English 103

Essay #4--Final Essay

For your fourth essay, you may select ONE of the following three choices:

(1) Take an argumentative position involving a topic you select from chapters 17-24 from the *Practical Argument* 3rd ed. text. It must be different from the topic you used for essay #3.

(2) A topic of your choice, subject to my approval

(3) Select ONE of the two alternative essay topics listed below

If you select your own topic, it must be one that provokes opposing points of view and rises to the level of an academic argument. You should attempt to reveal what gives your topic or idea credibility. What is or was significant about your topic? If applicable, discuss the important consequences or possible future outcomes of the topic.

Determine that your topic lends itself to an argumentative approach, i.e., a topic or idea over which people hold differing views. Avoid choosing a topic that leaves you feeling neutral or ambivalent.

Develop a thesis that describes the topic and asserts your position.

As you examine both sides of the topic, you must include counter arguments (concessions and refutations). Making certain concessions to opposing positions demonstrate you are a person of good character with a moral sense of fair play.

Briefly (no more than 200 words) summarize the background of the controversy.

Go on to develop your argument with evidence (facts, quotations, and statistics) that lend weight to your position.

Engage the topic in a critical manner by assessing opposing writers’ claims, evidence, assumptions, language and tone, reasonableness and fallacies. Do those naysayers exhibit weaknesses in areas of ethos, pathos, or logos? What are they? What are their effects? How do those weaknesses possibly undermine their positions?

More importantly, please be creative and unique in your analysis and evaluation; in other words, do not state the obvious or write a report.

Remember to also develop unified and cohesive paragraphs, and use transition words to facilitate the flow of ideas. You can utilize relevant historical and/or personal anecdotes to illustrate and explain your points.

When using outside material, always use signal phrases wherever you summarize, paraphrase, or quote; in addition, make it clear to the reader where outside source material ends and your voice begins.

In your conclusion, you may also choose to utilize rational, emotional or ethical appeals if you topic calls for some type of action on the reader's part.

Finally, remember to use highly effective and purposeful sentences that demonstrate a diverse variety of thoughts (i.e., simple, compound, complex and compound/complex sentences).

Alternative essay guidelines:

* Pick a historical figure and write a critical analysis as to why that person and their ideas were better than those of another person in a similar field of endeavor. Do not write a research report. The paper must follow the listed guidelines.
* Write a textual analysis of a scholarly essay. The paper must follow the listed guidelines.

The following topics are off limits for purposes of this paper:

Abortion

Animal rights/research

Censorship

Death penalty

Drug abuse/legalization

Euthanasia

Genetic cloning

Global warming

Gun control

Kony 2012

Pseudoscience topics (aliens, ghosts, conspiracy theories, etc.)

Stem cell research

Additional guidelines:

* It must be at least eight pages long. Eight full pages—not including the works cited page—is the minimum length (2,400 words).
* Create an original title.
* It must contain counter arguments, including concessions and refutations.
* It must contain a works cited page if you cite outside sources.
* It must contain at least one hard-copy source (a real book, magazine, journal, etc.)
* It must contain at least six direct quotations in your paper, each using appropriate signal phrases.
* Quotations, paraphrases, or summaries of outside sources require parenthetical cites.
* A maximum of 30% of sources used can be from Internet sources. Database sources are exempt from this guideline.
* Any textual material you use from a web source must have an author, otherwise you cannot use it. Only government publications are exempt from this guideline.
* Do not use encyclopedias or Wikipedia.com as sources.
* The paper must discuss secular topics only.
* You cannot write on the same topic you used for essay #3.
* In addition to submitting a hard copy in class the day it is due, you must submit it electronically to turnitin.com to receive a grade.

Formatting guidelines:

* Have approximately 300 words per page
* Double space throughout
* Font size = 12 point, Times New Roman font, printed in black ink
* Use standard margin settings
* Refer to the RFW Ch. 56 or Appendix B from Practical Argument for MLA formatting guidelines
* Ensure that you make backup copies of this paper on at least one removable storage device.

Typed proposal due:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1st draft due:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2nd draft due:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Annotated

bibliography

due: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Final version due:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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