

## Essay 4: Ethical Argument (10% :: 100 points)

### Problem and Thesis:

For this assignment, I will ask you to choose a specific topic on which you can take a stand. The paper must make an ethical argument in defense of a thesis. Use the thesis that you generated from Essay 3, revising it as necessary. Your stance on the topic does not matter, but your argument must be clear and coherent. You will need to research both sides, arguing one side with support from outside sources and making a critical assertion about this topic.

### Argument and Support:

The most important part of ethical analysis is getting a clear grasp of the key ethical issues: What values, principles, moral rules, etc., are involved? What conflicts exist between them? How will you weigh them? To state the issues clearly is more important than reaching a decisive conclusion. Your introduction should directly state your thesis—the argument you are going to make—and how you are going to go about it. Your conclusion should be equally direct: Restate your thesis and how you defended it.

Develop your own approach to the topic. When building your position upon another author or source, be critical and judicious in the use of that source. For instance, don't just list someone's arguments and then agree or disagree with each one—that gets boring. For example, don't simply assert that gay marriage should be legalized; say what evidence you have, and why some states have made exceptions.

I will read your paper based upon the following criteria:

\_\_\_\_\_ Preliminaries: Does it meet the requirements of the assignment regarding format, length and due dates?

\_\_\_\_\_ Essay Organization: Is the essay well organized? Is there a discernible thesis? Do each of the paragraphs have a topic sentence?

\_\_\_\_\_ General Understanding: Does this essay demonstrate that the author understands all sides of the topic and the relevant sources?

\_\_\_\_\_ Ethical Understanding: Does the author present a convincing moral argument? That is, does it offer valid, persuasive reasons for accepting the position advocated?

### Use of sources:

You will need to find a source per page. This does not mean that you should use only one source per page, but this rule of thumb will give you enough research from which you can argue.

Sources should not only support your argument but should be used as points with which you can disagree, and both should be weaved seamlessly into your writing. These sources should be quoted and paraphrased in order to enhance your paper using correct MLA citation techniques.

Organization:

As we've discussed, organization is critical to the logos of any argument. Topic sentences should be clear and relate back to thesis. Your ideas should be ordered so they make sense for your audience and the argument you're making (i.e. Chronological, Point-Counterpoint, etc). Each paragraph must transition into the next, and I strongly advise you not to force such a transition. These transition sentences should flow naturally if your paragraphs are a natural organization of your ideas.

Mechanics and Formatting:

*Length:* Paper should be 5-7 pages, double spaced, 1" margins

*Font:* Times New Roman, 12 pt.

*Formatting:* MLA citations with works cited

*Sentence Level Issues:* Paper should be almost free of mechanical errors; read your paper out loud, visit the Writing Center, or stop by my office if you're struggling.

Due Dates:

15 November: Assigned

22 November: Peer Review

1 December: Final Draft Due

See the English 101 Rubric (in Blackboard) for more details.