

## **Title of Module: Writing *Arguments Part 1***

**Collaborators:** Pary Fassihi and Maria Zlateva

Module Overview:

Video 1: Introduction to Arguments: Visual Arguments

Video 2: Introduction to Arguments: Verbal Arguments

Video 3: Introduction to Arguments: Written Arguments

Video 4: Purpose of Arguments

Video 5: Using Arguments to Persuade

### **Video 1:**

Welcome to Part 1 of the Argument module. We hope you will listen and engage actively, as we take you through a series of short videos and activities. The goal is for you to master this content and be able to have an active and fruitful discussion during class.

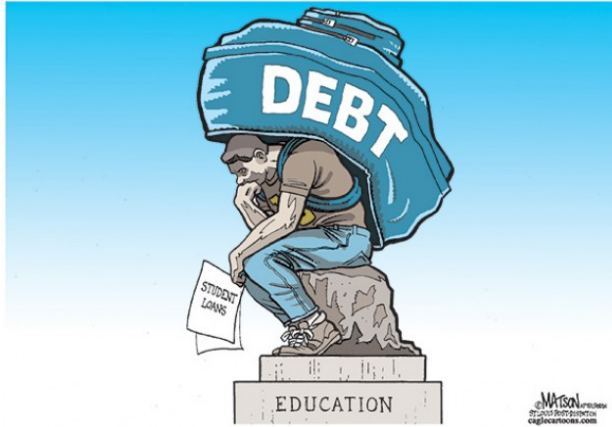
Introduction to Arguments: Look around carefully, and you will see arguments all around you. There is an argument in the way you dress, the way you talk, the clubs you join, the news you watch, etc. You may be dressing a certain way to get a message across... You may be speaking with a certain tone to protest a decision made....

Often times, we even see arguments in pictures, which we would call a visual argument. For example, take a look at this cartoon. What are some words that come to mind as you're trying to analyze this? What are some possible claims you think this cartoon is trying make?

For example, we might say: *The high cost of higher education puts a financial burden on students, and as a result creates less opportunities for them in the future.*

One would then continue to argue why and how there would be less opportunities for students, despite the knowledge they have gained.

This is just an example, and you may come up with other ones on your own.



### Video 2:

Welcome Back. Let's continue with our discussion on Arguments. You will see or hear various forms of arguments. You will see and hear very heated arguments during the presidential debates, for example. Let's take a look at this video:

(The first 3 minutes will be shown)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxKMCIanL8o>

What was this argument about? What do you think each side was trying to claim? Do any of them use evidence to support their argument? (Students submit response as an online activity)

### Video 3:

So far, we have talked about visual and verbal arguments, but the most common form of argument, which you will come across more in academia is written argument, in which a claim is made, and evidence is presented to support it. You will either be asked to read and analyze arguments critically, or you will be asked to write arguments yourself, which is one of the goals of our current course.

As a reminder, a claim is a sentence that would be contestable, it would declare something, and it would be supportable with evidence. We will be focusing in more detail on writing claims, but for now, we will just rely on this definition...

Think about Gleiser's "Globalization: Two Visions of the Future of Humanity". What is the article claiming? Do you think the claim is contestable? I'd like you to submit your response right after this video.

#### **Video 4:**

I'm sure you have argued many times throughout your life in different ways. Often times, when we use the term *argument* students think of the traditional sense of argument, *fighting*, *disagreeing*, or, *quarreling*. One thing to consider is that arguing isn't always about winning; sometimes, especially in academia, it would be about finding the truth, or finding a common ground.

Arguments basically have different purposes; they may inform, convince, explore, help make decisions, etc.

For example, an argument may be aiming to explore certain problems in the society, and proposes a solution for the reader. Let's take a look at this passage written by Gleiser:

"One of the most obvious and terrifying responses to tendencies of cultural merging is the upsurge of fundamentalism. If values and traditions that have defined how you and many generations of your ancestors have lived become threatened by "outside" forces, you have two choices: You either open up and absorb them to a lesser or greater extent, or you entrench and fight back. Humans have evolved in tribes and are still tribal. Beyond our families and blood relations, many of our social and cultural relations are vested in allegiance to certain groups, from the Red Sox or the New York Yankees to being an American or Mexican to being White or Hispanic to being an Episcopalian or a Muslim. We pledge allegiance to this or that flag, and many are ready to die defending it" (Gleiser 9).

What do you think is the main argument in this piece? Summarize it in a sentence or two, and submit your response after this video as an online activity.

#### **Video 5:**

People use arguments to persuade others. The art of persuasion and which strategies to use is something we will cover more in our future modules, but I'd like to briefly touch on it here by looking at an example:

Let's see how Gleiser uses persuasion to make citizens of the world change their positions.

"The challenge is to reinvent our tribal make-up. Can we live without our flags? Unless we find ways to respect and celebrate our differences while jointly creating an atmosphere of open

exchange and mutual understanding, I fear that the utopian world of the future will have a very dystopian bend to it” (Gleiser 9).

What is the author’s position in this paragraph? Write 1-2 sentences explaining the author’s purpose and position, and submit your response after this video as an online activity.

**List of References:**

Behrens, Laurence, Leonard Rosen, and Bonnie Beedles. *A Sequence for Academic Writing*. Longman, 2002.

Lunsford, Andrea, John Ruskiewicz, and Keith Walters. *Everything’s an Argument with Readings*. Bedford St. Martin’s, 2007.

Schick, Kurt, and Laura Schubert. *So What? The Writer’s Argument*. Oxford U Press, 2014.

Turabian, Kate. *Student’s Guide to Writing College Papers*. University of Chicago Press, 2010.