

Major Paper Assignment # 3

A Persuasive Argument using rhetorical topoi and figures on an issue of your choice approved by the instructor.

- This project is completed individually.
- Proposal Due 3 weeks after SES #8
- Paper Draft Due 4 weeks after SES #8
- Oral Presentations Due SES #9-12
- Final Draft Due SES #16
- Length: 2000-2500 words. ~8-10 double-spaced pages

Assignments:

This paper is an exercise in deliberative rhetoric, the rhetoric of future action. You are to write a proposal, a complete draft of a paper, present a 6-8 minute speech, and then submit a revision of the original draft.

Audience:

For purposes of persuasion, your audience is this class. Aim your arguments to your classmates.

Topic:

The topic can be:

1. a proposal to change something at MIT; the change can involve academic policy, a particular class or requirement, residential life, or any other aspect of MIT that affects you and your classmates.
2. a proposal to change something based on scientific or technical information.
3. any other topic that would be an appropriate argument to this audience

Remember, who your audience is. You are trying to move them to some sort of action. However, the action can occur in the future. (The first time I used this assignment was 1999. One student presentation was on hybrid cars. One of his main points was that hybrids became economical viable only when gasoline was close to \$3.00 per gallon. I bought my Prius two years ago.)

Proposal Due 3 weeks after SES #8 (150-250 words):

Your proposal should be handed in electronically, but bring 2 hard copy versions to class.

The proposal should have:

1. Your thesis statement – a one sentence statement of what you are trying to convince us to do and why. It (or a following sentence) should address counter arguments. **A thesis sentence is a claim you are proving to your audience; it never consists of questions.** For more information on writing a thesis sentence see <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/documents/Thesis.html>.
2. A few sentences giving the background and identifying the problem that you are going to solve. (Remember, there has to be a problem or there is no reason for change.)
3. An elaboration of your thesis statement.
4. Identification of counter arguments, other solutions, or both.
5. Sources of information.

Draft Due Wednesday, SES #17:

Submit electronically a complete draft of the paper. The paper should contain the following elements.

1. Title page with title, your name, date, and class number.
2. Introduction giving background, identifying the problem, and prominently featuring your thesis statement.
3. Detailed description of your proposal with explanation how it will solve the problem.
4. Analysis of why your solution to the problem is preferable to other solutions.
5. Conclusion.
6. Bibliography.

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