

Glenn Lester
EN 106 HOC
Park University
Spring 2015

Controversy Project Assignment

GOALS: Students will create a creative project on a current controversy in their majors or intended career fields. Students will synthesize all that they have learned about focus, development, rhetorical strategies, and writing conventions to create a nuanced, complex argument. Students will write about a specialized subject to a public audience.

DESCRIPTION: Your job in this project is to produce a piece of public writing, aimed at an educated but general readership, on the topic of a current question or controversy in your major or career field. In this piece of writing, you should argue a claim with whatever rhetorical tools you deem necessary. But, remember: your audience is the general public.

The most difficult part of this assignment may be figuring how out to communicate the importance and urgency of the controversy to a general audience. You may have to use your rhetorical skills to identify common ground with your readers. You may have to focus your writing with emotional appeals or popular sources.

Because a formal essay in APA style *may* not be the best way to reach the general public, you must *also* create some kind of visual aid that helps teach your readers about the issue. This visual aid may be a poster, a PowerPoint, a Prezi, a video, a handout, a brochure, or some other visual aid.

DUE DATES:

Draft 1, with cover letter: Monday, April 13

Peer review activities: Wednesday, April 15 and Monday, April 20

Individual conference with Prof. Lester: Wednesday, April 15 or Monday, April 20

Draft 2, with cover letter: Wednesday, April 22

Visual aid presentations: Wednesday, April 22

LENGTH & FORMATTING: Your controversy project should be 1000-2000 words, typed, double-spaced, stapled. For document formatting, please follow the guidelines of the Modern Language Association (MLA) or the American Psychological Association (APA). See the *Norton Field Guide to Writing* for details.

DELIVERY: For your first draft, please bring enough hard copies for your peer review group. You should also place a copy in the eCompanion dropbox. Hand in the final draft at the beginning of class on the due date, and place a copy in the eCompanion dropbox. Bring your visual aid to class on the due date, and be ready to present it to the class.

SOURCES: Your controversy project should synthesize as much research as is necessary to persuade your reader of your position. Follow MLA or APA guidelines for in-text and references page citations.

RUBRIC: The grading rubric for this writing assignment is derived from the categories on your syllabus. This assignment is worth 150 points, or 15% of your final grade in the course.

Rough Draft	15 pts
Peer Review	15 pts
Focus	10 pts
Development	30 pts
Rhetorical Strategies	30 pts
Conventions	20 pts
Visual Aid	30 pts
TOTAL	150 pts

POSSIBLE INVENTION EXERCISES: Begin by freewriting, looping, mapping, journaling, listing, or some other brainstorming activity. Write about what attracted you to your major. What issues in your major are most urgent to the general public? What misconceptions do everyday people have about your major or career field? What sorts of problems or questions are considered by scholars in your major? What long-term trends have you identified in your major? What are the labor conditions in your intended career field?

Another idea for inventing a topic is to interview an expert. Consider finding a professor or professional to interview. Ask your interviewee for ideas about issues or controversies in your major. Ask your interviewee for ideas about where to learn more.

After you have selected a topic, think about what you already know and what you need to know. Write and research simultaneously, and look to see how other writers have addressed the issue. Identify what the public needs to know, and how you can best teach them.

This assignment has the potential to be not only instructive, but *fun*. (Yes, fun!) Good luck, and I look forward to seeing where you go!