**Assignment: Analyzing What You See (Visual Rhetorical Analysis) DE Writing & Rhetoric I Ms. Baez**

**Purpose, audience, and genre:** The purpose of this assignment is to practice your ability to analyze—to break something down, examine it, and figure out how it works. You will be writing a thesis-based essay that analyzes two advertisements to figure out how the ads’ creators target and try to persuade their audiences. Hopefully, you’ll become more sensitive to when and how someone is trying to use rhetorical strategies to persuade you or others. Your audience for this essay is your instructor. Please, assume that I have yet to see the ads.

**Guidelines:** You will get to choose the ads and their genres (print, web, video, social media). Please, follow these guidelines:

* You should choose two ads that sell the same type of product, but they don’t have to sell the exact same brand.
* One of the ads should be targeting **you and your peers**, and the other ad should target a different audience. For example, you might choose one car ad aimed at college-age women and another one aimed at retired men. You might also consider ads that target audiences who speak different languages or belong to different cultures or races than you, such as a political ad aimed at Latinos and another aimed at African Americans.
* In your summary and analysis of each ad, explain how you can tell which audience each ad is targeting, and feel free to use first person (“I”) when describing how the ads make you feel.
* **Remember that your analysis of these two ads should be connected by a thesis**—**a clear idea or claim about the ads and their rhetorical strategies**. For example, your thesis might focus on why one ad targets an audience by using ethos while another ad relies mainly on pathos. Or, perhaps you can make a claim about what you think these ads say about the audiences or cultures they’re trying to persuade. For example, does one ad express a cultural belief about beauty or masculinity?
* Don’t be afraid to make strong, arguable claims about your ads, but remember to back up those claims with clear, vivid descriptions and details from the ads. Don’t just assume that your classmates and instructors will know what you mean. Explain yourself.

**If you get stuck, here are some questions to help you develop your analysis:**

* purpose and audience: Who is the intended audience for each ad? How do you know? What values or beliefs does each audience hold? What might the context of the ad (where it appears) tell you about the audience?
* use of type, layout, color, and image: What effects might these elements have on the ad’s audience? What’s the relationship between the images and the text?
* the appeal to logos, the logic of the ad: Does the ad make sense? Does it have to?
* the appeal to ethos and the credibility of the advertiser: Does the ad seem professional? Is it relatable? Is there a celebrity endorsement that might add credibility, for example?
* the appeal to pathos: Does the ad try to evoke certain emotions or trigger the audience’s values or beliefs? Why?
* the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the ad: Is it persuasive? Why or why not?
* the advertiser’s cultural perspectives: How does each ad reflect the culture or society that produced it? Does the ad include any popular culture references?
* the angle of vision: Is there anything conspicuously absent from the ad? Why?
* What similarities or differences do you notice in the rhetorical strategies of the ads?
* What is each ad trying to get its audience to think and feel? Why?

**The essay will be evaluated using the following rubric:**

* Introduction attempts to hook your audience and set up the rest of the essay (10%)
* Essay contain a clear, specific, and arguable thesis about the ads and how they work (20%)
* Describes both ads clearly and thoroughly, and included an explanation of each ad’s rhetorical situation (purpose, target audience, genre) (20%)
* Essay supports your thesis with detailed, thorough analysis of both ads (20%)
* Essay is clearly and logically organized, unified, and coherent (10%)
* Conclusion reinforces the thesis and bring closure to the essay (10%)
* Essay shows evidence of thorough proofreading and editing (10%)

**Deadlines:**

**3/7:** Very rough draft due for conferences

**3/16:** Revised draft due

**3/23:** Final draft due

**Length:** Minimum 1250 words

**Value:** 15% of final grade