

COMM 322: Argumentation and Advocacy 4.0 Units

Summer 2022 – Tuesdays and Thursdays –
9:30 AM-1:40 PM

Section: 20510R

Location: ANN L116

Instructor: Amber Lynn Scott

Office: Annenberg PhD Offices (ASC G6)**

Office Hours: Tuesdays from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (or on Zoom by appointment).

**Please email me to arrange a meeting during office hours and receive directions to my office - it is very hard to find.

Contact Info: amscott@usc.edu

I. Course Description

This course is centered on basic argumentation theory, including analysis and practice. You will engage in analysis, research, evidence development, case construction, refutation, discursive argument, and visual argument. Additionally, you will explore diverse fields of advocacy including law, politics, organizations, and interpersonal relations. This course will ultimately demonstrate the important role arguments play in helping you better understand complicated issues, develop informed opinions, shape decisions, and resolve disputes. By the end of this course, you will develop the tools necessary to both advocate for positions that are important to you as well as an appreciation for the validity and merit of positions you may disagree with. The research, writing, and speaking skills taught in this course will enable you to become a better consumer of argument.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

- Define argument as a field of study and a human communication process
- Give examples of the importance of argumentation for a democratic society
- Identify different parts of an argument and their functions
- Analyze arguments as they appear across a variety of contexts
- Evaluate source credibility as an audience member and researcher
- Create argument responses and refutations in both written and oral contexts
- Develop public speaking skills

III. Course Notes

Due to the continued shifting nature of the COVID pandemic, this course is scheduled to be delivered through in-person instruction but may change at any time without significant advanced notice. Some aspects of the course may change in terms of mode of delivery, participation, and assessment. For periods of both online and in-person instruction, this course will be web enhanced and will utilize Blackboard, Kahoot!, YouTube, and social media platforms (e.g. Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter). Details on use of these web enhancements are found within this syllabus under the course description and course assignment sections.

IV. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Hollihan, T. & Baaske, K. (2016). *Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making*. Waveland Press. ISBN-13: 978-1478629290

NOTE: DO NOT PURCHASE THE 2022 UPDATED 4TH EDITION - WE ARE USING THE 3RD EDITION!

Additional readings and video content as provided on Blackboard

Readings are assigned to enhance our understanding of argumentation theory and practice as well as to stimulate class discussion. **All readings are required unless indicated otherwise.** Readings will come primarily from the textbook. In some cases, supplementary readings or video recordings will be distributed via Blackboard or in class as handouts. Readings should be completed *before class* on the day assigned and you should bring your book and/or article(s) to every class session. Lectures will not cover all portions of the assigned readings and may cover additional materials not in the assigned readings.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

In-Class Quizzes/Discussion Board (10 points each, 50 points total): Over the course of the summer term, some classes will include either a short in-class quiz or discussion board assignment to be completed on Blackboard during the class session. These assignments are designed to check your understanding and comprehension of the assigned readings. In-Class Quizzes and Discussion Board assignments will not occur on debate days; however, any other non-debate class may include an In-Class Quiz or Discussion Board assignment without advanced notice.

Propositions (Debate Topics) (50 points): You will submit on Blackboard at least 5 (no more than 10) potential debate topics by Friday, May 20th at 5:00 p.m. PDT. These topics must be of meaningful consequence and have two clear sides. More specific details on this assignment can be found on Blackboard in the folder “Content: Assignment Information: Propositions (Policy Debate Topic) Assignment Information.”

Visual/Social Media Argument Analysis (150 points): You will search Instagram and analyze a recent social media post made by one of the current candidates running for Mayor of Los Angeles. Your analysis will focus primarily on visual aspects of the post, including a dominant and an alternative reading of the visuals (review Chapters 10 in Hollihan & Baaske). Your selected post must come from an official candidate Instagram page (no fan pages). More specific details on this assignment can be found on Blackboard in the folder “Content: Assignment Information: Visual/Social Media Argument Analysis.” This assignment must be submitted on Blackboard by June 16th at 9:30 a.m. PDT.

Mini Debates (25 points per debate, 100 points total): At four separate points during this term, you will engage in short, informal debates with a partner on the same topic. Each topic and partner will be randomly assigned by the instructor and no formal evidence will be required. These debates will be on topics that are inconsequential (i.e., Who is the greatest sporting team of all time?) and are designed as “warmups” to get you comfortable with public speaking in a debate format. These debates will be judged on your speaking poise, speaking tempo, and overall innovation in response. More information about the mini debate format will be shared in class prior to the first mini debate.

Debates (150 points per debate, 300 points total): At two points during this term, you will engage in formal debates with a partner on the same topic. In one debate, you will take the affirmative position, and in the other debate, you will take the negative position. There will be class time dedicated to working your debate assignments. You will be informed of your assigned debate topic, debate dates, and debate sides by the instructor on Tuesday, May 24th. Your debate grade score for each debate will be as follows:

- Evidence file prepared prior to debate (40 points)
- Outline and delivery of your constructive speech (60 points)
- Performance of cross examination & rebuttal speeches (50 points)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Your overall debate score does not depend on “winning” the debate!

The debate format for each formal debate will follow this structure:

- Affirmative Constructive Speech (4 minutes)
- Negative Cross-Examination (2 minutes)
- Negative Constructive Speech (5 minutes)

- Affirmative Cross-Examination (2 minutes)
- First Affirmative Rebuttal (3 minutes)
- Negative Rebuttal (4 minutes)
- Second Affirmative Rebuttal (2 minutes)

Each side will also be given 2 minutes for prep time to use at their discretion. More information about the debate format including the use of the 2-minute prep time will be shared in class prior to the first debate. More specific details on this assignment can also be found on Blackboard in the folder “Content: Assignment Information: Debate Format and Outline Examples.”

Judge’s Ballot (100 points): During Debate #2, you will be assigned one debate to ‘decide’ - this decision will require you to write a Judge’s Ballot that identifies the winner of the debate and the rationale for your decision. The Judge’s Ballot *should not recap the debate* but should be written to justify your winner selection. The Judge’s Ballot should be between 1-2 pages when written in 12-point font and double-spaced. Your Judge’s Ballot will only be viewed by the instructor and must be submitted on Blackboard by June 28th at 9:30 a.m. PT.

Final Exam (150 points): The final exam will be a closed book, in-class exam. The final exam will two short essays, multiple choice questions, and short-answer questions based on all the course readings, lecture material, and in-class discussions held cumulatively throughout the course. The final exam will be distributed in class on Tuesday, June 28th.

Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Participation	100	10%
In-Class Quizzes/Discussion Board Exercises (5)	50	5%
Debate Topics	50	5%
Visual/Social Media Argument Analysis	150	15%
Mini Debates (4)	100	10%
Debate #1	150	15%
Debate #2	150	15%
Judge’s Ballot	100	10%
Final Exam	150	15%
TOTAL	1000	100%

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, events, and/or guest speaker availability. Students should consult the [University Registration Calendar](#) for dates associated with add/drop deadlines, fees, and grading options.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings/Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 Dates: 5/19	5/19: Introduction to the Course, Argumentation as a Human Symbolic Activity, Audiences and Fields of Argument, and Arguments as Stories	5/19: Read: Syllabus, Chapter 1 & 3 of Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making, AND posted Blackboard reading (HONY)	5/20: Propositions (debate topics) are due by tomorrow, May 20th at 5 p.m. PDT.
Week 2 Dates: 5/24, 5/26	5/24: Argumentation and Critical Thinking, Types of Arguments, and Building Arguments (Debate Evidence) 5/26: The Toulmin Model, The Grounds for Arguments, and Building Arguments (Constructive Speeches)	5/24: Read: Chapter 5, 6 & 8 of Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making AND posted Blackboard readings (Zarefsky) 5/26: Read: Chapter 7 of Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making AND review Ch. 6 pgs. 109 - 113 AND Ch. 8 pgs. 149-154 of Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making	5/24: Final propositions (debate topic assignments) will be emailed to you by the start of class today.
Week 3 Dates: 5/31, 6/2	5/31: Refuting Arguments (Rebuttal Speeches), Cross Examinations 6/2: Practice Mini Debates & Debate Preparation Workshop	5/31: Chapter 9 of Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making AND pages 197-199 of Ch. 11 of Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making 6/2: Posted Blackboard readings (Case Attacks, Counterplans, Critiques, Cross Examinations, Disadvantages, Rebuttals & Topicality)	5/31: All evidence files for the Affirmative position should be uploaded to Blackboard and shared with your partner/opponent by the start of class today. 6/2: All evidence files for the Negative position should be uploaded to Blackboard and shared with your partner/opponent by the start of class.

<p>Week 4 Dates: 6/7-6/9</p>	<p>6/7: Practice Mini Debates, How to Write a Judge's Ballot, & DEBATE #1</p> <p>6/9: Argumentation in Politics: Campaigns and Debates</p>	<p>6/7: No readings!</p> <p>6/9: Chapter 13 of Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making</p>	<p>6/7: All speaking outlines (1AC/1NC constructive speeches) are due by the start of class.</p> <p>6/9: Blackboard response due by tomorrow, June 10th at 5 p.m.</p>
<p>Week 5 Dates: 6/14, 6/16</p>	<p>6/14: Visual Argument and Social Media</p> <p>6/16: Argumentation in America & Debate Preparation Workshop</p>	<p>6/14: Chapter 10 of Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making AND posted Blackboard reading (Salcedo article)</p> <p>6/16: Blackboard readings (Broome, Chui et al., Minson & Gino, & Miller articles)</p>	<p>6/14: All evidence files for the Affirmative position should be uploaded to Blackboard and shared with your partner/opponent by the start of class today.</p> <p>6/16: All evidence files for the Negative position should be uploaded to Blackboard and shared with your partner/opponent by the start of class today.</p> <p>Visual analysis is due by the start of class.</p>
<p>Week 6 Dates: 6/21-6/23</p>	<p>6/21: Practice Mini Debates, & DEBATE #2</p> <p>6/23: Argumentation and the Law, & Final Exam Overview</p>	<p>6/21: No readings!</p> <p>6/23: Chapter 14 of Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making</p>	<p>6/21: All speaking outlines (1AC/1NC constructive speeches) are due by the start of class.</p>
<p>Week 7 Dates: 6/28</p>	<p>6/28: Final Mini Debates, Course Evaluations, & FINAL EXAM</p>		<p>6/28: Judge's Ballot due by the start of class today.</p> <p>Course evaluations will be conducted at the start of class.</p> <p>The 2-part final exam will be distributed and <u>taken in class.</u></p>

Grading Scale

94 to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 93%: A-	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C-	0% to 59%: F

Grading Standards

Letter Grade	Description
A	Excellent; demonstrates extraordinarily high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.
B	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
C	Satisfactory/Fair; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.
D	Marginal; minimal knowledge and understanding of subject matter; more than one significant shortcoming; deficiencies indicate only the most rudimentary level of understanding.
F	Failing; unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; deficiencies indicate lack of understanding.

Grading Timeline

Grading Timeframe and Missing or Inaccurate Score Inquiries/Disputes

Every attempt will be made to grade assignments/exams and post grades within one week on Blackboard. You are responsible for notifying the instructor **within one (1) week** of a score posting if you think a score is missing or inaccurate. If you fail to inquire/notify me of any discrepancy, missing score, or contest a score within one week of the date the score is posted, no change will be made.

NOTE: After all grades are posted for each assignment there is a 24-hour cooling off period. This means you should not reply to me about your grade for a particular assignment until at least 24 hours after the grade has been posted on Blackboard. After that time, you may reach out to me with your questions or concerns. Failure to abide by this rule will result in further points deduction on your assignment.

Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments are due on the dates specified on this syllabus. For assignments due on a class day, all assignments are due before the start of class that day unless otherwise indicated on the syllabus. Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Non-debate assignments turned in late and without prior approval will be deducted 10% per day they are late. The Final Exam **MUST** be turned in by the due date - failure to do so results in a zero (0) grade for the exam. Missing class on a day you are scheduled to debate is strictly prohibited and will result in a zero (0) grade on the assignment.

Course Expectations/Policies

Attendance and Due Dates: You are expected to attend every scheduled class meeting, whether online or in-person, for the full duration of class. Classes will be held on Zoom only if mandated by USC policy (e.g., reinstating COVID safety protocols) or extenuating circumstances (e.g., the instructor is sick but still able to teach).

Each missed class or a portion of missed class will result in an automatic 10% off your participation grade. Three missed classes during summer term will result in a zero (0) for your participation grade.

Regardless of the reason, as a professional courtesy, you should always e-mail me in advance to let me know you will be missing class. Missing class on a day you are scheduled to debate is strictly prohibited and will result in a zero (0) grade on the assignment. This is non-negotiable. Classes are not recorded, and debates will not be recorded.

If you need to miss class for a religious or university-sanctioned activity, please email me to let me know.

Communication: E-mail is the best way to reach me. **As a general rule, I do not respond to any e-mails sent after 5:00 PM or before 9:00 AM PST on weekdays; I do not respond to emails on the weekends or USC holidays.** Please keep this in mind when expecting an email response. I will always respond to your e-mail within 24 hours on weekdays and within 48 hours for emails sent to me during the weekend. If you do not hear from me within that timeframe, please send a follow-up e-mail.

Above almost anything, I value open communication. If you need assistance in the course, please contact me early so we can work together to come up with a plan to better support your learning needs. I am here to facilitate your learning, and I cannot help you if I do not know there is an issue. Additionally, if you have read this syllabus closely enough to get to this paragraph and would like to earn ten extra points towards your participation grade, please email me a short statement with the name and address of your favorite local restaurant and why it is arguably the best one in the area. I will confirm receipt of this email to ensure you receive your ten extra points, but only if your email is received prior to the second class of the term.

Potential Changes to Course Modality: This course has been designed to transition to fully online, should the need arise due to local, state or federal guidelines. In the event that the delivery method is altered, please be assured that the learning goals and outcomes of the course will not change; however, some aspects of the course will change in terms of the mode of delivery, participation, and assessment.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: I always strive to create an affirming, welcoming climate for all students. Diversity encompasses differences in age, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, physical or mental ability, religion, socioeconomic background, veteran status, and sexual orientation. Diversity is most beneficial to us all when it cultivates connection and mutual learning fostered by the interactions of people from different backgrounds. If at any point you do not feel our course embodies this environment, please let me know immediately in the manner you feel most comfortable. I am here to listen and to learn, and to ensure a consistent, welcoming learning environment for all.

Professionalism: During our class meetings you are expected to exhibit professional behavior at all times. While this is a class on argumentation and will involve debate, you are expected to always conduct yourself with respect for our class and community. The best policy is to always **T.H.I.N.K.** before you speak by ensuring that your comment is: **T**houghtful, **H**elpful, **I**nteresting, **N**ecessary, **K**ind. While I strongly affirm the importance of free speech, free speech does not come without disagreement or consequence. You should develop thoughtful arguments in support of your claims, rather than offering unsupported assertions. Explicitly sexist, racist, gendered, homophobic, ableist, or other exclusionary language or ideologies will not be tolerated.

Technology Use: Laptops are permitted in the classroom when they are used responsibly for class-related

purposes. Students are encouraged to take handwritten or typed notes; however, audio/photo/video recordings of any portion of classes or lectures are not permitted. When our course operates online, live class sessions *may* be recorded and made available to students through Blackboard but will be subject to all USC policies regarding the prohibiting of sharing course content outside of the learning environment.

E-mail and Blackboard: You are expected to regularly check your USC e-mail account and our course Blackboard site for any updates or changes to the course. I will always send an e-mail if something in the class schedule or structure changes; I will not email you on weekends or USC holidays or after 5:00 PM on weekdays unless an emergency change to our class schedule requires me to do so.

Culture of Care: I care about you, your health, and your safety. At the end of this syllabus there is a list of USC offices and services designed to help students coping with mental health struggles and an array of challenging personal situations. If you are struggling and need help, please reach out to one of these offices.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

All COMM 322 students should have access to Blackboard, USC email, Google Drive, and Microsoft Word. You should also have basic academic research skills and an ability to navigate the USC library website.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism

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](#).” Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school’s policy.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course, without approval of the instructor.

b. Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

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 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

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

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symlicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776

osas.usc.edu/

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

uscса.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-and-awards>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.