COMM351: Argumentation       Winter 2011

INSTRUCTOR: Angela McGowan, MA  OFFICE: Minne Hall, Room 139, Winona State Campus
CLASS TIME: M 5:40-9:40pm  OFFICE PHONE: 507-457-2909
EMAIL: amcgowan@winona.edu or mcgowan@augsburg.edu  OFFICE HOURS: Before class or by appointment

CLASSROOM: Please refer to Records & Registration on the Inside Augsburg page for latest information on room assignments.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course investigates and applies principles of argumentation to interpersonal and public discourse in varying contexts.

This course
1) emphasizes genres of argument and research
2) will focus on the analytical reading of written and visual arguments
3) presents and implements research as a means of discovery
4) ends with civic and professional argumentation

Students choose most of their own topics for their arguments and research, and they will be introduced to academic research and field research about local problems/issues.

This course uses reading as material for rhetorical analysis and examination of argumentative strategies. Writing process time for invention exercises, peer reviewing, and revising is built into the course. The writing assignments progress from smaller incremental tasks to longer. A main focus is to give students the opportunity to produce several different genres of argument (among them: an op-ed piece, a speech, and a longer magazine article). Students do research on their issues of interest throughout the course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will expand students’ contextual knowledge of how arguments operate within our culture, and it will cultivate one’s ability to read critically and creatively, make pertinent claims, assess opposing arguments fairly, and communicate judgments effectively. Students will develop tools for analyzing argument and gain insight into the character and quality of arguments. Additionally, participants will have the opportunity to develop their own oral and written communication skills.

Coursework

1. First part of the course: Gives students a strong common foundation in the concepts and strategies of argument.
2. **Second part of the course**: Teaches more advanced argumentative moves and gives students practice with different forms that arguments can take for specific purposes, audiences, and context.

3. **Third part of the course**: Emphasizes truth-seeking and problem-solving through independent research and the production of several researched arguments, where your choice of claim type arises out of your own sense of audience and purpose. Each argument will be addressed to an actual audience and aimed at publication in a newspaper, magazine, employee bulletin, or newsletter.

4. **Fourth part of the course**: Focus on the issues of definition, cause, analogy, evaluation, and proposal.

**Individual work will consist of:**

- Op-ed piece or guest editorial (local or regional newspaper)
  500-1000 words

- Advocacy advertising piece
  1 page*
  *Writing Assignment, Chapter 15, page 324*

- Evaluation or ethical argument written as a magazine article for a particular public affairs or niche magazine
  4-6 pages*
  *Writing Assignment, Chapter 14, pages 295-300*

- Practical proposal addressing a local problem
  4-6 pages*
  *Writing Assignment, Chapter 15, pages 323-324*

- Letter to the editor
  Approximately 300 words
  *Writing Assignment, Chapter 13, pages 271-273*

- Policy proposal speech
  7-9 minute speech
  *Writing Assignment, page 324*

* Currently approximate page length, subject to change

- **Readings** enhance students’ abilities to engage in class discussion and demonstrate preparedness for class. Therefore, students are required to complete the assigned reading for each class session.

- **Requirements**: Each assignment has a series of minimum requirements; failure to complete these will result in a grade deduction for each missing requirement.

- **In-class assignments** will vary depending on the course material covered. These scores reflect the student’s willingness to participate and punctuality and attendance in class. Therefore, one cannot make-up in-class assignments because of absence or tardiness.
POLICIES

Attendance: Attendance is a necessity due to the nature of the course. Your involvement and participation are required – whether it be as a participant, presenter, or listener. This course is based on communication, and we cannot communicate if you are not present. Since we only meet 7 times, you are expected to attend every class session.

Missed Presentations: If you are absent on a day you are scheduled to present, and we have not agreed in advance that you could present on another day, you will receive a zero for the assignment. There will be almost no excuses accepted for presentation days.

Writing Considerations: All work turned in for a grade must be typed, double spaced, and cited according to the APA style manual. All papers and outlines must be in Times New Roman Font, Size 12. Deductions will occur for not following instructions. For written work, late work is lost work. Thus, I do not give extensions for written assignments, nor do I accept late work.

APA Citations: All written work must be submitted in APA format. If you have not used APA style before, or need information on how to format your Reference Page and papers, please go directly to the APA website and check the links at http://www.apastyle.org/elecsourse.html and http://www.apastyle.org/faqs.html.

Academic Honesty: I strongly believe that academic misconduct hurts you as a student, your peers, the university, and me. Therefore, in this course academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and will result in a lowered or failing grade for the assignment or the course, depending on the situation.

If I suspect you have plagiarized, I will ask to see the sources of your information and you will not receive a grade until I have verified the source of every idea in question. If you have copied someone else’s words or ideas without giving appropriate credit, I will follow the procedures set forth in the undergraduate catalog.

1. **Plagiarism.** If you use the words or ideas of someone else, you must cite the original source of information in your written and spoken work, including your presentations and essays. If you do not cite your sources, you will be plagiarizing. Copying someone else’s words or ideas without giving that person credit is a very serious offense.

   Unless the information is common knowledge, give the source credit even when you are paraphrasing (not directly quoting) source’s words. Remember, it is better to over-cite sources than to under-cite.

2. **Cheating.** Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices in any academic exercises is not acceptable.

3. **Fabrication.** All sources and facts cited in a speech must be real; inventing facts or sources is academic dishonesty and will be treated accordingly.

4. **Multiple Submission.** The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports), for credit more than once without authorization is dishonest.
5. **Behavioral Integrity.** Behavioral integrity shall consist of demonstrating behaviors that are consistent with expected professional behaviors in the classroom. The primary responsibility for ensuring adherence to the principle of academic and behavioral integrity rests with students and faculty.

I am committed to having a supportive instructional climate. Achieving such a climate means that both students and instructor:

- attack arguments, not people
- are individually responsible for the accuracy, quality, and complete citations of ALL evidence or reasons that they use to support claims
- support equality of access to opportunities in the course
- show respect for differences based on gender, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and physical challenges

### GRADING

**Grading Scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Scale</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-90</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Exceptional work, inspired, rare. Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-80</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Strong, consistent work, insightful. Achievement that is significantly above what is required for the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79-70</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Basic, adequate work fulfilling all requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69-60</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below par, revealing minimal participation/knowledge. Achievement that is worthy of credit, even though it does not meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-50</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Achievement not worthy of credit. Will be given for no shows and didn't knows.</td>
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**Percentages:**

- A 100 - 90 %
- B+ 89 – 86 %
- B 85 – 80 %
- C+ 79 – 76 %
- C 75 – 70 %
- D+ 69 – 66 %
- D 65 – 60 %

**Incompletes:**

Only under extreme circumstances or emergencies will I give an incomplete. Incompletes require documentation for consideration and must be arranged in advance with the instructor. If you do not arrange an incomplete, I will assume that you accept the grade you would be assigned given your total points at the end of the semester.
### A Word on Grading

After a grade is returned, participants have one week to resolve questions about the grade with the instructor. If you wish to discuss a grade, you must set up an appointment with the instructor no later than four days after the assignment is returned. A grade will be assumed agreed upon if unquestioned after one week upon return to the participant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Points</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Your Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Op-ed piece</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy advertising piece</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation or ethical argument written as a magazine article for a particular public affairs or niche magazine</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Practical proposal</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy proposal speech</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL POINTS FOR COURSE (approximate)</strong></td>
<td>400</td>
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If you want to find out where within that category you are, use the following scale:

- 360-400   A
- 320-344   B
- 280-303   C
- 263-244   D
- 345-359   B+
- 304-319   C+
- 264-279   D+
- 243 – 0   F
- 540-580   A-
- 480-497   B-
- 420-437   C-
- 360-370   D-
# Course Schedule

(This schedule is tentative; if changes are made you will be notified in class.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
<th>Reading/Preparation</th>
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</table>
| **Session 1:** | Introduction to argument, the rhetorical triangle, and discovering arguable issues and claims | No formal writing assignment | Course Introduction - Print syllabus  
Read chapters: 1, 2, and 3 |
| **Session 2:** | Reading arguments and working with sources as a bridge toward writing arguments | No formal writing assignment | Read chapters: 16 and 17 |
| **Session 3:** | Framing and supporting an argument | Op-ed piece or guest editorial | Read chapters: 4, 5, and 10 |
| **Session 4:** | 1) Focusing on Logos, Pathos, and visual arguments  
2) Accommodating audiences and making evaluations | 1) Advocacy advertisement  
2) Evaluation or ethical argument written as a magazine article for a particular public affairs of niche magazine | 1) Read chapters: 6 and 9  
2) Read chapters: 7 and 14 |
| **Session 5:** | 1) Writing a practical proposal  
2) Joining a Conversation with a letter to the editor | 1) Practical proposal  
2) A causal argument or a resemblance argument | 1) Read chapters: 15  
2) Read chapters: 12 and 13 |
| **Session 6:** | 1) Writing a policy proposal speech  
2) | 1) Policy proposal speech | 1) Read Chapters: 15  
2) |
| **Session 7:** | Writing researched arguments | 1) Policy proposal speech | 3) Researched academic argument or a white paper on a political or civic issue |

This syllabus is a guideline for the course. As such, its terms may be altered when doing so is, in the opinion of the instructor, in the best interests of the class.