

Argumentation and Debate

COMMUNICATION STUDIES 120

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The ability to critically analyze and respond to the spoken (or written) word is skill that will hold you in good stead for the rest of your life. Once mastered it is never forgotten. This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of argumentation and debate. The focus is on improving students' effectiveness in debate situations by learning and practicing the skills needed to analyze, build, and refute arguments.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to

- ❖ understand and demonstrate fundamental concepts of communication theories that govern argumentation and debate.
- ❖ demonstrate basic ability to argue logically using sound reasoning and credible evidence that support and defend claims.
- ❖ exhibit basic competency in both verbal and non-verbal delivery skills.

REQUIRED TEXTS & SUPPLIES

Crossman, M. R. (2008). *Burden of Proof: An Introduction to Argumentation* (4th Ed.). Cincinnati, OH: Thompson
Scantrons, a notebook, legal pad, and pens in 2 different colors.

Course Requirements

ADVOCACY SPEECH

This is a 5-7 minute speech that advocates a specific solution to a social problem. The topic should be important and timely. 5 sources are recommended. After the speech, the speaker will field questions from me challenging his or her point of view or support. A detailed handout will be provided. (50 points)

EVIDENCED PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

This debate will center on a value topic and will be supported by quoted research (evidence). Debaters on both side of the issue will use reasoning from authority (a minimum of 5 sources are recommended) to support and defend their positions. The topics will be assigned in advance and the debate will last 30 minutes. A detailed handout will be provided. (75 points)

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE #2

This debate will use reasoning by authority, example, analogy, and/or sign. Topics will be policy resolutions. Although written evidence will not be read during the debate, extensive research will be required and sources should be cited from memory. The topics will be assigned in advance and the debate will last 30 minutes. A detailed handout will be provided. (75 points)

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE #3

This debate will bring together all course material and will build on debates 1 and 2. Students will flip for sides; a topic will be decided upon, and the government team will have 15 minutes to prepare a value or policy case, straight or metaphor; the opposition team will use the 15 minutes to brainstorm an opposition strategy. As in intercollegiate competition, times will be 7-8-8-8-4-5. Possible topic areas will be discussed in class the week before to allow students time to familiarize themselves with major current issues. (75 points)

ARGUMENT RESEARCH PAPER

This stand-alone paper (not outline of your debate) will involve analyzing the topic you are assigned for debate #2. The paper should argue **both sides of the issue equally**, and **cite 3-4 appropriate sources on each side**. The required length is 4-6 pages typed, double-spaced. Use 1" margins and 12-point, Times New Roman font. Standard APA or MLA format is required. Your paper should not have no grammatical blunders, typos, and spelling errors ☺. Grace, wit, and style will be rewarded, as they often are in real life. Your paper must have an introduction, thesis, preview, logically progressing body, and conclusion. **The paper is due the day you are scheduled to debate.** Short papers will receive half credit. (50 points)

FALLACY HUNT

To complete this assignment, you will hunt for fallacies (as discussed in Chapter 3 of the text) that are committed in the print media (not advertisements). When you find an article with a fallacy, you will print it, highlight the appropriate section, and type a brief paragraph defining the fallacy, noting the publication, and explaining how the fallacy is being committed. You will get 10 points for each fallacy you turn in, up to 5. Do not repeat fallacies. Incomplete or unhighlighted articles will receive no credit. **Due 2 weeks after the fallacy lecture.** (50 points)

LAB

The El Camino Communications Studies department requires all students enrolled in a class that satisfies the public speaking requirement to attend a speech lab; the on-campus Speakers' Forum performance fulfills this requirement. Cost \$12. Dates will be announced in class. (25 points)

EXAM

There will be **one** cumulative, multiple choice/true-false/short answer exam, worth 100 points. The exam will be based on the texts, assigned readings, class lectures, and handouts. (100 points)

POINT ALLOCATION

Advocacy Speech	10%	50 points
Evidenced Parli Debate	15%	75 points
Parli Debate 2	15%	75 points
Parli Debate 3	15 %	75 points
Argument Paper	10%	50 points
Fallacy Hunt	10%	50 points
Lab	5%	25 points
Exam	<u>20%</u>	<u>100 points</u>
	100%	500 points

Keep track of your points:

Speech	_____
Debate 1	_____
Debate 2	_____
Debate 3	_____
Paper	_____
Fallacy Hunt	_____
Lab	_____
Exam	_____

KEEP ALL RETURNED ASSIGNMENTS UNTIL SEMESTER GRADE IS RECEIVED.

GRADING

Generally, grades will be calculated on a straight percentage as follows:

90 – 100%	(450-500 points)	= A
80 – 89.9%	(400-449 points)	= B
70 – 79.9%	(350-399 points)	= C
60 – 69.9%	(300-349 points)	= D
59.9%	(299 and below)	= F

Students must receive a “C” in the course for it to count as a general education credit.

Additional “stuff”

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION/TARDINESS

Since a large part of the class involves speaking in front of others, it is important that you be a responsive audience member, and participate in class exercises, critiques, and discussions. You get 2 free absences. After that, **you will lose three points for every undocumented absence, and two for every tardy.** If you are more than 30 minutes late, you will be considered absent.

If you miss 2 classes before the add deadline or 5 classes overall, you will be dropped. I will ask you to leave and mark you absent if you use any electronic devices without permission.

You must be present at the **beginning** of class in order to debate, present, turn in an assignment, or take the exam. *Hiss! Boo!*

MAKE-UPS/LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Be prepared to speak on the day you are assigned. **There will be no speech/debate make-ups** without a documented excuse, and even then make-ups may not be possible. Because you are paired with another student for the debates, it is necessary that you make a commitment to your partner, and live up to that commitment. It is also the only way that you will pass this class.

Papers/fallacy assignments will be accepted up to 1 week late with a **penalty of a letter grade.**

After 1 week they will be accepted for **half credit** up until the first class meeting of the final week. *More hissing and booing!!!*

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Special Resource Center on campus as soon as possible to better ensure such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. As well, please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Special Resource Center 310-660-3295

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

If you arrive late and a class member is speaking, please wait outside until they are finished. Communication among “strangers” can be daunting. I will make every effort to provide a supportive, non-judgmental learning environment. You are encouraged to voice your opinions and concerns regarding class content as long as appropriate consideration is given to the feelings and/or beliefs of your fellow students. I have a great sense of humor and find most things funny; I do not find intolerance funny. (Does that make me of intolerant of intolerance?)

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be ignored. I expect that students in this course will do their own work. Engaging in either cheating or plagiarism will result in an "F" for the course.

SAMPLE SEMESTER SCHEDULE

NOTE: Public holidays are not included and will change what is below.

Week	Topic	Assigned reading
1	Introduction to the Course <u>AN INVITATION TO ARGUE</u>	Introduction Ch. 1
2	DISCUSSION OF AND SIGN-UP FOR ADVOCACY SPEECH <u>RESEARCH: DISCOVERING AND SUPPORTING THE ISSUES</u> <u>IDENTIFYING AND TESTING INDUCTIVE ARGUMENT</u>	Ch. 5 Ch. 2
3	ADVOCACY SPEECHES	
4	ADVOCACY SPEECHES	
5	<u>AN OVERVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE</u> <u>ARGUING PROPOSITIONS OF FACT AND VALUE</u>	Ch. 4 Ch. 6
6	Discussion of and Sign-Up for Evidenced Parliamentary Debate Debate Demonstration	
7	<u>FALLACIES</u> EVIDENCED PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (FACT/VALUE)	Ch. 3
8	EVIDENCED PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (FACT/VALUE)	
9	<i>Fallacy Assignment Due</i> EVIDENCED PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (FACT/VALUE) <u>ARGUING PROPOSITIONS OF POLICY</u> Discussion of and Sign-Up for Parliamentary Debate 2	Ch. 7
10	<u>REFUTATION: DEFENDING YOUR IDEAS</u> <u>PRESENTING YOUR ARGUMENT</u> PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES 2 (POLICY)	Ch. 8, 9
11	PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES 2 (POLICY)	
12	PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES 2 (POLICY) Discussion of and Sign-Up for Parliamentary Debate 3	
13	<i>Exam—All Chapters</i> <i>Day reserved for public holiday or catch-up</i>	
14	PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES 3 (COMPETITION STYLE)	
15	PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES 3 (COMPETITION STYLE)	
16	PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES 3 (COMPETITION STYLE)	