Essay Instructions

The essay is to be 5-8 pages long, double spaced.

It must include a bibliography, which is included in the page count.

The essay must be based on one of the three pre-assigned essay topics, TBA.

Each of these topics must be addressed in an argumentative essay, so, for example:

**Find a current environmental debate where there is disagreement about anthropogenic causes and argue if that case is different or similar to Martin’s.**

-This is NOT an argumentative thesis built around that topic:

I will compare the similarities and differences between debates about anthropogenic extinction and debates about anthropogenic climate change.

It is descriptive, it doesn’t argue for or against anything, it just tells you stuff.

-This argumentative but off topic:

Martin thinks large mammals were made extinct in the late Quarternary period due to anthropogenic causes, but his detractors have argued for climate or disease based explanations. I will show that Martin’s anthropogenic argument fails when some of the climate based explanations are considered.

It’s just about Martin, it isn’t comparative

-This is argumentative but too vague:

I will compare the similarities and differences between debates about anthropogenic extinction and debates about anthropogenic climate change and show that anthropogenic climate change arguments are different.

But why are they different? You need to state this so your reader knows what to look for.

This is an argumentative thesis built around that topic:

The debate about global warming divides into two camps, one that believes global warming is anthropogenic, the other that it is natural. Unlike the debate over anthropogenic extinction of large mammals in the late Quarternary period, where the evidence is harder to find as the event is in the distant past, the debate over global warming has resolved much more conclusively in favor of the anthropogenic side, as the evidence, though contested, is in the present and easier to find.

An argumentative thesis always argues for or against some position or idea.

You can write in the first person.

You should state your thesis up front and outline your argument in the first section of the paper.

You can use quotations, but use them sparingly, paraphrase first before quoting.

Always give a page number when referring to a source.

You will be evaluated on four criteria:

Argument – Do you have one, is it consistent, is it persuasive

Thesis – Do you have one, is it clearly stated, is it on topic, is it argumentative, do you stick to it

Evidence – Do you use a standard referencing style consistently, do you use paraphrasing and sometimes quotations, do you demonstrate that you understand your sources when discussing ideas

Clarity – Is your presentation clear, can it be understood, do you make frequent writing mistakes

All out of 5, for a total of 20.