RHETORICAL ANALYSIS: In this age of social media, we are constantly bombarded with information: advertising, political messages, news reports, disinformation campaigns, conspiracy theories, and endless, endless memes. Being able to analyze these messages is an important skill to have, not only as a college student but as a professional in your field and as a citizen of the world. At every turn, we encounter a host of different perspectives and experiences that attempt to persuade us—and such attempts are not always ethical, honest, or made in good faith. Understanding the rhetorical tools used to communicate (or potentially manipulate or outright deceive) not only helps you better understand the messages others attempt to convey, but it also helps you more effectively express your own intentions and ideas. Being aware of the rhetorical situation of any given argument will help you become a more effective, sophisticated, and ethical communicator/writer, which is essential to ensuring your success in the roles you will play before and after you graduate. YOUR TASK For this assignment, you will choose one of the following articles and write a rhetorical analysis of it (we will be reading and discussing these texts in Week 3): “Defining the Relationship” by Rob Jenkins, Everything’s an Argument pp. 220-223 “The Toxicity in Learning” by Jenny Kim, Everything’s an Argument pp. 247-251 “Message to My Freshman Students” by Keith Parsons You must summarize the article in the second paragraph of your essay. Then, drawing on rhetorical concepts discussed in your textbook and in our class, compose an analysis that examines the text’s use of appeals in light of the text’s rhetorical situation. In order to conduct your analysis, consider the following questions: ➢ What values, assumptions, and beliefs must one possess in order for the argument to be persuasive? ➢ In what larger social or cultural conversations does the text participate? ➢ How is the argument structured? What proof is provided to back up claims? ➢ What stylistic choices are significant to the (in)effectiveness of the argument? ➢ How does the author utilize the rhetorical appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos? Be sure to include the vocabulary we learn in class in your paper: rhetorical situation, purpose, audience, context, rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos), etc. Your analysis should demonstrate your understanding of these concepts and your ability to apply them appropriately. FORMATTING Required page length: minimum of 750 – 1,000 words (2 ½ - 3 pages) Times New Roman size 12 font Double-spaced with one-inch margins all around Your essay must have an original title The first page of your paper should look like this example of a document formatted in MLA style: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\_and\_citation/mla\_style/mla\_formatting\_and\_style\_guide/mla\_samp le\_paper.html HOW I EVALUATE YOUR ESSAY When I read your essay, I will be considering the following questions. As you work through the various stages of your writing process for this assignment, keep these questions in mind and ask them of yourself as well. CONTENT—Does the essay respond thoughtfully to the assignment? Have you presented a clear thesis that provides the ultimate focus of your discussion, and does your essay successfully work in the service of that thesis? Have you successfully summarized the article being analyzed? Is your analysis sophisticated, detailed, nuanced, and thorough? Throughout the essay, do you provide concrete examples, evidence, and illustrations from the text to support the analytical claims you make? Are you accurately referencing the text as you quote, paraphrase, and summarize? ORGANIZATION—How effective is the organization (the order in which information is presented) of your essay? Is all the material that is included, and information that is presented, made relevant to the discussion and thus to your thesis? Are you writing effective transitions and cohesive, coherent paragraphs? How effective are the opening and closing of the essay? STYLE—Are you successfully maintaining a consistent third-person point of view (use of first person is not forbidden, but remember to try to maintain emotional distance from the analysis)? Are your sentences clear and maybe even sophisticated? Do you vary your sentence structures to create interest for the reader? Is your vocabulary precise and mature, avoiding repetition and vagueness? To what extent is your essay free of mechanical errors in spelling, syntax, and punctuation? WHAT I’M LOOKING FOR A Strong Rhetorical Analysis will accomplish the following: Purpose/Focus: The essay’s focus is clear, easy to identify, and successfully demonstrates understanding of the assignment’s genre (Rhetorical Analysis). Summary: The summary of the article is concise, accurate, fair, and evenhanded. Analysis: The analysis is well developed and demonstrates a strong understanding of rhetorical terms and concepts; evidence/examples from the text are provided in support of analytical claims; successfully utilizes signal phrases to identify ideas/words that belong to the author of the text. Organization: The essay follows a logical organization, with effective transitions and paragraph structures; all included material is relevant to the analysis. Style: Writing is polished and reasonably free from errors that obscure meaning and clarity. REFLECTIVE MEMO • Your reflective memo should be included at the end of your document, beginning on a new page. • It will receive a separate grade from the grade you earn on your paper (it will be entered in a separate column in the grade book). • The memo should be honest (i.e. you will not be penalized for confessing to procrastination) and thorough. • We will be writing the memo in class on the day the paper is due—a specific prompt will be provided on the projector—so be sure to submit the final draft of your paper after you have written your memo and added it to your document. • The reflective memo does not count toward the word count/page requirements.