



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF MOMBASA

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Communication Studies

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION FOR:
BACHELOR OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION
HMC 4406: EDITORIAL AND OPINION WRITING
END-OF-SEMESTER EXAMINATION
SERIES: DECEMBER 2024
TIME: 2 HOURS
DATE: DECEMBER 2024

FINAL PROJECT

Assignment Description

Nearly all news publications have an “Op/Ed” section. Short for “opinion editorial,” an op-ed is a concise essay that offers a writer’s unique viewpoint on a timely event or issue. While similar to an editorial in that it expresses an opinion, the essential distinction between an editorial and an op-ed is that op-eds are typically written by contributors unaffiliated with the publication. In this way, op-eds allow writers to reach a broader audience of stakeholders and potentially persuade them to change their minds or take action regarding an important issue.

The Task (60 Marks)

You will write a 3-4 pages (750-1000 words) opinion editorial that addresses a social, political, economic, or cultural issue that impacts you, your family, or your community. Within this essay, you must take a position on your chosen topic and support your claims using at least three sources, which may include:



- An interview with a friend, family member, or neighbour affected by this issue
- A website (including social media posts, YouTube videos, and other forms of multimedia)
- A magazine article
- A newspaper article
- A scholarly source

To fulfil this assignment, you will need to select a print or digital publication to pitch your op-ed. Be sure to read other op-eds from the publication to understand the format, style, and audience that you will work with. Along with your final draft, you will submit a 1-2 page Reflection in which you address several questions about your experience writing this essay, including (but not limited to):

- What publication are you pitching to and why? Who is your specific audience?
- What rhetorical situation are you addressing in this op-ed?
- What rhetorical strategies (style, tone, etc) did you employ given the genre and rhetorical situation?

Throughout the writing process, you will engage in a series of short assignments designed to help you think through these rhetorical strategies before you submit your final draft.

a) TOPIC REFLECTION (250-500 words)

- Write a brief description of a social, political, economic or cultural issue that interests you-What is the issue? How has it affected you personally, your loved ones, or your community? What are the implications of this problem on a local, national or global scale?

(20Marks)

b) RHETORICAL ANALYSIS (250-500 words)

- Identify a print or digital publication to pitch your essay. Then, select an op-ed from the publication and complete a brief rhetorical analysis on it. Your response should address several questions including (but not limited to):



- Rhetorical Situation: What problem or issue is the author responding to? How to do you know?
- Author: Who is the author of this op-ed? Is s/he credible? Why or why not?
- Audience: Who is the targeted audience for this piece? How do you know? What assumptions does the author make about this audience?
- Purpose: What purpose do you believe the author had in mind when s/he created the text? What rhetorical strategies (logos, pathos, ethos) does s/he use to do achieve this purpose? How so?
- Stance: What is the author's stance toward his subject? How do you know? Does the author offer sound reasons for adopting that stance?
(20Marks)

Submission Milestones/Timeline

Nov. 5	Review Essay Question: Opinion Editorial Assignment
Nov. 12	Post Topic Reflection
Nov. 19	Post Rhetorical Analysis
Nov. 26	Post First Draft
Dec 3	Peer Review
Dec 10	Final Editing/ Corrections
Dec 20	Post Final Draft + Reflection submission

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

i) Organization – 20%



- Does your editorial have a coherent structure? Are your ideas united and logically organized in a way that leads to a thought-provoking conclusion?
- Does your editorial adopt the rhetorical conventions (i.e. format, style, etc.) of your chosen publication?

ii) Content – 40%

- Does your editorial include an engaging lead which makes the reader want to continue reading?
- Does your editorial have a clearly stated opinion toward the beginning of the article which continues throughout?
- Does your editorial employ appropriate rhetorical devices to appeal to your target audience?
- Ethos or the ethical appeal, means to convince an audience of the author's credibility or character.
- Pathos or emotional appeal, means to persuade an audience by appealing to their emotions.
- Logos or the appeal to logic, means to convince an audience by use of logic or reason.
- Does your editorial contain sufficient background information that clearly establishes the rhetorical situation you wish to address?

iii) Development – 25%

- Are your main points well supported with sufficient (but not excessive) use of evidence?
- Does your editorial include at least 3 different reputable sources?

iv) Style – 10%

- Are the sentences well-worded and well-constructed? Should some sentences be combined for clarity? Should others be broken into two or more sentences, so ideas receive proper emphasis?
- Do you implement a combination of quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing?



v) Grammar - 5%

- Have you proofread your work for grammar and mechanical errors?

