



Communication ~~ Reedley College ~~ Fall 2020

Communication 25: Argumentation

Instructor: Dr. Linda Carvalho Cooley

Office Phone: 638-0300 ext 3126

Office: Social Science 38

E-mail: Linda.Cooley@reedleycollege.edu

(Office hours are posted on Canvas but students can also ask for an appointment)

This course will not utilize a textbook. Instead all of the content will be provided in Canvas. This means that questions on exams will come from lectures, videos, and any reading provided in the Canvas shell. Please take notes while watching online lectures.

In addition this course is normally taught in a face to face format. Although the content has been modified to accommodate an online learning environment there will be face to face requirements. Students will be given a selection of days/times to choose from but will be doing presentations and debates in a face to face online format utilizing Zoom.

Refer to the calendar for required meetings in Zoom.

Student Rights

Students are encouraged to become familiar with the "Campus Policies" section of the Schedule of Courses. This material includes information regarding cheating and plagiarism, disruptive classroom behavior, and other instructional issues. Students caught cheating and/or plagiarizing in my class will receive a zero on the assignment and any assignment connected to that assignment. In addition those students will also forfeit all participation points. Finally any student caught cheating will **NOT** be allowed to take the final exam. **Turn it in** will be used and students need to address and resubmit any assignment with a 36% or more match prior to the final due date/time.

Students with disabilities: If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e., Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Course Description

Argumentation is designed to provide students with the methods of critical inquiry and advocacy. Emphasis will be placed on analysis, presentation and evaluation of oral and written argumentation. This course focuses on identifying fallacies, testing evidence, and advancing a reasoned position while defending and refuting arguments. Students will write a minimum of 6,000 words during the course of the semester. This course fulfills the G.E. requirement for Critical Thinking (Foundation A3). G.E. credit requires a grade of "C" or better. (C-id designation Comm 120) This course has a prerequisite of completion of English 1A & an advisory for the completion of Communication 1 or 1H.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically formulate, advocate and evaluate oral arguments using logic, discriminating between valid and fallacious forms of reasoning in a variety of debate formats.
2. Construct and deliver dynamic, competent and ethical presentations that are adapted to the purpose and audience.
3. Utilize organizational patterns and research materials that incorporate sufficient, credible, and relevant evidence.
4. Explain the principles of human communication by critically evaluating public speeches through constructive critique and self-analysis.

Specific Course Objectives

At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. Recognize, develop, and defend arguments orally.
2. Use research and organization to formulate arguments for oral presentation and refutation.
3. Evaluate others' arguments and oral presentations.
4. Analyze audiences in order to formulate effective arguments.
5. Recognize fallacies and illogical arguments.
6. Develop and advance a reasoned position on a debatable issue.
7. Develop an understanding of the Narrative Paradigm in creating persuasive arguments.

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***This schedule and syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor – it is the responsibility of the student to check on announcements made during any absence.***

“Per Title V Regulation 58170(e), students must be referred to academic support services by counselors or instructors. With this statement on my course syllabus, I am referring any students in my class in need of academic support to tutorial services. Tutorial services may include: the tutorial center, writing center or the communication lab. Referral reason: Mastering the content, study skills, and basic skills of this course is aided by the use of trained peer tutors.”

## Assignments

| Graded Item                                                                                                                                                                          | Points Possible |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Introduction Debate                                                                                                                                                                  | 20              |
| Persuasive Position Presentation <b>**SA</b><br>Presentation 80<br>Outline/Reference 20                                                                                              | 100             |
| SP-AR Debates<br>(Individual SPAR – 30 pts)<br>(flow SPARS – 10 pts)                                                                                                                 | 40              |
| Mini Debate <b>**SA</b><br>(Individual 100 pts)<br>(Teamwork 10 pts)<br>(Win 10 pts)<br>(Debate Briefs 2 @ 15 pts each)                                                              | 150             |
| Cooperative Debate <b>**SA</b><br>(Individual 150 pts.)<br>(Group presentation & Dyad work 20 pts.)<br>(Win 20 pts.)<br>(Peer Evaluation 10 pts.)<br>(Debate Briefs 2 @ 25 pts each) | 250             |
| Online Assignments (10 pts each)<br>(Triad Response to Persuasive Position)<br>(Would you rather?)<br>(“Root of all Evil” Flowing Exercise)<br>(Coop Debate Proposition Submission)  | 40              |
| Flow Sheets                                                                                                                                                                          | 100             |
| Participation & Flow Sheets                                                                                                                                                          | 100             |
| Mid Term                                                                                                                                                                             | 100             |
| Final                                                                                                                                                                                | 100             |
| <b>Total Points Possible</b>                                                                                                                                                         | <b>1000</b>     |

**Mandatory Signature Assignments:** are indicated above with **\*\*SA**

***these assignments are REQUIRED in order to take the final exam OR earn any extra credit.***

**Students must pass signature assignments with a C or better. Students who do not earn a C or better on the attempt signature assignments will not earn the right to take the final exam, will lose all participation points, flow sheet points and will not be allowed to earn extra credit.**

The following numerical guidelines will be used in the assignment of final grades.

900-1000 = A  
800-899 = B  
700-799 = C  
600-699 = D  
599- 0 = F

The instructor reserves the right to increase points for students who are *on the margin (defined by Dr. C as less than 10 points)*; this will be done on the basis of attitude and participation throughout the semester and is solely at the discretion of the instructor.

Students will not qualify for this *on the margin* grade adjustment if they did not submit any outside extra credit, or if they have utilized 2 or more of the 12 hour window options. On the margin grade adjustments are not a given they are “solely at the discretion of Dr. C.”

## Classroom Advisory, Requirements and Department

Since this is an online course, it is recommended that students have good basic computer skills. If students are intimidated to utilize computer programs and do not want to conquer the fear, this is not the class for you. Students should have access to a computer and an internet connection. A DSL/broadband line is preferred since you will need to upload documents, participate in presentations and watch videos.

Additionally an online course requires a high degree of independent learning. Students must have self-discipline to stay on top of their work without reminders from me or anyone else or you will fail this class. Although you do not physically attend the course you must log in and engage in the material on a weekly basis. Successful students are those who log in and engage in the material on a regular basis at least two to three times a week.

Students must respect the other students in the class. Comments and posts should be respectful and appropriate. I reserve the right to block any student whose comments are out of bounds. If necessary students can be reported to the dean of student services or removed from the course. As a communication course, part of the content is to recognize that our messages should be created for a specific audience. The audience for this course is: “educated adults” and I will expect the discussions and posts to be appropriate for an educated adult audience. Under no circumstances will flaming (online name-calling, hate speech, etc.) be allowed.

Please know that due to the nature of this course (controversial topics), it is possible that the subject and language in the debates will be controversial and for educated adult audiences.

Although the course is taught online this course still requires a face to face component for debates/presentations. Therefore varied dates/times will be offered where students can pick which time slot works best for their schedule. Debates will require all students on a team to agree to a date/time. Please discuss these as a team prior to reserving your time slot. If none of the times slots offered work please contact Dr. C immediately so that arrangements can be made.

**Canvas** - Canvas will be our primary method of instruction. Students should be familiar or become familiar with Canvas. Please seek additional help during an office hour or ask the tutorial center for extra assistance. Keep in mind when reviewing grades in Canvas the point total is the ONLY thing that matters, percentages do not reflect true grade. Technical difficulties are **NOT** a valid excuse. All deadlines are final – plan ahead, and drop box early. Assignments will be due at 10 pm. Students will have the ability to “purchase” a 12 hour window to upload assignments the cost is a 5 point penalty assessed on the current assignment. This penalty will be given even if the assignment is one minute into the 12 hour window. The 12 hour window eliminates all technology excuses, high turn in score, or lack of submission. The 12 hour window is implemented to allow students to figure those issues out. I will NOT excuse any assignment that did not get into the drop box beyond the 12 hour window under ANY CIRCUMSTANCE – DO NOT ASK.

**Participation/Engagement Points**: This class is only good if it is interactive therefore; participation is vital to the classroom environment. Each student is expected to read the explained tab in the modules every week, watch all lecture content along with accompanying videos and activities. Students’ participation grades could suffer if a student does not log in regularly to the course.

## Brief Descriptions of Assignments

**Persuasive Position Presentation:** Students will prepare a presentation 3-4 minutes in which they will be assigned a current controversial topic where they will be given the proposition, and the side they will defend. This speech must be done in Zoom to the instructor. Sign up for a time slot that works for you.

**Debates:** Debate dates will be pre-assigned. **Debates must be given live in Zoom. Sign up for a time slot that works with your team.** Debates will include SPAR, Mini, and Cooperative formats. SPAR stands for **SP**ontaneous **AR**gumentation. These debates are short impromptu debates, which means no advanced preparation is required. Students will also participate in a Mini debate. This is a much shorter version of the Cooperative Debate at the end of the semester. Both the Mini and Cooperative Debates require research. Students will be assigned a team, and a proposition. The mini and cooperative debate will be a group assignment where a dyad will formally debate another dyad on a controversial local, national or world issue. These debates will follow a modified Parliamentary Debate format and will be researched in advance. More information regarding the grade distribution and formats will be given in class at a later time. Briefs are required for both the Mini and the Cooperative Debates. Please use template provided in Canvas.

**Mid Term & Final:** There will be two exams in this class. The final exam is comprehensive covering all of the content covered in the course. Material for the exams will come from lectures, videos, and any reading assignments given in Canvas. Both of these exams will be open on Canvas for 3 days. Students must log in and take the exams during the dates assigned. Both exams will offer two portions to each exam. The first portion is the multiple choice portion and students can attempt that portion twice. The best score will be recorded. The second portion is a short answer essay portion and can only be taken once. Finals in my course are earned. Students who have missed a signature assignment will not be allowed to take the final exam.

**Additional Point Assignments (Extra Credit):** In addition to the assignments there will be limited extra credit assignments. They will be announced in Canvas. It is the student's responsibility to look them up and turn them in by the deadline posted in Canvas. Extra credit assignments submitted by students who have missed signature assignments (see list of assignments for **\*\*SA** designation) will **not** be accepted. In addition students who have taken advantage of the 12 hour late window 2 or more times do not qualify for extra credit. The sole purpose of extra credit assignments is to enhance learning not to take the place of assignments.