English 1B Spring 2016 **Rhetorical Analysis of a Web Site**

**Overview**: We started with rhetorical analysis of arguments; now you will apply those analytical skills to a more complex kind of argument: the Web site a company uses to describe and sell its product.

* **Length/format** 1300 words, typed in MLA format
* **Content** should include all three of the following: **Describe** what is there, both in terms of visuals and text, **Analyze** the effect it is supposed to have on the audience, and **evaluate**--discuss strengths & weaknesses of the site. Also, be sure to analyze and evaluate the visual elements of the site as well as the words.
* **Include** one visual from the site in your essay itself, with a label to explain what it shows about the company’s strategy.
* **Audience:** your classmates and professor in 1B. This means you can use rhetoric jargon.
* **Topic Proposal** just tell me what Web site you will do and include the URL
* **Due Dates**: Topic Proposal Rough Draft Final Draft

**Content:** To recap: you will **describe** (tell us what’s there), **analyze,** (tell us why the words/visuals/audio bits are there, what effect they are intended to have) and **evaluate** (discuss strengths & weaknesses) of the site. Questions your paper will answer include the following (but not in this order, necessarily):

* Who seems to be the intended audience and how can you tell? What do they value?
* What is the context for the argument (issues in the world that relate to the product and/or company history)?
* How are the three appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) being used? One paragraph each is a good idea.
* What criteria are emphasized to sell this product (ethical/legal, pragmatic, aesthetic)?
* How are visuals/audio used? (You will incorporate a visual into your essay, too.)
* Where does it discuss its virtues—how “green,” ethical, and responsible it is--and what does that statement of company virtue emphasize?
* If it defends itself from charges of wrong-doing, where and how does it do that?
* What do you think are the site’s strengths and weaknesses as an argument that says, basically, “Buy (and/or invest in) our product and tell your friends!”

**Topics**: You can choose either a not-for-profit organization OR a company that either emphasizes an earth-friendly, enlightened, socially responsible ethos OR responds to charges that it is a “corporate villain.” If you want to target a Web site not on this list, let me know and I might approve it. My ratings come mostly from this site (and the book) <http://www.betterworldshopper.com/r-retail.html>

“Good Guy”Companies TOMS shoes, Global Girlfriend, Ten Thousand Villages, New Belgium Brewing, Toyota, Lexus, Patagonia, Divine Chocolate, Aveda, Yes to, Burt’s Bees, Ember Jewelry, Santa Cruz Organic, Bainbridge Ometepe Coffee, Clif Bar, Dannon Yogurt, Chipotle, Trader Joe’s, Greendisk. Companies on the Defensive Monsanto, BP Oil, PG&E, Microsoft, Solyndra, Chevron-Texaco, Wal-Mart, Tyson Foods, General Motors, Chevy, Revlon, LA Gear, Ralf Lauren, Wells Fargo, KFC, McDonald’s, Macy’s, Ralf Lauren, TJMaxx, Coca Cola. Non-Profits: 826 Valencia, Rising Farmworker Dream Fund, Room to Read, Books for Africa, Heifer International, Kiva, Ashoka, Habitat for Humanity, Doctors Without Borders, Amnesty International, World Bicycle Relief, Bicycle Exchange, African Children’s Choir, Greenpeace, Oxfam, Engineers Without Borders (there’s an SJSU branch!). Note: Try Charity Navigator for more info about these and many others: <http://www.charitynavigator.org/>