Writing to Persuade

A worked example for Pharmacy 387 Pediatrics & Geriatrics

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Writing Across the Curriculum

Would you like to improve the writing of your students? Improve their learning of your lecture material? Are you looking for new ways to engage your students in your course materials? If this interests you, contact Roger Graves: or 492.2189

What can we do for individual instructors:
- meet to talk about ways to incorporate informal (short, impromptu) writing assignments into any class, small or large
- review via email any assignment you give students that has a writing component to help make it clearer for students and to help develop grading rubrics to improve the speed and accuracy of grading
- visit your class to help students get started on their writing assignments

What can we do for departments:
- hold workshops on creating good writing assignments
- host discussions of how to improve the writing of students in your programs
- conduct reviews of writing assignments in your departments courses to identify exactly what your students are being asked to write—and to ensure that they have access to resources on how to write (online and on-campus)

Upcoming Presentations and Workshops:

http://www.humanities.ualberta.ca/WAC/
GRAM WOW!
The assignment

The deliverable:

- Structure is clear: one page letter to editor

- Challenges: don’t be a crank

- Body: structure within it seems open; one ad to analyze—what are the visual aspects that you could discuss: eye contact; dynamic image/static image; point of view; framing/focus; “interest” [Brief Penguin Handbook, Ch. 2]
The writing process

Getting started
- Explore the assignment
- Make rough notes
- Pick a tentative topic

Getting feedback
- Make an appointment at the writing centre for later in the week
- Get feedback on your draft/revise

Revising
- Work on style and lower order concerns
- Proofread, consult checklist for assignment
A sample thesis statement

According to new approaches in pain management, nurses must obtain three kinds of knowledge if they are to respond effectively to a patient’s pain: knowledge of self, knowledge of pain, and knowledge of standards of care.

[original/passive voice] New approaches to pain management stress three kinds of knowledge for nurses to obtain if they are to respond effectively to a patient’s pain: knowledge of self, knowledge of pain, and knowledge of standards of care.¹

www.mbon.org/practice/pain_management.pdf
Thesis statements

- Specific
- Manageable
- Interesting
Possible thesis statements
Sketch the argument
Outline

- Title:
Argument structure

Claim:

Stated reason:

Grounds/evidence
Argument structure

Unstated assumptions

Evidence supporting unstated assumption:
Rebuttal

Qualifiers
Drafting/Revising

- Get a “trusted reader” to get feedback
- Consider using other students in the course or the writing centre for this
- Ask readers to read for specific purposes: thesis, structure, transitions, development of a particular paragraph or idea
Don’t hand in a first draft

Towards the due date, switch your focus from

**higher-order concerns** (arrangement, arguments, evidence) to

**lower-order concerns**: proofreading, grammar, citation format, grammar/spelling