

Argumentation and Advocacy

COMM322 (201510R)

Summer 2016

M/W/F – 1:00-3:50 p.m. ANN 309

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Office Hours: Thursdays 11:00-12:00 or by appointment, ANN 209

“Only reason can convince us of those three fundamental truths without a recognition of which there can be no effective liberty: that what we believe is not necessarily true, that what we like is not necessarily good, and that all questions are open.” – Clive Bell

I. Course Description & Objectives

Every day we are inundated by conflicting arguments in social media, online news sites, television, and radio, in magazines and books, on bumper stickers and billboards. The sources of these arguments constantly compete for our attention and our assent. How do we decide who is correct, what is reasonable, and what ideas or perspectives deserve our time, energy, and money?

This is a course about the communicative nature of reasoning. The purpose of this course, first and foremost, is to improve your capacity for reasoning so that you will be equipped to audit the myriad contradictory messages that saturate modern society as competent critical consumers of argument. Second, the course is designed to teach you how to construct convincing arguments of your own while effectively refuting your interlocutors. Third, the course fits into the larger curriculum at the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism by giving you a set of methodological tools with which you will be able to unpack and critique complex humanistic political and cultural texts, evaluate the sufficiency and relevance of social scientific evidence, and craft creative and well-reasoned advocacy campaigns in a variety of communicative contexts. You will also gain familiarity and competence with the technical conceptual vocabulary of argumentation and rhetorical studies, enabling you to pursue more advanced scholarly work in these fields.

Specifically, this class will introduce you to the basic theories and practices of argumentation and natural language reasoning. You will be exposed to a wide range of theories and concepts from the fields of rhetoric, applied epistemology, and informal logic, and be asked to apply these approaches to real world deliberative situations. This course will situate argument at the center of lived

social experience. We will explore how argument shapes the political, ethical, and cultural lifeworlds that we inhabit and communicate within.

We shall examine a wide range of argument formations, from formal logical proofs to informal argumentation 'in the wild.' For every different kind of argument, and for every unique context, we will identify and practice employing appropriate reasoning schemes through which good arguments can be constructed and distinguished from bad arguments. Equipped with these schemes, in each case you will be able to determine:

- what counts as a good reason for a claim;
- when claims are relevant to an argument and when they are not;
- which conclusions reasonably follow from different kinds of evidence;
- the difference between sufficient and insufficient evidence;
- the expectations that attend different contexts and different audiences.

We will accomplish this not by memorizing principles or rules, but instead by repeatedly applying our reasoning schemes in practice. Other topics in the course include the ethics of advocacy, the types and tests of evidence, standards for evaluating non-discursive arguments, and preparing a case and adapting it to an audience.

II. Materials

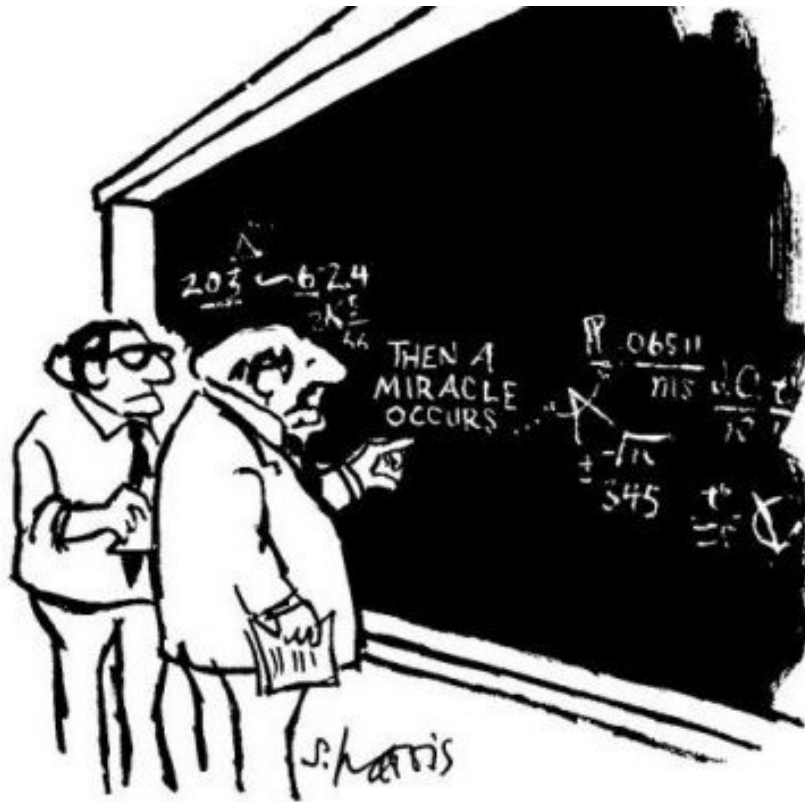
Required:

Hollihan, T. and Baaske, K, T. (2015). "Arguments & Arguing" 3rd Edition. Waveland Press.

Recommended:

A current style manual such as the Chicago Manual of Style (16th edition, 2010), the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition, 2009), or the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition, 2009).

Supplementary reading chapters and materials will be available via blackboard



"I THINK YOU SHOULD BE MORE
EXPLICIT HERE IN STEP TWO."

III.

Schedule

This schedule represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to address pedagogical issues and respond to specific student needs and interests. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.

May 18th

Course Introduction

Arguers as Lovers (Brockriede)

Argumentation as a Human Symbolic Activity (H&B Chapter 1&2)

May 20th

Can we defend debate?

Switch-Side Debating Meets Demand Driven Rhetoric of Science (Mitchell)
Debate as a Weapon of Mass Destruction (English, Llano, Mitchell, Morrison,
Rief & Woods)

May 23rd

Argument Evaluation – Refutation & Analyzing Arguments

Refutation (RSP)
Refuting Arguments (H&B – Chapter 9)
Tools for Analyzing Arguments (Herrick)

May 25th

Interpersonal Argument

Argumentation in Interpersonal Relationships (H&B Chapter 16)
Interpersonal Argument: Conflict & Reason Giving (Trapp)
To Argue or Not to Argue (Benoit & Benoit)
Argument in Interpersonal Relationships (Trapp)

May 27th

Legal Argumentation

Argumentation & the Law (Chapter 14)
Bias: Reading Between the Lines (G&T)
Arguments: Weak and Strong (G&T)
Weighing Evidence (G&T)

May 30th

Memorial Day – No Class

June 1st

Legal Argumentation

Ethnography assignment at Los Angeles court – no class meeting

June 3rd

Argumentation in Politics

Argumentation in Politics: Campaigns and Debates (H&B Chapter 13)

“Actually, let’s hear more from Dick Cheney on Iraq” (Chait)

Deliberative Democracy (Gutman)

June 6th

Argumentation in Politics II

Effeminate Speech on New Media: @HillaryClinton’s Public Intimacy through Relational Labor (Rhode & DeJmanee)

Glen Greenwald is Ralph Nader (Jonathan Chait)

June 8th

Argumentation in Politics III

The Metapolitics of the 2002 Iraq debate: Public Policy and the Network Imaginary (Goodnight)

Reagan’s Safety Net for the Truly Needy: The Rhetorical Uses of Definition (Zarefsky, Tutzauer & Tutzauer)

Strategic Maneuvering in Political Argumentation (Zarefsky)

June 10th

Argumentation in Science

Rhetoric of Economics (McCloskey)

More Empirical Schemes and the Reasons of Science (G&T)

Accidental Rhetoric: Root Metaphors of Three Mile Island (Goodnight and Farrell)

June 13th

Argumentation in Science - II

The Relationship Between the Public and the Technical Spheres of Science: A Case Study of the Challenger 7 Disaster (Rowland)

Science is Not Your Enemy (Pinker)

June 15th

Types of Arguments and The Toulmin Model

Types of Arguments (H&B Chapter 6)

The Toulmin Model (Herrick)

Toulmin's Model of Argumentation (Van Eemeren)

June 17th

Visual Argumentation

Visual Argument – (H&B Chapter 11)

Toward a Theory of Visual Argument (Birdsell & Groarke)

Representative forms and the visual ideograph: The Iwo Jima image in editorial cartoons (Edwards & Winkler)

June 20th

Academic Debate

Academic Debate (H&B Chapters 11 & 12)
Final Debate Cases Due

June 22nd

Demo Debate

June 24th

Debates – No Class Meeting

June 27th

Final Exam – In class final examination

Debate Case Final Version Due

IV. Assignments

Full descriptions of the instructions and parameters of each assignment will be provided in class and will also be available on the Blackboard site under the ‘Assignments’ tab. All assignments must be the original work of the student and cannot have been used previously or concurrently in any other course. All assignments must be attempted and turned in to pass the course.

1) Participation (20%)

This course is designed to provide students with a new methodology to approach public argument. The success of this process depends on the willingness of students to read before class and be ready to discuss the readings and each others’ interpretations and ideas. Students should expect a substantial amount of daily

reading for each class period Students who attend class without being ready to participate will receive a lower class participation grade.

There will be an additional online component to be explained on the first day of class, where students can discuss current events, applications of readings on a blog shared only by students in which rich text can be used.

2) Final Exam (20%)

There will be a final exam on the final day of class. The exam will be open book and all outside materials (books, chapters on blackboard and the internet) can be accessed by students. The format of the exam will consist of essay questions with some elements of choice. Students may use rich text (pictures, videos, etc.) from online in their essays to illustrate or reference arguments.

3) Debate Case (15%+15% for a total 30%)

During the course of the semester you will, in collaboration with two of your colleagues, develop a “case” on the debate topic for the year. This case will consist of a collection of individual arguments or “cards” that quote your research on the topic, your brief interpretation of that research and what it means as well as a specific citation. In class each team will choose whether they will write a case on the negative or affirmative side, but half have to be on each side. The case will be handed in – and graded – twice. The first time it will be due is October 1st while the second version will be due the final day of class (December 3rd). The grade for both versions will be shared amongst all three members of the group.

Throughout the semester we will discuss your progress and work and what kind of research you need and how to transform them into “cards.” Moreover, as I assess the first version I will provide you advice on how to develop your case and fill holes, but you are free to ask me for help throughout the semester. However, your team will do the actual research, though the librarians on campus can offer ample assistance as you look for relevant material. The case will be evaluated based on its comprehensiveness, creativity and quality of scholarship cited.

4) Debates (20%)

In stead of a final, you schedule – on your own time during finals week(or before) – a series of debates. Each student will be partnered with one other student and will debate on both the negative and affirmative side of our topic. In addition, you will serve as a judge (along with other students) on a panel evaluating debate rounds involving other teams. At the last day of class, you will receive every research team’s arguments and can use them for the debate. Your grade will be

based solely on the notes (or “flow”) you take from the debate, the thoughtfulness and fairness of your decision as judge (you will write down how and why you picked which team won – your “reason for decision”) and a three page reaction paper documenting your experience. You will submit all these materials to me electronically (notes taken on physical paper can be photographed/scanned and emailed). No part of your 25% grade is based on your win or loss, but only your understanding and reaction to it. Extra credit will be awarded to the best teams based on their win/loss record

5) Ethnography of Legal Argumentation in the Courts – 10%

One class period – June 1st – is set aside for you to spend time going to a Los Angeles court room and listen to legal arguments. You may choose to go any other day of your choosing as well. You are to attend a minimum of one court hearing or trial and take notes during the proceedings and write a summary of your experiences and reflections of the procedure and process of the argumentation you witnessed. A more detailed sheet of assignment expectations will be provided on blackboard

Grading Scale

Final course grades are assigned on the following scale:

94-100 % = A	80-83 % = B-	67-69 % = D+
90-93 % = A-	77-79 % = C+	64-66 % = D
87-89 % = B+	74-76 % = C	60-63 % = D-
84-86 % = B	70-73 % = C-	59 % and below = F

VI. Course Policies

Academic Integrity - The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's academic integrity code. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the academic integrity code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor. The University presumes that you are familiar with its standards and policies; should you be found to have committed a violation, ignorance of these standards and policies will not be accepted as an excuse. You should be familiar with the following resources:

* “Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism” addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations and citations in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's Writing Program (by Student Judicial Affairs):

<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/plag.html>

* “Understanding and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty” addresses more general issues of academic integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration (by Student Judicial Affairs): <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/tio.pdf>

* The "2013-2014 SCampus" (the student handbook) contains the university's Student Conduct Code and other student-related policies: <http://scampus.usc.edu/>

*The USC Code of Ethics:
https://about.usc.edu/files/2011/07/USC_Code_of_Ethics_2004.pdf

Draconian/Luddite Technology Policy – A considerable and burgeoning body of research suggests that students using laptops in the classroom detracts from learning, participation, thoughtfulness and focus. My anecdotal experience aligns with this research. As a result, we will have a no laptop or device policy in the classroom (exceptions may be made for certain exercises – in such cases I will let you know ahead of time). Taking notes will do just fine in this class, and should you miss material, your colleagues and I can surely help – there is not in-class final, midterm or any other test for which you will need notes in a time-sensitive situation. Exceptions based on documented disabilities should be discussed with the professor on an individual basis.

Attendance – Because of the practical nature of argumentation, your attendance is crucial, as most classes will involve some sort of exercise or active discussion in addition to the lecture. Accordingly, I will take attendance regularly. Any unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade, as will regularly missing portions of class. Absences due to university activities (conferences, competitions, etc.) must be discussed with the instructor before the relevant class period and proof of activity must be submitted in writing. Arrangements concerning absences are entirely at the instructor's discretion.

Grievance Procedure - Occasionally, students are dissatisfied with some dimension of a course. In such cases, students should first provide a written argument in support of their position to the instructor and request a meeting with the instructor. All grade appeals on specific assignments must be made within one week of the return of the assignment.

Late & Unfinished Work – Students must complete all assignments in order to earn a grade in the course. Any material turned in late will be reduced one letter grade per calendar day late. Late homework assignments will not be accepted.

Special Assistance - Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure that the letter is delivered as early in the semester as

possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and can be reached at (213) 740-0776.

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students – All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. I will often send out materials via blackboard's email tool, which will go to your USC e-mail account.