**Draft Workshop Guide: Causal Arguments**

Look critically at your colleague’s draft and provide specific, detailed, and thoughtful responses that will help them in their revision.

**Please be aware that the quality of your responses in draft workshops will be part of your 10% participation grade for this class.**

**Process**:

1. Give the draft an initial read through. Think about the following broad questions as you read, and make notes directly on the draft relating to the following broad questions:

\*\*Does the paper capture the audience’s attention?

\*\*Can you easily follow the organization of the paper? Where might the writer need to think about more effective transitions?

\*\*Does the writer present a clear claim that presents a causal argument supported with convincing evidence?

1. Next, give the draft a more careful and thorough reading. This is where you will provide specific, detailed, and thoughtful responses to the questions below. **Do not just provide yes or no answers**. Make specific references to the paper.

As a general rule, try to provide as in-depth and helpful responses as you yourself would want to help you through your own revisions. Be sure to let the writer know what they are doing effectively, as well as where they could improve and serve the needs and expectations of their audience better.

1. Finally, give the draft another quick reading and look for sentence-level issues (grammar, spelling, mechanics, punctuation, etc.). Note any suggestions directly on the draft.

**Questions for Peer Response**:

What is the author’s main claim (thesis)? Rewrite the claim. If you cannot identify a claim, please note that to the author.

Does the claim state a causal argument? What about the claim is appealing to readers? Is the claim too sweeping/broad? Does it need to be qualified? How might it be narrowed and focused? How strong is the relationship between the claim and the reasons given to support it? In what ways could that relationship be more specific?

What evidence does the writer provide for the claims? Which evidence (if any) needs to be strengthened?

Is enough evidence offered to show that these causes are responsible for the identified effect, that the effects result from the identified cause/s, or that a series of causes and effects are linked? If not, what kinds of additional evidence would be convincing?

How credible are any outside sources used? What other sources might be more convincing or persuasive?

Is evidence in support of the claims analyzed logically? Are there any breakdowns in any causal chains? Are there places where correlation might be mistaken for causation?

Have alternative causes and effects been considered? Have possible counterarguments been addressed and presented fairly?

How does the author establish credulity and authority? How might the author improve on this?

Are all quotations introduced with appropriate signal phrases (such as “As Tyson argues, “Blah blah blah....”)?

How is the argument organized? Does the organization seem effective?

Does the reader use strong topic sentences that directly support the thesis statement (claim)? Can the audience understand the relationship between the claim, supporting reasons, warrants/assumptions, and evidence? If not, how might these connections be made more clear?

How effective are the paragraphs? Do they seem too short or too long? How can they be improved?