

Topic Analysis Assignment

Purpose: The goal of this assignment is to find a field-specific topic (which will vary depending on the field you choose) and analyze the various facets of that topic through multiple sources that take different stances. In addition, we will also look at how rhetorical constructions differ depending on whether a given source is a scholarly journal, a trade publication, or a popular source. By thinking about how the writers formulate their ideas, we should be able to draw conclusions about what the field in question values in terms of genre, audience, and purpose.

Task: Locate three or four sources, all dealing with the same topic but each taking different stances on it (because there are always more than just two stances). Read the sources carefully, then, compose an essay of 900 to 1200 words in which you discuss and analyze the different strategies used to approach the topic and try to draw conclusions regarding the nature of rhetoric in the field.

Audience: First-year students intending to major in the field.

Week 1: Topic Analysis assigned. Locate sources (possible library instruction session).

Week 2: Reading and analyzing sources. Drafting.

Week 3: Conferences and Peer Review.

Week 4: Project due to instructor.