

# Comm 322: Argumentation and Advocacy (20512)

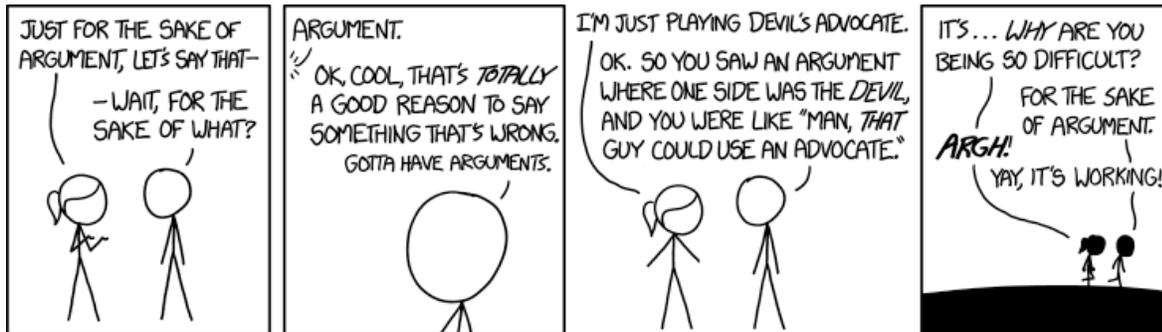
Spring 2017—Tues/Thurs—Time: 9:30-10:50 AM  
ANN 211

**Instructor:** Kari Storla

**Contact Info:** storla@usc.edu

**Office:** ASC G6 (basement on west side of building), Desk 7

**Office Hours:** TBD, by appointment



from <https://xkcd.com/1432/>

## Course Description and Learning Objectives

The goal of this course is to give you hands-on experience with constructing and analyzing arguments. In order to do so, you will engage in a range of activities designed to help you apply argue and advocate for issues in a variety of situations and understand how to adapt your message to different audiences. At the end of the course, we will have covered what arguments are and how they work, how to construct your own reasoning, how to analyze and respond to the arguments that others make, and also when it may be best to *not* argue. This class is designed to fuse theory and practice, rather than viewing them as separate. Along those same lines, this class will help you to apply these skills to your work in other classes and in your daily lives. By the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Identify, define, and explain key concepts related to argumentation and advocacy
- Engage in short online debates and adapt your argument strategies to the responses you receive
- Evaluate your own arguments and identify what is effective and what can be strengthened
- Recognize logical fallacies and refute them
- Persuasively present your position in verbal arguments, both when you are prepared to do so and when you are not
- Analyze visuals and explain how they present arguments
- Produce a 10- to 12-page essay that uses argumentative strategies to take a stance on an issue important to you

## Course Notes

If you have any concerns with the class or any assignments, it is in your best interests to come and discuss them with me ASAP. The earlier we can address potential problems, the better.

Argumentation and advocacy is, perhaps not surprisingly, an area of communication studies where there are a lot of debates about how things work. You are not expected to (and likely will not) agree with everything we read this semester. You *are* expected to work to understand each reading and how they can fit into the “bigger picture” of how you understand argumentation and advocacy.

While there are no required prerequisites to this course, students who have taken Comm 311: Rhetoric and the Public Sphere (previously Comm 201) and/or Comm 204: Public Speaking will be able to expand on some of the concepts and theories covered in those courses.

## Required Materials

- *Practical Argument: Short Third Edition* by Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. [Amazon link](#). ISBN: 978-1-3190-3019
  - The previous edition (Short Second Edition) is also acceptable
  - [Amazon link](#). ISBN: 978-1-4576-8388-6
- *Arguing Constructively* by Dominic A. Infante. [Amazon link](#).
- *“They Say / I Say”: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)* by Gerald Graff & Cathy Birkenstein. ISBN- 10: 0393935841. [Amazon link](#).
- Other readings indicated on syllabus will be made available on Blackboard.

## Suggested Materials

Suggested readings are *not* required but will provide you with additional resources that you may find useful.

- APA, MLA, or Chicago Style manuals/handbooks, depending on your preferred citation style
  - *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. [Amazon link](#).
  - *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition*. [Amazon link](#).
  - *The Chicago Manual of Style, 16<sup>th</sup> Edition*. [Amazon link](#).

## Grading and Assignments

More in-depth information on assignments will be provided as the semester progresses; an overview of each assignment is given here. Information about assignments will be posted on Blackboard in the “Assignments” tab. As per USC policy, all assignments must be your original work and cannot have been previously turned in for another course.

### Participation (10% of total grade)

Participation is a crucial component of this class and everyone will be required to participate in class discussions and activities. This is where you can explore ideas, share your thoughts and experiences, and talk through the materials covered in our readings.

Class conversations aren’t about having the “right” answers, but rather about collaboratively engaging with the material in order to gain a better understanding. You should not only answer questions that I may ask but also ask and answer each other’s questions. Each of us has valuable insights and knowledges to contribute to class, both through personal experience and the ways in which we view class readings. If you as a class are not participating, I will “cold call” on you in order to get a more diverse range of views on that day’s materials. This will be done using a method that randomizes student selection and is something that you should be prepared for by doing the readings before each class.

Participation can come in many forms; additional methods (e.g. working in pairs, short writing activities, etc.) will be integrated throughout the semester. Pop quizzes will be given at my discretion and will count as a part of your participation grade. If you are concerned about talking in front of the class or another aspect of your participation, please come speak with me so we can discuss other ways in which you can contribute to the class.

### Assignments (15% of total grade, 5% each)

Assignments are short papers and projects that highlight specific concepts and theories we will be covering throughout the semester. You must do 3 of the 4 options given; you may pick which 3.

#### *Option 1: Internet Argument—Due February 9*

This assignment involves going online and getting involved in an argument. For example, you might go on Twitter and engage with others about the interpretation of a recent episode of your favorite TV show. You will then write a 2-3 page reflection on your argument and submit this along with a link to and/or screenshots of the Internet argument you participated in.

*Option 2: Fallacies in News Media—Due March 23*

This assignment requires you to choose a news clip, magazine article, news blog post, or other piece of news media that contains one or more logical fallacies. In a 2-3 page paper, you will then explain what the fallacy is, how it works, and what the piece of news media needs to change to avoid using the logical fallacy.

*Option 3: Visual Argument Analysis—Due April 11*

For this assignment, you will select a visual that makes an argument and write a 2-3 page analysis of the ways in which it does so.

*Option 4: Interpersonal Argument Analysis—Due April 20*

Think back to when you've gotten into an argument with a friend, family member, fellow student, etc. What were each of you saying? Were you arguing about the same thing? In 2-3 pages, explain what the argument was about, and what you would do differently in the future.

**In-Class Debates (20% of total grade, 10% each)**

For this part of your grade, we will be having two different types of verbal debates in class. One of these will be something where you read up on the topic ahead of time and one will be where you do not know anything about what you will be debating before you come to class.

*Unprepared—March 2*

It's a surprise!

While that might sound intimidating, this isn't a "pop quiz" sort of surprise—instead, it's simply a way to let you practice the more impromptu style verbal arguments that you are more likely to face in everyday life.

*"Fishbowl" Debate—April 18*

For the fishbowl debates, you will need to go on blackboard before class and read several articles that take several different positions on a particular topic (these articles will be posted several days before the fishbowl debate). In class, you will use this information to argue for what your *own* perspective on the issue is. The format of this debate is informal and conversational.

**Essay (30%)**

We will be working on one 10- to 12-page paper over the course of the entire semester. You will have multiple assignments due over the course of the semester, as well as workshopping the papers in class; these assignments range from your thesis statement to an annotated bibliography to drafts to the final paper. Over the course of the semester, you will apply various theories and styles of argument we learn in class in these assignments. More information will be provided on a separate handout about the breakdown of these assignments, due dates, and how much each is worth.

For each of the two full drafts and final paper, you will also be required to do a self-evaluation of your essay. This will involve both assessing the strengths and weaknesses of your arguments, as well as looking at the ways in which the structure of your work, your writing style, and other intentional choices impact the effectiveness of your message. The point of this assignment is to better your ability not only to make arguments, but also to understand how to critique and improve your own positions. In effect, you will comment on and grade your own work as if you were the instructor. The grade you assign yourself for that draft will be averaged with the grade you earn from me for that draft to determine your "final" grade for that assignment (a more in-depth explanation of this will be given). If there is a discrepancy of 7 or greater points between the grade that I assign and the grade that you assign, you will be required to meet with me so that we can discuss your paper in more depth.

**Self-Evaluation (10%)**

As mentioned above, for each draft of your essay project, you will perform a self-evaluation and grade your own work. I will grade your self-evaluations based not on whether or not we thought the drafts earned the same grade but rather on the thoroughness of their evaluation, their identification of both strengths and weaknesses in the draft, their suggestions for future improvement, and their explanation for why the draft was assigned the grade it was.

### Exam (15%)

At the end of the semester, you will pass an exam consisting of a combination of multiple choice, multiple answer, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. A study guide will be provided.

### Grading

Final grades are assigned on the following scale:

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

Assignment	% of Grade
Participation	10
Assignments	15
In-Class Debates	20
Essay	30
Self-Evaluation	10
Exam	15
TOTAL	100

### Assignment Submission Policy

All out of class assignments will be submitted over Blackboard unless otherwise specified. All assignments are due at 7:00 PM on the date indicated on the syllabus. Papers must be submitted in .doc or .docx formats.

### Grievance Procedures

If you are dissatisfied with your grade, you may submit a written appeal to me within one week of your assignment being returned to you. Wait until at least 24 hours after you have received the graded assignment to submit your appeal in order to give you some time to fully review my comments.

Your appeal must explain reasons supporting your position on why the grade was inaccurate (in other words, you must make a well-supported argument). I will respond to grade appeals within one week. In your appeal, please let me know if you would like my response to be written or if we should schedule a meeting.

### Additional Policies

#### Late Assignment Policy

I understand that your life does not revolve around this course—you have many other responsibilities (including to your own wellbeing) besides Comm 322. With that in mind, my policy is to allow students one (1) “unexcused” late assignment per semester. At the end of this syllabus, you will find a “Late Assignment Form.” On the date that your assignment is due, simply hand in a signed copy of this form. You must then turn in the assignment one week later. For example, if you turn in the “Late Assignment Form” on February 9<sup>th</sup> when your Internet Argument is due, you must then submit this assignment by February 16<sup>th</sup>. All other assignments would then need to be submitted on time.

Be aware that the “Late Assignment Form” cannot be used for the final paper, exam, or in-class debates.

If there are extenuating and unforeseen circumstances (e.g. serious illness, the death of a family member, etc.) for which you provide documentation, extensions may be provided at my discretion and in accordance with USC policy.

Late assignments that are not covered under either of the previous circumstances will be reduced by ½ letter grade (5 points) for each day that they are late.

### **Attendance & Tardiness Policy**

Participation in class requires your presence in class. If you need to miss class, please email a classmate to get notes on what we did that day. If you miss the day of the in-class debates, you will receive a zero for that assignment *unless* you (a) notify me beforehand **AND** (b) can provide evidence of an excused absence.

Arriving late to class does not exclude you from attending that day. However, when you come in please be courteous to everyone else in the room.

### **Email Policy**

Emails will be responded to within *no more than 24* hours of receipt (48 hours on weekends and holidays). In order to guarantee a response to an email concerning an exam or assignment, the email must be received by 9:00 PM the day before the due date (e.g. if you have a paper due Thursday, emails sent at 3 AM Thursday morning may not be answered before the paper is due; emails sent at 3PM on Wednesday will be).

In order to help ensure emails don't get "buried" in my inbox, please include the course number (Comm 322) and a brief reference to the subject you're emailing about in the subject line of the email. If you haven't received a response from me within the appropriate time frame, please email again to make sure your first email was received.

Similarly, you should regularly check your official university account for any email correspondence from me. I will also use blackboard's email tool to correspond with the class as a whole, which will direct messages to your USC email account.

### **Classroom Conduct and Respect**

Everyone in our class should respect, strive to learn about, and work to understand and appreciate varied races, classes, genders, physical and mental abilities, sexualities, and other sites of identity. Such diverse positionalities lead to different worldviews and experiences. Everyone matters, and all individuals are to be respected and treated with dignity and civility. Everyone, including both me as the instructor and you as the students, shares the responsibility of making our class a positive and better place to live, work, and learn.

The class will collaboratively establish specific rules for classroom conduct during the first class session. Both I as the instructor and you as the students will follow these rules.

## Course Schedule

The course schedule below is tentative. It is possible that adjustments may be made as the semester progresses. Any such changes will be communicated to the students both through email and (if possible) in-class announcements. Changes to the course schedule are a normal part of the process of progressing through the class and the possibility of them should be expected.

	Topics	Readings and Assignments
<b>Week 1</b> Tuesday 1/10	UNIT 1: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF ARGUING AND ADVOCATING Introduction	
Thursday 1/12	Getting into gear: Thinking and reading critically	<i>Practical Argument</i> , Chapter 2
<b>Week 2:</b> Tuesday 1/17	What Is Argument?	Make sure you've gotten the textbooks! <i>Practical Argument</i> , Introduction & Chapter 1 <i>They Say/I Say</i> Introduction
Thursday 1/19		<i>They Say/I Say</i> Chapters 1-3  <b><u>*Essay topics due*</u></b>
<b>Week 3</b> Tuesday 1/24	What is Advocacy?	(1) " <a href="#">Principles of Advocacy</a> " from the University of Kansas' Community Tool Box (2) "A greater means to the greater good: Ethical guidelines to meet social movement organization advocacy challenges" by Carrie Packwood Freeman  <b><u>*Explanation of the conversation you're entering due*</u></b>
Thursday 1/26	#NotAllInternetArguments	(1) "Unfollow" by Adrien Chen (2) " <a href="#">How to win arguments online: A flamer's guide!</a> " by Jonathan Crossfield (3) "Symbolic violence in the online field: Calls for 'civility' in online discussion" by Shannon Sindorf  (Optional: " <a href="#">10 Common Mistakes People Make When Arguing Online</a> " by Luís Azevedo )
<b>Week 4</b> Tuesday 1/31	Internet Advocacy	(1) "Green vs pink: Change your picture, change the world" by Nathan Matias, Molly Sauter, & Matt Stempeck (2) "Advocacy 2.0: Advocating in the digital age" by Regina A. Galer-Uni  <b><u>*Bring in examples of Internet advocacy campaigns*</u></b>
Thursday 2/3	Constructing Arguments	<i>They Say/I Say</i> , Chapters 4-7 <i>Practical Argument</i> , Chapter 8
<b>Week 5:</b> Tuesday 2/7	How not to be a broken record argument	<i>They Say/I Say</i> , Chapters 8-11  <b><u>*Essay outline due*</u></b>

Thursday 2/9	UNIT 2: TOOLS AND STRATEGIES FOR ARGUMENTS Rhetorical Situation	<i>Practical Argument</i> , Chapter 4 See Blackboard for additional readings  <b><u>* Internet argument due*</u></b>
<b>Week 6</b> Tuesday 2/14	Toulmin Model	<i>Practical Argument</i> , Chapter 6  <b><u>*Rough draft 1 due*</u></b>
Thursday 2/16		(1) "Toulmin's Model of Argumentation" by van Eemeren, et al. (2) "Taming the Warrant in Toulmin's Model of Argument" by James E. Warren
<b>Week 7</b> Tuesday 2/21	Argument Strategies	<i>Practical Argument</i> , Chapters 12 & 15  <b><u>*Self-Evaluation 1 Due*</u></b>
Thursday 2/23		<i>Practical Argument</i> , Chapters 14 & 17
<b>Week 8</b> Tuesday 2/28		<i>Practical Argument</i> , Chapters 13, 16, & Part 5 Review
Thursday 3/2	<b><u>*Unprepared debate*</u></b>	--
<b>Week 9:</b> Tuesday 3/7	Fallacies	<i>Practical Argument</i> , Chapters 5  <b><u>*Annotated bibliography due*</u></b>
Thursday 3/9		Cont.  See Blackboard for additional readings
<b>Week 10</b> Tuesday 3/14 Thursday 3/16	NO CLASS: Spring Break	--  <b><u>*Rough draft 2 due Thursday March 14th*</u></b> Note: You may want to start reading <i>Arguing Constructively</i>
<b>Week 11</b> Tuesday 3/21	Student's Choice	TBD  <b><u>*Self-Evaluation 2 Due*</u></b>
Thursday 3/23	Audience	(1) "The Second Persona" by Edwin Black (2) <a href="#">1992 DNC Address</a> by Elizabeth Glaser (3) " <a href="#">A Whisper of AIDS</a> " by Mary Fisher.  <b><u>* Fallacies in news media assignment due*</u></b>
<b>Week 12</b> Tuesday 3/28	UNIT 3: ARGUMENT SITUATIONS AND TYPES  Visual Arguments	(1) <i>Practical Argument</i> , Chapter 3 (2) "Eminently visible: The role of T-shirts in gay and lesbian public advocacy and community building" by Joel Penney

Thursday 3/30	Styles of Argument	(1) "Arguers as Lovers" by Wayne Brockriede (2) "Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for Invitational Rhetoric" by Sonja K. Foss & Cindy L. Griffin
<b>Week 13</b> Tuesday 4/4	Debates in the Classroom	(1) " <a href="#">Winning an Argument, Losing Your Colleagues</a> " by Melanie Nelson at <i>Chronicle Vitae</i> (2) <i>They Say/I Say</i> , Chapter 12 (3) " <a href="#">The Coddling of the American Mind</a> " by Lukianoff and Haidt (4) " <a href="#">Trigger Warnings Aren't Coddling the Traumatized—They're Showing Basic Human Respect</a> " by Luban
Thursday 4/6	Speaking for/With Others	(1) "The Problem of Speaking for Others" by Linda Alcoff (2) "Harmful Communication" <a href="#">Part One</a> and <a href="#">Part Two</a> by Melissa McEwan
<b>Week 14</b> Tuesday 4/11	In-person and Interpersonal Arguments	<i>Arguing Constructively</i> <b><u>* Visual argument analysis due *</u></b>
Thursday 4/13		Cont.
<b>Week 15</b> Tuesday 4/18	<b><u>*In class debate*</u></b>	See Blackboard for readings
Thursday 4/20	Your Choice	TBD <b><u>*Interpersonal argument analysis due*</u></b>
<b>Week 16</b> Tuesday 4/25	Buffer	--
Thursday 4/27	Last Day of Class! Wrap Up	<b><u>*Final paper due* (Self-evaluation due May 2<sup>nd</sup>)</u></b>
<b>Final Exam Period</b> Tuesday 5/9 8:00-10:00	Final exam	Have a good summer! :)

## Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

### Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/departement-public-safety>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

### Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

### USC Confidentiality Policy Regarding Sexual Assault

All staff or faculty who become aware of a sexual assault should report all known information to the university’s Title IX Coordinator, Jody Shipper, at (213) 740-5086, or [jshipper@usc.edu](mailto:jshipper@usc.edu). This disclosure will be kept as confidential as possible. Disclosing this information does not mean that the student or employee about whom the report is made will be required to make any disclosures to DPS, LAPD, or to participate in any university investigation. Instead, this disclosure to the Title IX Coordinator ensures that information regarding resources, reporting options, and student and employee rights is provided. Please note that certain specific individuals are exempt from this obligation: licensed physician and clinical staff in the Engemann Student Health Center, licensed therapists or social workers at the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services or the Center for Work and Family Life, and clergy, are exempt from this reporting obligation.

Confidential options for reporting to someone on campus are the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services and Student Counseling Services.

## Late Assignment Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Original Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

New Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In turning in this form, I acknowledge that I am delaying the submission of the assignment listed above for the period of one week, in accordance with the "Late Assignment Form" procedures and policy as described in the syllabus.

I will submit my assignment the following week. If I do not, my assignment will be considered late and the penalties for late assignments as described in the syllabus will apply.

I also understand that I can only turn in this form once a semester. If I turn in this form a second time in lieu of an assignment, that assignment will be considered late and the penalties for late assignments as described in the syllabus will apply.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_