

COMM 322 SYLLABUS

Section 20514R

Argumentation and Advocacy

Monday & Wednesday, 12:00 pm to 1:50 am

4.0 Units

Spring Semester 2019

Classroom: ASC 231

Professor: Michael Wissot

Office: ASC 333

Cell Phone: (805) 490-2460

Office E-Mail: mwissot@usc.edu

Office Hours: *Only by Appointment*, M & W, 9-10am, 2-3pm

Course Description: This class will be an intensive examination of the theories and practices of argumentation. Students will be exposed to a wide range of argumentation theory and vocabulary, and they will be asked to apply these approaches to public argument and advocacy. The class will also cover a variety of contemporary topics, tied particularly to domestic and foreign policy.

Course Goals:

- To analyze theories of argumentation and demonstrate practical applications
- To enhance critical thinking skills by anticipating, advancing and refuting arguments
- To develop viable strategies in constructing and presenting oral and written arguments

Course Meaning: We will demonstrate the highest attainable work ethic and discover within us that which is superior to circumstance. We will persevere this semester toward the most rewarding pursuit in higher education – the stimulation of thought, emotion, and soul. It is my duty to prepare you, as future leaders of the Free World, to integrate your communication skills into all fields of endeavor. As individuals and as a collective unit, we will dare to be great.

Required Textbook: Hollihan, Thomas A. and Baaske, Kevin T. *Arguments and Arguing: The Products and Process of Human Decision Making*. 3rd Ed. Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2005.

Additional Materials: *Available via e-mail or the university's Blackboard course site*

Preparedness: Class will meet each Monday and Wednesday throughout the semester. You must complete ALL course requirements in order to earn a grade in this course. You are responsible for all reading assignments as pop quizzes may be given to determine your preparedness for class. You are required to participate in debates on the dates when you are scheduled. Since your attendance in this course – both as a speaker and listener – is vital, any absences from class will affect your final grade. You are, therefore, required to notify me BEFORE missing class and provide corresponding documentation AFTERWARD. In the event that both of these criteria are satisfied, you will receive “make up” assignments/projects to suffice for time missed from the classroom. Please note that I will record an unexcused absence if you miss any considerable portion of the class period (arriving late, leaving early) without my prior authorization. Late submissions on assignments will result in a 10% grade deduction for every day late. Classroom behavior will be predicated on an environment of mutual respect. Any level of disruptive or threatening student behavior is unacceptable. We are here to learn from each other in a non-threatening environment. You are encouraged to formulate and share opinions with due discretion, as well as be comfortable in practicing communication techniques and debating ideas in a safe environment. However, any behavior that is deemed disrespectful by the instructor will affect your participation points.

Academic Integrity: USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Plagiarism is defined and interpreted as the act of presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words. It 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, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.

Support Systems:

[Student Counseling Services](#) – (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.

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

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24/7.

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

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

[Sexual Assault Resource Center](#)

Get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources

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

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

[Bias Assessment Response and Support](#)

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response.

[Office of Disability Services and Programs](#) – (213) 740-0776

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

[Student Support and Advocacy](#) – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting success (personal, financial, academic).

[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.

[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.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) – (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community.

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Syllabus (cont.)

Use of Technology: Students may only use technology-based products with the expressed consent of the professor. The use of mobile phones, laptops and other devices during class time is not permitted, unless such activity is used exclusively for class-related notes. Accessing the Internet in any capacity during class time is not permitted. Students are not permitted to record any class lectures at any time. **Any violation of these policies may result in the loss of ALL participation points for the entire semester, as well as other ramifications under university policy.**

Disability Services: 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 the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) 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. Contact DSP at 213-740-0776, 213-740-6948 (TDD only), or ability@usc.edu.

Grading Procedures:

Participation / Attendance	30 points
Jeffersonian-Madisonian Exchange	30 points
Debate #1	30 points
Debate #2	40 points
Analysis #1	20 points
Analysis #2	20 points
Op-Ed Submission	50 points
Town Hall Debate	75 points
Term Paper	75 points
Midterm Exam	100 points
Final Exam	130 points

TOTAL: 600 POINTS

I expect you to complete all assignments on time. Late work, if accepted, may be penalized substantially. Typically, late submissions will result in 10% grade deduction per day late.

Your final grade will be based on the following scale:

94 - 100 percent = A	74 - 76.9 percent = C
90 - 93.9 percent = A-	70 - 73.9 percent = C-
87 - 89.9 percent = B+	67 - 69.9 percent = D+
84 - 86.9 percent = B	64 - 66.9 percent = D
80 - 83.9 percent = B-	60 - 63.9 percent = D-
77 - 79.9 percent = C+	BELOW 60 percent = F

COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week / Date	Topic / Activity	Assignment (Hollihan, 3 rd ed)
#1 1/9 only	No Class 1/7 Overview of Course Introduction to the study of Argumentation	
#2 1/14 & 1/16	Argument as Public Discourse Foundations of Argumentation - Narrative Models Language & Framing Arguments Language in Presidential Debates	Chapter 1 Chapter 2 Chapter 4
	Assign Jeffersonian-Madisonian Exchange in which you will argue, via weekly e-mail correspondence, in support/opposition of events, trends, policies and initiatives -- at the local, state, federal and international levels -- that you deem important. Due 4/24	
#3 1/23 only	Audience Analysis & Fields of Argument Identity Politics: Reaching Unique Demographics	Chapter 3 Denton, Chapter 5
	Assign Topics for Debate #1 (Feb 4 & 6)	
#4 1/28 & 1/30	Argumentation & Critical Thinking Types of Arguments Grounds for Arguments Defective Evidence Building Arguments Refuting Arguments	Chapter 5 Chapter 6 Chapter 7 Chapter 8 Chapter 9
	Assign Op-Ed project in which you will write an editorial (500+ words) in support of a particular policy, candidate, cause or organization, and then submit it to at least <i>two publications</i> (that you deem suitable, based on editorial content). Final version must be submitted to Professor Wissot, and targeted publications, by April 3.	
#5 2/4 & 2/6	Debate # 1	

**COMM 322 – Wissot
Course Schedule (cont.)**

Week / Date	Topic / Activity	Assignment (Hollihan, 3rd ed)
#6 2/11 & 2/13	Review for Midterm Examination	
	Assign Analysis #1: Viewing of Democratic Presidential Primary Debate (TBD). Class Discussion will take place Wednesday, February 20. Prepare to analyze the positions taken by your assigned candidate(s) on related issues, the communication strategies and overall effectiveness (verbal/nonverbal) of the candidates.	
	Assign Debate #2 Topics	
	Midterm Examination on Wednesday, February 13 Covers Chapters 1 – 9 in Hollihan, plus all lectures and additional readings BLUE BOOK REQUIRED (Loss of 10 points without Blue Book)	
#7 2/20 only	Analysis #1: Democratic Presidential Primary Debate (Feb 20)	
#8 2/25 & 2/27	Debate # 2	
#9 3/4 & 3/6	TBD – Activity	
	Assign analysis #2: Viewing of Republican Presidential Primary Debate. Class Discussion will take place Monday, March 25. Prepare to analyze the positions taken by your assigned candidate(s) on related issues, the communication strategies and overall effectiveness (verbal/nonverbal) of the candidates.	
	Assign major term paper: DUE Wednesday, April 10, at the beginning of class One hard copy and one electronic copy of the policy paper are REQUIRED. All papers must follow MLA style. Students without internal citing/references could be committing plagiarism and receive an “F” grade, plus possible referral to the Ethics Committee. (When in doubt or in need of help regarding MLA style, please show a rough draft of your term paper to Professor Wissot or go to the USC Writing Center).	

NO CLASSES on March 11 and March 13

**COMM 322 – Wissot
Course Schedule (cont.)**

Week / Date	Topic / Activity	Assignment (Hollihan, 3rd ed)
#10 3/18 & 3/20	Introduction to Academic Debate Debate Formats	Chapters 10 & 11
	Political Debates: Techniques & Results Managing The Dialogue Argumentation in Politics: Campaigns & Debates	Morris, Chapter 43 Morris, Chapter 34 Chapter 12
	Bring a sample Op-Ed to class (March 20)	
#11 3/25 & 3/27	Analysis #2: Republican Presidential Primary Debate (March 25)	
	The Absolute Advantage: Sacred Rhetoric	Marietta
	Assign Topics for Town Hall Debate (April 15, 17, 22)	
#12 4/1 & 4/3	Argumentation in Business Message Development & Corporate Strategy	Chapter 14
	OP-ED ASSIGNMENT DUE (April 3)	
#13 4/8 & 4/10	Activity – TBD	
	ALL TERM PAPERS DUE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10 AT START OF CLASS. LATE PAPERS WILL HAVE 10 POINTS DEDUCTED PER DAY LATE. LATENESS BY SEVERAL MINUTES/HOURS WILL RESULT IN LOSS OF POINTS. ONE ELECTRONIC COPY MUST BE SUBMITTED BY DEADLINE.	
#14 4/15 & 4/17	Town Hall Debate	

COMM 322 – Wissot
Course Schedule (cont.)

Week / Date	Topic / Activity	Assignment (Hollihan, 3 rd ed)
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#15

4/22 & 4/24

Town Hall Debate

Review for Final Examination

JEFFERSONIAN-MADISON EXCHANGE DUE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24.

April 24 is the last day to submit any late assignments/projects for “excused” absences or deliver “make-up” excused absence speeches.

#16

5/3 only

Final Examination: Friday, May 3, 11:00 am – 1:30 pm

Covers Chapters 10-11 & 14 in Hollihan, plus all lectures and handouts from the second half of the semester AND selected topics covered in Test #1

BLUE BOOK REQUIRED (Loss of 10 points without Blue Book)

The final exam will cover all Hollihan material (covered in study guide), lectures, discussion, and handouts. Please do not ask to take the final exam early because university regulations prohibit it.