

**ENGL 121 Spring 2011**  
**Project 3: Researched Rebuttal Essay**  
**Professor Ludeker**

**Overview**

For this assignment, you will need to take a position (not simply an opinion) on an issue that has existing arguments. You will then develop a well-researched rebuttal—either a refutation, counterargument or a combination of both—to one or more of the arguments put forth by the opposition. That is, you will need to respond to an existing argument either with the purpose of tearing it down (refutation) and/or for the purpose of demonstrating an alternative understanding (counter-argument). You must provide evidence to support your claims.

If you'd like to use the topic you wrote about for the definition argument, you may. However, you are constructing a different style of argument with new research. Therefore, your rebuttal should look nothing like your definition argument. It may pull from the research and arguments that you've made, but it must be constructed differently (rebuttal has a different purpose). If you wish, you may choose an article from the readings in our e-text. Not every section on the e-text contains appropriate readings, so see me if you have a question.

**Guidelines**

We will discuss rebuttal arguments further in class, but here are two brief definitions of the kinds of arguments you will work with.

**Refutation**—to attack or show weaknesses in an existing argument for the purposes of making that argument collapse or retreat.

**Counter-argument**—to respond to an existing argument with points that dispute or contradict the opposition's position while providing alternative evidence that is contrary to that provided by the opposition.

Be certain that you have something to *argue*. Not every idea is worth spending time fighting for and not every argument/claim lends itself to supported positions. For example, making a case that blue is a better color than red is a waste of time. It is based on taste rather than on a supportable position.

In constructing your argument, be sure that you are not merely summarizing or reporting on what someone else has argued and/or that you are not copying someone else's argument. Say something new or make a better case for your position.

Additionally, you should think carefully about your audience. You do not want to argue or attempt to persuade an audience that already agrees with you. You also should narrow your argument sufficiently so that you can be clear about your goals for the writing.

**Specific Requirements**

- No less than five (5) outside sources are required for this paper. They should be used primarily for building your argument, but you may wish to use more in order to develop a background or other peripheral information. Three or more of those sources must come from a database or print sources. No more than two can be an actual website.
- Essays should be no less than 1500-2000 words. You can always write more (as long as your argument requires it).
- Essays need to contain both in-text citations AND a works cited page.
- Paraphrases, quotes, and summaries should be included. Cite what is appropriate to cite.
- Drafts and final copies must be submitted through SafeAssign. Final copies submit in hardcopy with print out of drafts, Audience Analysis and any other draft materials.

Your argumentative essay should include:

- an introduction in which you orient your readers to your topic, state your position (your main argument statement or claim), and preview the rest of your paper;
- a body in which you provide support for your position by using different types of appeals (ethos, pathos, logos), recognize any counterargument(s), and use outside research to further your own ideas (either to argue alongside or against);
- a conclusion in which you briefly summarize your argument and offer what you think needs to be done to improve the current situation. You can also raise questions about the issue and/or point to larger ramifications that may come the issue; and
- in-text citations and a works cited.

In addition to the usual criteria (word choice, organization, etc.) I will be grading you based on your use of argumentative appeals and on how you incorporate your research. I will NOT grade you according to my own position on your topic. In other words, I don't grade according to whether or not I agree with you.

### **Due Dates**

Research Proposal: 3/29

Audience Analysis: 3/29

Intro Paragraph and Formal Outline (including three or more sources):4/5

Rough Draft (through Safe Assign): 4/7 by midnight

Final Copy (through Safe Assign and hardcopy in folder): 4/14