

Your Argument: What issues do YOU care about?

Why are you constructing and presenting an argument? We are surrounded by arguments. This is why much of the work you do as a college student requires you to read and construct arguments. Think about it: even a toilet paper ad argues that “you deserve a little luxury in your life, and so does your bottom.” Since you are pursuing your undergraduate studies at BMCC, you probably believe that college education is valuable. In your social life, you may agree or disagree that TikTok is the best social media platform. All of those positions are arguable—we can agree or disagree with them and present reasons and evidence to support our position.

For this assignment, you are asked to find, evaluate, and synthesize the ideas of experts in order to present your own compelling argument. Those are skills that you will likely use in any profession you might eventually pursue, as well as in your personal life. And since in real life you present arguments to real people, I ask that for this assignment you direct your argument to a specific individual/ audience. This can be a politician, an author, a celebrity, a social media group, anyone you’d like to convince to think or to do something.

Select 1 of the 10 topics below, from CQ Researcher (a database available via BMCC library), research the topic, and then construct an argument about it. Your final product should include at least 3 secondary sources, including at least 2 from CQ Researcher and/ or Opposing Viewpoints.

[Arts, Culture and Sports](#)

[Human Rights](#)

[Education](#)

[Media](#)

[Employment and Labor](#)

[Personal and Family Relations](#)

[Health](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Housing and Development](#)

[War and Conflict](#)

Final Product: present your argument to your audience, in a format that you think is best. Here are some examples:

- A newspaper article
- a letter
- a speech

Do you have a better idea for presenting your argument? Let me know, and I will add it to the list of options.

Steps and Assignments

Summary and Response, 250 words +/- Submit on Blackboard

Once you conduct some research on your topic for the argumentative essay, select one article from CQ Researcher or Opposing Viewpoints and do the following:

- provide a brief summary of the article, including the main idea and supporting details
- respond to the article: why you selected it, what you learned, how you might use it

Annotated Bibliography/ Submit on the OpenLab in Conversation

You are writing an annotated bibliography as an indication of the sources you intend to use for your essay. The goal here is to continue thinking critically about your topic and the sources you decide to incorporate into your essay. Your annotated bibliography must include at least 3 sources relevant to your topic. For each source,

- write 3-5 sentences summarizing or describing content, including the main idea/argument
- 1-2 sentences providing an evaluation of the source's usefulness: why the source is interesting or helpful to you.

I encourage you to (re)use your source from the Summary and Response assignment here.

Peer Review

- Your outline: conclusion + at least 3 claims, each with a premise and supporting evidence, including one counterargument with your rebuttal
- Your draft (add some information to your outline and you're done)
- Your idea for the final product, including a statement about your audience

You will receive 60 points if you submit your outline and draft according to the guidelines, and another 40 points if you comment on two of your classmates' outlines.

Extra Credit: Peer Review Response, 200 words+

Once you have received feedback from classmates, think about how you may want to revise your outline and/ or idea. Address the following questions: What, according to your critics, are the strengths of your idea? Do you agree? What, according to your critics, might you need to work on? Do you agree? How do you plan to revise and improve your idea? Be specific. Extra 25 points on Peer Review

Argument Presentation

By now, you will be an expert on your topic. Now share what you learned with your classmates.

Plagiarism Alert: Remember that using language or ideas that are not your own without proper citation is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade on the paper or in the class. Please don't use ChatGPT—I am interested in YOUR ideas and YOUR writing.