

Communication

Communication ~~ Reedley College ~~ Spring 2024

Communication 25: Argumentation

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

There is NO textbook for this course. Instead, I lecture on content, share videos, and stories to help you engage the concepts.

TIP: Make sure to attend class regularly, & take notes – You will need those notes to be successful on assignments, mid-term & final

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.

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, plagiarizing, and/or utilizing artificial intelligence technology to create their work will receive a zero on the assignment and any assignment connected to that assignment. Any student caught cheating, plagiarizing, and/or utilizing artificial intelligence technology to create their work will also forfeit all participation points and will not be allowed any extra credit points. **Turn it in** will be used via Canvas and students need to address and resubmit any assignment with a score above 35% match prior to the due date or they will receive a zero on the assignment. Issues of cheating, plagiarism, and/or the use of artificial intelligence will be submitted to the Dean. These issues are serious and are likely to cause the student to fail the course.

Students with disabilities who 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.

My Teaching Philosophy

Teaching for me has always been about helping students. If you are having an issue – talk to me. I'm not near as scary as I may look or sound. Please reach out to me and I promise I will listen to you and together we will come up with a solution. All I can do is be here, but I can't help, if you don't ask. I will meet you day or night in Zoom, I'm also available before and after class. I care and want you to succeed. Meet me halfway – come to class, check into Canvas regularly and take notes during lectures. Everything on the mid-term and final are covered in my lectures. I believe that all students are capable of learning.

No one wants you to succeed more than I do!

My Personal Sanity

I had to think more about my work/life balance. I will no longer reply to emails or pop into my zoom office after 6 pm on weekdays or on weekends. You are welcome to email me anytime, but I cannot guarantee I will reply after 6 pm. The only exception will be for students who request appointments in advance or if there is a major assignment due.

Assignments

Graded Item	Points Possible
Class Debate	25
Persuasive Position Presentation **SA Presentation 80 Outline/Reference 20	100
Mini Debate **SA Individual debate 100 pts Debate Briefs 2 @ 10 pts each	120
Cooperative Debate **SA Individual 180 pts. Group & Dyad work 10 pts Win 10 pts Debate Briefs 2 @ 25 pts each	250
Other Assignments Given in Class/Canvas: Debate Games 10 pts Flowing Exercise 10 pts Debate Proposition Submission 5 pts SPARS 30 pts Movie Analysis 50 pts	105
Flow Sheets	100
Participation & SPAR Flow Sheets	100
Mid Term	100
Final	100
Total Points Possible	1000

Mandatory Signature Assignments: are indicated above with **SA****
these assignments are REQUIRED 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 based on 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

Students must respect the other students in the class. Comments made in class or in Canvas must be respectful and appropriate. I reserve the right to block any student whose comments are out of bounds or ask a student to leave the room. 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 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 content in the debates will be contentious and for educated adult audiences. Mediated distractions are also inconsiderate. Put your cellphone away, do not use your laptop, and remove ear pods/headphones prior to coming to class. If you must use your laptop for notes, sit in the front row.

Canvas – Although there are some assignments that will be submitted in class, Canvas will be our primary method of assignment submission. Students should be 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 and submit assignments 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. There is no actual process for “purchasing” the purchase happens automatically. 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 it 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.

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 attend class every week, take notes during the lectures and participate in all the in-class assignments. Lack of physical attendance in class will result in a lower grade. Students can have two absences during the semester with no consequences but beyond those two absences points will be deducted from participation points possible. Students can lose all participation points with excessive absences (5 or more). Also please note that arriving late to class or leaving early twice is equivalent to one absence. In addition, students who attend but are distracted by their cellphone/laptop may also lose points for not participating in the classroom discussions and/or activities. Ear buds, or headphones are not allowed in class at any time. There are many discussions, debates, games, and activities we will do during our class time. Students who are absent are missing these valuable encounters. All the activities were selected to enhance learning and add to the curriculum of the course.

Brief Descriptions of Assignments

Persuasive Position Presentation: Students will prepare a presentation 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 will be presented in class on the date assigned.

Debates: Debate dates will be assigned. **Debates must be given on the date assigned.** Debates will include a Classroom Debate, SPARs, Mini, and Cooperative formats. The Classroom Debate is a group class activity on a current topic. Students will participate in two SPARs. These are impromptu debates that require no advanced preparation. Students will also present a Mini debate. This is a much shorter version of the Cooperative Debate given at the end of the semester. Both the Mini and Cooperative Debates require research. Students will be assigned a proposition. The mini debate will be an individual debate with two students or depending upon enrollment could be 2 students against 2 students. 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 a modified Parliamentary Debate format and will be researched in advance. More information regarding the grade distribution and formats will be given in class later. Briefs are required for both the Mini and the Cooperative Debates. Please use the template provided in Canvas. Debates cannot be made up, if you miss your debate, you will earn a zero on the assignment.

Mid Term & Final: There will be two exams in this class. The final exam is comprehensive, covering all the content covered in the course. Material for the exams will come from lectures, videos, and any reading assignments given in Canvas. Both exams will be given in class. Students must bring a Scan Tron 882. These can be purchased at the student store. Please come prepared. I will allow handwritten notes taken in class to be used for these exams. No photocopied or typed papers will be allowed. Notes will be checked prior to the exam being given. 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.

The class calendar and syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor – it is the responsibility of the student to check 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 using trained peer tutors.”

Picky Professor Pet Peeves

Everyone has their quirks – I want you to know mine in advance.

- 1. Assignments are not optional.** Students are expected to do all the work/assignments. I would have a hard time feeling bad for your grade if you selected to not do all the assignments.
- 2. Take notes when you come to class.** This is the number ONE piece of advice given by former students. When you take quizzes/exams those notes will really help you out. I literally cover everything on the quizzes/exams in my lectures.
- 3. You need sources but they do not need to be quotes.** Quotes should ONLY be used if they are brilliant – if they aren't please put them in your own words rather than quoting.
- 4. Use my templates!** (outlines, briefs, and movie analysis). I give templates to help students. Use the ones I gave you not something you got from a different instructor.
- 5. SCCCD Library Databases are REQUIRED!** Please don't fight me – Resistance is futile you will be assimilated.
- 6. Do not email me your assignments!** I will NOT download any files from students. All work must be submitted to Canvas. (I lost two computers downloading files from students.)
- 7. Please use my feedback!** I give feedback and it takes me a long time to give every student feedback. Students who do not make the changes suggested in my feedback will not earn a good grade on their final work.
- 8. Be proactive!** If you have a tight schedule, then you need to be on top of your work. I don't know your schedule, but you do. Don't wait until the last minute to do your work.
- 9. Technology is not always your friend.** All work in this class is required to be the original work of the student. Any use of AI Authorship tools including, but not limited to, ChatGPT, QuillBot, etc... will be considered a violation of this requirement. To be completely honest, work created by AI isn't always accurate and often does not meet the prompt. Students end up getting a bad grade and they are surprised. My suggestion is don't use it – do your own work. You really are capable, and it will be fine. This is the third time in your syllabus, but I will say one last time: no cellphones during class lectures, no ear pods/headphones, and no laptops. If you must use a laptop in my class, please sit in the front row.
- 10. Be respectful of different opinions.** Our world has become divided. That is not the intention of argumentation. Argumentation – at least academic argumentation, is not personal. It is a systematic process to show the best arguments and the decision of who won the debate is based on the merit of the evidence presented not which side you are on, or not which side you prefer. This course is a critical thinking course. It requires you to put aside your personal beliefs and investigate the quality and ethical nature of the evidence. That is what I want from all my students. My job isn't to tell you what to think, it is to teach you how to think. This is one of the most important classes I ever took as an undergraduate and my hope is that you see the value in breaking apart arguments and learning how to craft arguments. If you master this, I can guarantee it will be a valuable skill for your future.