

Asserting a Claim of Value/Policy

**Writing Situation/Prompt:** For this second essay, you'll be writing an argument that asserts either a *claim of value* or a *claim of policy* (choose only one). You are free to select nearly any topic, but for policy claims, avoid topics on abortion, the death penalty, gun control, marijuana, gay marriage, and any religious-based issue. Your topic must be approved by me no later than \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objectives:** The critical thinking skills you will develop in this this assignment involve **asserting an argument**, anticipating and addressing reasonable **objections**, and working with implied or direct **warrants** (or both). Additionally, you will practice locating **relevant outside sources** and employing them either to support your claim or to refute them if they challenge your claim.

**Evaluation Criteria:** You'll be evaluated on your topic originality, the quality/precision of your value or policy claim, overall essay development/support of your claim, awareness of objections to your claim, sensitivity to audience, and your synthesis of outside sources throughout your essay.

**Requirements**

- **Page length:** Your essay must be 5-6 typed, double-spaced pages (min. 5 fully-typed pages; approx. 2,100 - 2,500 words).
- **Time Allotment:** Budget 10-12 total hours to work on this assignment.
- **Sources:** 4 peer-reviewed periodical sources.
- **Manuscript Conventions:** use the required MLA essay template located on the course website. (*This was previously customized & approved by Prof. CS.*)
- **Audience:** college-level students; rationally minded-readers; non-hostile thinkers.
- **SAWE:** Remember, your paper must follow the basic conventions of standard American written English (correct mechanics, usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and so forth).
- **MLA:** in-text-parenthetical notes and a Works Cited page are required to document your source material.
- **Due Dates:** Rough Draft \_\_\_\_\_ Final: \_\_\_\_\_

**Preparing the Essay:**

- In **EA**, read and understand chapters 10 and 12 on "Evaluations" (value claims) and "Proposals" (policy claims), respectively.
- For the **value claim essay**, especially follow the "Guide" on **EA** pages 229-34. For the **policy claim essay**, especially follow the "Guide" on **EA** pages 290-95.
- Once I have approved your topic, draft a **macro outline** after you have brainstormed the **sub-claims** that you will use to support your value or policy claim. Brainstorm likely **objections** and write out the likely **warrants** that underlie your topic. *Complete all of these pre-drafting tasks before conducting any research.* Your carefully thought-out **macro outline** will help you see the big picture and is a necessary writing process step for a successful essay!
- Based on the **sub-claims** and **objections** you've brainstormed, now you are ready to conduct research by looking for the source material you need to fill the "knowledge holes" of what you don't know about your topic, sub-claims, or objections.
- Now you are ready to expand the **macro outline** into a **micro outline**. Focus on the smaller details.
- Begin **drafting** your essay. Visit the Writing Center.

**Writing the Introduction:**

1) Aim to grab your audience's attention. 2) Clearly establish the context of your topic and the essay's purpose. 3) Assert a strong thesis/claim at the end of your introductory paragraph.

**Writing the Main Body Paragraphs:**

Depending on the needs of your audience, **organize** your essay using an appropriate organizational method. Each paragraph should begin with a **topic sentence** that identifies a new point you will discuss.

Remember to focus on a **single main idea** or point per paragraph, and develop that **sub-claim** of your thesis/claim with specific, well-chosen **support** in the form of **evidence/examples**.

Cite sources when appropriate, quote sparingly, and document these citations in correct MLA format.

**Writing the Conclusion:**

In general bring closure to your essay, and avoid summarizing content you already have written. Examine and use the techniques employed in the sample essays in the **EA** textbook.

**Final Reminders and Tips:**

- Write your essay in the third person, *avoiding the use of "I" and "you"*.
- Keep your audience's needs in focus.
- Proofread your essay by reading it aloud to catch and fix obvious errors or awkward phrases.