

COMM-128: CRITICAL THINKING: ARGUMENTATION AND DEBATE

Effective Term

Fall 2025

CC Approval

11/1/2024

AS Approval

11/14/2024

BOT Approval

11/21/2024

COCI Approval

05/15/2025

SECTION A - Course Data Elements
CB04 Credit Status

Credit - Degree Applicable

Discipline

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
Communication Studies (Speech Communication) (Master's Degree)	

Subject Code

COMM - Communication Studies

Course Number

128

Department

Communication Studies (COMM)

Division

Language and Developmental Studies (LADS)

Full Course Title

Critical Thinking: Argumentation and Debate

Short Title

Argumentation and Debate

CB03 TOP Code

1506.00 - Speech Communication

CB08 Basic Skills Status

NBS - Not Basic Skills

CB09 SAM Code

E - Non-Occupational

Rationale

Course updates to align with CALGETC -1C

SECTION B - Course Description

Catalog Course Description

This course focuses on argumentation theory including research, methods of analysis, use and test of evidence, refutation, and the logical responsibilities of advocacy, and the rhetorical theories and communication techniques in a multicultural democratic society. It emphasizes the preparation and presentation of cases for and against propositions of Fact, Value, and Policy through debate and public address.

SECTION C - Conditions on Enrollment

Open Entry/Open Exit

No

Repeatability

Not Repeatable

Grading Options

Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass

Allow Audit

Yes

Requisites

Prerequisite(s)

Completion of ENGL-C1000 with a minimum grade of C.

Advisory Prerequisite(s)

Completion of COMM-C1000 with a minimum grade of C.

Requisite Justification

Requisite Description

Course Not in a Sequence

Subject

ENGL

Course #

C1000

Level of Scrutiny

Requisite Established by Statute/Regulation

Explanation

CALGETC

SECTION D - Course Standards

Is this course variable unit?

No

Units

3.00

Lecture Hours

54.00

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Contact Hours

54

Total Student Hours

162

Distance Education Approval

Is this course offered through Distance Education?

Yes

Online Delivery Methods

DE Modalities	Permanent or Emergency Only?
Entirely Online	Permanent
Hybrid	Permanent

SECTION E - Course Content

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Use critical thinking skills to research, evaluate, and debate using multiple forms of argumentation.
2.	Distinguish between valid and invalid forms of support.
3.	Proficiently demonstrate use of various debate skills.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Evaluate and develop arguments using inductive and deductive reasoning.
2.	Employ sound reasoning and construct compelling arguments to evaluate knowledge from belief and fact from judgment in oral and written persuasive discourse.
3.	Learn how to analyze, advocate, and criticize ideas, through effective research strategies and the process of discussion, and debate.
4.	Identify common logical errors and fallacies of reasoning and language.
5.	Identify propositions of Fact, Value, and Policy, and assumption upon which particular conclusions depend.
6.	Develop and apply rhetorical theories to employ research skills, analyze, outline, compose, and present traditional and contemporary argumentation, debate, and advocacy methods.
7.	Demonstrate the ability to evaluate reliable and relevant evidence in support of arguments.
8.	Apply the principles of argumentation, debate, and advocacy with attention to their intended audience, purpose, and social context.
9.	Demonstrate rhetorical sensitivity to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging and adhere to ethical communication practices which include truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason.
10.	Employ effective listening practices.

Course Content

1. Critical thinking – arguments
 - a. Methods of critical inquiry, reasoning.
 - b. Advocacy and argumentation techniques
 - c. The role of value propositions and the need to address value conflicts; ethics in argumentation.
 - d. The role of Fact propositions. Distinguishing facts from inferences, and possibility from probability.
 - e. The role of policy propositions and distinguishing between inductive, and deductive arguments.
2. Deductive arguments:
 - a. Syllogisms
 - b. Validity and truth
 - c. Logical fallacies

3. Inductive arguments:
 - a. Statistical generalizations
 - b. Scientific method
 - c. Arguments from authority
 - d. Causation
4. Critical analysis of oral and written arguments
 - a. Analyzing required components to meet prima facie burdens.
 - b. Analyzing the quality of evidence used to support claims.
 - c. Analyzing source credibility
 - d. Analyzing traditional forms of argumentation, and logic.
 - i. Support assumptions
 - ii. Premises and conclusions
 - iii. Deduction and Induction
 - iv. Informal fallacies
 - e. Considering the implication of rhetorical appeals to emotion (pathos).
 - f. Denotation and connotation
 - g. Vagueness and ambiguity
 - h. Metaphor
 - i. Style
5. Research skills
6. Critical writing
 - a. Writing briefs for propositions of fact, value, and policy applying evidence to support claims.
 - b. Analyzing and critiquing debates.
7. Presentation skills

Methods of Instruction

Methods of Instruction

Types	Examples of learning activities
Lecture	The instructor will develop and present course material through lectures, supplemental articles, and videos.
Discussion	Instructor-led class discussion identifying fallacies of logic.
Observation and Demonstration	<p>Observation: Provide the speaker with constructive criticism concerning performance, the audience's engagement, and the speech's effectiveness.</p> <p>Demonstration: A minimum of three faculty-supervised, faculty-evaluated, debate presentations in front of a live audience (one to many), including proposition of Fact, Policy, and Value.</p>

Instructor-Initiated Online Contact Types

Announcements/Bulletin Boards
 Chat Rooms
 Discussion Boards
 E-mail Communication
 Telephone Conversations
 Video or Teleconferencing

Student-Initiated Online Contact Types

Chat Rooms
 Discussions
 Group Work

Course design is accessible

Yes

Methods of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation

Types	Examples of classroom assessments
Oral Presentations	A minimum of three faculty-supervised, faculty-evaluated, oral presentations in front of a live audience (one to many), including an Informative speech of at least five minutes and a Persuasive speech of at least six minutes in length; speech outlines and works cited/references; critiques of speeches. Additional methods of evaluation are at the discretion of local faculty.
Exams/Tests	Tests will reflect the unit readings and lectures. Example: Multiple choice exam covering deductive and inductive reasoning, analyzing credibility of sources and quality of evidence.
Quizzes	Quizzes will reflect the unit readings and lectures.. Example: Quiz on the difference between value, fact or policy propositions.
Essays/Papers	-Flow Sheets from debates -Value Affirmative case essay (1000 words). -response to Value Affirmative case essay (1000 words). -Policy Affirmative case essay (1000 words). -response to Policy Affirmative case essay (1000 words). -Self Evaluation of debate performance (1000 words)
Class Participation	Critique of public debate, in class activities, group work.
Homework	Reading assignments from assigned textbook.

Assignments

Reading Assignments

- Read articles relevant to constructing an Affirmative case
- Read articles relevant to constructing a Negative argument
- Read assigned chapters from the textbook

Writing Assignments

- Write a Value Affirmative case essay (1000 words).
 - Write a response to a Value affirmative case essay (1000 words).
 - Write a Policy Affirmative case essay (1000 words).
 - Write a response to the Policy Affirmative case essay (1000 words).
 - Write a Self Evaluation of debate performance (1000 words)
- Writing critical peer evaluations and self-reflection papers (1000-2000 words).

Other Assignments

- Viewing and analysis of selected TV news programs, opinion, and documentary programs.
- View and evaluate public debates

SECTION F - Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Material Type

Textbook

Author

Zarefsky, David

Title

The Practice of Argumentation: Effective Reasoning in Communication (Critical Reasoning and Argumentation)

Publisher

Cambridge University Press

Year

2019

Material Type

Textbook

Author

Pugh, R. H.

Title

The Debate Handbook: Winning With Parliamentary Debate

Publisher

Independently published

Year

2020

Material Type

Textbook

Author

Nancy Wood & James S. Miller

Title

Perspectives on Argument

Edition/Version

10th

Publisher

Pearson

Year

2023

ISBN #

13:9780138274870

Course Codes (Admin Only)

ASSIST Update

Yes

CB00 State ID

CCC000552268

CB10 Cooperative Work Experience Status

N - Is Not Part of a Cooperative Work Experience Education Program

CB11 Course Classification Status

Y - Credit Course

CB13 Special Class Status

N - The Course is Not an Approved Special Class

CB23 Funding Agency Category

Y - Not Applicable (Funding Not Used)

CB24 Program Course Status

Program Applicable

Allow Pass/No Pass

Yes

Only Pass/No Pass

No