Writing as Inquiry I (Sections: 04, 014, 017)
Assignment # 2: **Argumentative Synthesis Essay**
Length: **1400-1600 words**

Due Dates: Clean 1st draft (Due on April 8th before 11:00 am as a Word File to NYU Classes)
Revised 2nd draft (Due on April 13th before 11:00 am as a Word File to NYU Classes)
Final draft (Due on April 15th before MIDNIGHT as a Word File to NYU Classes)

Important Information: Please be advised that I will neither offer as much mandatory guidance nor exercise as much control over the development of your essay evolution as I did during the rhetorical analysis assignment. I would like to give you as much independence as possible because working independently should help you grow as a writer. Therefore, responsibly and wisely manage your project completion time: plan your essay in advance, commit to self-monitored deadlines, and apply some of the techniques and strategies you have recently learned-- such as active reading and planning strategies and outlines or reverse outlines-- to develop and complete this new assignment.

That said, anytime before April 8th and/ or during the planning, drafting, and revision stages, you are, however, welcome to consult with me one on one, during my office hours, with regards to your outlines, thesis statement, analysis/ synthesis, overall essay planning/ organization/ and structure, or any other issues. **

Value: 20 % of the course grade

Introduction:

This assignment, a common requirement in academia, asks you to write an argumentative synthesis essay from source readings. You will be given 4 readings on the topic of human genetic engineering. **Your task:** combine information and ideas from ONLY TWO source texts, from the assigned FOUR readings, with your own knowledge and reasoning to explain and support your own argumentative thesis.

> Your argumentative thesis must directly engage and answer the following prompt: "**After you carefully read, analyze, and assess the** TWO source readings of your choice, which author/ reading of these two do you believe presents the most convincing argument? Why do you think so? Remember, your focus must be primarily placed on content/ argument, and secondarily on style/ rhetorical strategies and appeals"

I expect you to use material and evidence from the TWO source texts of your choice to support your argumentative synthesis thesis, sometime summarizing relevant parts of the readings before you critique them. Remember, be selective in terms of what ideas from the source texts you will summarize and critique. Summarize and criticize the parts that are necessary, relevant, and needed to help you advance and support your own thesis.

Please, see the various **thesis templates I will provide and either use one of them or adapt one to help you focus your essay and concentrate your claim**. To organize your essay, **please see the handout (which I will provide later) on organizational plans: The handout offers a template for organizing your essay.**

Objectives: This assignment builds on the objectives of the second unit. And your final essay, must demonstrate the following:

- Present an arguable thesis statement that makes a claim about how one of the TWO chosen readings is more persuasive primarily in its content and argument than the other one.
- Your claim should selectively identify primarily elements of argument and secondarily elements of persuasion in the TWO readings of your choice to demonstrate how one of these two readings' arguments is more persuasive. Remember, your task is to **primarily** assess the content, and not the style, of these two readings. In the process, **you may reflect** on their stylistic effectiveness in one or two paragraphs, if there is space left, to argue something about how the style assists OR hinders the strength of the readings' arguments.

- So, yes, your essay will assess these two readings in terms of the arguments they present. Your thesis statement should help you determine what organizational and essay structure to follow.
- Your essay should accurately summarize and/or paraphrase parts of the readings where relevant before it analyzes and critiques these parts to convincingly advance your own argument which you will house in your clear, focused, specific, and arguable thesis statement.
- To reiterate, you are expected to carefully use relevant information and materials from the two readings to support the argument of your thesis. Your own thesis is what guides and controls the essay.
- Systematically develop your thesis and its sub-claims. To strengthen your sub-claims, consider acknowledging or conceding with opposite point of views and engage them if their positions merit this acknowledgment: partially agree with an opposite point of view before you move on to challenge it in a way that will help you advance your position,
- When you consider opposing views and engage with them where needed, you can furthermore do that through conceding (agreeing), refuting (challenging and counter-arguing), and/or accommodating (using them to back up your claim).
- So, yes, remember to give credit where needed and properly document the source texts you use.
- In your body paragraphs, make clear claims and sub-claims, use sufficient evidence from the source readings, explain and analyze that evidence and tie it back to your claim before you transition to the next paragraph.
- Ensure flow within and between paragraphs.
- Produce a clear and clean essay.
- Effectively incorporate direct quotes.
- Document your sources and avoid plagiarism.

This assignment can be challenging if you do not have a plan. In order to produce this argumentative synthesis essay, you are advised to follow a clear writing process. Divide writing this essay into 3 stages: pre-drafting, drafting, and the revision stage. Remember to follow and complete all mini-assignments and carefully consider any handouts and templates I will or have already shared with you. Remember, everything you produce to complete this essay, you must eventually include in your end-of-course portfolio.

The Assigned Readings: use ONLY **TWO** of the following four source readings. Here are the assigned readings:

1- "Enhancement, Evolution, and the Possible Futures of Humanity" by Sarah Chen (pp. 185-91),
2- "On Designing Babies: Genetic Enhancement of Human Embryos Is Not a Practice for Civil Societies" (pp. 192-93) by Sheldon Krimsky,
3- "A Moderate Approach to Enhancement" (pp. 193-97) by Michael Selgelid.
4- "The Future of Gene Editing: Ending Disease or Creating Super-soldiers or a Master Race? Why Rules Are Needed" by Brian Galvan. To download this 4th reading, follow the link impeded inside the course syllabus or go to resources. The previous three source readings are available under "Resources" on NYU Classes.

Grading: The grade you receive will reflect how successful your essay is at offering the following:

1- Proper and correct formatting,
2- Clear essay structure and effective organization,
3- Your arguable, focused, and specific thesis statement,
4- Strong paragraphs with clear and focused topic sentences that relate back to and advance your thesis statement,
5- Deeper analysis and synthesis,
6- Clear transitions within and between paragraphs,
7- Close reference to the analyzed pieces in order to support your claim,
8- Effective incorporation of direct quotes,
9- Strong flow and elimination of wordiness,
10- Avoiding plagiarism,

11- Clear conclusion that reiterates the paper's main claim(s) and invite further investigation, or draw attention to a bigger insight,
12- Formal and objective style,
13- Grammatical clarity and strong sentence structure,
14- Correct in-text and end-of-text citations,
15- Punctuality and timely submission.

Writing Process: Steps to Complete This Assignment and Produce Your Argumentative Synthesis Essay

Create a schedule for yourself and follow these eight Steps to produce your argumentative synthesis essay:

1- Analyze the assignment sheet,
2- Annotate and critique the readings,
3- Arrange the relevant information: use an outline to plan and determine your position
4- Formulate a thesis,
5- Follow an organizational plan,
6- Write your 1st draft,
7- Revise your draft,
8- Edit your draft,
9- Check in-text and end-of-text documentations.

*Remember, use ONLY **TWO** of the following source readings. Here are the assigned source texts:

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➢ **The Pre-Drafting Stage**: This stage can be understood to include 1- analyze the assignment sheet, 2- annotate and critique the 2 readings of your choice, 3- arrange the relevant information: use an outline to plan and determine your position, 4- formulate a thesis statement, and 5- design an organizational plan.

For example, if you choose "Enhancement, Evolution, and the Possible Futures of Humanity" by Sarah Chen (pp. 185-91), then read it and reread it before you answer the following questions. Write your answers in full sentences because you most likely will use or adapt and modify then use some of that text in your first draft. Here are the pre-drafting questions to help you understand, analyze, evaluate, and critique each of the two source texts of your choice:

- o *Identify and write down the thesis statement of that source reading*.

- o *Identify two of its author's sub-claims and write them down. Evaluate these sub-claims: Are they strong enough to help their author carry on with his or her article's main thesis? How/ why so? To help you answer this prompt in depth, consider the following questions*:

   - - What type of evidence—facts, statistics, reference to authorities, personal anecdotes, scenarios, case studies or cases, examples, comparisons, process analysis, clear arguments and counter arguments, observations, historical references, logical reasoning, diagrams and visuals, appeal to logic, appeal to emotion, appeal of character, appeal to need, appeal to value—does the sub-claim use? Is the evidence sufficient, suitable, reliable, up to date, and/or balanced, and is it therefore effective or ineffective in supporting that particular sub-claim? How so?

- o Does that sub-claim (in)directly engage with any opposing views through any or all of the following strategies: summarize or paraphrase the opposing views, agree with part of their position (concede), accommodate it, before it refutes it and proceeds to advance its own position? Can you identify places in the article where the author anticipates his readers' thoughts? If the author does not engage with any opposing views, should s/he engage any possible opposing views? Why so? Can you think of one or two relevant opposing views?

- o Does the sub-claim counter-argue opposing claims and is its counterargument logical, balanced, relevant, sufficient, and/or manageable?

After you are done applying the above prompts to the first sub-claim, apply them to the second, third, fourth, etc. sub-claims. Organize your answers in ways that would work for you and which will eventually allow you to complete the following question:

- o Based on your answers to all the above, is that particular sub-claim effective? How/ Why? Is each of the author's remaining sub-claims equally effective, less effective, or completely ineffective? How/ why? Write down your answers in full sentences.

When you are done applying these questions to the first article, use them to analyze the second article of your choice so you can eventually assess them fairly and evenly and evaluate which article's argument is more effective, where exactly, and in what ways. By the time you complete your analysis of both articles, you should be able to formulate your own argumentative synthesis thesis statement where you directly answer the following question: **Which author/ reading of the two do you believe presents the most convincing argument? Why do you think so? Also, stylistically speaking, which is the most

persuasive text? For the design of your thesis statements, see the following sample thesis statement templates:

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*Which author/ reading of the two do I believe presents the most convincing argument? Why do I think so? Also, stylistically speaking, which is the most persuasive text?

Thesis Statement Templates

a- While X and Y argue that human genetic enhancement is . . ., X offers a more persuasive argument through her use of . . ., . . ., and . . . .   X effectively argues . . . .

b- Although X and Z agree on . . ., Z advances a more convincing position because s/he uses effective . . ., clear . . ., casual . . ., and . . . .to argue that . . ..

c- X persuasively demonstrates how . . . . S/he however falls short from . . . because of . . . . Writer Z, on the other hand, is less effective when s/he . . . because of . . ., but s/he is more persuasive than X in proving . . . due to her/ his use of . . . and . . . .   I therefore argue that X is overall more persuasive than Z.

d- Authors X and Z take different positions on the issue of . . . . Unlike Z who fails to . . ., and . . . . X presents a convincing argument because s/he effectively employs . . ., . . ., and . . . to argue that . ... These argumentation techniques allow X to . . ., something Z cannot achieve or . . . .

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5- *Follow an Organizational Plan:* You can use the following organizational plan to structure your argumentative synthesis essay:

I-   Argumentative Synthesis—***Mixed Format***

In this mixed model, suppose that you are using the following thesis template: "Although X and Z agree on . . ., Z advances a more convincing position because s/he uses effective . . ., clear . . ., casual . . ., and . . . .to argue that . . .." To structure your essay, start with your introductory section. Then follow with each of your sub-claims: some of these sub-claims can cover a point in both source texts, while others concentrate on a single text at a time. Conclude the essay when you satisfy discussing each point. Offer a Works Cited page.

You can use this proposed essay structure:

Title of Your Essay

Introductory paragraph/ section:
-Capture your readers' interest and attention
-Introduce the topic/ debate (feel free to briefly allude to authors other than the ones you will be closely examining in the rest of your essay and you can use these other authors as a springboard to smoothly introduce the texts or their authors' positions/ arguments which you will closely examine and assess)
-Briefly introduce the 2 authors whom you will thoroughly engage in the rest of the essay (avoid any unnecessary repetitions)

-Smoothly lead up to and give your thesis statement

Offer your first sub-claim: "X and Z agree on …."
-Provide some contextual information (as needed) and explain your observation/ point,
- Use convincing evidence from the 2 source texts
- Explain that evidence where needed
-Smoothly transition to the next point.

Offer your second sub-claim: "X asserts that/ demonstrates how. . ., but s/he fails to . . . because . . . , and …."
-Explain or elaborate on your point
- Use convincing evidence from the source text
-Explain that evidence where needed
-Smoothly transition to the next point.

*If needed, continue your discussion of X in another paragraph or two. Just remember to follow this paragraph development pattern: offer your arguable sub-claim or point, elaborate on it, then use relevant evidence, next explain the evidence and tie it back to your sub-claim to prove it, and finally transition to the next paragraph.

Offer your next point/ section on how "Z advances a more convincing position because s/he uses effective . . ., clear . . ., casual . . ., and . . . .to argue that . . .."

- Explain or elaborate on your point
-Use convincing evidence from the source text
-Explain that evidence where needed and tie it back to your sub-claim to prove it
-Smoothly transition to the next point.

**Continue your discussion of Z in another paragraph or two or more as needed. Just remember to follow this paragraph development pattern: offer your arguable sub-claim or point, elaborate on it, then use relevant evidence, next explain the evidence and link it to your sub-claim, and finally transition to the next paragraph.

Conclusion:

-In your conclusion, recapture the main claim of the essay,
-Draw attention to something the authors did not address or to a blind spot in the broader debate over human genetic engineering and maybe offer a recommendation,
-Leave the readers with an insight to consider or a question to think about.

Works Cited Page:
-Document your sources alphabetically

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Next, produce the 1st draft of your essay.