh was generally tough and lean, like that of our school-boys, by continual exercise, and their taste disagreeable, and to fatten them would not answer the charge. Then as to the females, it would, I think, with humble submission, be a loss to the publick, because they soon would become breeders themselves: And besides, it is not improbable that some scrupulous people might be apt to censure such a practice, (although indeed very unjustly) as a little bordering upon cruelty, which, I confess, hath always been with me the strongest objection against any project, how well soever intended.

But in order to justify my friend, he confessed, that this expedient was put into his head by the famous Salmanaazor, a native of the island Formosa, who came
from thence to London, above twenty years ago, and in conversation told my friend, that in his country, when any young person happened to be put to death, the executioner sold the carcass to persons of quality, as a prime dainty; and that, in his time, the body of a plump girl of fifteen, who was crucified for an attempt to poison the Emperor, was sold to his imperial majesty's prime minister of state, and other great mandarins of the court in joints from the gibbet, at four hundred crowns. Neither indeed can I deny, that if the same use were made of several plump young girls in this town, who without one single groat to their fortunes, cannot stir abroad without a chair, and appear at a play-house and assemblies in foreign fineries which they never will pay for; the kingdom would not be the worse.

Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people, who are aged, diseased, or maimed; and I have been desired to employ my thoughts what course may be taken, to ease the nation of so grievous an incumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known, that they are every day dying, and rotting, by cold and famine, and filth, and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the young labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition. They cannot get work, and consequently pine away from want of nourishment, to a degree, that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labour, they have not strength to perform it, and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.

I have too long digressed, and therefore shall return to my subject. I think the advantages by the proposal which I have made are obvious and many, as well as of the highest importance.

For first, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of Papists, with whom we are yearly over-run, being the principal breeders of the nation, as well as our most dangerous enemies, and who stay at home on purpose with a design to deliver the kingdom to the Pretender, hoping to take their advantage by the absence of so many good Protestants, who have chosen rather to leave their country, than stay at home and pay tithes against their conscience to an episcopal curate.

Secondly, The poorer tenants will have something valuable of their own, which by law may be made liable to a distress, and help to pay their landlord's rent, their corn and cattle being already seized, and money a thing unknown.

Thirdly, Whereas the maintainance of an hundred thousand children, from two years old, and upwards, cannot be computed at less than ten shillings a piece per annum, the nation's stock will be thereby encreased fifty thousand pounds per annum, besides the profit of a new dish, introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom, who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among our selves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.

Fourthly, The constant breeders, besides the gain of eight shillings sterling per annum by the sale of their children, will be rid of the charge of maintaining them after the first year.
Fifthly, This food would likewise bring great custom to taverns, where the vintners will certainly be so prudent as to procure the best receipts for dressing it to perfection; and consequently have their houses frequented by all the fine gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their knowledge in good eating; and a skilful cook, who understands how to oblige his guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

Sixthly, This would be a great inducement to marriage, which all wise nations have either encouraged by rewards, or enforced by laws and penalties. It would increase the care and tenderness of mothers towards their children, when they were sure of a settlement for life to the poor babes, provided in some sort by the publick, to their annual profit instead of expence. We should soon see an honest emulation among the married women, which of them could bring the fattest child to the market. Men would become as fond of their wives, during the time of their pregnancy, as they are now of their mares in foal, their cows in calf, or sow when they are ready to farrow; nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a practice) for fear of a miscarriage.

Many other advantages might be enumerated. For instance, the addition of some thousand carcasses in our exportation of barrel'd beef: the propagation of swine's flesh, and improvement in the art of making good bacon, so much wanted among us by the great destruction of pigs, too frequent at our tables; which are no way comparable in taste or magnificence to a well grown, fat yearly child, which roasted whole will make a considerable figure at a Lord Mayor's feast, or any other publick entertainment. But this, and many others, I omit, being studious of brevity.

Supposing that one thousand families in this city, would be constant customers for infants flesh, besides others who might have it at merry meetings, particularly at weddings and christenings, I compute that Dublin would take off annually about twenty thousand carcasses; and the rest of the kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining eighty thousand.

I can think of no one objection, that will possibly be raised against this proposal, unless it should be urged, that the number of people will be thereby much lessened in the kingdom. This I freely own, and 'twas indeed one principal design in offering it to the world. I desire the reader will observe, that I calculate my remedy for this one individual Kingdom of Ireland, and for no other that ever was, is, or, I think, ever can be upon Earth. Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: Of taxing our absentee's at five shillings a pound: Of using neither cloaths, nor household furniture, except what is of our own growth and manufacture: Of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury: Of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: Of introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence and temperance: Of learning to love our country, wherein we differ even from Laplanders, and the inhabitants of Topinamboo: Of quitting our animosities and factions, nor acting any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken: Of being a little cautious not to sell our country and consciences for nothing: Of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy towards their tenants. Lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shop-keepers, who, if a resolution could now be taken to buy only our native goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact
upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.

Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients, 'till he hath at least some glympse of hope, that there will ever be some hearty and sincere attempt to put them into practice.

But, as to my self, having been wearied out for many years with offering vain, idle, visionary thoughts, and at length utterly despairing of success, I fortunately fell upon this proposal, which, as it is wholly new, so it hath something solid and real, of no expence and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger in disobliging England. For this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, and flesh being of too tender a consistence, to admit a long continuance in salt, although perhaps I could name a country, which would be glad to eat up our whole nation without it.

After all, I am not so violently bent upon my own opinion, as to reject any offer, proposed by wise men, which shall be found equally innocent, cheap, easy, and effectual. But before something of that kind shall be advanced in contradiction to my scheme, and offering a better, I desire the author or authors will be pleased maturely to consider two points. First, As things now stand, how they will be able to find food and raiment for a hundred thousand useless mouths and backs. And secondly, There being a round million of creatures in humane figure throughout this kingdom, whose whole subsistence put into a common stock, would leave them in debt two million of pounds sterling, adding those who are beggars by profession, to the bulk of farmers, cottagers and labourers, with their wives and children, who are beggars in effect; I desire those politicians who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals, whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food at a year old, in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual scene of misfortunes, as they have since gone through, by the oppression of landlords, the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor cloaths to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of intailing the like, or greater miseries, upon their breed for ever.

I profess, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavouring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than the publick good of my country, by advancing our trade, providing for infants, relieving the poor, and giving some pleasure to the rich. I have no children, by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old, and my wife past child-bearing.

Sample Toulmin essay in MLA
Introverted Students and the U.S. School System

In the United States, we are infamous for how we educate younger generations. Attempts at educational reform, such as “No Child Left Behind” and the controversial “Common Core” education standards have often left certain groups of students neglected in the process of getting their education. One of the groups neglected is students who are introverted. This student group, who are often deemed “shy” or “different” by their parental and educational peers, are often put into social situations (i.e. group projects) that can be mentally taxing to some, if not most, students. They’re also taught that they need to learn in one certain way and, in a sense, be put into a box. School systems in the United States should change some aspects of their practices for introverted students so that they may integrate better in terms of getting their education.

In my personal experience I, as an introvert, felt as if I was left out in some aspects of the scholastic curriculum (particularly in mathematics) and became overwhelmed easily because I didn’t get the question or the concept. When a group project came my way, I always went to class dreading the thought of having to share ideas and ended up doing all the work while others didn’t care. Also, if I was given the opportunity to work alone instead, I would happily say “YES PLEASE!!!!” Though I am only one example, I represent many, many introverted students who should be educated better so that they can succeed.
It all starts early enough in elementary school. Introverted students in Pre-K, Kindergarten, and all the way to 5th grade should receive some extra attention from teachers so that they can be more assimilated within the classroom atmosphere. This would all begin by assessing children’s mental and cognitive skills to see what elementary educators can do to help those students improve on their social skills so that they don’t feel behind and get easily overwhelmed in the classroom. Educators can also make some adjustments in their teaching style as well. They should make some time for “one-on-one” instruction for those students who are struggling in one particular subject or social area and discuss with the student, as well as the parents, ways to improve on their subjects as well as their social interactions in school.

At the middle school and high school level, this is more crucial. It is also more difficult and complex considering that introverted students are now dealing with different teachers and different class subjects instead of one teacher encompassing all subjects. Also, some assignments that teachers assign will involve working in large group projects. This causes some animosity as well as anxiety within some introverted students who are not accustomed to sharing their ideas, and without knowing it they end up doing all of the work associated with the project. Teachers can remedy some of these situations by giving them the choice of working alone or working in a very small group (perhaps about 1 to 3 other people) so that they not only work well within that group, but all members of that group would have put in their fair share of ideas and work into the project.

Another aspect of a middle and high school education are the electives and extracurricular courses within that school or curriculum. Introverted students carry some leverage with electives because they can choose what interests them and see if that course can spark further interest or if that course wasn’t meant for them. With that, introverted students still
face adversity in electives as well. Electives, such as music, art, or any intellectually stimulating subject, are often the first electives to be cut from the school budget and, in turn, leave those introverted students in a different elective that doesn’t interest them. As an example, in the state of Oklahoma, approximately $46.7 million was cut from the budget in January 2016 by the Oklahoma State Department of Education, and that included elective and extracurricular activities (qtd. in *Guthrie News Page*). For the remaining courses, elective teachers should put in some time and find out what part of the course interests the students (even if it’s just a slight interest) and help them explore that, and hopefully they can find some common ground with the class and learn to enjoy it.

At the college level, introverted students face an even greater challenge. They could feel like a small fish in a rather large pond and become overwhelmed by the aspects of college and these new responsibilities that they have to face within their new setting. It can all start with the professors of the courses that they are taking. Whether the introverted student is incoming straight from high school or a sixty-something who is seeking another degree for personal enrichment, professors should adjust their teaching skills so that the introverts can feel more comfortable in the college setting and know that they don’t have to fear asking for help if they need it. Much like at the earlier levels, professors should assess the introverted students’ strengths, weaknesses, and learning habits. With their assessment, they should help work on their weaknesses in a patient and timely manner in order for the student not to get overwhelmed and help them get the subject matter and pass the course.

With the addition of what professors can do to help introverted students in college, college administrators and student organizers should do their part to help them adjust and even get them to a point where they can enjoy college and get them further involved for the so-called
“college experience.” Student organizers can help introverted students join or even create clubs and organizations of their own so that they can be involved and not feel left out (which could create that “go to class and go home” attitude if a student lives close and off campus). Introverted students would benefit quite a bit if they had a place to go for solace, and being a part of a club or organization can help foster that feeling of solace.

Others (such as extroverts) could argue that teaching practices such as group projects will build character in getting introverts to interact with other students. In addition to that, many people invalidate their social struggles by saying “Oh, they’re just shy” and they believe that they will just simply “grow out” of their introversion as they age. That is a common misconception: children who are introverted do try to initiate and involve themselves with social interaction.

According to Robert J. Coplan, a psychology professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, introverted children may not have an issue speaking up in class or socializing with other students. However, those same students need to regain their social energy by being alone and they are more energized if they work in an environment that has low social stimulation (qtd. in Sparks).

Another argument (which could be plausible) is that educators just simply don’t have all of the time in the day to help those introverted students due to possible overcrowding in their classroom and lack of funding and resources so they can do their job effectively. In fact, some schools in the country have been working on making their schools friendlier to introverted students. According to Bobbi MacDonald, an executive director with the City-Neighbors Charter School in Baltimore, her methods include revising seating arrangements so that there is a mix of desks, individual tables, reading nooks, and floor to ceiling whiteboards so that introverted students can work on projects alone or in small groups (qtd. in Sparks). This is one example of
how adjusting teaching practices for introverted students shouldn’t take any time away from teachers’ daily instruction and could in fact give them more time for teaching individually.

Introverted children in the United States public school system face tremendous adversity as they can feel left out, neglected, and overloaded in the polarizing uniform teaching practices that are often taught in school systems across the country. However, it should be time that some of those teaching practices and principles change in order to benefit the introverted student: one of the largest, and perhaps one of the most unsung student groups in the American student body. With these practical adjustments, introverted children can not only flourish and thrive when getting their education; they can be more involved with life outside of the classroom and those things that they learned can help further aid their social life.
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Sample MLA common ground essay

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Professor Antoinette Castillo
ENGL 1113
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Tolerating Intolerance

Historically, college has been a place to challenge students' views regarding themselves and how they relate to the world. In addition to providing training for a future career, university life provides the opportunity to expand one's cultural experience. Colleges, especially during the 60s and 70s, have been known for the production of tolerance-minded students, the likes of which have made great strides in minority rights and social equality. In recent years, however, the culture on public university campuses has shifted from one of genuine tolerance, to one of "conform or leave," particularly in regard to freedom of speech; this growing culture of intolerance is not conducive to a free and open American society.

Intolerance and tolerance are broad words. Intolerance is not simply the inability to understand someone's beliefs, but the inability to "grant equal freedom of expression" ("Intolerance"). Intolerance is the demand for silence from opponents. This can be seen in the suppressive backlash on conservative campuses when a liberal student states support for homosexual marriage or government-provided healthcare, and can be seen just as easily on liberal campuses. The problem does not lie in disagreement, but it is found when a differing view is silenced because it is judged as objectively wrong by the majority voice. Tolerance, on the other hand, is the ability "endure pain and hardship" ("Tolerance"). It cannot exist without something to tolerate. What value is there in only tolerating the acceptable? At the core of true tolerance is allowing the expression of what one finds to be offensive. Tolerance is not simply
embracing minority races, religions, and sexual orientations—although this is a large part of it—but it includes not condemning and silencing those who hold a different world view.

In past decades, college students have been essential to progressive movements. Tolerance in universities has influenced mainstream thought, and the United States is better off because of it. Young, progressive-minded students have greatly improved the unity of our nation. It was students who largely led the Civil Rights movement of the early nineteenth century, who supported and developed so much of feminism, and who were instrumental in changing the societal view of homosexuality (Library of Congress). In each of these movements, students called for society to accept segments they might not understand or condone. By exposing students to challenging views, and the necessary skills of tolerance to embrace this difference, colleges have often helped to foster the next generation of culture changers in ways that are beneficial to the marginalized people of our society.

In recent years, however, the culture on college campuses has grown more and more intolerant. Despite making further strides for gender and race equality and the representation of marginalized groups, college life has fallen ever-closer to censorship—both directly and indirectly. As a student currently coming of age in this new college culture, I have seen the hesitance to voice certain opinions for fear of violent, public rejection. When arguing against the existence of a gender pay gap or other commonly accepted beliefs, many unpopular opinions have become forbidden expressions. Colleges have shifted towards shutting down non-mainstream ideas rather than engaging in honest debate. Take, for example, the incident at Yale last fall when a dean voiced an unpopular opinion in favor of the university’s lenience with Halloween costume selection—in regard to blackface, headdresses, or other possibly demeaning or offensive costumes. As she supported the minority belief that students should not be policed
by the administration on their costume selection, her suggestions were met with uproar as outraged students and faculty petitioned for her resignation (Stanley-Becker). While there was validity in addressing whether she was right or wrong—the hurt expressed by her accusers was indeed genuine and heartfelt—the larger problem is that no debate over whether she was right or wrong took place. She was not free to express her opinion without putting her career in jeopardy. Her opinion was judged as objectively wrong and she was demonized for it instead of allowing her the freedom of speech she is supposed to enjoy. Instead of respectfully engaging and attempting to persuade her, students bullied her in a fit of intolerance. This is just one of many instances showcasing the loss of persuasion and debate, and the culture of demand and intimidation that has risen in its place.

The atmosphere of intolerance on college campuses is a very complex problem, without any easy fix. Before a fix can even be suggested, however, an end goal for how colleges should be has to be established. Although it is difficult to accept, the only power public colleges should have for censorship of speech is the ability to ban speech that incites violence or crime. Anything short of that, despite how offensive, needs to be protected—keep in mind, speech that can be legally censored is already defined, regulated, and penalized by federal and state laws (Ruane 1-4). The problem with universities further censoring free speech is that while starting with the admirable intention of limiting hate speech, it opens the door for suppression of unpopular ideas—which is contrary to a democratic society. Ben Wizner, a lawyer and director of the American Civil Liberties Union’s (ACLU) Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project, points out that while most everyone arguing in favor of censorship likes to think that authority will be used in the way they intend, the actuality is that the power to decide what speech is permissible often ends in limiting speech based on “political considerations, not principled distinctions.” This
means that while censorship may begin with not allowing the Ku Klux Klan to parade swastikas through campus, it could result in not allowing a pro-life rally to be held on a public campus by calling it hate speech—in fact this very thing happened at Spokane Falls Community College (Alliance Defending Freedom). Freedom of speech in order to protect unpopular beliefs has to extend to deplorable speech. In fact, it could be taken a step further to say that freedom of speech exists to protect the expression of offensive beliefs. To protect a pro-life rally—or pro-choice for that matter—the right of a Klan parade must be protected as well.

So how does this new expectation of tolerance translate into application? While there are no quick fixes, there are some simple, concrete actions universities could take to create a culture of genuine tolerance on campuses. Before students enter college, freshman orientation classes should be held to prepare students for the challenging and—in some instances—downright offensive beliefs they will encounter. A good example of the effectiveness of this approach is the currently changing sexual culture on college campuses. Until recently, date rape and other forms of sexual assault were common and tacitly accepted, with only twenty percent of college rape cases being reported and even fewer leading to prosecution (Langton and Sinozich). This, however, is changing largely due to universities requiring sexual awareness classes which define and thus, combat sexual assault. A study done by the Journal of Interpersonal Violence points to the success of these programs (Foubert 7). In a similar way, universities should hold orientation classes defining genuine tolerance. These classes should focus on supplying students with applicable skills for dealing with offense. Rather than demanding silence from those with opposing views, students need to be given the skills to logically analyze philosophical challenges and have their own beliefs strengthened by reason as a result. Students should be made aware of the offense they may encounter and how to tolerate it. The realization must be made that even
when stemming from good intentions, intolerance is intolerance.

Once students have been appropriately prepared for the challenges they will face, the rights of administration and the student body must be addressed and supported. On the administrative level, universities should maintain the ability to invite the speakers they desire to speak at and, consequently, represent their university. An example of this put into practice is what is currently happening at the University of Chicago. The college issued a letter to incoming freshman warning of the offense they may encounter on campus, but stating their support for the freedom of expression. The letter makes a point to say that efforts to “harass or threaten” will not be tolerated—a necessary piece to include—but that they will not “cancel invited speakers because their topics may be controversial” nor will they discourage their professors from addressing challenging ideas for “fear of censorship” (Grieve). The right of administration to invite speakers from the opposite end of the political or philosophical spectrum should be supported and even encouraged. Students may certainly protest and universities may not find it beneficial to invite offensive speakers, but as a democratic society relying on the free flow of ideas, the right to do so should remain. Banning speakers because of their intolerance is an intolerance of its own. Choosing to invite or not invite a speaker with an opposing view is a right that should not be taken away by student demand.

While public universities have the right to invite the speakers they desire, they should not have the right to silence students they do not agree with. If free speech is to be provided, and authentic tolerance encouraged, students have to be allowed to host events and speakers with views in conflict with those of the university. It is not tolerance for universities to only allow speakers they agree with on campus—administration does not have to invite opposing speakers, but they should not ban them from student-led events either. Giving administration the power to
ban a speaker because of their offensive or hateful messages is a very slippery slope. A pro-life stance can be taken as a hatred for women, while pro-choice can be considered a hatred for the unborn. Some will view support of Black Lives Matter as a hatred for white people. Yet showing opposition to the movement is seen as racism. Because hate and offense are so subjective, they cannot be used as validation for banning expression of ideas. Censoring any group opens the door to censoring any group. Frustrating as it may be, the cost of freedom of expression is offense. To attain a truly tolerant university, students must have their right to free speech protected, even if their ideas are unpopular, offensive, and in some cases just wrong.

The current culture of demanding conformity is incompatible with a nation that relies so heavily on the freedom of expression. It should be the effort of universities around the nation to return to the fundamental principles of tolerance and progression that were once synonymous with college life.
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