

ARGUMENTATION/ COMMUNICATION STUDIES 104

Instructor: Allan McKissick
Office Sessions: by arrangement

Website: mckissicka.faculty.mjc.edu
E-mail: mckissicka@yosemite.edu

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To examine...

1. ...traditional logic-based argumentation as a foundation for effective thinking, writing and speaking.
2. ...the benefits of argumentation as a basis for individual, group, and societal decision-making.

To develop...

1. ... class members' abilities as critical listeners, readers, and thinkers.
2. ... class members' abilities as reasonable, persuasive and ethical advocates in written and oral communication.

COURSE CONTENT

Unit I: Philosophy and Underlying Precepts
Unit II: Analysis
Unit III: Evidence
Unit IV: Reasoning
Unit V: Debate Format

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Item	Due	Weight
1. MINOR ASSIGNMENTS: Assigned throughout the semester. Due dates announced with assignments.	_____	25%
2. EXAM #1 (Mid-Term): Over Units I & II (all lecture, discussion, reading assignments, etc.). Normally, the term grade may be no higher than one grade above the grade given on this exam (as adjusted by any retakes -- see policy on retakes).	_____	25%
3. MAJOR COMPOSITIONS: Demonstrating class members' skills of research, evidence management, analysis and reasoning.	_____	15%
4. EXAM #2: Over Units III, IV, V (also over any other material stipulated).	_____	15%
5. TO BE ANNOUNCED: A major assignment relating to class members as voters or consumers -- will be determined with class participation.	_____	10%
6. ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY/PARTICIPATION: Due to the nature of this course, attendance, punctuality, and participation will be reflected significantly in the final grade. (See relevant policies.)	_____	10%
7. SPEECH NIGHT ATTENDANCE and OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES: Class members are required to attend Speech Night (a late afternoon or evening activity) and at least two authorized "outside activities" that relate to the course. Options will be announced.	_____	Pass/Fail
8. OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT: May be negotiated with the instructor (assignment and value must be agreed upon before submission.) Includes Bonus Tickets awarded during class discussion. Extra credit may raise the term grade to a maximum one grade higher.		

TEXT: *Argumentation Handbook* (current edition) by Allan McKissick

IMPORTANT NOTICES (COMMUNICATION STUDIES 104)

- Attendance/Punctuality/Participation** policy: Class members with “perfect” attendance and significant class participation will receive maximum points for the participation grade. Unexcused absences will significantly affect the attendance/participation grade, as will excessive tardiness. An excused absence must usually be acceptably documented with a verifiable note from someone in a position of authority/expertise relevant to the cause of absence, e.g., from the student’s supervisor at work if it is work-related, from a doctor or nurse if it is health-related, etc. (NOTE: if the class as a group prefers to count all absences as unexcused, the instructor will do so.) Tardy class members are responsible for making sure that their attendance is recorded. In any class where there is a significant amount of tardiness, two late arrivals will count against the student’s attendance grade at the rate of one absence.
- Dropping Students:** Students will be dropped for any of the following reasons: (1) excessive absences; (2) failure to complete assignments; or (3) not participating in-class as defined by this syllabus.
 - **Excessive Absences:** Normally, students will be dropped for a third unexcused absence before the second census date, and excessive excused absences before that date will also result in being dropped. Attendance will be taken by the professor at every class session.
 - **Failure to Complete Assignments:** Failure to complete assignments in a timely manner will result in a student being dropped.
 - **Not participating in-class:** During remote instruction, students are required to both attend and actively participate during class sessions. *Participation*, at a minimum, is defined as: (1) displaying a live video feed by facing and looking directly into the webcam or other video source (i.e., substituting the live video feed for a picture or name will not suffice); (2) maintaining engagement during lectures, classroom exercises, and student presentations; and (3) offering relevant and appropriate comments when called-upon in class.
- Using Canvas:** Students MUST use Canvas to submit assignments and take online quizzes and exams. No other method will be offered, accepted, or graded. Students are advised to complete assignments and exams early. “Technical difficulties with Canvas” WILL NOT excuse missed assignments, quizzes, or exams.
- Assignment revision:** When assignments are “good faith efforts” submitted on or before due dates, students may, in consultation with the instructor, resubmit the assignment. The higher grade will be used in calculation of the term grade. To facilitate such efforts, students may make appointments to discuss an assignment’s tentative grade before the assignment is returned in class, or even, when practical, before the assignment is due.
- Cheating:** Plagiarism (misrepresenting someone else’s ideas or wording as one’s own) or cheating in any other form may result in automatic failure on the assignment in question, penalty to the participation component of the attendance-participation grade, or failure of the entire course, at the instructor’s discretion. (See the required text for additional explanation of plagiarism.)
- Course requirements:** All assignments must be completed for a class member to receive a passing grade. Requirements are not necessarily limited to those specified in the course syllabus. Some assignments may require independent or group activities outside of regularly scheduled class time and place. Class members are responsible for awareness of lecture and discussion materials, out-of-class assignments, etc., regardless of absence during activity or when an assignment was made or modified.
- Grading policy:** See the first page of the syllabus for the relative weights of the assignments. This course is offered on a credit - no credit basis, but it must be registered as such by the student no later than the first 30% of the class. (The deadline this term is _____). The Admissions Office (not the instructor) accepts students’ applications for credit - no credit grading status. (See the college catalog.)
- Late assignments:** All late assignments will be penalized except under well-documented (see above) extenuating circumstances
- Make-ups/extra credit:** In consultation with the instructor, students may submit extra credit or make-up projects. Students may use approved make-up projects to remove a limited amount of penalties for late submissions or absences, or approved extra credit projects to add points to their term total.
- Withdrawal procedures:** It is the students’ responsibility to notify the Admissions Office of withdrawal from this class. Do not depend on the instructor to drop you from the class roll for non-attendance or any other reason: he will not necessarily do so.

IF IN DOUBT, ASK!

COURSE OUTLINE

UNIT ONE: PHILOSOPHY AND UNDERLYING CONCEPTS

- I. Critical thinking, argumentation and debate.
 - A. Critical thinking defined.
 - B. Reasoning and rationality.
 - C. Argumentation and debate.
 - D. The interaction of reasoning, logic and persuasion.
 - E. Persuasion-based and Logic-based Argumentation.
 - F. Strong Sense Critical Thinking, Weak Sense Critical Thinking and the Four Rhetorical Styles.
 - G. Critical thinking process.
 - H. Critical thinking values.
- II. Argumentative Burdens (Responsibilities) and key concepts.
 - A. Burden of Proof.
 - B. Presumption.
 - C. Proposition.
 - D. Prima Facie Case.
 - D. Burden of Refutation.
 - E. Burden of Rebuttal.
 - F. Other Burdens.
 - G. Lighter and heavier Burdens of Proof.

UNIT TWO: ANALYSIS

- I. Analysis defined.
- II. Problems of poor analysis.
 - A. Problem of ill-defined positions.
 - B. Problem of mistaken agreement/disagreement.
 - C. Problem of mistaking relevant/irrelevant.
 - D. Problem of missing critical issues.
 - E. Problem of lack of “clash.”
- III. Propositions.
 - A. Described.
 - B. Traditional types.
 - C. Guidelines for clarity and effectiveness.
 - D. Hierarchies of propositions.
- IV. Definitions.
- V. Manipulative language.
- VI. Issues.
 - A. Issue as a question on which arguers can disagree.
 - B. Perspectives on an issue.
 - C. Discovery of issues -- stock issues as pre-determined critical issues.
 - D. Clash.
- VII. Poor analysis of issues and manipulation.
 - A. Argumentum ad Rem.
 - B. Avoidance of relevant issues.
- VIII. Outlining as a tool for analysis

UNIT THREE: EVIDENCE

- I. Evidence defined
 - A. “Proof” and other synonyms
 - B. “Reasoning” as inferential leap from evidence to claim

- II. Types of evidence
 - A. Assumptions
 - B. Fact/value Premise/opinion
 - C. A hierarchy of evidence
- III. Tests/subtests of evidence
 - A. For fact and opinion data
 - B. For value premises
- IV. Research
 - A. Procedure
 - B. Sources

UNIT FOUR: REASONING

- I. Key definitions
 - A. Reasoning
 - B. Inference
 - C. Argument
 - D. Logic
- II. Primary standards for evaluation
 - A. Material truth
 - B. Validity
 - C. Persuasiveness
- III. Our philosophy
 - A. Reasoning as “heart” of argumentation
 - B. Logic-based, traditional approach
- IV. Toulmin Model
 - A. Serves as analytical device
 - B. Uses of model
- V. Types of arguments
 - A. Induction vs. deduction
 - B. Specific types/ tests
- VI. Syllogism as model for testing validity of deductive reasoning
 - A. Structure
 - B. Types
 - C. Tests
 - D. Enthememes
- VII. Logical fallacies
 - A. Fallacies of Unclear Evidence.
 - B. Fallacies of Inaccurate (or Questionable) Evidence.
 - C. Fallacies of Irrelevant Evidence.
 - D. Fallacies of Insufficient Evidence.

UNIT FIVE: DEBATE FORMAT

- I. Basic goals in formatting a debate
- II. General concerns
 - A. Speaking order
 - B. Speaking time
 - C. Degree and type of structure
 - D. Specialization of speeches
 - E. Cross-examination
 - F. Audience participation
- III. Sample debate formats
 - A. Academic debate
 - B. Audience involvement format
- IV. Parliamentary Procedure

Study Questions on Philosophy, Analysis, Evidence, Reasoning, and Debate Format Units

1. Define and provide your own example for each of the following terms (terms will be provided during the exam -- any term that has been used in lecture, text, discussion or handouts may be used). (ALL UNITS)
2. Compare and contrast the “Audience-Centered” (Persuasion-Based) and “Traditional” (Logic-Based) schools of argumentation, including how they differ in approach to ethos, pathos and logos. Also, provide original examples clearly illustrating the two schools differing use of ethos, pathos and logos. (Unit 1)
3. Explain each of the “Four Rhetorical Styles,” including which style or styles should be considered audience-centered or logic-based. As part of the analysis, clearly explain the difference between rational argument and manipulation/propaganda, and also the distinctions between self/group centered and socially responsible motivations for argumentation/persuasion. Explain significant ethical implications of each style. Also, provide examples that clearly illustrate each style. (Unit I)
4. Explain and provide your own example for each of Paul’s “Seven Traits of Mind.” (Unit 1)
5. “Anatomy of an argument:” Use your own example of an argument between two parties to illustrate the following concepts: status quo, presumption, proposition, burden of proof, prima facie case, burden of refutation, burden of rebuttal. Also, define each of those terms. (Unit I)
6. What is a proposition? What are the three basic types of propositions? (Explain and give your own example of each.) Discuss at least five of the Eight Guidelines for Propositions. (For each, explain the guideline, give an example of a sentence that violates it and another example that corrects the violation.) (Unit II)
7. Define “Critical Thinking” and explain the key terms in the definition. Then, explain criteria for a “good” definition and use those criteria to evaluate your definition. (Unit I & II)
8. Define analysis. Discuss the consequences of poor analysis -- illustrate with your own examples. Explain obfuscation and techniques used to accomplish it -- illustrate with your own examples. Contrast good analysis of issues with poor analysis, illustrating with your own examples and including explanation of Argumentum ad Rem and red herrings. (Unit II)
9. Define “Stock Issues.” Then, using your own policy proposition on the topic provided to you (during the exam), support it with a stock issues case, clearly illustrating the nature of each issue. Then, do the same for a proposition of fact and a proposition of value. (If topics are not provided, use your own original topic.) (Unit II)
10. Explain each of the six rules of outlining. Correct any errors in the outline provided to you (during the exam), labeling each as to type of error. If no outline is provided, provide two examples for each rule: one that violates the rule and a correction that passes it. (Unit II)
11. Explain the “Four Basic Tests of Evidence” and the “Three Basic Source Tests.” Using the appropriate tests of evidence, evaluate the examples of evidence provided to you (during the exam). If no examples are provided, for each test (or sub-test) you discuss, provide original examples of evidence that pass and examples that fail each test (or sub-test). (Unit III)
12. In the following arguments [provided during exam] indicate which informal logical fallacies are present -- be as specific as possible and justify your assessments. (Unit IV)

13. Explain the Toulmin Model. Then, use the model to analyze (break down) the arguments provided (during the exam). Use all six parts of the model – if the argument provided does not have wording corresponding to a particular part of the model (e. g., the “warrant” is missing), infer what it would be (or suggest what it could be). Identify each argument as to type (e. g., “analogy”). Then use the appropriate tests to evaluate each argument, justifying your assessment of that argument’s strength or weakness. (Unit IV)
14. Explain what a syllogism is. Then, indicate whether each of the following arguments (provided during the exam) is valid or invalid. If the argument is invalid, explain what rule (or rules) of the syllogism is broken. (Unit IV)
15. What is “debate?” When is argumentation debate, and when is it not debate? What are the advantages and disadvantage of a debate approach? Explain typical formats for academic team (two-on-two) debate and academic Lincoln-Douglas debate. Discuss also a possible format for a “public” type debate, justifying your design. (Unit V)

Communication Studies104 Course Learning Outcomes

The following are the official Student Learning Objectives for the Argumentation (Communication Studies104) Course, adopted by the Department of Communication Studies and Modesto Junior College.

As a result of satisfactory completion of Communication Studies 104, students should be prepared to:

1. Differentiate between types of propositions and the discovery of issues inherent to their analysis.
2. Find, evaluate, and incorporate research materials into written and oral argumentation, as well as cite sources correctly.
3. Create logically strong arguments and apply principles of fair-minded argument, which includes how to identify and respond to bias, fallacious reasoning, and propaganda.

YCCD Policy 5-8081 Academic Freedom – Students

The Board of Trustees believes that students have the right to listen, the right to decide, the right to choose, the right to reject, the right to express and defend individual beliefs, and that the educational purpose of the District is best served by this freedom of expression. As members of an academic community, students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Institutional procedures for achieving these purposes may vary from campus to campus, but maintaining rigorous standards of academic freedom for students are essential to the purposes for which community colleges exist.

Students are free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Student performance will be evaluated on a broad academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards.

Rev. 8/’20