

## Class Notes and Homework

English 105i, Day #5:

\*Writing is hard work. A clear sentence is no accident. Very few sentences come out right the first time, or even the third time. Remember this in moments of despair. If you find that writing is hard, it's because it is hard.

— William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*:

1. Attendance: Check-in App.
2. Can you see/read my comments in Canvas?
3. How was Sunday Tutorial # 1
  - a. Topic: Website construction: Basic architecture
4. Midterm I Assistance: Monday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - a. I will be hosting a pizza night
    - i. 5:30PM
    - ii. Location: TBA
    - iii. Mentors will be there
      - a. Quickest path to an "A"
5. Were my HW links on "fulcrum" and "causation" helpful?

Question of the day: Do I really understand the complexity of issues with my writing?

1. Please note:
  - a. Self-reflections were QUITE thin! Define what you did.
6. Incredible how almost all of you found b/t 227-232 comments
  - a. Weird statistical anomaly since papers were b/t 5-35 pages long.
  - b. Let's see what you missed once you got to the "A" grade.
7. Everyone finds one sentence from HW where they saw ZERO issues.
  - a. Paste it [here](#):
8. Discussion 1: Review New nomenclature
  - a. Thesis: Claim **THAT** X=Truth – where does it go in an argument?
  - b. Causation: Every sentence is an **if/then** statement where the writer demonstrates **HOW** the X variable causes the Y variable through a...
  - c. Fulcrum: – the science girding or tool for defining the Through/By **Ex.:** THROUGH the "transitive law of equality" an "x" can = a "y".
    - i. How is this structurally different from a thesis?

- d. **Intro concept:** This is your initial FULCRUM -- it defines the HOW and “where” of the causation b/t your first x/y variables (e.g.,  $X=Y$  **by/through** the transitive property of equalities or throwing = falling **through** gravitation influence). (You might need to reread that a few times...)
- e. **Epistemology:** Your epistemology, from “belief” and “supposition” to “verifiable empiricism” is the tool you use to “know”. In the pretest, everyone’s writing was driven epistemologically by some form of “belief.” Simply, **belief** is the HOW or tool you used for justifying the thesis claims because your writing was void of fulcra. E.g., “gun deaths are highly preventable through physician education of patients.” OK, HOW or through what fulcrum exactly?
- f. **Debate/Causal argument** –
- g. **Absolutes:** “is-ing” or “are-ing” –non-scientific – why are these typically seen in thesis claims and not intro concepts that use through/by?
- h. **Defined X/Y variables:** e.g., **Ear Score**
  - i. **Student Example:** “[I]n further exploring the biotechnology world, the country can continue to get closer to a happier and healthier future.”

2. **Discussion II:** Next new term: What does it mean to “**demonstrate**” (thesis) versus “**suggest**” (roadmap).

- i. **Discuss:** Lincoln’s study of Euclid: He wanted to “demonstrate” guilt/innocence.  
[http://www.bradleyhammer.com/105i/euclid\\_quote.pdf](http://www.bradleyhammer.com/105i/euclid_quote.pdf)

Let me proffer an example using simple math.

Put on board at beginning of class:

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

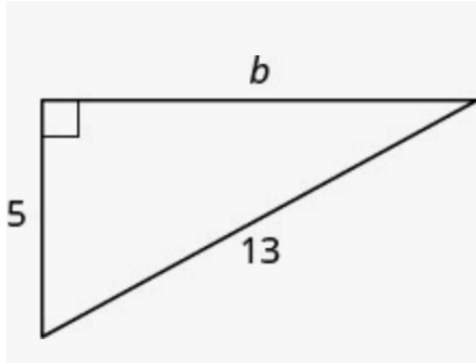
ii. **Question #1:** Is “**that**” the Pythagorean theorem? i.e., do you “**recognize** **or** **KNOW**” it...

iii. **Question #2:** Can I use **THAT** formula to solve for an unknown side of a RT triangle? Perchance you know **THAT** too...

iv. **Question #3:** **What would you** “**recognize**” as the correct formula to use for this problem?

$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$

**Why is this example below a “critical thought” problem:**



- v. So, **does this student actually KNOW anything?** If 'know' means to recognize then yes – s(he) recognizes what **existing tool** (i.e., the Pythagorean theorem) to use. And, if she sees similar problems in life, she is ready to "recognize" those too. This is essentially what you do when you cite in your papers – you say, "look – **so and so** (e.g., Gupta 2018) has the answer (e.g., MM is not dangerous) ergo, I don't really need to understand the science (i.e., the bio-pharmacology, chemistry, anatomy and physiology, etc.)." **But does the student really "know" (as to "understand" – what Lincoln termed "demonstrate") anything about HOW MM operates relative to human metabolism?**
- vi. **To understand at the university level, you must go from "recognition" of someone else's ideas (i.e., the memorized formulae  $a^2+b^2=c^2$ ) to defining and demonstrating the "HOW" of that thing.**
- a. This is why students often say, "The Prof didn't teach ANYTHING that was on the test..."
- vii. **Simple question, HOW or WHY does the Pythagorean theorem work? Can you demonstrate HOW/WHY  $B=12$  instead of 'THAT' it does?**

**Anyone? Anyone?**

**What does this demonstrate about HOW you KNOW math?**

- viii. Let's go through- **The Proof**. Start with an "intro concept" by asking, "what am I trying to understand" – e.g., **"the whole is the sum of its parts"**. This is "college level" work.
- ix. **Big Q #2:** How much more **"thinking," "knowing,"** and **"demonstrating"** is involved in college work?
- X. What was the intro concept: **The WHOLE = the sum of its parts...**

**Discussion II:** Below are the BIG issues —we'll see if we can get through all of them today.

1. **Undefined Variables/** Remember: ear scar: **Student Example:** "Marijuana use can lead as a gateway to hard-core drug use." The problem is not only the undefined "how much & what kind of marijuana use" and under what conditions it can "lead" but also, if you had done the actual reading, you'd know that marijuana is no longer classified (i.e., federally **defined** as "Schedule I"). Also, what is the science (i.e., the HOW) of the "gateway effect"? Please note that there is NO fulcrum defining the **HOW of "gateway" causation**.
2. Too many **variables** in one sentence that each proffer their own causation: Ex.: "The act of **gun violence** continues to **deteriorate society's confidence** in being safe in their communities and causing **America to spend money** that **could be used for other matters**." \*In college, ONLY 2 variables PER sentence — set up in a causal relation with a defined fulcrum.

3. **Initial elements** of the thesis did not **measurably** CAUSE **secondary elements**.

**Example I:** "From **the research present**, marijuana **appears to have benefits** that **greatly outweigh the drawbacks**, and it should therefore be an option available for doctors to prescribe their patients".

**Example II:** "**Firearms** are **associated** with **the three leading causes of death** in the United States each year (homicide, suicide, and unintentional injury). Also, **HOW and in what proportions?**"

And/or

4. "**Chronologies** don't = causation!"

**Student Example I:** "With gene editing technology **at a very immature experimental stage**, there exist countless **unknowns** in the field."

**Student Example II:** "**If** you smoke weed **then** you're less likely to have a high standard of reading comprehension and **without this** somewhat elementary tool, that cannot be regained, a user's grades **will** plummet."

5. The BS segue as assertion of "importance": e.g., "Before delving into the research, it is important to understand marijuana and its classification." Ugm.. **WHY exactly?**

6. Faulty causation is NOT the same as UNTRUE. This student's statement is faulty causation but very likely true per my Lit Review: "THC is the primary chemical responsible for addiction rates and by producing strains with higher contents of CBD and lower contents of THC, addiction rates can be decreased, and medical effectiveness can be increased." **Why are there also 10 examples of plagiarism here?**

7. A whole lotta **hyperbole** and **absolutist rhetoric** — **Why are BOTH examples below PLAGIARISM?**

"There is no denying that both **public and professional opinions** on marijuana have begun to shift in the drug's favor in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, **especially when** its potential as a **legitimate medication** is considered."

"Although it is obvious that marijuana is not deserving of its schedule 1 classification, it will most likely remain a topic of much debate for years to come."

8. **FAKE statistics:** This is your MOST common form of plagiarism I saw in your work this semester! SOO easily busted by any Prof:

"Most critics of marijuana legalization claim that there will be an increase in driver fatalities; however reputable sources would say otherwise."

"Most Americans would agree that the majority of physicians are in favor of gun control. This is increasingly present in our shifting attitudes toward violence."

The US Government does more harm than good by making marijuana illegal.

Typically, marijuana use can serve as a gateway to harder drugs.

It's not normal to own guns if you have children in the house. If you do, there is a high chance that something could go wrong.

The vast majority of Americans do not regularly partake in recreational marijuana use.

- Easiest way to get an "F" (and honor court violation) in college is to use fake stats like: "most, more, often, high, many, much, often, generally, typically, usually, common, frequent, habitual, normally, customarily, ordinarily, regularly." MEMORIZE these words AND their statistical corollates!!
- Do you even understand "basic" stats?

9. Most of you had flawless grammar, spelling, punctuation, SS, mechanics but, made HUNDREDS of if/then thesis claims instead of ONE argument – with NO fulcra. How many can you count below? Do you see all 97? How many fulcra present?

Medical marijuana has been a source of great social and political controversy for decades in the United States. Hailed by many as a panacea for an array of physical and mental ailments, this substance has also been contrarily classified as a gateway drug parallel to heroin by the federal government as a "Schedule 1 drug". The controversy surrounding this substance, especially in regards to its medical benefits and risks, is extremely understandable given the lack of research on this federally criminalized substance. The benefits of medical marijuana far outweigh the dangers due to its ability to control pain, manage chronic illness, and aid mental illness recovery.

10. Majority of you used some version of the phrase, "due to the fact" prior to a THERFORE statement! This just means, "as we all know!" How is this plagiarism? E.g., "Because the US government misclassified marijuana as a schedule 1 drug, its therapeutic effects will go unrecognized."

11. OMG if life were only as simple as your "simple" or "just" if/then reductive logic...

Example I: "Simply knowing that an individual in the household owns a gun, can cause a stigma where the doctor may not fight for their life."

Example II": "Consequently, as any educated person can plainly see, medical marijuana could, if legalized, save countless lives." 3 more MAJOR issues here too!

Example III": Every year, high school students prepare blindly for college admissions in the hopes of being admitted to the best college or university. While having the goal of being admitted, students take the hardest classes that are offered to them, spend thousands of hours volunteering at non-profit organizations, start their own clubs, give tutoring sessions, and study for months to score high on ACT or SAT

12. **MISQUOTING**: If you write in an academic paper that someone "states" something specific, it better be in quotes w/a citation or it's both plagiarism AND slander—especially when you use an absolute. Example: "Gun rights advocacy organizations such as the National Rifle Association often denounce calls from the American Medical Association to research gun violence, claiming that the research is always guided under the assumption that the gun is to blame and should instead focus on the root cause of suicides or homicides". -- **Plagiarism**
13. Science doesn't care (**even a little bit**) about your **opinion**...You can't just assert scientific/statistical models w/o evidence. Example: "With the uses for medical marijuana, the positive effects **outweigh** the side effects **and** **problems** that come with legalizing the drug." **Plagiarism**

#### 14. Personification:

- "Society tells us that if hard work is done, the outcome will be what is desired."
- "Science should not intervene with nature."
- "This technology, specifically as shown by CRISPR, is capable of altering a cell's genome."

#### 15. Use of cliché and **aphoristic** terminology – **Linguistically**, aphorisms suggest but do not demonstrate causation!!

Example: "The United States has long been a **world leader**, being the **Land of the Free** and the **Home of the Brave**, always having the **best interest of the citizens** at the forefront and providing the **finest health care in the world**."

Example: "The debate over the legalization of medical marijuana has been a **hot button issue** in the United States for **quite some time now**." (this is also a FAKE statistic! – Plagiarism, yet AGAIN!)

#### 16. **Fake scientific voice suggesting causation between 2 sentences**:

- b. **Example**: "Existing AMA data on the safety of marijuana asserts its "benign" chemistry (AMA). **As such**, there exists opportunities within the medical realm for marijuana to address diseases like epilepsy."

- a. In this example, the student has asserted **THAT** something is true – i.e., **THAT** there is a **causal relationship** b/t 2 variables "**marijuana [chemistry]**" and its "**benign [effects]**". Really, tell me **how** this works, exactly? I'll bet you have no idea because you just Googled the quote and didn't read the actual science in the article? **REALLY BAD** idea in college. Your prof is not that naïve! Even worse, in the next sentence, you jump to a secondary claim based on your fabrication by asserting there are "opportunities." Why is this a really BAD idea?

#### 18. **Random Guess**:

"Gun violence and related deaths have been on the rise in the US for a while now."

“Marijuana is often connotated negatively and used interchangeably with words like drug addiction and abuse. However, there is not much evidence to support these bland claims.”

ii. Quiz: I asked you guys to “memorize” the new vocab.

These include:

- i. Thesis Claims
- j. Undefined variables
- k. Faulty Causation:
- l. Absent or assumed Fulcrum
- m. Non-empirical Epistemology
- n. Plagiarism
- o. Debate
- p. Absolutes

- a. Using our new vocab and what you just learned above— what are the issues with these sentences? Break into 4 groups.

“As the transition to college initiates, the competitive pressure drops, as do the levels of structure and supervision, leading to students slacking off and turning to alcohol to fill the once full void of stability in their lives.”

“In today’s medical community, the legalization of medical marijuana has been heavily debated.”

“Because of the consequences that gun violence is having on our nation, lots of groups are trying to advocate for prevention and policy surrounding gun control.”

“Millions of Americans suffer from anxiety, pain, opioid use, epilepsy, and more horrific diseases that could be rectified with the prescription of medical marijuana.”

19. Most of you did NOT write in **1<sup>st</sup> person – yet, academic analyses MUST be yours!**

Example: “**Physicians** charged with the responsibility of helping a patient’s well-being are well-founded in casting gun violence as a public health threat because of **their potential** to alleviate the **disproportionate number** of **citizens affected** by gun violence.” This of course, is **PLAGIARISM** too— why/how? **Also, who can define at least 5 issues with this sentence?**

20. Almost everyone conflated multiple arguments.

Example: “The argument **for and against** the **uses of medicinal and recreational marijuana** has been **going on for decades.**”

21. Most of you used citations to make/reinforce your points with NO analyses of stats.

**Example:** When compared with the highest rates of violent gun deaths in the Middle East and North Africa, America is second from Iraq. (Aizenman 2018). OK – I read the factoid but what exactly is YOUR point?

22. A few too many of you use “according to Merriam Webster” to define, and thereby box-in belief...

\*One person used “according to Oxford Dictionary”... or, some other “authority” by stating -- THE definition of X=Y..

23. Several of you (around page 1-3) presented the “other” side—just to bash it later. Arguments MUST remain linear!

**Example:** “While opponents often clarify that Medical Marijuana is not well-tested and therefore potentially safe, it’s actually the government’s anti-pot, “schedule I classification” that unfairly limits its use and the public’s understanding of its medicinal value.” Any other issues with this sentence?

24. Factoids, factoids, and more factoids... nicely footnoted too.

- I. The CDC is a part of the Department of Health and Human Services (“Our History –Our Story,” 2018).
- II. ...guns were “created in 1364.”
- III. “In 2737 B.C., marijuana was prescribed to treat diseases such as gout and malaria.”
- IV. “Marijuana, commonly known as cannabis”

25. Most of you began with a thesis and a “hook” X to Y

**Example Thesis:** For the majority of Americans, access to Medical Marijuana is the goal.” **Plagiarism**

**Example Hook** Every day, American children and adults are awoken to massive headlines on multiple media streams about a new mass shooting that has occurred somewhere across the globe. **Plagiarism, yet again...**

26. Many of you used an example/story to extrapolate to a general rule or truth.

**Example:** “In March of 1990, a man got into a heated argument with his girlfriend, who was, at the time, checking coats at a local club and bar. The disturbance he caused led him to be forcibly ejected from the establishment, angering him even further. He went home to retrieve his weapons”

27. Everyone’s writing was driven epistemologically by belief, conjecture, supposition, absolutism, pseudo-scientific and self-evident logic. Here’s one sentence that asserted it all!

**Example:** Despite most Americans agreeing that medical-grade marijuana is both safe effective in curing countless illnesses, “no,” Republicans’ care enough to change their politics to save millions of lives annually. Also, a TON of plagiarism!



28. **Captain obvious:** “Physicians are one of the many first responders in cases of shootings, they are always trying their best to keep victims alive.” **Plagiarism**

29. **The god argument:** **The Obvious Example:** “I am trying to believe that god has my back, and while I will struggle at times, there is always hope that we can end gun violence, For I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

\*Where is the faulty causation asserted?

a. **The Less Obvious Example:** “Medical and recreational marijuana are essentially the same product.” – Q: What kind of person would make this erroneous, belief-ridden statement? i.e., someone of “faith”...

30. **The amorphous you(r) argument.** Ex. “As you start to see more guns and violence at school. You are also exposed to more adult issues without any real answers to the questions you have. No one is really giving you any real advice on how to deal with the violence that affects you.” This is also an issue with “1<sup>st</sup> person”. See above...

31. Most of you finished with a conclusion that restated your thesis.

**Thesis:** “Physicians, based on their work in response to the public’s wellbeing, are responsible to address gun-related health threats.”

**Conclusion:** “Thus, physicians have not only the right but the responsibility to respond to gun violence as a public health threat.”

32. **“The Thoughtful Compromise”** Almost everyone else had a “wrap it up,” **Disney-style summation/conclusion** in the form of a compromise. **Science NEVER Compromises!**

**Example:** “As Americans weigh the cost of their liberties against their safety, both gun owners and anti-weapon activists will inevitably begin to work together to frame a better solution that addresses both the social violence and citizens’ 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment rights to ‘bear arms.’”

33. SOOOO many of you used the word “should” “fair” or “reasonable” – UGH!

34. HUGE percentage of students writing about Medical Marijuana **cited Sonja Gupta**... Just FYI—did you think I didn’t notice that he is the first guy to come up from a Google search... it’s also a CNN reference, not an academic reference. **NEVER** cite a **news source** in an academic paper (unless you’re in the journalism school) and NEVER google anything for an academic paper.

35. Empty Sentences that say essentially NOTHING:

**Example:** Recent claims on the effectiveness that medical marijuana has on epilepsy has been up for debate. The legalization of this questionable substance would undoubtedly make researching its effects on epilepsy much easier ceasing the pushback from federal agencies on studies. Tzadok et al. found that these studies should be warranted because the results from his study on the effect of CBD and epilepsy were “promising”. **--65 words that define NOTHING! --- This wasn’t even the winner**

36. No transition words b/t sentences to connote causation. “Consequently”, non sequitur.

**Example:** “Marijuana has maintained a notable name in society for decades, for good and bad. It’s commonly been frowned upon by many for its perceived ability to exist as a gateway drug. On the other hand, pro-legalization movements have swept the nation in efforts to decriminalize the drug.”

37. High percentage of you had a “title”

E.g., Therapeutic Plant or Dangerous Weed: A Case for Medical Marijuana

E.g., ‘Gun Violence, Public Health, and the Physician’

38. Majority of you had some sentence like, “as most Americans/people/physicians/X would agree”...

39. **Major Reminder:** “That” versus “how” --- quickest way to a “D” paper or, a 2 out of 10 on a short-answer exam. Almost all of you **STATED the science** but did not demonstrate that you understood how the science worked. Example: “A commonly prescribed molecule of marijuana, CBD, has been scientifically proven to increase levels of serotonin, a neurotransmitter widely believed to “regulate sleep, memory, mood, social behavior, and appetite”, and increase the molecule anandamide, often referred to as the “bliss molecule” (McIntosh 2018). What is/are the FULCRUM/fulcra here?

40. All had ONGOING cause/effect asserted w/o a fulcrum:

**Example:** “If someone is capable of buying that many [50] guns in such a short period of time, surely something is amiss.

41. Almost everyone had a bibliography: Here is typical example of a citation. Any issues?

Kohn, David. “A powerful new form of medical marijuana, without the high.” *The Washington Post*, 31 Jan. 2020, [www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/a-powerful-new-form-of-medical-marijuana-without-the-high/2016/12/29/81bbf7c0-b5b2-11e6-b8df600bd9d38a02\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.4c17d7f141f4](http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/a-powerful-new-form-of-medical-marijuana-without-the-high/2016/12/29/81bbf7c0-b5b2-11e6-b8df600bd9d38a02_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.4c17d7f141f4) --

42. Writer’s block—one student, 9.5 hours produced a 3 pages!

43. No one had an “introductory concept” – **you can’t** enter an argument w/o one! This concept defines the **WHEN/WHERE** your roadmap is even POSSIBLE! **We discussed this in the last class and with Pythagoras.** This is why you must actually **READ**.

**E.g.,** Through the **US Congress’ ratification of “Bill HR 127”** US physicians became congressionally charged to define the legal foundations of “gun-related public health.” Consequently, the AMA’s focus on gun-accident prevention, affirms **the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress’** codification of their “right”, as physicians, to define the limits of public “health”. Thereby, federal legislation, not belief, mandates the legal precedent for a physician’s questioning of a parent’s “possession” of a “firearm and ammunition.” **(HR 127)**

a. More on this next week!

**Discussion #3: Quiz #2:** Student volunteer at board:

- i. Everyone looks for items from our list above.
  - ii. Let's rewrite it together
    - 1. Pick x and y variables
    - 2. Define the variables
    - 3. Find an intro concept where this relationship HAS to be true and use it as your fulcrum #1
    - 4. Create a connector sentence.
44. From "epistemology" and "fulcrum" to "non-sequitur" and "road-mapping" -- do you want to refresh any topics?

### **Homework:**

**Step #1:** Get a partner. Also consider incorporating your peer-mentors. This HW will be HARD!

**Step #2:** Go back to each partner's pretest and highlight examples of each topic we learned today. See if you can find at least ONE version of each comment above. Send me a copy of your highlighted paper and the number you found written at the top. BE SURE that 1/44th of the comments are for each discrete issue covered above.

**a. Old student examples:**

- i. <http://www.bradleyhammer.com/105i/problems.docx>
- ii. <http://www.bradleyhammer.com/105i/problems2.docx>

**Step #3:** Breathe. I haven't busted anyone for plagiarism

**Step #4:** Come to the Sunday session if you want the extra credit.

**Step #5 - Reminder: Midterm I Assistance:** February 3rd, I will be hosting a pizza night. I have invited 10 peer mentors to help you guys work on (and hopefully complete) your midterm.