

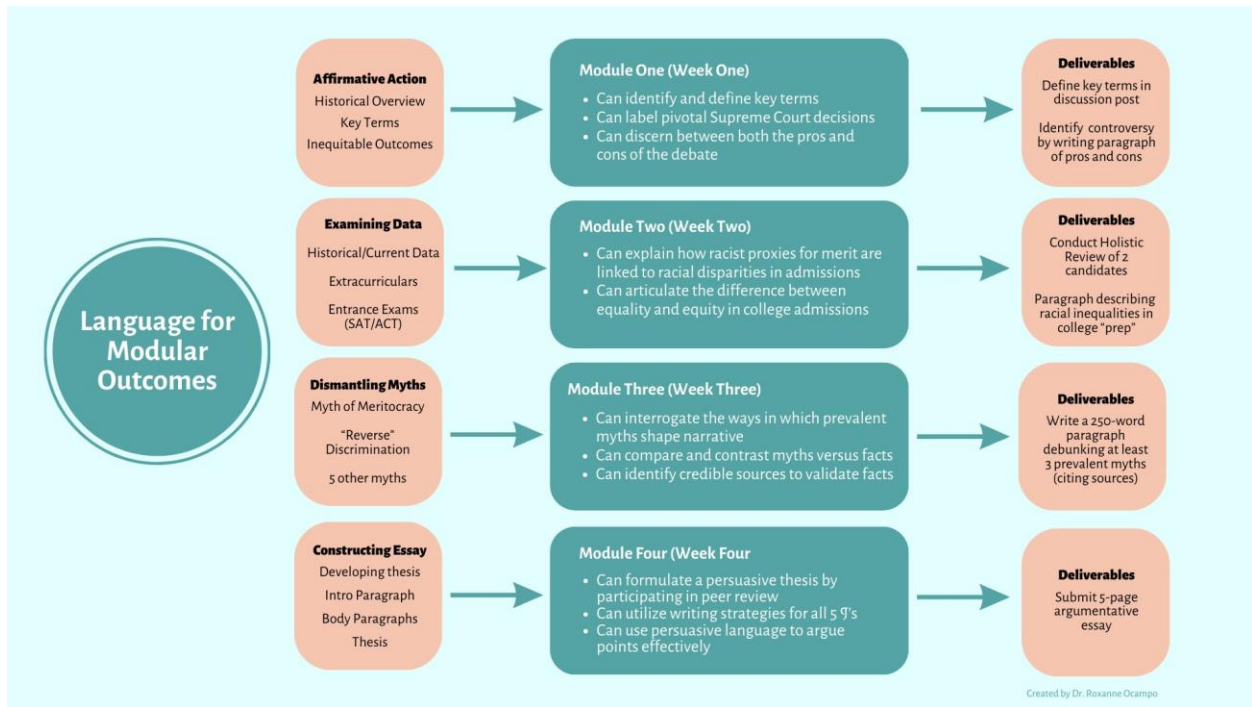
Instructor Guide

Argumentative Essay (first year composition course): *Affirmative Action*

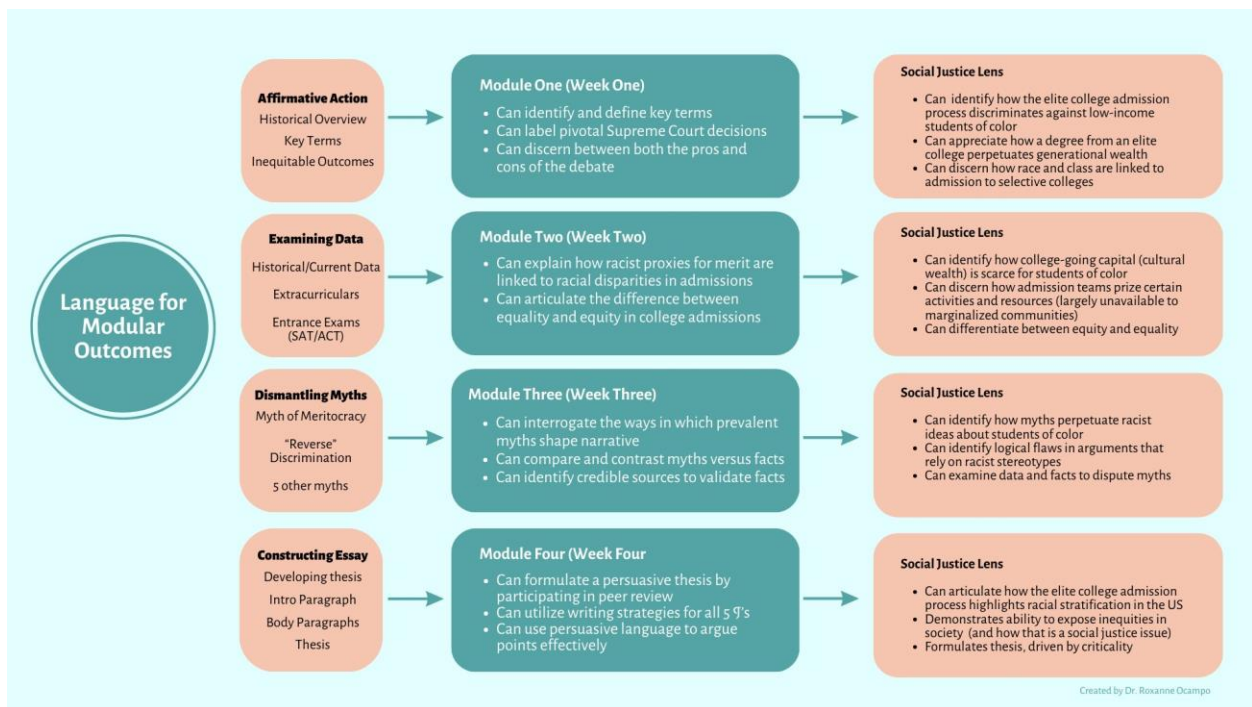
Target Audience	First year English composition, community college
Course Title & Description	English 115: First year college composition (at a California community college). Provides instruction and practice in reading and writing expository, analytical, and argumentative essays. Emphasizes textual analysis, writing analytically, logical reasoning, research techniques, information literacy, and documentation. Includes drafting, revising, and editing written work
Course Topics for this section	Throughout the semester, students will engage in five (5) modules covering the School-to-Prison Pipeline, Environmental Racism, Affirmative Action , Free Speech, and a research paper addressing whether DACA holders should have a pathway to citizenship.
Length of Time	Four weeks
Relevance to Social Justice	Higher education is one of the great drivers of social mobility in America. Thereby, access to a selective university is significant in terms of generational wealth, social status, access to professional jobs, networking opportunities, quality of neighborhood and schools for offspring, and overall quality of life. However, historical racial inequities exist between those with access to selective colleges (white) communities and those communities historically underrepresented in higher education (brown and black). The recent dismantling of Affirmative Action by the US Supreme Court is aligned with a social justice writing assignment because the module helps students examine how current and historical admission inequities continue to negatively impact brown and black communities.
Student Learning Outcomes	<p>This module allows students to critically examine current and historical inequities in higher education. Framed with a social justice perspective, students will investigate, assess, evaluate, and ultimately, articulate in writing whether the recent Supreme Court decision was warranted and just or unfair, inequitable, and discriminatory.</p> <p>Students will develop a greater understanding of the history of Affirmative Action, be able to define key terms, identify which groups have benefited from the program, and identify the ways in which dismantling this program will impact historically underrepresented students.</p> <p>Using the writing prompt, “<i>Is Affirmative Action Beneficial or Detrimental to Society</i>”, students will (a) utilize core components of a 5-paragraph argumentative essay; (b) curate credible and compelling articles as evidence for their papers; (c) develop and advance critical thinking skills by crafting strong concessions and</p>

	rebuttals in body paragraphs – enabling them to examine both sides of the controversy; and (d) develop and enhance rhetorical strategies to present an effective and persuasive argumentative essay.
Instructor Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See “Citational Justice” for a list of essential books and articles • Supreme Court Cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College – Students for Fair Admissions, Inc., v University of North Carolina –Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin –Grutter v Bollinger –Regents of the University of California v. Bakke • Glossary of Terms (below)
Teaching Notes	<p>Students will explore and write about the concept of Affirmative Action, scaffolded over four weeks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, an overview to gain an historical understanding of the goals of this policy, identification of key terms, and analysis of how Affirmative Action has impacted society. • Secondly, students will gather and examine information about the college admission process including the holistic review. They’ll examine admission policies, practices, and data. They will identify and review articles (both pro and con) to determine whether this policy is beneficial or detrimental to society. • Third, students will measure pro and con arguments and develop a working thesis statement based on the prompt: <i>Are race-based affirmative action policies necessary and equitable or detrimental in college admissions?</i>
Learning Products	Formal, 5-page argumentative essay
Assessment	Various discussion posts (low stakes), weekly assignments (drafts of each of the 5 paragraphs), and a detailed grading rubric.

Language for Modular Outcomes



Language for Social Justice Outcomes



Instructor Best Practices (*Social Justice Andragogy*)



- Instructor establishes firm protocols for respectful student behaviors
- Instructor provides glossary of key terms adopted for class
- Instructor considers inserting trigger warnings for pivotal moments
- Instructor strategically curates selected texts, tools, activities, assignments, and assessments with a social justice lens
- Instructor engages students by selecting culturally responsive materials
- Instructor centers the experiences of marginalized communities to explain concepts & theories
- Instructor incorporates black and brown scholarship and frameworks to situate the lesson
- Instructor unpacks cultural assumptions: Engages in explicit, direct teaching to dismantle myths, stereotypes, and deficit narratives as a starting point for discussions.
- Instructor incorporates Validation Theory, Funds of Knowledge, Cultural Wealth
- Instructor does not sugarcoat historical inequities and uses clear language to describe these events
- Instructor engages students in criticality in order to understand and promote anti-racism
- Instructor cultivates joy to counter student perceptions of powerlessness and hopelessness
- Instructor encourages praxis to empower student agency

Created by Dr. Roxanne Ocampo

Glossary of Terms

Affirmative Action

Important Concepts & Terms

Admission Team / Officer	Merit
Admissions Quota	Mismatch Theory
Discrimination	Race Conscious
Disproportionality	Race Neutral
Equity versus Equality	"Reverse Discrimination"
Historically Underrepresented	Selective University
Holistic Review	Socioeconomic Status
Legacy Applicant	Students of Color

**Affirmative Action Argumentative Essay
Grading Rubric**

**See Note for Instructors on Next Page*

<i>Are race-based affirmative action policies necessary and equitable or detrimental in college admissions?</i>		
<p>Introductory Paragraph</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Hook</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Definition of key term(s)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Description of controversy</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Preview of thesis factors</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Thesis Statement</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>10 points possible (2 points each component)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there evidence of a “hook” – language that compels the reader to continue reading. Examples are a question, quote, anecdotal reference (story), or statistic. • Did the writer include a comprehensive definition of a key term(s)? “Comprehensive” refers to 15 or more words from a source of authority (quoted). • Is the controversy of this topic explained? Does it describe both sides of the argument (pro and con)? • Did the writer preview each of the 3 thesis factors? Meaning, was there at least one sentence summarizing each factor prior to stating the formal thesis statement? • Does the intro paragraph include a thesis statement as the last sentence in the paragraph?
<p>Thesis Statement</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">One sentence</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Definitive & declarative language</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">States Position</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Includes 3 distinct factors</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Logical and accurate statement</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>20 points possible (4 points each component)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the thesis one-sentence long? A clear thesis should be concise and to the point. Consider Einstein’s famous saying, <i>“If you cannot explain it simply, you do not understand it well enough.”</i> • Definitive and Declarative Language – the language clearly indicates this is a statement (versus other content) • Thesis clearly states the position or “side” (pro or con) • Writer includes three factors to support the thesis statement. Each factor is distinct and clear (easy to understand). • Logical & Accurate Statement – Is the thesis factual, logical, accurate, and arguable? With this thesis, can the writer argue the position effectively and comprehensively? In other words, will credible research back up the writer’s position?
<p>Body Paragraphs</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Transition strategy</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>30 points possible (10 points each body paragraph)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a transition strategy for the topic sentence? Did the writer include language that clearly signifies to the reader they are now moving on to the next factor?

<p>Topic sentence aligned with thesis factor</p> <p>Concessions & rebuttals</p> <p>Minimum 2 citations (credible sources)</p> <p>Citations are in MLA format</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the writer use language specifically aligned with the respective thesis factor? • Did the writer provide a concession as well as rebutting the concession? • After making the assertion, did the writer provide at least two sources of evidence and cite them? • Are the writer’s parenthetical references in MLA format?
<p>Conclusion</p> <p>Uses summary phrase</p> <p>Restates the thesis</p> <p>Summarize main points</p> <p>Tell reader why the findings are significant</p> <p>1 page long</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>5 points possible (1 point each component)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the writer use language signifying essay is concluding? Uses effective closing language (avoids “In conclusion”) • Does the writer effectively re-state the thesis, avoiding a cut-and-paste (verbatim) from the introductory paragraph? • Does writer construct a comprehensive conclusion that is at least one page long? • Does writer explain to reader why and how elite college admissions is a social justice issue? Why should they care? • Does the writer provide enough comprehensive closing material to cover one full page?
<p>Syntax/Diction</p> <p>Run-on sentences</p> <p>Comma/splice</p> <p>Grammar</p> <p>Diction</p> <p>Punctuation</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>5 points possible (1 point each component)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the writer avoid run-on sentences? • Does the writer avoid the comma/splice? • Does the writer include proper grammar usage? • Does the writer use appropriate diction to explain or describe? • Does the writer use proper punctuation?
<p>Format</p> <p>Headers</p> <p>Point-by-point method</p> <p>Five (5) full pages</p> <p>Double spaced</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>25 points possible (see point distribution below)</p> <p>Does the writer include a header on the first page? (1 point)</p> <p>Does writer follow the 5-paragraph structure? (2 points)</p> <p>Does writer include content that meets a minimum of 5 pages? (20 points)</p> <p>Does the writer double-space throughout the document? (1 point)</p>

Header on first page	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the writer use a 12-point font (no larger than 12 pt) with 1” margins? (1 point)
Works Cited Page	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5 points possible (see point distribution below)
Minimum 6 sources	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the writer include a minimum of 6 sources (2 per each body ¶)? (3 points)
Credible sources	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the writer cite credible sources (from “Greenlighted” list)? (1 point)
MLA format	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the writer follow MLA format for works cited page? (1 point)

Note for Instructors

The essay is a unique tool to assess writing proficiency. Because there are many components in a well-crafted essay, a cumulative score may not highlight proficiency in critical areas (concealing excellence in one area due to deficiencies in another area). Therefore, aligned with the theories in Dr. Joe Feldman’s *Grading for Equity*, the above rubric was intentionally designed to be transparent and explicit. Essentially, this structured rubric “lifts the veil” so to speak, making it clear (section by section) to the student where s/he is proficient and where s/he is struggling. Furthermore, the point-by-point method eliminates an “all or nothing” schema whereby students can identify where they may be moving toward proficiency. Most importantly, in terms of consistency, this rubric is used for all essays throughout the semester. This transparent and consistent approach provides students with the ability to troubleshoot their own work and eliminate surprises or mysteries as to how to earn a top score. It also establishes trust with the instructor, as they rely upon a consistent, fair and transparent method of grading.

This type of rubric is especially useful for students who utilize tutoring services. The tutor can easily reference what the instructor is expecting for full points, and coach the student appropriately.

Citational Justice

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