**Title of Assignment: Cause and Effect and Argument**

**Length: 3-5 pages**

**Due Date: TBA**

**Description of assignment:**

**You will write an argumentative essay that supports a claim or assertion and identifies causes and/or effects of your supporting statements. Secondary sources are not required. If you include secondary sources for supporting evidence, you *must* document your sources in MLA format. Double-space your essay in 12-point Times New Roman font.**

**Goal of assignment:**

**Argumentative essays assert the soundness of a debatable position, belief, or conclusion. Arguments examine ideas to persuade readers to accept new ideas or to take new actions.**

**Skills we will work on with this paper:**

**Creating a clear, debatable thesis statement**

**Developing supporting paragraphs**

**Organizing effective arguments**

**Avoiding illogical, fallacious reasoning**

**Suggestions for topics:**

**Do social networking sites do more harm than good?**

**Should patients have the right to die via physician-assisted suicide?**

**Should states establish more rigid gun control laws to buy weapons?**

***Your own*. Must have instructor’s approval**

**Rubric:**

**Thesis/Claim 20%**

**Debatable claim/developed purpose 20-18 points**

**Debatable claim/purpose fair 17-16 points**

**Debatable claim/purpose vague 15-14 points**

**Unclear/question/ 13-12 points**

**Missing/not relevant 11-00 points**

**Supporting Evidence/Content 30%**

**Support links to thesis/ 30-27 points**

**Well-developed details/**

**Rhetorical elements addressed**

**Support links to thesis/ 26-24 points**

**Good developed details present**

**Two rhetorical elements addressed/**

**Extraneous information included 23-21 points**

**One rhetorical element included**

**Support not explicitly linked to thesis**

**Extraneous information included 20-18 points**

**Support not linked to thesis**

**Rhetorical elements not present**

**Ideas are unrelated to thesis 17-00 points**

**Rhetorical elements not present**

**Extraneous information included**

**Organization 30%**

**Logical and coherent 30-27 points**

**Effective transitions guide argument**

**Logical and coherent 26-24 points**

**Strong transitions**

**Progression of ideas awkward 23-21 points**

**Transitions missing**

**Missing essay paragraphs 20-18 points**

**Transitions missing**

**Lacks structure 17-00 points**

**Incoherent/illogical**

**Grammar/Mechanics 20%**

**Punctuation/mechanics appropriate 20-18 points**

**Errors-do not interfere with meaning 17-16 points**

**Repeated errors. Meaning clear 15-14 points**

**Errors interfere with meaning 13-12 points**

**Unclear/Multiple errors 11-00 points**

**Possibilities (the best essays do this):**

**Argumentation is a process of reasoning that asserts the soundness of a debatable position, idea, belief, or course of action. Arguments clearly articulate the writer’s position and persuades readers to share the writer’s perspective and insight.**

**Consider your purpose and your audience. What do you expect your argument to accomplish? Successful arguments should . . .**

* **Clearly state a debatable thesis**
* **Present relevant, honest evidence that support your thesis**
* **Acknowledge the opposing viewpoints related to your claim.**
* **Provide coherent organization with appropriate transitions**
* **Proofread, revise, and edit carefully.**

**Pitfalls (common mistakes students make with this assignment):**

**To credibility in your argument, avoid these common errors:**

* **Do not create a question for your thesis statement.**
* **Do not create a self-evident/factual thesis statement.**
* **Do not over-simplify the evidence in your argument.**
* **Do not create illogical or fallacious evidence that is deceptive and dishonest.**
* **Do not ignore opposing viewpoints.**
* **Do not use personal attacks as evidence.**