ENGL 102: English Composition II

Definition Essay Proposal

Due 2/26/18

Reading

“Arguments of Definition” (chapter handout from class and available on D2L/Brightspace)

Overview of Essay #2

For your second essay, you must craft an argument of definition about a contested term of your choice. A contested term is a word or phrase that people disagree about in some way. They may disagree about how the word should be defined, such as with the word “marriage” (should it include same-sex or polygamous unions?), or the word “life” (when does it begin?). Or it could be a term that people disagree about whether it should be used in a certain way, such as the word “gay” being used as a generalized insult. Or it could be a term that some people believe should be wiped out from use, such as the word “retarded” or the confederate flag. Other contested terms include "illegal alien," "enhanced interrogation," "alternative facts," "feminist," "net neutrality," "jock," "equality," "American dream," and "terrorist," etc. In your essay, you should make an argument about your chosen contested term that either defends the way the term has come to be defined or raises questions about its appropriateness, offensiveness, inaccuracy, and so on. Make a strong call to action in your thesis statement.

Proposal for Essay #2: Answer the Following Questions for Analysis (due 2/26/18)

1. What contested term have you chosen?
2. Why or how is this term contested?
3. Give at least two possible definitions of the term.
4. Craft a preliminary/tentative thesis statement that makes a strong claim about the contested term. Your thesis should include a central claim and a reason (“because” clause).