

## Core 4 - Argue a workable "truth"

Students should be able to:

- Target a specific audience affected by your topic
- Synthesize and integrate the results of your primary and secondary research
- Apply documentation skills (MLA, APA, CSE)
- Eliminate non-workable arguments and focus on viable solutions

**Assignment:** Write an argument that offers a viable solution, an alternative approach, or a transitional position to a problem that you have defined in previous papers regarding your future goals. Your argument should be culturally or socially significant to your audience. Include a minimum of 5 different sources in your text. Document all primary and secondary sources.

**Project Overview:** The Core 4 essay is the culmination of your energy and efforts from the four previous essays. This essay provides you with an outlet for your passion for your topic and the knowledge you have gained about your problem or issue with a piece of popular culture. In the first four ENG102 projects, you talked about why you've chosen your future goals (pre-writing), rhetorical strategies of how media positively reflects your future goals (core one), negative issues in your future goals (core 2), and what you would like to find out about your future goals (core 3). Using your rhetorical skills, you will merge these elements to write an effective argument.

For Core 4, remember the elements of an argument, and make sure each is developed in this essay. Make sure that you not only have a compelling position and thesis statement, but that you have given the reader sufficient background (terminology, definitions, etc.) and history (how your problem came into being), an exploration of the controversy, and reasons developing the problem and the solution identified in your thesis statement. Make sure, also, that you have researched and relayed to the reader all necessary evidence to support each of these aspects of the argument essay.

Your overall goal is to convince your readers of the importance of your chosen topic and motivate them to enact change with a well-researched and persuasive argument.

**Assignment:** Write a persuasive, 1200- to 1500-word essay that a) educates your audience about your community, b) lets your audience know an issue that needs changing, c) invites them to your point of view, d) acknowledges and refutes opposing arguments, and e) motivates readers to act in specific ways. Your essay should work directly to effect change on the given issue. You must include specific actions that your audience members may consider to correct this problem. Use at least seven sources to develop your argument.

**Project Tips:**

1. Many students make the mistake of simply repeating the suggestions of other authors instead of coming up with their own calls for action. If those arguments were sufficient, why does your chosen injustice continue to be a problem? When considering the suggestions of other authors on your given topic, try to use your knowledge of various arguments and rhetorical devices to make an even more effective call to action.
2. Sometimes, students fail to persuade their readers because they do not accurately represent an opposing argument. Therefore, as you write your paper, you should spend as much time considering various legitimate counter-arguments as you do your own, so that your argument is as persuasive as possible. If your readers can see that you've considered a wide range of diverse viewpoints, they will be more likely to value your position as reasonable and impartial.
3. Try to keep your audience in mind as you write and revise your essay, especially when recommending actions that could be taken to affect your chosen problem. For instance, if you're writing to address the racism in a profession, it will be unconvincing to a student audience to simply say, "People should stop being doctors because they're racist." You need to craft recommendations that people might actually do, argued persuasively to consider possible objections they might have.
4. Evaluate your own solution and honestly explain its strengths and flaws. While you need to present a solution, you must make sure it is tenable. "We should just be at peace" will not effectively make any difference to anybody. "We should organize active protest groups by forming a Frances Marion student coalition with X funding..." is a more reasonable solution. Any educated audience will respect your point MORE if you then admit areas of difficulty. Nothing is perfect, not even your own essay!
5. You may use ideas (and/or language) from previous essays, but be certain that your Core 4 is a seamless and fluid whole, that it stands alone, and that it does not feel like a disjointed, stitched-together patchwork quilt of your prior essays.

**Context:** The genre of this project is a persuasive essay that promotes social action. This genre takes things beyond a simple informational, expository essay by offering sound ways that the issue can be solved. Your audience, therefore, is any group of people that is predisposed to disagree with your argument, or any group of people who have not previously acted on this issue in effective ways. When writing to this kind of skeptical audience, it is important to use a tone that will make that audience want to agree with you: calm but firm and considerate of other points of view, and extremely knowledgeable.

**Length, Format, Design: Essay:** 1,200-1,500 words, with a Works Cited page.

**Last Day of Class** will be a **Peer Review**

4/26 **Final Draft of essay DUE!!** Final draft of argument due, along with any revisions.  
Reflection Paper Exam. (11:45-1:45)

## **Different Types of Argument:** **Classical Approach**

The classical approach to argument is a model of argumentation invented by the famous Greek philosopher Aristotle. It is best used when the purpose of your argument is to persuade your audience to agree with your point of view, take your side on an issue, or make a decision in your favor. The classical approach/ Aristotelian model relies heavily on the use of ethos, pathos, and logos appeals.

The following is the typical organization pattern for this approach:

### **I. Introduction**

**II. State your case--**Clarify your issue. Give any necessary background for understanding the issues. Define any important terms or conditions here.

**III. Proposition--**State your central proposition or thesis. Present the subtopics or supportive points to forecast your argument for your reader.

**IV. Refutation--**Analyze the opposition's argument and summarize it; refute or address the points; point out faulty reasoning and inappropriate appeals.

**V. Substantiation and Proof--**Develop your own case. Use ethos, pathos, and logos appeals to make your case. Use good evidence such as examples.

### **VI. Conclusion**

## **The Toulmin Approaches**

This model of argument was developed by the British philosopher Stephen Toulmin. The Toulmin Model is especially helpful when you try to make a case on controversial issues that do not have an absolute truth as the Toulmin Model seeks to establish probabilities rather than truth.

The following is a typical organization for the Toulmin Model:

**I. Claims—**There are several different types of claims: claims of fact, claims of definition, claims of cause, claims of value, and claims of policy. You can use any one or more of these claims to introduce your issue and to establish your case.

**II. Data--**Information you use to support your claims.

**III. Warrant--**The assumption made by a writer in order for the claim to be true.

**IV. Backing--**What you use to support the warrant.

**V. Rebuttal--**This is where you consider the opposing viewpoint and refute it.

**VI. Qualifier--**Use language that seeks to qualify the claims you make in order to bring your argument to a close.

## **Rogerian Argument**

This is a model of argument named after the psychologist Carl Rogers, who believed that people could only resolve an issue or solve a problem once they found the "common ground." A group of rhetoricians, Young, Becker, and Pike, then developed a model of argument named the Rogerian argument, which advocates a way of argument that is less confrontational, less one-sided, and more compromising and deliberately consensus-building. The following are the usual elements of the Rogerian approach:

**I. An introduction** that briefly and objectively defines the issue or problem

**II. A neutral, non-judgmental statement of the opponent's position**, presented within valid contexts, that demonstrates the writer clearly understands it

**III. A neutral statement and explanation** of your position and the contexts in which it is valid

**IV. An analysis** of what the two positions have in common and what goals and values they share

**V. A proposal** for resolving the issue in a way that recognizes the interests of both parties, or a statement of how the opponent's position would benefit if he were to adopt elements of the writer's position

## Planning Positions

- Write your research Question
- Identify two different positions that answer the research question (Arguments A and B):
  - A.
  - B.
- Outline the argument structure of each position using the chart below:

| Argument A     | Argument B     |
|----------------|----------------|
| Claim:         | Claim:         |
| Reason(s)      | Reason(s)      |
| Assumption(s): | Assumption(s): |