



COMM 322: Argumentation and Advocacy

Spring 2018 Section 20515

Instructor: Julianna Kirschner

Email: jjkirsch@usc.edu (I usually respond to emails quickly, but no later than 48 hours from the time of receipt.)

Class Meeting Time: Monday and Wednesday 10:00 – 11:50am

Class Location: Wallis Annenberg Hall, ANN 211

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 8:45 – 9:45am

Office: ASCJ G21B

4 units

Course Description

This course is focused on basic argumentation theory and practice. You will engage in analysis, research and evidence, case construction, refutation; discursive and visual argument; explore diverse fields of advocacy including law, politics, organizations, interpersonal relations. The curriculum is designed to be reciprocal in the sense that you are responsible for gaining knowledge shared in class, as well as learning the process of knowledge dissemination. The research, writing, and speaking skills taught in this course will enable you to become a better student and a better consumer of argument.

Learning Objectives

This course is designed with these objectives in mind:

- To improve skills in the construction of arguments including organization, delivery and research to achieve personal, academic and/or professional goals;
- To appreciate argument as both a method of inquiry and advocacy;
- To recognize how a person's background, values and credibility influence the construction and processing of argument;
- To develop skills in critical thinking to comprehensively analyze, synthesize and evaluate information;
- To be able to refute the position of others and defend his or her own position against the attacks of others and accept responsibility for his or her own argument;
- To improve the ability to recognize the significance of language and culture in human experience;
- To work cooperatively and collaboratively with others; and
- To improve public speaking skills

Required Text and Supplementary Materials

Hollihan, T.A. & Baaske, K.T. (2016). *Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making*, 3rd ed. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

I will assign additional readings, videos or other materials throughout the semester. These readings will be posted on Blackboard (<https://blackboard.usc.edu>) and/or emailed to you.

Course Requirements

Response Papers (25 points each, a total of 150 points): You will compose a total of six (6) response papers that share your thoughts about the content of the assigned reading. In each paper, you will answer the following questions:

- Do you agree with the author of the textbook/article/video? Do you disagree? Explain using specific examples and citations from the textbook, article, and/or video assigned for that week.
- How might you use the content from this reading/video in your future career? In your relationships? In other words, how might you apply these ideas in the “real world”?
- Find at least one credible outside source addressing the topic at hand, and use it to support your claim regarding the assigned reading/video. What new element does this source add to your argument?

Each response paper requires the following:

- Back up your claims with strong reasoning and source material. As mentioned earlier, you are required to cite at least one scholarly source outside of what is assigned in class, and you must cite it using a proper MLA or APA style (Choose one style and stick to it).
- The paper itself should be at least three full pages, double-spaced (not counting the Works Cited page), and you should use 12-point, Times New Roman font. Be sure to reach the bottom of page three; 2.5 pages of writing is not enough.
- The papers should be printed, and turned in during class on the date listed on the syllabus calendar.

Use this as an opportunity to actively engage with the course material, and share your thoughts about the issues raised in class. You are welcome to be creative in your response, but the assignment length should be equivalent to a three-page, double-spaced paper.

Argument Analysis Paper (100 points) and Letter to the Editor (50 points): In the first part of this assignment, you will write an argument analysis paper. Take a look at two recent editorials on the same topic in publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, etc. Consider the following questions:

- Do they agree with each other? Disagree?
- What sources of evidence do they use to advocate for their position?
- Do you find these editorials reliable in their reasoning?

You will have the opportunity to analyze these editorials for the purpose of refuting arguments or pointing out logical fallacies and weak evidence. You are welcome to use our course textbook and additional readings, but you should use supporting material from at least four (4) outside credible sources. Your paper should be 5-7 pages, double spaced, and use 12-point font.

After analyzing these editorials, the second half of this assignment entails writing a letter to the editor of a real publication. Your letter should focus on the same topic as those in the argument analysis paper, and you should practice the effective argumentation that you saw or would have liked to see in earlier editorials. More details about the letter to the editor will be provided in class. Although you will be turning this in as an assignment, I strongly encourage you to send these letters in to the publications for which they are intended.

Presentation of Advocacy and Outline (150 points): This 8-minute prepared speech should advocate the support of or change in a current attitude and/or social behavior. Choose something in which you are interested! You will benefit from using the speech organization principles we discuss in class. Your presentation should be accompanied by an outline, and you should utilize at least three (3) sources. Be sure to also include a Works Cited page that follows MLA or APA style (Again, choose one style, and keep it consistent for the assignment).

Spontaneous Argumentation (150 points): You and a partner will have the opportunity to practice advocacy in a unique debate forum. Your team will choose a policy issue from a list I provide to you, and you and your partner will research the positions held and their lines of reasoning. You are asked to consider the topic from all angles, including those with which you disagree. After having worked with your partner to collect data on the argumentative context, you should be prepared to take any side. On the day of your team's debate, you will be told which side of this issue for which you will advocate, and you will debate with your partner, who represents an opposing side. The key to this assignment is preparation and quick thinking, and we will build toward this skill throughout the semester.

We will be framing all speeches and debates in a professional environment, so you will gain practice in a skill that you will use in the future. You should plan to dress accordingly on your scheduled presentation day. How might you dress for a job interview? Basically, dress to impress! Speeches and debates are graded on substance, organization, language, and delivery. I am here to help you, and work in this class will be collaborative as much as possible. Unfortunately, missed speeches and debates cannot be made up, so it is important that you are here!

Exams (100 points for the Midterm Exam; 100 points for the Final Exam): The exams are based on the course readings, lecture material, and discussions in class. The midterm covers the first half of class, and the final covers the second half. Although the final is not cumulative, knowledge of earlier material is expected. The questions are a mix of multiple choice and short answer. Further details will be provided in class.

Participation (200 points): Participation in building block assignments that we complete in class is integral to your success and understanding of the practice of argumentation. In-class participation assignments include the following:

- Feedback to classmates
- Group and/or pair exercises
- Written responses to lecture content
- Impromptu speeches

Speeches, debates, and class discussions are not possible without you! Please be punctual. If you are late, please do not walk in while another student is speaking. Furthermore, you should be willing to offer constructive feedback and receive it. Respect everyone in the room, and be willing to listen to a side of an argument with which you might not agree. See the class policies for more information on in-class conduct.

Grading

| Pts. Possible | Assignment | My Grade |
|--------------------|--|--------------|
| 150 points | Response Papers (6 papers at 25 points each) | |
| 100 points | Argument Analysis Paper | |
| 50 points | Letter to the Editor | |
| 150 points | Presentation of Advocacy and Outline | |
| 150 points | Spontaneous Argumentation | |
| 100 points | Midterm Exam | |
| 100 points | Final Exam | |
| 200 points | Participation | |
| 1000 points | Total Possible Points | /1000 |

We will use the +/- system, and course grades will be determined using the following scale:

| Earned Points | Percentage (%) | Grade |
|---------------|----------------|-------|
| 940-1000 | 94-100% | A |
| 900-939.99 | 90-93.99% | A- |
| 870-899.99 | 87-89.99% | B+ |
| 840-869.99 | 84-86.99% | B |
| 800-839.99 | 80-83.99% | B- |
| 770-799.99 | 77-79.99% | C+ |

| Earned Points | Percentage (%) | Grade |
|---------------|----------------|-------|
| 740-769.99 | 74-76.99% | C |
| 700-739.99 | 70-73.99% | C- |
| 670-699.99 | 67-69.99% | D+ |
| 640-669.99 | 64-66.99% | D |
| 600-639.99 | 60-63.99% | D- |
| 0-599.99 | 0-59.99% | F |

Course Policies

Before I share what is expected of you, let me first share how I see my role. I consider it my responsibility, indeed higher education's responsibility, to guide you to mastery of the professionalism you need to get, keep, and excel in the jobs you seek. In my work within and outside of academia, I have seen many talented people passed up for promotions, and others who have lost their positions because they did not know what was needed to succeed. I don't want that to be you. My policies are consistent with workplace standards, and they are meant to help you avoid ending up like those who did not know how to work with rigor, adhere to standards, and/or comply with job requirements. I want you to succeed, so please contact me if you need further clarification on course concepts, assignments, and/or policies.

Read the following policies carefully. Enrollment in the class constitutes agreement with and understanding of these policies. Ignorance of these policies does not excuse their violation.

Due Dates

It is important that you keep up with the due dates, because we work together best when everyone is on the same page. Assignments are due on assigned days. Documented illnesses or emergencies are the only exception to this policy, and you will need to contact me *before* class begins whenever possible. Please bring documentation when applicable.

Speech and Debate Due Dates: When announced in class, you will have the opportunity to sign up for the dates you (or your team) will deliver speeches and debates based on the syllabus schedule. As a class, we will try to accommodate everyone's request, but it is not guaranteed. The schedule will be provided after the sign-up process is complete. If a speech or debate is not delivered when scheduled, the highest percentage one can earn is 50% (e.g., if a student misses the presentation of advocacy, which is normally worth 150 points, a maximum of 75 points can be earned for late delivery. Also, this example assumes we will have time in class for make ups, which is not always possible).

Late Written Assignments: Assigned papers not turned in on the day due will be given one grade lower than the one deserved for each day the paper is late (for example, a "B" for an "A" quality paper if the paper is one day late, a "C" for an "A" quality paper if it is two days late). If you are missing class, you may email it to me only to document the time at which it came in. You should print your own hard copy after that to submit to me, because I will write comments on them that will help you in the future.

Missing an Exam: The midterm and final exams need to be completed when scheduled so you don't fall behind, and they cannot be made up.

Attendance and Participation

Although I recognize that we all have other obligations outside of class, we will all benefit from everyone attending regularly. Changes in work schedule, personal celebrations (e.g., birthdays), transportation problems, etc. are *not* considered legitimate reasons to excuse an absence. *If you do miss a class, it is*

important for your success to catch up on anything you might miss in class. Your success is partly due to having knowledge of all material covered in class, whether an absence is excused or not. Make friends with classmates, and get in contact with them should you miss a class for any reason to gain a copy of notes.

Regular attendance is essential to success in this course, and you must make an effort to be on time for class. We only meet twice a week so your presence is important. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class via sign-in sheets. If a student is present during class but does not sign the attendance sheet, the student will be marked absent for that day. Signing in for another student not present is not allowed, and it will result in an automatic zero for the participation grade for the person falsifying the attendance sheets.

Acceptable excused absences are the following and must be corroborated in writing by the proper authority:

1. Personal illness that requires a doctor's visit
2. Death of a close family member
3. Natural disaster such as fire, earthquake, or civic unrest
4. Military deployment
5. Court related obligation such as jury duty, appearance, deposition, or subpoena
6. Traveling on university related business as part of a university program or organization.

If religious observances will prevent you from completing assigned work on a scheduled date, you are responsible for discussing this matter with me, your instructor, as soon as possible, and no later than the second week of classes. For the University Office of Religious Life policy regarding religious observations, see: <https://orl.usc.edu/life/calendar/absences/>. Accommodations will be made for such circumstances in accordance with University policies and guidelines. If you have a health condition or disability that may interfere with your attendance or your ability to complete course requirements, you should take the following steps as soon as possible:

1. First, contact the Academic Counseling Services (ACS) and Disability Services and Programs (DSP) and arrange to meet with an ACS and DSP counselor, who will help you determine whether your condition qualifies you for accommodations and to complete a form describing the approved accommodations.
2. Second, you should inform your instructor of your need for accommodation, and provide the Instructor with a copy of the completed accommodation form.

You are expected to complete these steps within the first two weeks of class or as soon as possible after learning of the need for accommodation, unless legitimate circumstances prevent you from doing so. Please contact an ACS and DSP counselor as soon as possible with any questions. For university policies regarding students with accommodations, please see: <https://undergrad.usc.edu/services/counseling/> and <https://dsp.usc.edu>.

Much of the learning in a communication class comes from observing presentations and participating in class discussions, so it is very important that you attend class. The University of Southern California prohibits the awarding of points solely on a student's physical presence in a class. However, they allow the use of unexcused absences and excessive tardiness to count against a grade. This includes leaving class early.

Tardies and Reverse Tardies: Being late is easily preventable, so plan ahead! Arriving late to class is known as a tardy. Reverse tardies refer to instances when a student leaves class early. It is not enough to sign the attendance sheet; you have to be here for the whole class in order for it to count! Bear in mind that **3 tardies and/or reverse tardies = 1 absence.**

The figures below assume that the student has participated regularly while in attendance; a lack of participation can further impact the scores listed below.

| Absences | Applicable Deductions |
|--------------|--|
| 0-2 absences | No Deduction |
| 3 absences | -30 points |
| 4 absences | -40 points |
| 5+ absences | -50 points (increases by increments of 10 per additional absence, up to -100 points) |

Courtesy to Others

Promptness is expected as a general rule, but especially on speech and debate days. If you should happen to be late on a speech or debate day, wait in the hall until you hear applause and then enter. I cannot stress this enough—DO NOT walk in during another student's speech or debate. If we are having a lecture or discussion, come in only when appropriate. Public speaking in general can create a lot of anxiety for people, and the classroom must remain a safe place for everyone.

Cell Phone/Device Policy: If ALL cell phones/devices are stowed away and do not ring the entire time we meet as a class, everyone will be awarded 5 extra credit points. If a phone/device rings, or otherwise disturbs class, extra credit points for *everyone* will be reflected by the following:

5 points = No cell phone interruptions
 4 points = 1 cell phone interruption
 3 points = 2 cell phone interruptions
 2 points = 3 cell phone interruptions
 1 points = 4 cell phone interruptions
 0 points = 5+ cell phone interruptions

Basically, for every interruption, the extra credit points for *everyone in the class* will go down by 1.

Courteous Technology Use: Laptops and tablets are allowed for notetaking purposes only, and I reserve the right to ban them should they become a distraction. Please be respectful of others when they are giving their presentations and debates. All devices should be put away during student speeches and debates, unless I have stated otherwise. *If you elect to utilize these devices to supplement your speech or debate, you must give advance notice, so I may plan ahead for set up.*

As mentioned before in the attendance policy, please be courteous to the whole class, and come to class on time. Avoid in engaging in disruptive behavior, which includes but is not limited to the following: cell phone interruptions, walking in the room during a speech, heckling the professor or other students, etc. This will affect your participation grade!

Language Use: Another form of respect is how we speak to and about one another. Please use sex-neutral language in your speaking and writing. Because the language we speak and write leads us to perceive in certain ways, sex-neutral language will help all of us perceive women and men on equal terms, participating equally in the world. For example, use *he or she* instead of *he* when the person to whom you are referring could be of either sex. If it is grammatically correct, use *one* in reference to a general pronoun. Similarly, use *people* or *humanity* or *individuals* instead of *man* or *mankind*, *you* or *you people* instead of *you guys*, and *chair* or *sales representative* instead of *chairman* or *salesman*. If you need more clarification on this policy, please ask me! Here is a syllabus treat: If you see this message on or before January 15, 2018, send me an email listing the title of your favorite book and the author who wrote it. If you do this by the deadline, you will receive 5 extra credit points.

Written Standards

Academic writing is more formal than casual communication, and all of your writing in this course is expected to be error-free. Proof your writing, and correct your spelling, grammar, punctuation, word

choice, and syntax errors before turning in work for a grade. Treat all writing, including e-mail to me, with the same rigor. Everything “counts;” errors will lower your grades.

Grade Calculations

If a student’s final grade is on the cusp between one grade and another, I reserve the right to adjust grades up based on participation in class. For example, a student with a final grade of 89.99% may be given an A if he or she has made a significant contribution in class activities and discussions. However, if that is not the case, the grade will remain as is. I will never lower a student’s grade below what he/she/they have earned. To protect your privacy, please note that I will not send grades or grade-specific information via email.

Also, it is important to remember that I will not negotiate grades. If you have a problem or question about performance on an assignment, you must contact me within a week of receiving your grade. I give you a great deal of feedback on your assignments, so please review these comments before attempting to dispute a grade. If you are disputing a grade for an assignment, you must reference the assignment guidelines I have provided, and put your concerns in writing. Consider also these questions:

- Was your assignment submitted on time?
- Did you follow the directions of the assignment?
- Did you turn in your best work? If it was a written assignment, did you use proper grammar and syntax? Did you misspell words? Is your work neat and professional? Did you use weird spacing to make the paper appear longer than it really is?
- Did you practice your speech? If the work was an oral assignment, did you complete the speech within the allotted time limit? Did you dress professionally? Did you read your speech as opposed to presenting it?
- Did you credit your sources? Is your bibliography properly formatted?
- Did you wait until the last minute to complete the assignment?
- If you are missing participation points, were you absent the day of the classroom activity? Do you contribute to class discussions?

Again, please come see me within a week of receiving feedback on an assignment if you have questions about how it was evaluated. In any case, I am more than happy to meet with you in person to discuss ways you can improve.

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. 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>.

The work you complete must be original, and sources MUST be cited properly. MLA or APA are acceptable citation formats for this class, but if you would prefer another style, please notify me in advance. Also, if you are unclear about proper citation, please ask. It is better to ask than to assume, especially in this case.

Support Systems

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

COMM 322 Argumentation and Advocacy

Spring 2018 Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

| Week | Date | In-Class Activities and Topics | Assignments and Reading Due (Complete before class begins) |
|-------------|------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Monday, January 8 | Course Introduction | |
| | Wednesday, January 10 | Defining Argument and Argumentative Positions | Read outside materials |
| 2 | Monday, January 15 | <i>Martin Luther King's Birthday (No class)</i> | |
| | Wednesday, January 17 | Argumentation as Symbolic Activity | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 1 |
| 3 | Monday, January 22 | Foundations of an Argument | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 2 Response Paper 1 Due |
| | Wednesday, January 24 | Knowing Your Audience | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 3 |
| 4 | Monday, January 29 | Language of Argument | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 4 |
| | Wednesday, January 31 | Propositions and Critical Thinking | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 5 Response Paper 2 Due |
| 5 | Monday, February 5 | Types of Arguments | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 6 |
| | Wednesday, February 7 | Presentations of Advocacy | Advocacy Outline Due (For those speaking today) |
| 6 | Monday, February 12 | Presentations of Advocacy | Advocacy Outline Due (For those speaking today) |
| | Wednesday, February 14 | Presentations of Advocacy | Advocacy Outline Due (For those speaking today) |
| 7 | Monday, February 19 | <i>President's Day (No class)</i> | |
| | Wednesday, February 21 | Research and Evidence <i>Please bring a laptop or tablet to class.</i> | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 8 Response Paper 3 Due |
| 8 | Monday, February 26 | Midterm Exam | |
| | Wednesday, February 28 | Grounds for Argument | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 7 |
| 9 | Monday, March 5 | The Refutation Process | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 9 Response Paper 4 Due |
| | Wednesday, March 7 | Visual Arguments | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 10 |
| 10 | Monday, March 12 | <i>Spring Recess (No class)</i> | |
| | Wednesday, March 14 | <i>Spring Recess (No class)</i> | |
| 11 | Monday, March 19 | Media as Argumentative Tools | Read outside materials Response Paper 5 Due |
| | Wednesday, March 21 | Identifying Fallacies | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 11 |

| Week | Date | In-Class Activities and Topics | Assignments and Reading Due (Complete before class begins) |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 12 | Monday, March 26 | Types of Academic Debating | Argument Analysis Paper Due |
| | Wednesday, March 28 | Strategic Debate Planning | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 12 |
| 13 | Monday, April 2 | Argumentation and Politics | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 13 Response Paper 6 Due |
| | Wednesday, April 4 | Legal Argumentation | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 14 Draft of Notes for Spontaneous Argumentation Due |
| 14 | Monday, April 9 | Corporate Argumentation | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 15 |
| | Wednesday, April 11 | Interpersonal Relationships | Read Hollihan and Baaske Chapter 16 Letter to the Editor Due |
| 15 | Monday, April 16 | Spontaneous Argumentation | Final Version of Notes for Spontaneous Argumentation Due (For those presenting today) |
| | Wednesday, April 18 | Spontaneous Argumentation | Final Version of Notes for Spontaneous Argumentation Due (For those presenting today) |
| 16 | Monday, April 23 | Spontaneous Argumentation | Final Version of Notes for Spontaneous Argumentation Due (For those presenting today) |
| | Wednesday, April 25 | Spontaneous Argumentation | Final Version of Notes for Spontaneous Argumentation Due (For those presenting today) |
| Study Days | Saturday, April 28 – Tuesday, May 1 | | |
| Finals Week | Monday, May 7 8:00-10:00am | Final Exam | |

Classmate Contacts

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| Name: | Phone: | Email: |
| Name: | Phone: | Email: |
| Name: | Phone: | Email: |