INAF 6209 Tech&Tactics | Wichowski

Fall 2020

Assignment #2

**Op-Ed**

In no more than 800 words, write an op-ed on any topic related to this course. Your goal should be to publish this piece before the semester ends.

TIPS

1. **Write what you know**. Draw on your expertise and experience.
2. **Know your point**. Figure out your goal: to raise awareness? For readers to take action? Focus on one objective in your op-ed and make sure readers know what it is
3. **Use plain language**. Assume smart readers who have little to no background knowledge of your topic. Op-eds are short – your writing should be too. Use tough, terse prose.
4. **Use a topical hook**. Pick something recent in the news or an upcoming anniversary of a major event to peg your piece.
5. **Research your topic**. Even if you’re the expert or are drawing on personal experience, fresh research findings and statistics can strengthen your argument.
6. **Cover one issue in three points**: Focus on one issue in your op-ed and have one clear objective. Develop your issue in standard essay format, with an introduction, three key points and a powerful conclusion. Keep your piece concise and organized.
7. **Count the words**. 800 or less
8. **Use an active voice**: e.g. “I believe that” vs “It is believed to be that”)
9. **Write a catchy headline and first sentence**: you only have a few seconds to draw your reader into your article, so make sure you grab their attention with a strong headline and a powerful first sentence.
10. **Finish strong**. Summarize your argument in a strong final paragraph with a memorable last sentence.

Sources:

* <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/14/opinion/op-ed-and-you.html?pagewanted=all&pagewanted=print>
* <http://www.theopedproject.org/cms/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=79>
* <http://newsoffice.duke.edu/duke_resources/oped>
* <http://view2.fdu.edu/university-offices/communications/public-relations-media-relations/write-an-op-ed-piece/>
* <http://newsroom.depaul.edu/facultyresources/OPEDTips/index.html>