

Research-based Argument Examples

Stanford

http://pwr.stanford.edu/instructors/teach_res/brawn_samp.html#e4

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Assignment Four—Research Paper (12 pages)

This is a multi-stage assignment, and it is extremely important that you hand in each part of the assignment on time so that I can get it back to you with comments in time for it to be useful to you.

1. Topic (ungraded). This is a very informal announcement of your topic, which may be any issue that is open to debate. Rather than simply naming your subject, though, I'd like you to try to formulate the main issue question you'll investigate and relevant subsidiary questions you believe you'll be addressing. If you have an initial answer to the question, say what it is. It is fine (perhaps even better) to be undecided. Also write a few sentences telling me how you initially plan to go about answering your questions: what information you think you'll need, where you think you'll find it, and so on. I'm going to give the librarian at Green a copy of your topic, so try to open up with a succinct formulation of your research interests.

2. Outline with annotated sources (graded). This assignment has three main components:

- * A first draft of your introductory paragraph.
- * An outline forecasting your argument. Try to make this as detailed as possible: the more you tell me about what you intend to do and say, the more helpful I can be in advising you. (And let me know if you have any particular concerns about phases of your argument.)
- * An annotated list of four sources. Begin with a complete bibliographic citation. Then write a summary of the relevant parts of the source. Then say how you plan to use the source in your argument. (Does it present a view you plan to oppose? Does it represent an expert opinion? Is it providing evidence that will support a point you are making? etc.)

3. First draft (ungraded). I'm not calling it a rough draft because it won't do you any good to aim toward roughness. Write the very best version of your essay that you can. Doing so will make it easier for me and your peer evaluator to be helpful to you, because we won't waste time telling you to do what you already know you have to do. If you know there are particular parts of your draft about which you are unsure or with which you are dissatisfied, write a note to us explaining your

concerns so that we'll be sure to address them. It is critical that you complete this assignment on time! Bring two copies of this draft, one for me and one for a peer reader.

4. Final draft (graded). This is the finished version of the essay. Revision here may mean revamping and restructuring the whole argument, or it may mean polishing your diction and syntax. It may mean both. It is my expectation that you will not confine yourself to responding to whatever criticisms and suggestions you received from your two readers.

Penn State

<http://english.la.psu.edu/details.asp?element=420&id=103#Rebuttal%20Argument>

Rebuttal Argument

Preface

In short, a writer uses a rebuttal argument to disagree with an opposing position. The term “rebuttal” often carries with it a confrontational aura, but in most cases of rebuttal, aggressive confrontation does very little to move an opponent closer to one’s own position. In most types of sophisticated disagreements, opponents concede points to each other and search for common ground. This behavior shows a willingness to engage, and it also creates a positive tone for the disagreement. By trying to make a meaningful connection with your opponent, by discovering shared goals and assumptions, and by actively listening, you are far more likely to accomplish a productive and civil conversation.

Assignment

Please find a specific argument with which you disagree. Write a rebuttal of that argument. Your rebuttal could take the form of a traditional essay, a personal letter to the author, an open letter, or a response piece for a newspaper. Many other genre possibilities exist as well. Consider who you want your audience to be, and consider what type of forum might work best for a productive disagreement.

Some common elements of a rebuttal essay

1. Identify the specific claim against which you will argue.
2. Responsibly summarize the alternative position. Be fair and rigorous.
3. Establish common ground.
4. Find a point or points of disagreement.

5. Explain your good reasons for disagreeing with the alternative argument.
6. Explore other ideas, arguments, and possibilities that your opponent discounts or ignores.
7. Try to persuade the audience towards your position.

Not all rebuttals contain all of these elements, but most of these elements should be represented in a complex rebuttal.

Types of disagreements

People disagree for different reasons. Here are a few ways to think about how you might disagree with someone else's argument: you might disagree with a basic fact, or a definition of a key term, or the value of something (good, bad, desirable, undesirable). You might disagree about the proper course of action that should be taken in light of the facts, or about the cause of a problem. You might disagree with the analogies, metaphors, and descriptions that someone uses in an argument. Perhaps the argument just does not feel right. You might disagree with someone because they seem untrustworthy. You might disagree with someone's fundamental assumptions about the world. Usually in the course of a complicated disagreement, one person disagrees with another for a combination of reasons, but in most cases, one or two particular kinds of reasons prove to be more important than the others.

Harvard

<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~expos/index.cgi?section=courses#10>

Essay 3 is a controlled research essay, an argument based on multiple sources. This is the longest (8 to 10 pages) and most complex essay of the course, requiring students to call on all the skills they've practiced in Essays 1 and 2, and to move beyond them. Students work most independently on this essay, choosing their own topics or defining their particular focus within a common field of inquiry. If the field of inquiry is education, for instance, and a student is interested in issues of cultural and ethnic identity within education (or the politics of standardized testing, or how college admissions policies affect high school curricula, to offer two other examples), the student's own interest might lead him or her to additional research beyond those sources provided by the instructor

Rollins College

Martha Cheng

Research-based Argument Assignment

Due Dates and Points:

Wed, Apr 6: Topic proposal, 10 pts.
Mon, Apr 11: Annotated bibliography, 15 pts.
Wed, Apr 13: Outline, 15 pts.
Mon, Apr 18: Draft (for workshop and my review)
Wed, Apr 27: 2nd Draft (just for workshop)
Mon, May 2: Final paper, 60 pts.

Research-based Argument Paper:

6 full pages minimum, 7 full pages maximum. 12 pt Times font.

In this paper you are to contribute a new perspective to some issue that deals with crime and punishment.

“Contribute” for this assignment means to present something new to the discussion of your topic and argue why it is important. Your task is to add some important point that should be considered by the community that is dealing with the issue. You may, if you wish, take a definitive stand and defend it (i.e. for or against a punishment in a specific case), but it is not necessary.* Also, do not simply adopt another author’s position and reasoning and defend it by restating it. This is *your* contribution and it is *your* argument. You should reason from a synthesis and analysis of your sources to arrive at your position and then explain this reasoning in your paper.

A minimum of 5 sources are required. Two of these must be from the articles we have read in class.

A bibliography is required. Use APA format. You may only use web sources that are online versions of *print* resources. You may NOT use purely web-based sources.

Use APA format for the entire paper and your bibliography.

*You may not write on the death penalty.

Topic Proposal:

A 1-2 page description of your research project. Be sure your topic is socially significant, debatable, and focused. Explain what you know about the topic, such

as background and competing points of view, and what you need to investigate. You do not need to state a thesis, but the question you are trying to answer should be clear. After submitting your topic proposal, you may not change your topic.

Annotated Bibliography:

A list of at least 5 print sources with commentary that you will use to investigate and make your argument. Use APA format. See attached guidelines.

Outline:

A complete and detailed outline of your argument. The thesis must be clearly stated. Present the major claims and evidence that will support your argument in a logical organization. Also indicate which rebuttals you will address.