

CMST 2063: ARGUMENTATION AND DEBATE

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Meeting day and time: TTH 10:30-11:50am

Office hours: TH 12-2pm

Sec.: 1

Term: Spring 2016

Meeting room: Coates 111



COURSE OBJECTIVES

As a General Education Humanities Course, CMST 2063 enables you to demonstrate an understanding of the historical, cultural, and philosophical complexity that supports sophisticated discourse.

You will learn to become a more effective critical thinker and consumer of information and arguments. This will be accomplished by achieving the following:

- Understanding, identifying and evaluating the types of arguments, reasoning processes, and logical fallacies
- Knowing what evidence is, how to use it to prove a claim, and how to evaluate the adequacy of your and opposing evidence
- Learning to organize arguments into a persuasive case
- Developing skills in refutation and cross examination
- Being able to use these skills in a variety of forums

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The success of this course depends on the interactions generated between the instructor and the students (me and you). I do expect you to participate actively in class, share your ideas and opinions, comment on and assess those of your fellow classmates. However, I do demand that everyone treat each other with respect. Ridicule or disrespect of any sort will not be tolerated. While I use a wide variety of mediated examples to illuminate points and bring life to discussion in class, I do not use powerpoint presentations and will not post “lecture outlines” on Moodle. My hope is that we will all become more engaged members of the classroom discussions because of this commitment to an engaged and discussion-oriented environment.

COURSE WEBSITE

This course makes use of the Moodle website. You should be able to access Moodle through your PAWS account. After you log into PAWS, you will find the link to Moodle under the “Student Services” category. I will post readings, course assignments, documents, as well as any announcements. Make sure to check the website regularly.

COURSE MATERIALS

- Heinrichs, J. (2013). *Thank You For Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- One two-pocket folder for handing in assignments
- Additional readings/materials will be posted online.
- Access to and competency with online search engines and university libraries is essential for success in this course.

ASSIGNMENTS

Grade Scale

Letter Grade	Point Range Needed
A+	980-1000
A	920-979
A-	900-919
B+	880-899
B	820-879
B-	800-819
C+	780-799
C	720-779
C-	700-719
D+	680-699
D	620-679
D-	600-619
F	0-599

Assignment Weights

ASSIGNMENT	Points
Refutation Speech	150 points
Debates	150 points each x 2 = 300 points total
Argument Analysis Paper	200 points
Pop Quizzes (6 given, drop 1)	50 points each x 5 = 250 points total
Engagement	Various activities/assignments/engagement = 100 points total
TOTAL	1000

Assignment Descriptions

Refutation Speech (150 points) Refute a single argument of fact, definition, or value in a 3 minute speech to the class. Each speech will be followed by a 3-minute cross examination period where classmates are required to thoroughly examine and interrogate the speaker. 75 points will go towards each students individual speech and ability to answer questions, and 50 points will be

determined by the students active and inquisitive participation in the cross examination periods of other students.

Debates (150 points x 2 = 300 points) Each member of the class will partner with another member of the class and debate a specific resolution. One person will represent the affirmative side while the other will represent the negative side. Must follow specific debate format and requirements, including submitting a brief prior to each debate.

Argument Analysis Paper (200 points) 5-6 page essay analyzing an argument. You will receive a detailed assignment sheet describing this assignment later in the semester.

Pop quizzes (5 @ 50 points each = 250 points total) On 6 randomly selected days throughout the semester there will be a pop quiz at the beginning of class based on the readings due for that day in class, discussion/presentations from the day before. These quizzes cannot be made up for any reason. Your lowest grade will be dropped.

Engagement (100 points) This class is based on your thorough participation and critical engagement with text and exercise materials. I expect you to come to class having completed the readings for that day. Students are expected to attend all lectures and to complete all required readings. Material will be presented in the lecture that is not in the readings and **will be** addressed in the quizzes. The engagement grade is composed of student contributions to class discussions and various engagement assignments given throughout the semester. In addition, you will be graded on in-class assignments and discussions for which you will lose credit if you are not present. I also reserve the right to bump up the borderline grades of students who participate most actively in class discussions.

Quality of Written Work

Take pride in the quality of your work in this class. Written work must be spell-checked, grammar-checked, and proofread: The quality of your writing will affect your grade.

All written work must be typed in 12-point times new roman font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, with a clear heading up at the top. Your name must be included. All written work (with the exception of quizzes and engagement points) is submitted through Moodle and is due by class time on the assigned due date. If the assignment is submitted electronically, it must be in Microsoft Word (.doc) format, and named with your last name and the assignment (ie. "Mack – Argument Analysis.doc").

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

There are consequences if you miss class that you should consider while you make your decision about your attendance to this course:

- You are responsible for all information communicated in class, whether or not you are in attendance.
- You are responsible for participating in activities and discussion, and missing class will impact your engagement grade in this course.
- I do not lecture on the readings, so the information given in class is not something you can just get from the readings.
- If you miss a class, please get notes from a classmate rather than asking me for notes.
- You will not be able to make up quizzes or engagement activities.

Attendance on debate/presentation days, even when you are not speaking, is required. Failure to attend all speech days will result in a ten-point deduction from your own debate grade for each day missed.

Late Work

Tell me ahead of time if you're going to miss a major speech/debate day. Excusable reasons for missing are, to be frank, few and far between, but include unexpected sickness **proven** by the presentation of a doctor's note, family emergency **proven** through presentation of an obituary, etc., or a university-sanctioned activity like a game or a concert **proven** by a note from an advisor or an instructor. Under these circumstances, I will work out a way for you to make up the speech (either on another day during the same round, or during my office hours in front of myself and a few other instructors). Make-up speeches are reserved for **students who are in good standing** in the course, provide me with an **outline of their speech within twenty-four hours** of missing it, and **schedule a make-up within one week**.

Missed speeches that are not accompanied by proof of excused absence and an outline may be made up within the week they are missed for the **maximum grade of a C**. (Life happens, but not without consequences.)

Other major course assignments will be due in-class. If you can't make the in-class deadline, you can turn the assignment in for **increasingly fewer points** throughout that day, up **until 5pm**. After that point, work will no longer be accepted without proof of extenuating circumstances (see above).

Presentation Day Etiquette

On the day of your debate or presentation, you should arrive in appropriate attire (i.e. business casual, or at least not in pajamas) prepared to give your speech. All individuals must submit a folder containing materials pertinent to each specific assignment specified on each assignment sheet.

Your role as an audience member is equally important to a successful debate. As I indicate above, attendance on debate days is mandatory for everyone. You are also responsible for being a supportive audience member. This means that working on homework, typing on a lap top, text messaging, walking in late while someone is speaking, sleeping, or simply looking like anything other than engaged in your classmates' work will be considered rude and treated accordingly, probably with some species of public shaming and/or ridicule.

Grade Discussions and Appeals

I do not discuss grades over e-mail or in class. If you would like to speak with me about a quiz, assignment, final grade, or any other graded material you must come to my office and speak with me face-to-face. If you cannot come to my office hours, I will gladly schedule an appointment that works with your schedule.

If you wish to appeal a grade on an assignment, you must submit a grade appeal within 7 days of receiving the grade, and you must follow these procedures:

- Wait at least 24 hours before setting up an appointment and submitting your written grade appeal to insure that you have time to carefully read and consider the feedback. Focus less on explaining that you deserve a certain grade, and more on proving that you accomplished specific objectives that you were not given the appropriate credit for. Make sure to cite specific instances from your assignment to provide support for these claims.
- After reading my feedback, submit a typed, written appeal that identifies the specific issue in question (e.g. quiz item, etc.) and explains the specific and well-supported reasons you believe the grade should be changed. Please refer to any class materials that support your rationale for a change.
- The written appeal should be submitted at least 24 hours prior to the appointment.
- When you arrive for the scheduled appointment, bring in your graded copy of the item in question (e.g., quiz, exam, etc.) and any additional evidence to support your claims and be ready to present them.
- After meeting with you, I may wish to contemplate the matter. In any case, I will decide within two school days whether to change or uphold the grade.
- I will provide you with a written justification of my decision. We need to meet within one week (7 days) of the grade's issue.
- Grade appeals will not be considered after that "statute of limitations" has expired.
- If we cannot come to an agreement, you are welcome to follow the formal grade appeal procedure as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

You may feel compelled to compare grades with others in the class. If both of you are fine doing this, then there is nothing I can do to stop you. However, keep in mind that you are appealing your grade, not how you were graded compared to others. I strive to make sure grades are individual, rather than comparative, evaluations.

Technology and Electronics in the Classroom

You are more than welcome to use technology in this classroom (Laptops, iPads, etc) as long as it does not serve as a distraction to you and other students. However, if your cell phone rings during class I reserve the right to answer it or take it for the remainder of class. If you use a laptop to take notes, that is fine, but it should not be out during discussions or engagement activities. Also, if I catch you on facebook, twitter, instagram, or something unrelated to class—I will give one warning and if it happens again the rest of the class will lose the privilege to take notes electronically.

Waiting Policy

Class members should wait 15 minutes for me in the event I am late (which I do not at all foresee). After that period of time, you should consider class cancelled.

Netiquette

Think about how you communicate to your instructors and colleagues in person and via e-mail.

When sending E-Mails:

- Address me professionally in e-mails (ex: “Hello, Dr. Mack”)
- In an e-mail, please sign your name (I might think LSUcutiepie@gmail.com is spam and delete it).
- Check your grammar.
- Remember tone is harder to make out in e-mail. Assume a polite and professional tone, and my response will be the same.
- Make sure to include any necessary background information needed for me to “make sense” of what you are e-mailing about. Also, make sure to be clear (just like in an essay) of what you want out of the e-mail.
- Do not text me from your phone in all caps, or in broken English. Always use proper punctuation, complete spellings, etc...
- Courtesy in this class gives most people 24 hours to respond to e-mail. I will not assume you will get an e-mail in less time; don’t assume I will either. Weekends may take longer.
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If you fail to follow these guidelines, I will not answer your e-mail.

Academic Misconduct

Don’t plagiarize. Any student found to have turned in material not their own (either downloaded from the internet or written by another student) will immediately be reported to the Dean of Students. You can find the official LSU policies on plagiarism here:

<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/instruction/plagiarism2.html> . **Your work would be considered as plagiarism in part or entirely if it involves any of the following:**

- Submitting work that was written by someone other than you (an online source, a friend, etc.).
- Submitting work in which you use the ideas, metaphors or reasoning style of another, but do not cite that source and/or place that source in your list of references. Simply rewording a sentence does not make work your own.
- Submitting work in which you “cut and paste” or use the exact words of a source and you do not put the words within quotation marks, use footnotes or in-text citations, and place the source in your list of references.
- Submitting work that you have written together with a friend as if it was solely your own intellectual property.
- Submitting work for COMM 2063 that you wrote verbatim for another class.

Students With Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states: “If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs so that such accommodations can be arranged. After you receive the accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

Majoring in Communication Studies

Business leaders and other professionals recognize the importance of developing communication skills and analysis. Alan Greenspan, for example, stated, “To succeed, you will soon learn, as I did, the importance of a solid foundation in the basics of education – literacy, both verbal and numerical, and communication skills.” We hope this course contributes to your success.

To learn more about communication, you may want to major or minor in the Department of Communication Studies. The program explores how people sustain and change, experience, and make sense of the world through symbolic action. Students develop conceptual skills to analyze written, oral, and visual messages. Students gain practical experience in such areas such as public speaking, group decision-making, performance, and film. Such skills are elemental to careers in business, government, law, social services, and the arts.

A major in Communication Studies requires 36 hours including 12 hours of core classes and 12 hours at the 3000 or 4000 level. A minor requires 15 hours with one core class and 6 hours at the 3000 level or above.

More information is available at www.lsu.edu/cmst or by contacting our undergraduate advisor Mr. Kent Filbel (kfilli@lsu.edu), whose hours are posted at his office, 135 Coates Hall

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please Note: You are responsible for all readings. Please complete the reading assignment *before* the listed class. The syllabus is provisional and is subject to revision as necessary. Additional readings may be assigned from time to time, and/or assigned readings may be omitted.

Date	Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Info
TH 1/14	Course Introduction - The Role of Argumentation and Debate		
T 1/19	Argumentation Basics: Structuring & Supporting Arguments	Ch. 1, 2	
TH 1/21	Types of Argument (Fact, Definition, Evaluation/Value, Causal, Policy)	Ch. 3	
T 1/26	The role of the Speaker	Ch. 4, 5, 6, 7	
TH 1/28	Audience Centered Argument	Ch 11, 19, 20, 23	
T 2/2	Defining Terms & Controlling Arguments	Ch. 12, 13, 21	
TH 2/4	Refuting Arguments	Ch. 15, 16, 17	*Assign refutation speech
T 2/9	No Class – Mardi Gras Holiday		
TH 2/11	Fallacies, Errors, and Other Missteps	Ch. 14, 22	
T 2/16	Workshop		
TH 2/18	Refutation Speeches		
T 2/22	Refutation Speeches		
TH 2/25	Refutation Speeches		
T 3/1	Refutation Speeches		
TH 3/3	Introduction To Policy Debate	*readings on moodle	*Assign Policy Debates

	(Format, Resolutions)		
T 3/8	Workshop		
TH 3/10	Workshop		
T 3/15	Workshop		*Debate briefs due through Moodle & to Peer
TH 3/17	Analyzing Arguments		*Assign Analysis Essay
T 3/22 & TH 3/24	No Class – Spring Break		
T 3/29	Debates		
TH 3/31	Debates		
T 4/5	Debates		
TH 4/7	Debates		
T 4/12	Workshop		
TH 4/14	Workshop		*Debate briefs due through Moodle & to Peer
T 4/19	Debates		
TH 4/21	Debates		
T 4/26	Debates		
TH 4/28	Debates		
F 5/6	No meeting		
	Argument Analysis Essay Due through Moodle by 12pm		