



Communication ~~ Reedley College ~~ Fall 2012

## Communication 25: Argumentation

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(Office hours are posted on the webpage)

The image shows the cover of the textbook 'Arguments and Arguing: The Products and Process of Human Decision Making' by Thomas A. Holihan and Kevin T. Baaske. The cover features a colorful, abstract design with a face in profile.	<p>Required Materials: Textbook &amp; Scan Trons Textbook: Holihan, T. A. &amp; Baaske, K.T. (2005). <u>Arguments and Arguing: The Products and Process of Human Decision Making</u>. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.</p> <p>Three scan-tron forms (882)</p>
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### Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with the techniques necessary for effective public argument. Analysis, reasoning, advocacy, and criticism of ideas. Emphasis on deriving conclusions based on valid evidence and sound inferences without using fallacies of thought and language. Demonstration of basic argumentation principles through a variety of oral presentations and written assignments. This course focuses on how to develop effective, ethical, reasoned arguments accompanied by the critical thinking skills required to judge the validity of others' arguments. This course fulfills the G.E. requirement for Critical Thinking (Foundation A3). G.E. credit requires a grade of "C" or better.

### Classroom Department

Each student is expected to respect the rights of the other students in the class and the instructor. The exploration of controversial ideas is an essential component of this class. Students who do not behave in a respectful manner will be asked to drop the class. When presentations are in progress students arriving late are to stay outside until the presentation is complete. Interrupting a presentation for any reason other than a severe emergency is inconsiderate and will not be tolerated. Cell phones, and pagers should be turned off before coming to class.

## **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 in my class will receive a zero on the assignment and any assignment connected to that assignment (e.g. cheating on a debate will result in a zero on the debate, briefs, the reflection and on all audience evaluations). Any student caught cheating will also forfeit all participation points.

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.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

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

1. Critically formulate and evaluate oral arguments using logical reasoning.
2. Construct and deliver dynamic and competent presentations that are adapted to the purpose and audience.
3. Utilize research materials that incorporate sufficient, credible, and relevant evidence.
4. Choose appropriate organizational patterns.
5. Analyze the effectiveness of communication through constructive critique.

## **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. Explore solutions to current issues/problems in society.

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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.***

## Assignments

| Graded Item                                                                                                                                | Points Possible  | Score |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------|
| Introduction speeches                                                                                                                      | Credit/No Credit |       |
| Art as Argumentation Presentation                                                                                                          | 50               |       |
| Art as Argumentation Handout                                                                                                               | 10               |       |
| SP-AR Debates (2 @ 100 pts. each)<br>Spontaneous Argumentation Debates                                                                     | 200              |       |
| Cooperative Debate<br>(Individual 75 pts.)<br>(Dyad 50 pts.)<br>(Group presentation 25 pts.)<br>(Win 20 pts.)<br>(Peer Evaluation 30 pts.) | 200              |       |
| Cooperative Debate Briefs 25 pts each side                                                                                                 | 50               |       |
| Audience Evaluations / Participation                                                                                                       | 50               |       |
| Movie Argument Analysis                                                                                                                    | 30               |       |
| Reflection Papers (2 @ 30 ea.)<br>Cooperative Debate & Art as Argumentation                                                                | 60               |       |
| Quiz 1                                                                                                                                     | 100              |       |
| Quiz 2                                                                                                                                     | 100              |       |
| Final                                                                                                                                      | 150              |       |
| <b>Total Points Possible</b>                                                                                                               | <b>1000</b>      |       |

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; this will be done on the basis of attitude and participation throughout the semester and is solely at the discretion of the instructor.

### Just a Note Regarding My Teaching Philosophy

If you are absent do not approach me to ask “what did we do when I was gone?” Each student must assume full responsibility for all notes, assignments or announcements made during class. I cannot and will not re-teach a lesson in my office or in the hallway before or after a class. My power point presentations are for students who come to class – students who are not in class will have to rely on the book or notes from a friend. Just because you miss class when an assignment is given out or when an assignment is due does NOT excuse you or extend the due date.

## Attendance

Due to the nature of this course, attendance is important. Roll will be taken at each class session. I will drop anyone who misses the first day of class. I will also drop anyone who misses the second day of class. Per college policy I can drop any student who misses 4 class periods. If a student misses 4 classes prior to the drop date I will drop that student. Roll will be taken at each class session. Class points can be drastically reduced by absences. Understanding that perfect attendance can only happen in a utopian world each student is allowed 3 unexcused absences. I suggest you use them well. On the 4<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence after the drop date your participation points will be depleted – you cannot earn points when you are not in class to participate in the various activities. On the 5<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence audience evaluation points will be depleted. On the 6<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence no extra credit can be earned, this includes any extra credit points given in class or on tests. Arriving late to class and leaving early are unacceptable and will result in a reduction of participation points. Two tardies or early departures are equivalent to one absence. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of their absences. Excused absences are verifiable, documented and only occur under unavoidable circumstances. Exceptions are only made for school-sponsored functions (e.g. school sports, school mandated field trips). Please note that all excused absences **MUST** have verifiable documentation by a reputable source. (This does NOT include your parents!)

**All documentation must be submitted to the instructor NO later than one week following the absence. Note that all documentation will be verified by the instructor.** Please note that work schedules, lost keys, car trouble, parking trouble, or vacations are not excused absences. If however you know in advance that you will be absent please inform the instructor so that accommodations can be made for speeches or quizzes **prior** to your absence. Also understand that notifying the instructor does not excuse the absence.

**Please be aware that I WILL enforce this policy and will not make exceptions!**  
It is your responsibility to keep track of your absences and tardies **not mine**. At any time during the semester you may email me to see where you stand.

## Late and Missed Assignments

*I will NOT accept any emailed or handwritten papers.*

*I have a very strict policy on late work.*

**ALL WORK IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CLASS –  
DO NOT COME IN LATE AND ASSUME I WILL ACCEPT YOUR WORK.**

## Additional Point Assignments

In addition to the assignments I will be offering limited extra credit assignments. They will be briefly announced in class and posted on the classroom web page. It is the student's responsibility to look them up and turn them in by the deadline posted on the webpage. Extra credit assignments submitted by students who have missed debates, quizzes or any other assignment will not be accepted. In addition students who have five or more unexcused absences will not be accepted. Extra credit points can only be earned by students who have attempted all assignments. Their sole purpose is to enhance learning not to take the place of assignments.

## **Brief Descriptions of Assignments:**

**Art As Argumentation:** Students will prepare a presentation no longer than 5 minutes in which they will illustrate to the class how artistic works can be an argument. Grading will be based on presentation, and a handout showing the argument. These presentations will be assigned and must be presented on their assigned dates. I will not allow extensions or make ups.

**Movie Analysis:** In class we will view a movie that makes several claims. Students will take notes and evaluate the arguments set forth by the movie. A two page evaluation and explanation of the arguments will be turned in. They must be typed and will not be accepted late.

**Debates:** Debate dates will be pre-assigned. **I do not allow anyone to give their debates on a day other than their assigned date. Do not ask for an extension.** If you are unable to present on your assigned date you will be given a 0 on that presentation. I will only allow make up debates for severe medical excuses. Make ups will be on the basis of time available. Debates will include SPAR and Cooperative formats. Each student will participate in 2 spar debates. SPAR stands for **SP**ontaneous **AR**gumentation. These debates are short impromptu debates. Each student will also participate in one Cooperative Debate. The 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 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.

**Reflection Papers:** Each student will write two reflection papers. These will be assigned with a due date and will not be accepted late. They must be typed and turned in at the beginning of class. Reflection papers must be two pages and typed. Each student will be asked to review the prompt given and type a two page (12 font, Times New Roman, Courier New or similar font, double spaced) opinionated paper. This critique should include terminology from the textbook.

**Quizzes & Final:** There will be three exams in this class. The final exam is comprehensive but will only contain items either previously tested or from the final content of the course. Material for the exams will come from lectures, reading assignments and class discussions.

**Finals:** Finals are held in the same classroom but not necessarily at the same time. Please note schedule below so that you are aware of the time and date of your final. Please note – I will not allow anyone who is 20 minutes late to take the final unless there is a verifiable excused reason for the tardy. Please be aware and be on time. I will also NOT allow students to take the final prior to finals week, unless there is a verifiable MEDICAL reason.

Final is comprehensive and will cover all content from the course.