

Homework 1 – The Op-Ed Values Claim

This assignment requires 500 words, or about two pages, for 5 points.

Purpose: To analyze a current issue related to structural racism and compose a 500-word op-ed patterned after the op-eds we have read in *Read, Reason, Write*. Your op-ed should make a claim of value as outlined in Chapter 9 of our text.

Audience: Your instructor, your peers, the world!

The Assignment

Read actively and critically as discussed in our text, *Read, Reason, Write*, and compose a 500-word op-ed patterned after the op-eds we have read this semester in our text. Your op-ed should make a claim of value as outlined in Chapter 9 of *Read, Reason, Write*. Your op-ed should also contain all of the characteristics of a position argument discussed in Chapter 9:

- A claim based on values and argued more with logic than specifics is usually more general or abstract or philosophical than other types of arguments
- The position piece makes a claim about what is right or wrong, good or bad, for use as individuals or as a society.
- Although a claim based on values is often developed in large part by a logical sequencing of reasons, support of principles also depends on relevant facts.
- A successful position piece requires more than a forceful statement of personal beliefs. If we can reason logically from principles widely shared by our audience, we are more likely to be successful. If we are going to challenge others' beliefs or values, then we need to consider the conciliatory approach as a strategy for getting our audience to at least listen to our argument.

Learning Outcomes

This assignment supports the learning outcomes established for the course, for the Saint Louis University (SLU) writing program, *Eloquentia Perfecta* (EP1), and for SLU.

Assignment Learning Outcomes

1. Remember the characteristics of a values claim and position piece from the text; remember the elements of a rhetorical situation
2. Understand the characteristics of a values claim and position piece from the text; understand the elements of a rhetorical situation
3. Apply your understanding of a values claim, the position piece, and a rhetorical situation from the text to help you...
4. Analyze your rhetorical situation and a current issue caused by systemic racism
5. Evaluate your rhetorical situation and the current issue caused by systemic racism
6. Compose and revise a draft op-ed based on peer and instructor feedback that follows the formatting requirements below and that demonstrates ability to present a compelling values claim

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Write and design persuasive messages for specific purposes, audiences, and contexts
2. Analyze messages and arguments using a sophisticated rhetorical vocabulary
3. Summarize, paraphrase, and quote appropriate research sources accurately and fairly
4. Evaluate their [students'] own compositions and rhetorical choices

5. Remember and understand the basic tenants of structural racism and its impact on inequity in American and St. Louis, as well as the conflict this inequity has caused
6. Demonstrate the ability to apply, analyze, and evaluate information related to structural racism and compose writing appropriate for a first-year writing course discussing these issues

EPI Learning Outcomes

1. Write and design persuasive messages for specific purposes, audiences, and contexts.
2. Analyze messages and arguments using a sophisticated rhetorical vocabulary.
3. Summarize, paraphrase, and quote appropriate research sources accurately and fairly.
4. Evaluate their own compositions and rhetorical choices.

University Learning Outcomes for Written and Oral Communication

Student Learning Outcome 3: Assess evidence and draw reasoned conclusion – Achievement level: Introduce

Student Learning Outcome 4: Communicate effectively in writing, speech, and visual media – Achievement level: Introduce, developing

Grading Rubric

This general grading rubric is from our syllabus. Please see the course website for the detailed feedback and grading rubrics I will use this term and for this assignment.

Concept	Structure	Design	Style & G/M
High-level concerns: purpose, audience, effective research, knowledge of topic	Strong thesis, logical and detailed argument or exploration, effective paragraph organization	Document design, adherence to HATS, professional pages, accurate visuals	Sentence-level organization, prose, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, citation

I will provide margin comments on your drafts and final, and I will provide end-of-document comments organized into the rubric above.

The Format

This op-ed must adhere to Associate Press (AP) guidelines and must be at least 500 words in length. The op-ed must properly attribute information you use from outside sources by following AP standards. For the most part, if you use external information, you will be paraphrasing. But you might include some short direct quotes for impact. The op-ed will be titled, typed in 12-point Times New Roman (or similar font), double-spaced, with 1-inch margins all the way around. Reference the values claim discussion in Chapter 9 of *Read, Reason, Write*.

At the top of page 1, please type the following statement and sign your name: “I understand and will uphold the ideals of academic honesty as stated in the Honor Code.”

Please use the Checklist for Revision in our text to help you once you have composed your draft.