

Prepared by the Department of Arts and Communication
Date of Departmental Approval: February 13, 2017
Date approved by Curriculum and Programs: March 29, 2017

Effective: Fall 2017

1. **Course Number:** COM207
Course Title: Argumentation and Debate
2. **Description:** This class provides an overview of the study of argumentation. Students learn argumentation theories and approaches while gaining skills in critical thinking and public speaking. By the end of the semester, students understand how to research and build an argument; how to anticipate, construct, and refute arguments; and how to evaluate the political, moral, and cultural contexts of argumentation.
3. **Student Learning Outcomes:**
Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to do the following:
 - Understand and incorporate logos, ethos, pathos
 - Understand and implement techniques for framing, constructing, and deconstructing arguments
 - Recognize how to establish significance and impact in a debate
 - Consider the ethical application of argumentative theory
 - Recognize logical fallacies in arguments/reasoning
 - Understand, identify, and explain deductive and inductive reasoning
 - Recognize the relationship between credibility and ethics
 - Evaluate and question other speakers' sources, statements and arguments for their ethical standards.
 - Evaluate and question the sources, statements and arguments of public figures
 - Recognize the role of cultural values and attitudes on what is perceived to be an effective argument
 - Demonstrate awareness of cultural bias and gender bias in argumentation
 - Use inclusive and non-offensive language in argument construction
 - Research international and historical context to debate topics
 - Research debate topics relevant to the non-Western world
 - Write debate critiques and case constructions
 - Deliver speeches on researched debate topics
 - Respond to questions from the opposing teams during the debate
 - Ethically consider the appropriateness of the topics and language to your audience
 - Demonstrate basic refutation skills necessary to defend their own arguments and respond to the arguments of others
 - Avoid stereotyping and labeling behavior in argument construction
 - Construct and apply decision-making criteria in judging and deciding the outcome of a debate
 - Compare and evaluate the relative strength/weaknesses of sources and arguments
 - Construct coherent reasons to support your arguments.
 - Demonstrate the ability to listen effectively by critically evaluating debates and responding to arguments presented by others
 - Explain the role of debate in academics, politics and culture
4. **Credits:** 3 credits; may be repeated once for credit
5. **Satisfies General Education Requirement:** Humanities and Fine Arts
6. **Prerequisite:** COM103 (Human Communication) or ENL101 (English Composition I) or ENL108 (Critical Reading & Thinking)
7. **Semester(s) Offered:** Fall, Spring

8. **Suggested General Guidelines for Evaluation:** Student performance is evaluated based on the demonstration of a basic understanding of argumentation theory, including elements of argument construction, refutation and analysis. Methods of assessment include class debates (3), reaction papers, and other assignments. All students will participate in one un-graded and three graded in-class debates, and take a cumulative final exam.

9. **General Topical Outline (Optional):**

Introduction to Argumentation Theory. Introduction to Argumentation: Generating main points, constructing a complete argument, and structuring an argument. Understanding logical fallacies. Establishing significance and impact in a debate.

How to Construct and Refute a Case. How to distinguish between questions of policy, value, and fact. The different ways to construct a case in different debate formats. Refutation Strategies: answering arguments effectively. Tests and types of different kinds of evidence.

Focus on Delivery and Credibility. How to take notes in an argument, how to deliver an argument, and how to question your opposition.