

## FINAL PROJECT: WRITING PERSUASIVELY ON YOUR TOPIC

### DESCRIPTION

We spent most of the semester working on a literature review whose purpose was *to inform* your scholarly audience and to *contribute knowledge* to your field. In this final project, you will adapt your literature review into a *persuasive* genre. You'll take a stance on your topic in some way and advocate for that stance in a genre you choose from the options provided in this prompt. Your purpose in this genre is to *persuade* your audience.

To argue effectively, you'll need to analyze your genre and make sure you understand the conventions and expectations. You'll also need to identify and analyze your audience, so that you understand their perspective on your topic. Finally, you'll need to develop a rhetorical strategy based on your genre and audience analysis that will effectively persuade your audience to consider your point of view. Your final grade will be based on how effectively and specifically your reflection explains the choices you made about genre, audience, sources, and other rhetorical elements in your text.

### POTENTIAL GENRES:

From the options below, select the genre that best suits your interests and your topic. Read the descriptions of each carefully and review the samples.

- **Advocacy Letter**—An advocacy letter makes a direct request for action on your topic from the person who has decision-making authority to implement your suggestions. Often this is your legislator or political representative, but it could also be the head of a company or organization. To write an effective advocacy letter, you will need to:
  - Identify the specific person to whom you will address the letter and research their position on your topic
  - Write a 1-2 page single-spaced business letter, formatted appropriately for that genre and including the expected conventions of any business letter (date, addressee address, sender address, salutations, closing, etc.)
  - Indicate the specific change you want your audience to make
  - Tailor your argument to your specific audience, based on what you know about their history of action on your topic, their values, their motivations, and their level of expertise or knowledge

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the genre-specific requirements, all projects should accomplish the following:

- **Establish your ethos/credibility.** You will be writing as an undergraduate student, as yourself. You will not be approaching the audience pretending to be an expert, or pretending to be someone else. You'll need to find a way to convince your audience to take you seriously as yourself.
- **Effectively analyze your audience.** Carefully consider your audience's perspective, values, and knowledge level in order to effectively tailor your argument to them
- **Convincingly establish exigence.** In a way that's appropriate for your genre, convince your audience that the problem you're addressing requires urgent attention
- **Use rhetorical appeals to persuade your audience.** Using ethos, pathos, and/or logos, design a rhetorical strategy that will effectively persuade your audience to enact the change you are suggesting
- **Use sources effectively.** Select sources and/or information that will appeal to your specific audience. Make decisions about how many references to include and what kind of citations to use based on the conventions of the genre you are working in and the expectations of your audience.
- **Include a reference list.** Though not all the genre options would ordinarily require a reference list, for grading purposes I am requiring that you include one. It should be formatted in APA style and include *only* the sources you reference in your persuasive text (not all the sources from your literature review). Refer to the [Purdue OWL](#) for formatting guidelines.

## REFLECTION

To accompany your persuasive text, write a reflection responding to the following questions about the writing choices you made as you adapted your research for a persuasive genre. Your reflection should be written in complete sentences and paragraphs (not as bulleted responses to the questions), and include in-text citations for any references.

### Part I. Genre

- Which genre did you select for this assignment? Why did you feel that was the best fit for your project? (research proposal, opinion piece, **advocacy letter**)
- Identify 3-5 defining features of this genre (these can be related to design, mode, structure, content, style, tone, etc.). How did those genre conventions shape your approach to your text? Cite examples in your answer.

- Are images or videos typically used in this genre? If so, how are they used, and what are they meant to achieve? If not, why not? How did that genre convention shape your approach to visuals in your text? Cite examples in your answer.
- How are sources cited in this genre? How did that genre convention shape your approach to citing sources in your text? Cite examples in your answer.

## **Part II. Audience**

- Who is the primary audience for your persuasive text? How did you determine this?
- What values, biases, and perspectives does your audience hold on your topic that you need to consider? How have those beliefs shaped your approach to your argument? Cite any sources you used to research your audience.
- What is your audience’s knowledge level on your topic? How has that shaped your approach to your argument? Cite any sources you used to research your audience.

## **Part III. Rhetorical Analysis**

- How is ethos typically established in your genre? How did you establish ethos in your text? Be specific, indicating the exact visual or linguistic elements that you used.
- How is logos typically established in your genre? How did you establish logos in your text? Specifically, what sources of evidence did you choose, and why did you choose those specific sources? Be specific, indicating the exact visual or linguistic elements that you used.
- Is pathos typically used in your genre? Did you include any emotional appeals in your text? Why or why not? Be specific, indicating the exact visual or linguistic elements that you used.
- How did you establish and communicate exigence to the audience?
- How does your text make a “new offering”? Does it provide a different perspective, or offer original insight? If the audience already mostly agreed with you, how did you establish your text as a new contribution to the conversation?

## **Part IV. Reference List**

The references section should be formatted in APA style and include *only* the sources you reference in your persuasive text and reflection (not all the sources from your literature review). Refer to the [Purdue OWL](#) for formatting guidelines.