**Essay 3: Persuasive Essay**

**This essay is required by state law for all ENGL 1301 students. Results will be anonymously evaluated** **by teams of instructors to determine program effectiveness.** As a result, the instructions for this essay may be different than the other essays in this course.

Of course, I will assign the grade you receive for this writing as it relates to your final course average.

**KEY TERMS + OVERVIEW**

**Ethics:** Moral principles that govern a person’s behavior or the conducting of an activity

**Assumptions:** The opinions, perspectives, or beliefs a writer or speaker thinks the audience holds; the major premises of an argument

**Consequences:** The results or effects of an action or position

**Rhetorical situation:** The audience, purpose, and context

Essay 3 requires that you

* Examine a debatable, controversial, ethical issue
* Consider the assumptions and consequences related to various sides of the ethical issue
* Choose the position you believe is the strongest.

*Write a persuasive essay that demonstrates your critical thinking and full understanding of the issue and gives your readers logical reasons to agree with your position.*

**LENGTH**

The essay must be a minimum of **3 pages (about 700-900 words)** plus an additional page for your Works Cited list of sources (details below). Be sure to follow all of the guidelines in the MLA Formatting Information document. Significant point-deductions will be applied to essays that are not formatted correctly.

**SOURCES**

For this essay, we will be using the ***Opposing Viewpoints in Context*** database available through the DCCCD library site.

(<http://go.galegroup.com/ps/dispBasicSearch.do;jsessionid=F417D3757B8D7E0D82477DEDFE5496AB.omni_as01?userGroupName=txshracd2500&prodId=OVIC>)

See the information and instructional video posted in the “Library How-Tos” section of the library’s homepage) for details about accessing the database.

* A minimum of **2 sources (maximum 3)** from the database must be used in your essay and listed on the **Works Cited** page.
* Direct quotes from the sources are required and must be **integrated** (use your own words to introduce or embed the quotes).
* ALL information from sources (whether you write the information as a direct quote or paraphrase it by writing it in your own words) must be cited in the text of your essay with in-text citations.
* At least some of the in-text citations must be written as citation **parentheticals**. See information posted in the Research section of our course for more help with source documentation.

**ASSIGNMENT DETAILS**

Begin your work by choosing from the extensive list of topics available on the ***Opposing Viewpoints in Context*** site. Be sure to choose a topic that is debatable and controversial – do not choose something most people will already agree with! Instead, choose a topic that has more than one valid, reasonable ethical position, then choose which position you believe is the strongest.

The **INTRODUCTION** of the essay should explain the topic and present information that will help your readers care about the ethical issue. Consider using narrative strategies or an example situation to show your readers why the topic matters. The last sentence of the introduction should be a specific **thesis** that tells readers which side of the issue you will argue. What is it you want them to agree with? What exactly will you persuade them is the strongest position on the issue? **Your thesis should be clear, specific, and debatable**. Don’t end the introduction with a question, and don’t leave readers wondering which side you are on.

Use the **BODY** of your essay to explain the different sides of the debate and the reasons you have for choosing your position. What is the ethical issue you want readers to consider? What two or more choices are being presented in this ethical debate? What are the **assumptions** related to the various positions? What are the **consequences** related to each of the choices? Which choice do YOU make and why? **Develop and support your reasons** with sources as well as your own original ideas and logic.

Remember that when you are **discussing other positions on the issue (the counterargument)**, your goal is to show that you understand those positions but that *your* position is the strongest one to take. Show your readers what you have thought critically and comprehensively about the different perspectives people have on the issue and that while there is some validity to the sides that oppose you, the best long-term consequences will be a result of the position you want them to agree with and explain *why*.

The **CONCLUSION** should reiterate your main points without being too repetitive or introducing new reasons. Often, a “call to action” can be effective in the conclusion; consider leaving readers with an idea about what they can do to related to your topic. Be sure to leave them with strong, persuasive final thoughts about your position on the argument.

The last page of your essay will be the **Works Cited** page that lists the 2-3 sources you cited in the essay.

Please remember not to include any source information that is not clearly cited with both in-text citations and MLA-style works cited page entries! Including source information that is not clearly documented is **plagiarism** and cause for an **automatic zero** on your essay.

**CORE REQUIRED ELEMENTS**

* Introduction catches readers’ attention and explains a debatable ethical issue.
* Thesis shows your clear and specific position on the issue.
* Essay explains assumptions and consequences of two or more sides of the ethical debate.
* Essay persuasively argues your position with support and developed reasons.
* Two reliable, credible sources from the Opposing Viewpoints are included in the body of the essay with in-text citation parentheticals AND listed on the Works Cited page in full 8th edition MLA-style source entries.
* Direct quotes are used in the essay and are integrated.
* Essay meets minimum page length and all MLA formatting requirements.
* Personal voice is used to keep readers engaged – Let your voice, reasons, and ideas drive the paper; balance that with source information that supports your reasons.
* The writing is concise; essay is edited to reflect strong spelling, word choice, grammar, and punctuation skills.
* Proofread carefully! Do not use 2nd person “you.” Avoid contractions and slang.

You are the expert on the ethical debate you are choosing to write about, so share your knowledge and ideas as an interesting, informed, intellectual (and persuasive) writer!