

Classical Argument Paper

This paper is the culmination of all the work you have put in over the course of the semester. You will use several of your previous projects and in-class writings and homework to inform and develop this paper. This paper is worth 200 points, plus an additional 48 points for the peer review and for having a draft ready (at least 2000 words for the main peer review draft). As well, you will be giving an oral presentation about your research paper to the class. This is worth 100 points (but, we'll get into the requirements for that presentation later).

This is a scholarly research paper. This means that you are not writing a simple “for” or “against” paper on your topic. This is more than just “taking a stand” on an issue. Instead, this paper should make it clear that you’ve explored the multiple angles around a specific aspect of a tightly focused research question, worked through the complexities of the relationships between them all, and have come to some specific conclusions about them all (perhaps even a new way of looking at the issue).

The best papers show the complexity of the issue and acknowledge the problematic nature of it. Great papers also tend to show insightfulness and originality of thought.

The goal of this paper is for you to write a sustained (around 10 pages), multi-vocal (6-7 sources), scholarly (following accepted conventions for argument, documentation, and style) discussion of your research. This paper should use a trustworthy, formal tone, yet one that shows your personality and style (much like you did for the creative writing free writing). Your audience is non-committed, but skeptical, on the issue. Your job is to get them to come around to your way of thinking about the issue.

If you have conducted primary research, the paper also incorporates an extended description of the methods and findings of that research.

Chapter 14 should become your dear friend in helping you write this paper.

I HIGHLY recommend that you conduct an in depth exploration of your topic and question before you begin drafting. Then, make sure that you shape and draft your paper appropriately for your audience and your purpose. The tasks to accomplish this are listed on pages 400-402 in Allyn and Bacon.

Key Features

The paper must be at least *2000 words* long, but no more than 3000. This equates to about 9-12 pages. It should be representative of your very best work.

The *introduction* of your paper should follow the CARS model and include a hook (such as an illustrative story or saying, or a unique turn of phrase that really catches the attention, like what you had to do in the Informative and Surprising paper) and a statement of why this is an important research question for you, and why the reader should care (included in your Proposal paper). You should also include any necessary background information on the topic (from the Informative and Surprising, Research Proposal, and Review of Literature papers). This section would also include a review of relevant literature and how it all fits in (the Review of Literature and Proposal papers).

This introduction will conclude with your thesis statement (your claim, which includes a “surprising” thesis like you did for the Informative and Surprising paper) and indication of the structure of your paper. The thesis should follow all the conventions we talked about in class and should also telegraph the structure of your paper. This claim should be focused on audience-based reasons, taking unstated assumptions into consideration as appropriate, and using appeals to pathos, all while creating a positive, credible ethos.

The main *body* of the paper should flow logically and be easy to follow. Make sure to take advantage of the Old-New Contract. You should give careful consideration to other positions and texts (much like you did for the Analysis and Synthesis paper). In fact, you should extend your summary and analysis to ALL your texts, with synthesis as appropriate. This includes categorizing the texts as appropriate. You should summarize and respond to opposing views as well as present reasons and evidence in support of your own position. You will need to choose whether to summarize and refute opposing views before or after you have made your own case. See page 398 in your book for an EFFECTIVE (read that as required) organizational framework for your paper.

I expect that you will analyze how well the texts do their jobs by focusing on the rhetoric of the text (instead of just the topic). You can talk about how the rhetoric affects the text’s message and topic. I also expect that you will have about 33% of the text in the body be from an outside source. The other 67% should come from you as you introduce and explain texts and arguments and talk about each text and its relationships to the other texts in your research. If you use any visual elements in your text, make sure to number them (figure 1, and so forth) and to discuss them just like a quote from a source (independent redundancy). Additionally, cite the visual if it did not come from you.

Use sources to support your point, not the other way around.

The *conclusion* should summarize your main points. If you have been able to argue effectively for a certain thing, you can also end with a call to action (what the reader should do with this information you’ve presented). Another good closing technique is to refer back to the introduction and any hook or story you used there. It is important to remember that you are not giving the last word on the issue. Instead, you should use wording here and throughout the paper that indicates the complexity of the issue as well as the uncertainty of any hard and fast determinations (qualifying your claim).

Formatting

This paper will be electronically submitted in one document. You will name it as follows: Classical Argument_Teacher Draft_yourname. The document will include the following:

- APA style *title page*, modified. Center title horizontally and vertically (about 10 double-spaced lines down) on the page. Put your Name, Teacher name, Class, and Date below that, each on separate lines. All this is double-spaced.
- *Abstract* page. Header on this and subsequent pages has your last name, a shortened version of your paper title, and the page number in the upper right corner (the title page is counted as page 1). Separate each of these with a comma, hyphen, or pipe character. Type the page title (that would be, Abstract) and center it at the top of the page, then go down one double-spaced line to start typing. Do

not indent. The abstract should be about half a page long (120 words maximum). This abstract states the essence of your entire paper in one paragraph. In it you summarize key information, give an objective description of the contents of your paper, and tell the conclusion. You should do it from a 3rd person point of view.

- *Main paper.* Again, header here (page is 3), then center the paper title at the top of the page. Indent the first paragraph and start typing. Everything in the entire paper should be double-spaced, with at least 1-inch margins all around the paper. Use headings if appropriate. If you vary from the APA style, make sure you have a good reason and be consistent. Make sure to follow APA guidelines for in-text citations for ANYTHING that is quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. After the last line of the text, go down a line or two and put the number of words in square brackets, left aligned on the page. Make sure to use only ONE space after a period or other end punctuation mark (this is a pet peeve of mine).
- *References page.* Header as always. Title of page (for this page, that is References) is centered at top of page. This section should start on a new page (even if the previous page ended with just one line of text). All the citations must follow APA style guidelines. The references should be in an alphabetized list, with a hanging indent (only the second and subsequent lines of a citation are indented). The entire list is double-spaced (even between lines in a source). Do not add any extra lines between sources (apart from the double-spacing). Do not number the sources. Do not include any annotations.
- *Peer Review Draft.* You will include the version of your peer draft (only the complete draft, not the pieces of it). Start a new page after the Teacher Draft. It can have peer comments still or just be a clean version of the same draft you showed your peer reviewers.

Attached to the same email as the electronic paper, you will include the following:

- *Teacher Review Sheet.* You will include the DOC version. You will name it Classical Argument_Teacher Review Sheet_yourname.doc
- *Sources.* You will include a PDF or RTF of all sources used in your paper. Include your name in the file name (John Smith source xyz.pdf) so I can recognize it easily.

In class, you will hand in the following:

- *Letter* (using letter formatting) explaining how you want me to comment on your paper in general and for grammar, including anything you'd like me to pay attention to. The next paragraph is where you respond to the peer review comments. Describe any changes based on comments. Also indicate where you think the reviewer was incorrect and why.
- *Peer Review Sheets.* Do you need more explanation here? Sheets not stapled to anything.

All of this should be paper-clipped (or use a binder clip) together.

Grading

You will be graded on this paper as follows:

Peer Review (48 total)

- 1, 2, and 10 points for having a thesis, intro, and complete draft (at least 2000 words) ready for review, respectively.
- 4, 10, and 16 points as a reviewer of theses, intros, and a thorough evaluation of 2 drafts, respectively.
- 5 points for writing up your analysis of the peer review comments

Paper (200 total)

- *Content* (100 points) - This score indicates the how well you showed the complexity of the issue, the strength of your argument, and how well you compared and contrasted source relationships and information. You will lose points here for instances of plagiarism (20 points per incident, but a failing paper grade for wholesale stupidity and laziness). You will also lose points for not focusing your research with a specific aspect (field) or for only looking at one-side of your issue. You will lose points for using logical fallacies or faulty arguments. This score also indicates the strength of your sources and how well you integrate them into your text.
- *Organization* (45 points) - This score indicates how well you arrange the material so that it logically flows, including keeping to the Old-New Contract. It includes the arrangement of the introduction (as per our discussion of CARS) and whether the thesis statement indicates the structure of the paper. This includes points for having all citations in alphabetical order and for a one-to-one correspondence of in-text sources to reference page sources.
- *Style* (20 points) - This is a little about grammar and usage. Mostly, it includes doing appropriate and accurate APA in-text and reference page citations. Non-inclusive language use will affect your points here as well.
- *Presentation* (35 points) - This includes the arrangement information above and the general look of the paper (in other words, does it look professional and is it done with care?). This also includes the inclusion of any visuals and headings.

From all of this you should be able to see now how this paper really is a culmination of everything we have written and learned in this course. And, again, you should see why it is important to make sure this is your very best work, so that you show how much you have progressed as a writer and critical thinker in this course.