

ENC1102: Rhetoric and Research

Research Argument Guidelines

Overview:

An important goal of ENC 1102 is to equip you with the writing and research skills to compose a clear, coherent, and engaging research argument. A traditional approach to writing a longer essay includes a process of:

- Generating a topic and identifying a clear, defensible thesis.
- Accumulating and evaluating solid academic and popular (news) resources.
- Organizing a coherent argument (often from an outline) with an introduction, body of supporting evidence, and a conclusion.
- Working through a recursive drafting process that includes a rough draft, a preliminary draft, and a final draft.

Topics:

The subject matter and argumentative direction of your research argument are open to your choice. You must, however, research and write about a matter of contemporary American public controversy. In recent classes, students have written about gun control, immigration policy, educational access, environmental concerns, and stem-cell research—just to name a few potential topics. Due to the complexity of many of these areas of controversy, you'll want to identify a subject that you are passionate about early in the course and begin accumulating resources and refining your views. I recommend that you develop a series of research questions that will help you to clarify your position and organize your writing.

Composition Guidelines:

- Your research argument should be ten pages in length. Because you will also include a "Works Cited" page at the conclusion of your work, the final document that you submit for a grade will stretch to eleven total pages in length.
- You need to incorporate a minimum of at least ten resources in supporting your work. I recommend a mixture of academic resources (journal articles, reference texts, or chapters from academic books) and popular resources (newspaper and magazine articles, TED Talks, or podcasts) for your essay.
- Your essay must be formatted to meet MLA standards. Please review Module Five for information on citing resources with MLA documentation principles.
- Please use either the Times New Roman or the Courier New font for your work. Depending on the length of your essay, you can use 10, 10.5, 11, 11.5, or (preferably) 12-pt font size. Your work should be double spaced. Please do not include an extra space between paragraphs.

- Do *not* include a cover page for this assignment (some instructors may ask for one in other classes).
- Up to three reasonably sized images (charts, graphs, and photographs) are acceptable. Please re-size them so that the images are not pixelated, and center them in your document with text above and below. Label them Figure 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3 (for images) or Table 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3 (for charts and graphs). You can use both images and charts, of course, but just make sure that you label them accordingly.

Assignment Deadline:

- Consult the calendar in the course syllabus for the appropriate assignment deadline and submission method. ⁽¹⁾

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