

FACT, VALUE, AND POLICY CLAIMS

A **fact claim** is a statement about how things were in the past, how they are in the present, or how they will be in the future. A fact claim is not a fact; it only claims to be a fact. What makes it arguable is that the speaker has no direct way of establishing the truth of the claim. For example, "The Earth is round" is a fact claim. "In our right-handed world, left-handed people are discriminated against" is a fact claim. A persuasive speaker must provide arguments which build a case in favor of the claim, showing that the claim is probably true.

Value claims are arguable statements concerning the relative merits of something which is measured subjectively (e.g., "Hawaii is a better place to go for summer vacation than Colorado."). What makes a value claim arguable is that different people may disagree on the *criteria* used to evaluate something (e.g., weather, live entertainment, water sports). Defending a value claim involves offering a set of criteria for consideration, defending the set of criteria as legitimate and showing how applying the criteria justifies the claim. Often value claims are comparative.

A **policy claim** is a statement regarding the merits of a course of action. What makes it arguable is that, even though people may not be totally certain about the proper course of action to take, they still must act. To argue in defense of a policy claim is to state that, given what we know now, it's best to act in the manner proposed.

Samples:

Fact claim (causality): The death penalty does not deter crime.

Value claim: Capital punishment is unjust.

Policy claim: The death penalty should be abolished in Illinois.

Fact claim (existence): Heartland relies less on state taxpayer funding than ISU.

Value claim: Heartland is a better school than ISU.

Policy claim: Students in Heartland's district should do their first two years there before transferring to a two year school.

Examine each statement to determine whether it is an appropriate working thesis for a question of FACT, VALUE, POLICY, or none.

- A **fact claim** is an argumentative thesis which makes a quantifiable assertion; in other words, it is an argument (claim) about a measurable topic (fact).
 - A **value claim** is an argumentative thesis which makes a qualifiable assertion; in other words, it is an argument (claim) about a moral, aesthetic, or philosophical topic (value).
 - A **policy claim** is an argumentative thesis which makes an assertion about a course of action the reader should take; in other words, it is an argument (claim) about an actionable topic (policy).
1. President Roosevelt knew in advance about the Japanese plan to attack Pearl Harbor and allowed it to happen.
 2. If Roosevelt knew in advance about the Japanese plan to attack Pearl Harbor, he was wrong in allowing it to happen.
 3. Using lie detector tests as screening devices for jobs in private business is a violation of the employee's right to privacy.
 4. The use of lie detector tests for screening employees in private business should be banned by law.
 5. A federal law should be passed requiring that trunk safety releases be standard on all new cars sold in the United States.
 6. If trunk safety releases were standard equipment on all cars, we could save several hundred lives in the US every year.
 7. Colorizing classic movies such as *Casablanca* violates the artistic integrity of such movies.
 8. Congress should protect the artistic integrity of movies like *Casablanca* by prohibiting the colorization of classic films.

SIX ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR ARGUMENTS AND PERSUASIVE SPEECHES

1. Statement of Reasons

This structure is a version of the categorical pattern listed in chapter 5 of your text. It is best used with audiences who you believe would already be in favor of your claim (positive) or who are un-invested in or uneducated about your topic (neutral). It should only be used with fact or value claims. This speech introduces your claim and then offers evidence to show how you have benefited from believing your claim that you believe will impact our understanding and invite us to believe what you believe, too.

- P Intro provides standard parts with purpose statement providing main claim and preview outlining each of the reasons you believe your claim and that you think will impact us.
- P Body has several points that represent your reasons for making your claim. You should provide support for each of your reasons.
- P Conclusion summarizes the main argument and invites the audience to take action.
- P Be sure to use transitions to explain why your reasons support your main claim. This “reasoning” is very important.

2. Speech of Refutation

This style of speech is particularly suited when your audience is against your opinion but not hostile. You can use this pattern with any type of claim. In it, you identify the major reasons why your audience believes what they do and then invite them to consider alternative information (evidence) and form an alternative view.

- P Intro provides standard parts with purpose statement providing main claim. Preview emphasizes the partial nature of different perspectives and suggests consideration of alternative ideas.
- P Body shows how what others believe and how it is only part of the picture or may even be inaccurate.
- P Conclusion summarizes the whole picture and reframing the options and inviting reconsideration of the audience’s point of view in light of the new information provided.

3. Classical Argument Structure

This style is primarily an academic structure and is often used with all types of audiences and claims, but is particularly beneficial for mixed (some positive, some negative) or unknown audiences because it demonstrates “objectivity.” This speech is a mix of the previous two.

- P Intro provides standard parts with purpose statement providing main claim.
- P Body has two sections
 - A - Section one supports the main claim of the speech with reasons why you believe the way you do. This section is similar to the statement of reasons pattern above.
 - B - Section two addresses the audience’s concerns about changing their point of view and offers a reframing of it for them.
- P Conclusion summarizes the main points of the argument, including reasons why you believe what you do, how the audience may benefit from changing their point of view, and an invitation to participate in a meaningful action that supports your claim.

4. Delayed Thesis Structure (Rogerian Argument)

This style is often difficult to accomplish. It requires strong organizational skills and excellent understanding of your audience. This structure is effective for hostile or close-minded audiences and can be used with any type of claim. It is not designed to convince the audience but to invite them to reconsider if their beliefs or actions are really congruent with their values—or if there is a perspective or way of seeing the problem that could meet their (or everyone's) needs better. The focus on this speech is identifying and capitalizing upon the values of your audience.

- P Intro may have limited information and focus on speaker's credibility by creating trust and showing that speaker understands the audience. The preview of points focuses on values the audience holds dear .
- P The body demonstrates how the audience holds certain values or needs as very important. Each point focuses on a separate value and/or need and provides insight into how and why it's important to them.
- P The conclusion summarizes all the values and needs that the audience supports and then offers a suggested solution to meet those values. The conclusion briefly shows how that solution could work and invites audience to explore more.

5. Monroe Motivated Sequence

This structure is used for audiences favorable to your topic but in need of motivation to act. It should only be used with policy claims and positive, neutral, or disengaged audiences. This structure is listed in your text as Motivated Sequence and has five points to it. It's important to give these points *in order*:

- P Attention: Gain the audiences attention about a need or problem
- P Need: Describe the need or problem, offering negative effects or consequences of it.
- P Satisfaction: Provide solutions to fill the need or solve the problem
- P Visualization: Describe how the world (community or whatever) would be if the recommended solution was in place. This is the key element of this pattern because when we see the vision of what could be, we want to act to make it so.
- P Action: Provide easy action for the audience based on your recommendation and invite them to do it.

6. Exemplum (Narrative)

The exemplum pattern is a type of narrative that has five parts (no intro/body/conclusion). It is designed to capitalize on pathos and requires the speaker to be able to tell a good story that draws the listener in and transports them into the lives of someone who has been affected by the issue. This is a great pattern for sermons. It's also very effective for students who feel constrained by traditional arguments and like to be creative. The moral of the story or the lesson is what makes this pattern persuasive. Each part of the speech basically tells us the same thing in a different way.

1. Quote: Tell us quotation that illustrates the value, theme, moral or lesson you want us to understand.
2. Source: Identify the source of the quote and talk about them in enough detail to satisfy our understanding of how this quote became known.
3. Paraphrase: Put the quote into your own words and help us understand the theme of the quote and how or why it is relevant to you and us.
4. Narrative: Tell a story that illustrates the value, lesson, or moral you want us to understand and is the theme of your quote. Use dialog, description, repetition, alliteration, metaphor, and other literary elements as well as dynamic and lively nonverbal elements to draw us into the story and have us experience it. That is, telling us the dog barked is less effective than actually barking. (Hint: an issue students often have is they try to cover too much time in their stories. It can be more effective to pick a very important moment and delve into it.) This is often the where the bulk of time is used.
5. Lesson: Invite us to understand the moral and consider how we want to be or act. What important life lesson are you offering us vicariously so that we can learn through your experience?

CALL TO ACTION



The call to action in a speech is inviting your audience to avail themselves of an opportunity you provide for them to join you in participating in an action related to your topic or issue that both you and they believe will help create meaningful and effective change.

A good call to action is:

1. Immediate
You ask the audience to do the action as soon as possible after your speech.
2. Specific
You tell the audience exactly what you want them to do. You give details and info they need.
3. Meaningful
Ask us to do an action that will have impact. Your call to action should be worthwhile.
4. Easy for the Audience
The more work you do and the less work the audience has to do, the more likely your call to action will be completed.
5. Researched
A good call to action takes time and investment on your part, including researching possible actions that the audience can take. Researching laws, procedures, organizations, etc., to find different possible actions, being creative, and putting in time and effort are things that will increase your credibility and the meaningfulness of your call to action. Your audience wants to know that what they do is likely to be effective and you make the case for that by picking options that best fit your audience, occasion, and purpose and explaining them effectively.