Assignment: Write an essay on a recent controversial issue. Learn more about the issue and take a position on it. Present the issue to readers and develop an argument for the purpose of confirming, challenging, or changing your readers’ views on the issue. Use a least four academic sources to support your stance.

When writing your essay, be sure to support your claims with reasons and evidence drawn from your research. Citing, understanding, and refuting a counterargument are absolutely essential for an effective position paper. Also, be sure to structure your essay to include an interesting introduction, a clear, effective thesis statement that states your position on the topic and forecasts the rest of your paper, well-developed body paragraphs that include arguments for your position and refutations of opposing views, and a conclusion.

If you need help getting started, reference Ch. 10 of the Field Guide.

Format: Typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 12 point type. MLA headings and margins. You will need a title, but not a title page. For questions on MLA format, reference Chapter 50 in your textbook. For specifics on the essay format, see page 524.

Parenthetical citations and a Works Cited page are necessary.

Grading Criteria:

1. Ideas/Content: sufficiently developed introduction; clear statement of position (thesis); clear presentation of evidence that supports your position; appropriate detail; sufficiently developed conclusion in which you tie all of these elements together
2. Organization: clear connection between each paragraph and your thesis; logical order within and between paragraphs; clear transitions
3. Style: formal, but not stilted; avoid slang and contractions; sentence variation should be used to express degrees of importance and relationships between sentences
4. Grammar: standard conventional English; avoid sentence fragments, fused sentences, and comma splices; use correct subject/verb and pronoun/antecedent agreement
5. Mechanics: correct use of punctuation, including use of sentence boundaries and commas; double space with appropriate margins; MLA format

Length: 4-6 pages. No more, no less. MLA format only. Academic Audience

Topic approval is necessary. Make sure you obtain my approval for your individual argument before you begin this essay. Topics that will not be accepted because of scope include religious-based arguments, abortion, euthanasia, death penalty, drug legalization, and lowering the drinking age. Don’t ask.