

ENG 377W Argumentation and Persuasion

Fall 2007; Credits 3; CID 7332

Location: Evans 154
Time: MWF 11:00-11:50 a.m.
Instructor: Dr. Carroll Ferguson Nardone
Office: Evans 454
Contact Info: Office – 936-294-1472
Fax – 936-294-1408
cfnardone@shsu.edu
Hours: MWF 10:30-11; 12-1; TR by appointment

Course Description

This course, according to the catalog description, is an **advanced writing class** that focuses on successful argumentative and persuasive writing. Study will include a survey of the history of argument, structuring a sound argument, and stylistics.

Drawing on rhetorical theory and leading theories of argument, this course will assist students in analyzing and writing effecting arguments. Particular attention will be paid to current events and argumentation in everyday communication practices. Class instruction will be based on minimal lecture, involved class discussions, and active-learning assignments. Students will write a significant number of formal and informal papers throughout the semester. Some teamwork is expected and will be graded as such.

Course Objectives

- Introduce students to the basic theory of argument
- Improve students' skills as critical consumers of arguments
- Enhance students' abilities to present sound arguments, both in writing and orally
- Enhance students critical thinking skills
- Practice writing argument critiques and formal arguments

Required Textbook and Technology

- Herrick, James A. *Argumentation: Understanding and Shaping Arguments*, 3rd ed. State College, PA: Strata, 2007. (ISBN-13: 978-1-891136-19-1)

This book is an integral component of the course and students are expected to have access to it from the first day of class. I expect you to read the assigned chapters before class and to come to class with questions for clarification. I will not lecture directly

from the text, but will gladly clarify concepts and will base daily discussions on questions from students.

- **Internet service and access to Blackboard.** Course materials and weekly assignments will be posted and need to be accessed via Blackboard, so you will need *readily available* internet access, preferably high-speed access.

Class Policies

Attendance

I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. If you miss class for whatever reason, you do not get the benefit of the day's discussion and activities. If you arrive after attendance has been taken, it is your responsibility to tell the instructor after class is over so that you can be counted tardy rather than absent (3 tardies equal 1 absence). The instructor will keep the official record of attendance and students are responsible for making sure their attendance is properly recorded.

Attendance in the classroom assumes students will be prepared and will actively participate in the day's activities. Ten points of your final grade comes from your attendance. Earning attendance points is vital to your final grade in this class, so make sure that you attend class regularly. Many research studies have shown a direct link between class attendance and higher grades. Attendance points will be earned according to the following list:

0-1 absences =	10 points	5 absences =	7 points
2-3 absences =	9 points	6 absences =	6 points
4 absences =	8 points	7 or more =	0 points

Note that you can miss up to 3 classes and still earn the equivalent of an "A" in attendance; however, if you miss more than 2 weeks' equivalence of classes, you will earn no attendance points.

Attendance is mandatory for successful completion of this course. Even a moderate number of absences may seriously jeopardize your ability to learn the material and pass the course. Since much of our work will build on material previously completed and will include team and group interaction, you should make every effort to attend class and be on time. Students must be in the classroom for the entire time in order to receive full credit for attendance.

Please do not schedule doctor or dental appointments, meetings with other instructors, advisers, etc. during class time. I will have the same respect for your time and will make sure that I am in class as scheduled, barring any unforeseen emergencies. As it is we only have a few hours each week together and every class session will be important.

If you are unable to attend a class, you must make sure you are prepared for the session when you return. Much of what you need to know to be prepared will be on the calendar, but unanticipated events can occur during classes that may change the calendar. Contact a classmate to see what unanticipated assignments, discussions, etc., you might have missed; this will help ensure that you are not surprised when the class is doing something for which you aren't prepared.

Individual and group responsibility

During the semester you will work in teams whose responsibility will be to read and provide constructive criticism on each member's written work and at times create a document as a team. Because your input is essential to the success of the entire team, your attendance is essential. Failure to work as part of the collaborative team will mean you do not have the proper background to do the assignment and no grade will be recorded.

If you are to bring a draft of an assignment, make sure you are clear about its purpose and have that draft with you. Do not come to class without the needed materials, including your book, your drafts, and supplementary materials you might be using for your project. We will workshop assignments in class and you must have the proper materials in order to be able to participate and get the full benefit of the class interaction.

Assignments

Because writing is a process and involves various stages, students are expected to work through projects in a step-by-step fashion and **turn in all of these steps** when the assignments are due. If any step in the process of a particular assignment is missing or completed unsatisfactorily, the final paper will not be accepted.

Plagiarism in any of its forms will not be tolerated and will result in **automatic failure of the course** and university disciplinary action. You should be especially careful when using the Web for your research. Technology allows for easy "borrowing" of ideas and information. However, all intellectual property must be respected. You will be expected to follow proper citation format. We will discuss proper citation format in class and discuss alternate ways (based on disciplines) of citing material. Feel free to ask questions so that we can discuss this fully and so that you will have no doubt about expectations. We will use Turnitin.com in this class and students will be expected to upload their assignments and furnish the instructor with a proper receipt.

Cell phones and MP3 players

These wonderful advances in technology have also helped advance bad manners. Please turn off any of these devices when you arrive in class and put them away. If a student uses a cell phone during class, even to text a message, he/she will be **asked to leave the classroom** for the day.

Late work

No late work will be accepted for any reason. If you are absent, it is still your responsibility to turn in assignments and be prepared for the next class session. If you are going to miss class you must still turn in your assignment on time. Being absent or late does not change the due date/time for any assignment. Failure to follow this standard policy will result in a zero for that assignment.

Exams

We will have two mid-terms (dividing the semester roughly into thirds) and a final exam. Exams will be short answer and essay. The final exam will be comprehensive.

Exam dates are listed on the calendar and students must be in class to take the exam. No make-up exams will be given.

Grades

Argument analysis project (includes presentation)	15points
Blogs and responses	15points
Exercises (in-class and homework)	10 points
Fallacy reports (5 x 3 pts each)	15 points
Midterms (2 x 10 pts each)	20 points
Final exam	15 points
Attendance	<u>10 points</u>
Total	100 points

The grading scale is based on a ten-point system:

A=90-100;

B=80-89;

C=70-79;

D=60-69;

F=59 or below.

Argument & Analysis Project: Students will work in teams to create a case study of a current public topic and advance that argumentative topic in a creative classroom presentation. Specific instructions will be given about the middle of the semester. Students will be graded collectively on their team presentation (5 points) and individually on their completion report (15 points).

Fallacy Reports: Students will pick five times during the semester to give a short 3-minute informal presentation on a poorly developed argument found in a public space (web, magazine, newspaper, etc.). Based on our study of argument structure, students will choose five fallacies and share them with students during the time set aside for such presentations (the first ten minutes of Fridays' classes). Students are responsible

for volunteering to present their fallacies and are responsible for making sure that they present a total of five times. Specific guidelines and a presentation form are available on Blackboard.

Blogs: Blogs serve an instructive purpose and show that you are engaging with the course material. Actively participating in the blogging activity is your opportunity for expanding class discussion and getting assistance with ideas that need more clarification. Your blog posts, along with those of your classmates and instructor, will form a large part of your learning and are not considered an optional component of the course.

Students will create and respond to blogs throughout the semester, posting a minimum of 5 times and responding a minimum of 5 times. Blogs and responses are graded according to the guidelines posted on Blackboard. A schedule of posting dates will be developed.

Exercises: Students will be expected to work on exercises as part of the course activities. Some will be graded; others will not be graded but are not optional. Each exercise will help students develop their critical thinking skills and help students respond appropriately to argument strategies.

Academic Honesty

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

Religious Holidays

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

Course Calendar

Tentative Schedule of Readings, Topics, and Assignments

- Readings must be completed prior to the week in which they will be discussed. Blogs and responses must be posted by 10:00 a.m. on assigned day
- Assignments may be in-class, homework, or a combination (not all exercises will be assigned a grade)
-

Week 1: August 20-24

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Overview	Exercises A & B
Wednesday	Part I: Goals, Skills, and Functions of Argumentation Chapter 1: Introduction to Argumentation	
Friday	Chapter 1	Exercise C

Week 2: August 27-31

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Chapter 2: The Elements of Argument	Exercises A, B & C
Wednesday	Chapter 2	Exercise D
Friday	Chapter 3: Tools for Analyzing Arguments	Exercise C

Week 3: September 3-7

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Labor Day Holiday	
Wednesday	Chapter 3	Exercises C & D
Friday	Part II: The Conditions of Constructive Argumentation Chapter 4: Ethical Advocacy	Exercise A presented in class Exercise C

Week 4: September 10-14

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Chapter 5: Reasonable Arguments, Reasonable People	Exercises A presented in class
Wednesday	Chapter 5	Exercises B & C
Friday	Part III: Support: The content of Arguments Chapter 6: Evaluating Evidence	Exercise A & B

Week 5: September 17-21

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Chapter 7: Locating and Evaluating Sources of Evidence	Exercises A, B, or C presented in class
Wednesday	Chapter 8: Using Statistics as Evidence	Exercises A & B
Friday	Chapter 9: Using Testimony as Evidence	Exercise A

Week 6: September 24-28

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Part IV: Validity: The Structure of Arguments Chapter 10: Validity in Conditional and Enumeration Arguments	Exercises A
Wednesday		Review for first exam: Chapter 1-10
Friday		First Exam

Week 7: October 1-5

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Chapter 10	Exercises B & C
Wednesday	Chapter 11: Validity in Categorical Arguments	Exercises A
Friday	TBA	TBA

Week 8: October 8-12

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Chapter 11	Exercises B
Wednesday	Part V: Linguistic Consistency: Language in Argument Chapter 12: Definition in Argument	Exercise A
Friday	Chapter 13: Ambiguity, Equivocation, and other language considerations	Exercise A & B or C & D

Week 9: October 15-19

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Part VI: Types and Tests of Arguments Chapter 14: Analogies and Examples	Exercises A
Wednesday	Chapter 14	Exercises B & C
Friday	Chapter 14	Exercise D

Week 10: October 22-26

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Chapter 15: Reasoning about Causes	Exercises A and B
Wednesday	Chapter 15	Exercises C & D Argument Analysis Assignment discussed in class
Friday	Chapter 16: Moral and Practical Arguments	Exercise A & B

Week 11: October 29-November 2

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Chapter 17: Essential Nature Arguments	Exercises A
Wednesday	Chapter 18: Fallacies and Appeals	Exercises A

Friday	Part VII: Developing and Adapting your case Chapter 19: Policy Case Construction	Exercise A or B
--------	---	-----------------

Week 12: November 5-9

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Chapter 20: Adapting Arguments to an Audience	Exercises A
Wednesday		Review for second exam: Chapters 11-20
Friday		Second exam

Week 13: November 12-16

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Final consultations on projects	Exercises A and B
Wednesday	Drafts of projects due	Review projects
Friday		Review Projects

Week 14: November 19-23

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Projects due	
Wednesday	Thanksgiving Holiday	
Friday	Thanksgiving Holiday	

Week 15: November 26-30

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Projects presented in class	
Wednesday	Projects presented in class	
Friday	Projects presented in class	

Week 16: December 3-5

Day	Topic	Assignment
Monday	Projects presented in class	
Wednesday	Projects presented in class	
Friday	Reading Day; No Class	

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 12, 11:00-1:00