**Opinion Editorial**

An opinion editorial (Op/Ed) is derived from the fact that these essays appear in the section of a newspaper reserved for opinion pieces. Outsiders, that is, people not employed by the newspaper, generally write opinion pieces. These can be local experts in a subject area, a local reader---civic or political, or a syndicated columnist. *Keep in mind these are the personal opinions of the writer*.

**Tips for writing an Opinion Editorial:**

Here are some tips and pointers:

* The nature of an opinion/editorial piece requires that it argues something: that something is or is not so, is or is not worthy, somebody should or should not do something. If you are not arguing any of the above, an op/ed can also predict the outcome of certain events: what will occur if a political figure does or does not take action on an issue, etc.
* Op/eds MUST have a thesis. This sentence is what will be pitched to an editor to convince them to print your article. If it does not have a thesis, there is no main idea to pitch to the editor.
* Op/eds are traditionally between 700 and 800 words, but most editors say that the shorter the piece is, the better. With space at a premium in all national publications, a shorter piece is much more likely to run.
* Construct a short, compelling introductory sentence. The lead-in should encapsulate the idea of the piece and instantly engage the reader. Most editors judge introductions by this rule of thumb: the piece has less than 23 seconds to interest the reader. If your first paragraph does not grab them, they will not stick around long enough to finish reading the article.
* A good op/ed will offer proof that supports the opinion of the author. Proof can be introduced in the form of statistics (with a webpage or other resource where they can be checked), expert testimony (with the book and page number where they can be found), or personal experience.

Do not be afraid to let your personality show in your article. Remember that your piece is not just words on a page; people will read the article if they feel they are hearing from a real person they can identify with. Come up with a good last line. Come to some sort of conclusion, even if the conclusion is that the outcome of an issue will be uncertain.

References are required; a title page is not required for this assignment. See example provided.

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| **Component and the**  **Recommended Value** | **Exceeds Standards** | **Meets Standards** | **Does Not Meet Standards** |
| **Understanding of the Problem**10 points  **Key Aspects:**  • The need to create a policy on healthcare in response to Congressional action  • The need to write a persuasive op-ed piece to convince the public of the wisdom of the policy. | Describes the problem clearly, accurately and completely in terms of all key points  Solution to the problem is completely consistent with the scenario as presented; the parameters of the problem have not been altered and/or facts “made up” to avoid grappling with key aspects of the healthcare policy. | Describes the problem clearly and accurately in terms of all key points  Solution to the problem is generally consistent with the scenario as presented; the parameters of the problem have not been altered significantly and/or facts “made up” to avoid grappling with key aspects of the healthcare policy. | Does not describe the problem clearly or accurately in terms of some or all key points  Solution to the problem is not consistent with the scenario as presented; the parameters of the problem may have been altered and/or facts “made up” to avoid grappling with key aspects of the healthcare policy. |
| **Thesis 10 points**  • Your basic argument, which does not have to be explicitly stated, but should be clear and original. A focused thesis also makes it easier for you to keep the piece within the tight guidelines usually required, gauging which supporting statements or evidence are most pertinent to your central claim. | Describes the thesis clearly, accurately and completely in terms of all key points  Thesis is completely consistent with the scenario as presented; the parameters of the thesis have not been altered and/or facts “made up” to avoid grappling with key aspects of the healthcare policy. | Describes the thesis clearly and accurately in terms of all key points  Thesis is generally consistent with the scenario as presented; the parameters of the thesis have not been altered significantly and/or facts “made up” to avoid grappling with key aspects of  the healthcare policy. | Does not describe the thesis clearly or accurately in terms of some or all key points  Thesis is not consistent with the scenario as presented; the parameters of the thesis may have been altered and/or facts “made up” to avoid grappling with key aspects of the healthcare policy. |
| **Evidence 5 points**  • The support you use to back up the claims of your argument, this can be drawn from: statistics (from credible sources, government reports, etc.), case studies and anecdotes, historical or international precedent, expert findings, judicial inquiries, authoritative texts (peer reviewed research, etc.), polling data, personal interviews, testimonials, eye witness reports, other credible and/or disinterested sources, personal experience, or logic. | Describes the evidence clearly, accurately and completely in terms of all key points  Evidence supports the scenario as presented; the parameters of the evidence  have not been altered and/or facts “made up” to avoid grappling with key aspects of the healthcare policy. | Describes the evidence clearly and accurately in terms of all key points  Evidence is generally consistent with the scenario as presented; the parameters of the evidence have not been altered significantly and/or facts “made up” to avoid grappling with key aspects of  the healthcare policy. | Does not describe the evidence clearly or accurately in terms of some or all key points  Evidence is not consistent with the scenario as  presented; the parameters of the problem may have been altered and/or facts “made up” to avoid grappling with key aspects of the healthcare policy. |
| **Quality of Writing 15 points**  • Many of the writing mistakes that professors allowed at the undergraduate level are not tolerated at the graduate level.  • Graduate level writing is free of grammatical errors, concise, and clear.  • Graduate level writing demands increased scholarship to support your points adequately from the academic and professional literature. | Writing is highly persuasive; it defends the policy with precise and relevant evidence  Writing is in the proper Op-Ed piece style; uses non-technical language; tone is entirely appropriate to the audience  Writing is free of significant errors in mechanics and grammar; ideas are well  organized and clearly understandable. | Writing is generally persuasive; it defends the policy with relevant evidence  Writing is in the proper Op-Ed piece style; uses non-technical language; tone is generally appropriate to the audience  Writing has few significant errors in mechanics and grammar; ideas are for the most part organized and understandable. | Writing is not persuasive; it does not defend the policy with relevant evidence  Writing is not in the proper Op-Ed piece style; may use technical language; tone  is not appropriate to the audience  Writing has several significant errors in mechanics and grammar; ideas are not clearly organized and/or understandable. |