

## ENGL 1B Essay 4: Argumentation—Multiple Perspectives

**Research Outline DUE:** Sunday, 12/10 by 11:59pm

**FINAL DRAFT DUE:** SATURDAY, 12/16 by 11:59pm (submit .doc, .docx, or .pdf ONLY!)

**Assignment:** For your final paper for this class, you have TWO OPTIONS. Choose one of the following project options:

### **OPTION 1: TRADITIONAL RESEARCH PAPER**

If you choose this option, you will write a formal, traditional 8-12 page argumentative research paper about education. **You MUST use at least THREE (3) of our unit's readings AND at least FIVE (5) sources found on the SADDLEBACK COLLEGE LIBRARY website** (see the library research demonstration video on Blackboard), for **a minimum of EIGHT (8) total sources**. **Your paper must also include at least one counterargument (argument which opposes your thesis) with a rebuttal.** You will choose one of the following research questions:

#### **Questions:**

- + What is the purpose of a college education?
- + Should everyone have equal access to education?
- + What do students gain/lose from getting a college education?
- + Does it matter what a student gets their degree in?
- + What degrees are the most useful to the country's success?
- + What is the value of a humanities degree?
- + Is the prioritization of STEM fields in the United States legitimate?
- + **Create your own: email me for approval by Sunday, 12/3.**

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### **OPTION 2: DIALOGUE ESSAY (WORTH 20 EXTRA CREDIT POINTS)**

If you choose option 2, you will use a variety of sources to show a spectrum of perspectives on our education topic. It will take the form of a **8-12 page debate**, which will look somewhat like a **screenplay**. The challenge will be to offer coherent arguments by characters who represent not just different points of view, but also different styles of argumentation arising from their varied backgrounds, educational background, cultural and ethnic differences, and personal experience.

The **introduction** will consist of a description of your characters, their positions on the given issue, and background information needed to help your "intelligent, naïve" reader to understand your topic. Most of the explanation can be included in the context of the discussion. Assume your audience is educated, but isn't necessarily knowledgeable about the subject. Also assume that they are very sensitive to bias—they shouldn't see yours, even if you personally have strong feelings about it.

You can choose the **setting**, but it usually is helpful to think in terms of a venue that encourages high-level discourse. Feel free to be as creative as you would like as long as you think PBS level discussion, not Jerry Springer. The more you can envision the personalities of your characters, the better your choice of rhetorical strategies can be. The context of this debate should encourage the most intelligent arguments possible.

Your **characters** will be fictional, but can be based on actual people. While they should be representational of certain groups and belief systems, *they must not be stereotypes*. They should be people whom you would be willing to listen to even if you vehemently disagreed with their particular point of view. If the person has an unpopular viewpoint, you might want to contrast it with an especially appealing personality or intriguing life situation. Each should bring something unique to the discussion. **You will write as though they are speaking to each other, and your sources will be part of that speech.** (Each quote or paraphrase must be documented in the MLA style to avoid plagiarism.)

It can be difficult to distance yourself from your own words—some people feel very awkward making a strong argument for something they do not believe—but this is an excellent way to train yourself to think critically and be able to articulate others' points of view honestly and fairly.

**The debate itself will be in script form, with speakers asking and answering questions. Characters will address one another's points, and then go on to bring up new arguments. Make sure that the debate is not just a series of monologues, but is a real conversation.** Normally there will be three to five speakers per page—more than that means you might be lacking in your use of sources, and fewer would sound more like speeches than debate.

**Speakers will quote or paraphrase their sources as though they are stating their own ideas.** Your [**minimum of eight—at least THREE readings from our unit AND AT LEAST FIVE sources found on the Saddleback College Library website**] **sources** need to include academic journals, transcripts of radio and television shows, oral interviews, on-line discussion, news sources, books, and others. The personality of the individual character will dictate which kind of source s/he might use.

*Again...each side should be so persuasive that the reader won't know your bias.*

In the **conclusion**, you can enlighten your audience as to your true beliefs. Talk about why you believe what you do, and how your views might have changed as you did your research and formulated your arguments.

Students may create a context which inspires them, and which encourages strong argumentation. There is often a tendency to demonize those with whom the writer personally disagrees even though most students claim to be “tolerant” of others' beliefs. This assignment will help students practice how to be able to articulate other sides, a step toward respecting those who hold the opinions.

### Potential Topics for Dialogue Essay:

- ✚ What is the purpose of a college education?
  - ✚ Should everyone have equal access to education?
  - ✚ What do students gain/lose from getting a college education?
  - ✚ Does it matter what a student gets their degree in?
  - ✚ What degrees are the most useful to the country's success?
  - ✚ What is the value of a humanities degree?
  - ✚ Is the prioritization of STEM fields in the United States legitimate?
  - ✚ **Create your own: email me for approval by Sunday, 12/3.**
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### In-Class Texts (Choose AT LEAST 3):

- ✚ Deblanco, "3 Reasons College Still Matters" (463)
- ✚ Rotella, "No, it Doesn't Matter What you Majored in" (467)
- ✚ Conard, "We Don't Need More Humanities Majors" (469)
- ✚ Madsbjerg/Rasmussen, "We Need More Humanities Majors" (471)
- ✚ Scott Samuelson, "Why I Teach Plato to Plumbers" (474)
- ✚ Mark Slouka, "Mathandscience" (477)
- ✚ David Wallace, "Commencement Address, Kenyon College" (480)
- ✚ Malala Yousafzai, "Interview with Jon Stewart"

### Tips for Successful Essays:

- ✚ 8-12 pages.
- ✚ Incorporates **at least THREE readings from our unit AND AT LEAST FIVE sources found on the Saddleback College Library website**
- ✚ MLA format. 12-point font, Times New Roman.
- ✚ A creative title that hints at the subject matter.
- ✚ Concrete evidence from at least FIVE sources.
- ✚ Indicate a clear focus in a well-written thesis statement and stay focused throughout the essay (OPTION 1).
- ✚ Organizing Principle.
- ✚ Introduction, body, and conclusion.
- ✚ **Fully developed analysis of how the evidence supports each topic sentence and overall thesis statement.**
- ✚ Implements proper stylistic conventions to include: sentence variation, college-level vocabulary, target audience, complex sentence structure.
- ✚ Use an effective structure that carefully guides the reader from one idea to the next, and be thoroughly edited so that sentences are readable and appropriate for an academic audience.
- ✚ Write the paper as if addressing a scholarly audience.

