# Researched Argument Essay: *Proposing a Perspective*
# English 1301 Composition I | FALL 2012

**Researched Argument Essay: 20% of final grade**
Length: 1,000 – 1,500 Words, 3.5 – 4.5 pages
Layout/format: follow MLA guidelines, see Purdue OWL online
Submission Requirements: Hard copy & upload to TurnItIn.com

MW
M.W. 1301 | Class ID: 5419510 Password: FALL2012MW
Proposal (if deviating from prompts): Mon. Oct. 5 (must be aprox. 200 words)
Outline: Wed. Nov. 7
Rough Draft: Mon. Nov. 12
Final Draft: Wed. Nov. 19

T/TH
T.THURS. 1301 | Class ID: 5419512 Password: FALL2012TTH
Proposal (if deviating from prompts): Thurs. Nov. 1 (must be aprox. 200 words)
Outline: Tues. Nov. 6
Rough Draft: Thurs. Nov. 8
Final Draft: Tues. Nov. 13

PROMPT | Write a 1,000 – 1,500 Researched-Argument on ONE of the designated prompts. See prompts on Learning Web. If you choose your own prompt, you must submit a proposal per deadlines above.

Layout: MLA

- Typed on white paper (8 ½ x 11) with black ink (handwritten assignments not accepted)
- Double-spaced, with 1" margins, 12 pt font (Times New Roman)
- MLA heading (if you need a review of MLA paper format, visit: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)
- If multiple pages: Staple them and include your name and page number on each

Your paper will not be accepted until:

- it is submitted in both hardcopy and to TurnItIn.com.
- it is in the proper MLA format (it must be typed and have the correct heading)
- you include your Works Cited page
- you include the WORD COUNT in your MLA heading.
- the essay is at least 1,000 words (word count does not include the heading).

## Research Component:

- You are required to include **at least four outside** sources in your argument if you choose your own topic; if you choose one of the suggested topics with primary sources, you only need to find an additional **three sources**. However, all papers should have at least four sources—if you don't use the provided source, you must still find a fourth.
- Two of your sources MUST be from the library databases
- You can use more than the number of sources designated and are encouraged to.
- You MUST include an MLA Works Cited page

## Argument Components:

YOUR CLAIM: An argument must have tension—it cannot be based on a claim that is readily accepted (i.e. I propose that smoking is bad for your health … because, yeah, most folks know this and accept this already). This is why you have received predetermined prompts that already contain issues of debate. However, you are still responsible for developing a thesis/claim to defend in your argument. In other words, make sure what you argue merits the exercise of proof.

YOUR USE OF THE APPEALS:

*LOGOS:* An argument requires more than your own voice (not your personal opinion)—USE YOUR RESEARCH to add texture and depth to your argument. Sure, dropping in a quick statistic or percentage does count as a source and you should use these when appropriate. However, logos isn't ONLY about plying an argument with a ton of facts. You want your research to add a deeper layer to your argument.

*Talk* to your sources. Think about Colleen Wenke—this student author uses outside sources to not only back up or further build out her claim, but also to 'bounce ideas off of.' Don't let the research be 'dead weight' in your argument. Find voices, ideas, personalities, research that compliments your viewpoint. Likewise, find some that refute your ideas, like Pollitt does, and use them to literally argue against.

In addition, don't forget your modes of discourse as the means of backing your argument. To prove a point, try to **compare/contrast** or investigate **cause and effect** or question alternative **solutions** to the **problem** at hand or offer various interpretations in order to establish a fuller understanding of **definition**. **Analysis** is also a cornerstone to argument—break down the conflict, show its parts, explain how and why they affect each other the way they do. Any and all of these can be used.

*ETHOS:* Ethically driven arguments require a moment of concession—a fair nod to the most likely objections to your claim (sometimes also thought of as the 'holes in your proposal'). It's important to address these with as little bias as possible. However, once you have granted the opposing perspective(s) a fair nod—or **concession**—you must then **refute** it. Think about Katha Pollitt's piece—her argument is structured on the objections to her claim and then she refutes each one. Be aware, though, that Pollitt is also not very fair to her opposition and has a tendency to somewhat mock the opposing side's viewpoints. DO NOT DO THIS (unless you are writing a satire which is grounded in ridicule).

By providing a solid concession and refutation and showing thorough research you prove to your audience that you are trustworthy and fair.

*PATHOS:* Yes, you should have some. Don't be afraid to include appropriate anecdotes. In addition, write with imagery, connotative and figurative language devices. Be humorous or dark or angry in certain moments—show this with adjectives, adverbs and more colorful verbs (instead of 'so and so writes' … try 'so and so delivers a scathing rebuttal to the proposal…').

**Essay Organization: Following are several models you may find useful.**

*Keep in mind: all of these are models only. Once you begin to write your argument it will take on a "life of its own." Sometimes following an outline or model too closely will inhibit the natural flow of your argument. You can also mix and match some of the strategies—don't feel like you have to stick with just one exclusively.*

**I. The Classic**: this is the most straightforward of the models and runs on "stacking the deck" in your favor. It tends to be more "one-sided." However, concession is still a part of this model.

I. Colorful Introduction
   a. establish the problem/situation/issue
   b. make the audience care about why this important
   c. clearly state your claim

II. Background/definition
   a. include any historical information necessary
   b. further develop the 'crisis'
   c. provide any necessary definitions

III. Point 1
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports your claim

IV. Point 2
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports your claim

V. Point 3
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports your claim

VI. Concession
   a. Discuss the obvious objections to your claim

VII. Refutation
   a. Show how there is an error or some logical fallacy in the concession OR show how your claim/perspective has more to offer.

VIII. Conclude
   a. Conclusions in arguments typically will directly address the arguer's "proposal." Meaning, the arguer either encourages the audience to DO SOMETHING. This can include: learn more about an issue, take a stand, enter a fight, change their mind, make a donation, change a behavior, etc.

**II. The Diffuser:** this is a good model to use if you are working with an emotional topic. It grants validity to the other side of the argument and then dovetails into your perspective. The aim here is typically to show how there is value in both perspectives and either a. how the two can be brought together OR b. how one still offers more than the other.

I. Colorful Introduction
   a. establish the problem/situation/issue
   b. make the audience care about why this important
   c. clearly state your claim

II. Background/definition
   a. include any historical information necessary
   b. further develop the 'crisis'
   c. provide any necessary definitions

III. Concession
   a. Discuss the obvious objections to your claim
      i. Provide reason/evidence that validate/support the other perspectives

IV. Refutation
   a. Point 1
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports your claim
   b. Point 2
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports your claim
   c. Point 3
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports your claim

V. Conclude
   a. Conclusions in arguments typically will directly address the arguer's "proposal." Meaning, the arguer either encourages the audience to DO SOMETHING. This can include: learn more about an issue, take a stand, enter a fight, change their mind, make a donation, change a behavior, etc.

**III. The Analyzer:** This model is the most thorough and careful of all. It takes time to build and the arguer meticulously goes over each supporting point, the opposition to it, and then the refutation to it.

I. Colorful Introduction
   a. establish the problem/situation/issue
   b. make the audience care about why this important
   c. clearly state your claim

II. Background/definition
   a. include any historical information necessary
   b. further develop the 'crisis'
   c. provide any necessary definitions

III. Point 1
   i. Provide reason/evidence that supports your claim
      1. CONCESSION
         a. Provide reason/evidence that supports the concession
      2. REFUTATION
         a. Provide reason/evidence that supports the refutation

IV. Point 2
   i. Provide reason/evidence that supports your claim
      1. CONCESSION
         a. Provide reason/evidence that supports the concession
      2. REFUTATION
         a. Provide reason/evidence that supports the refutation

V. Point 3
   i. Provide reason/evidence that supports your claim
      1. CONCESSION
         a. Provide reason/evidence that supports the concession
      2. REFUTATION
         a. Provide reason/evidence that supports the refutation

VI. Conclude
   a. Conclusions in arguments typically will directly address the arguer's "proposal." Meaning, the arguer either encourages the audience to DO SOMETHING. This can include: learn more about an issue, take a stand, enter a fight, change their mind, make a donation, change a behavior, etc.

**The Aggressor:** This model is the most "defensive" or "aggressive" amongst the models because it leads with the opposition and systematically tears it down. It depends strongly on your understanding of the opposing sides' arguments and your ability to "poke holes" in it. The caveat here is that you need to make sure and deliver actual grounds for your claim at one point instead of constantly attacking. An excellent example of this model is Katha Pollitt's "What's Wrong With Gay Marriage?"

I. Colorful Introduction
   a. establish the problem/situation/issue
   b. make the audience care about why this important
   c. clearly state your claim

II. Background/definition
   a. include any historical information necessary
   b. further develop the 'crisis'
   c. provide any necessary definitions

III. Concession 1
   a. Address a common objection to your claim
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports the concession

IV. Refutation 1
   a. Show how there is an error or some logical fallacy in concession 1
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports the concession

V. Concession 2
   a. Address a common objection to your claim
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports the concession

VI. Refutation 2
   a. Show how there is an error or some logical fallacy in concession 2
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports the concession

VII. Concession 3
   a. Address a common objection to your claim
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports the concession

VIII. Refutation 3
   a. Show how there is an error or some logical fallacy in concession 3
      i. Provide reason/evidence that supports the concession

IX. Conclude
   a. Conclusions in arguments typically will directly address the arguer's "proposal." Meaning, the arguer either encourages the audience to DO SOMETHING. This can include: learn more about an issue, take a stand, enter a fight, change their mind, make a donation, change a behavior, etc.