

# RHETORIC

# Rogierian Argument

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	<b>Traditional Argument</b>	<b>Rogierian Argument</b>
<b>Basic Strategy</b>	Writer states the claim and gives reasons to prove it. Writer refutes the opponent by showing what is wrong or invalid.	Writer states the opponent's claim and points out what is sound about the reasons used to prove it.
<b>Ethos</b>	Writer builds own character ( <i>ethos</i> ) by citing past experience and expertise.	Writer builds opponent's character, perhaps at the expense of his or her own.
<b>Logos</b>	Writer uses logic (all the proofs) as tools for presenting a case and refuting the opponent's case.	Writer proceeds in an explanatory fashion to analyze the conditions under which the position of either side is valid.
<b>Pathos</b>	Writer uses emotional language to strengthen the claim.	Writer uses descriptive, dispassionate language to cool emotions on both sides.
<b>Goal</b>	Writer tries to change opponent's mind and thereby win the argument.	Writer creates cooperation, the possibility that both sides might change, and a mutually advantageous outcome.
<b>Use of Argumentative Techniques</b>	Writer draws on the conventional structures and techniques taught in argument papers.	Writer throws out conventional structures and techniques because they may be threatening. Writer focuses, instead, on connecting empathetically.

### **Questions to Consider Before Drafting:**

1. Who is my intended audience? Is it the person I am directly writing to or some imagined third party?
2. What do I know about my intended audience?
3. What do my readers know about the subject at hand?
4. Why do they believe what they do? Why do they think and feel that my position is wrong?
5. Might they be right?
6. What points of commonality do we share? How can I more fully understand what it is like to live in their world? How can I see and experience the “truth” as they do?
7. How is this issue bigger than all of us? Why do I care? Do I care more about being “right” or about fixing the problem?

### **With a Rogerian argument, the writer proceeds in phases rather than following set organizational patterns or argumentative strategies. These phases are as follows:**

1. The writer introduces the issue and shows that the opponent’s position is understood by restating it.
2. The writer shows in which contexts and under what conditions the opponent’s position may be valid. Note that the opponent is never made to feel completely wrong.
3. The writer then states his or her own position, including the contexts in which it is valid.
4. The writer states how the opponent’s position would benefit if the opponent were to adopt elements of the writer’s position. An attempt is finally made to show that the two positions complement each other and that each supplies what the other lacks.

### **Questions to Ask When Revising:**

1. Have I considered the moral qualities that both my opponent and I share?
2. Did I explain the opposing position and demonstrate understanding of and empathy for that point of view?
3. Did I consider how the other position might be right **and** explain that in my essay?
4. Did I write a clear transition from the opposing viewpoint to my own?
5. Did I clearly state my own position?
6. Did I show how and in what circumstances I might be right?
7. Did I reconcile the two positions, showing how they can work together? Have I called for a “higher interest?”
8. Have I, throughout, used value-neutral language? How can I make my language less emotionally charged?