

Skyline College
Official Course Outline

Date: November 2008

1. TITLE:

Speech 127 -- Argumentation and Debate

3 Units. Three lecture hours.

Prerequisites: None.

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL 836 or ENGL 846, or equivalent.

2. COURSE CLASSIFICATION:

Credit course applicable to the Associate Degree

3. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:

Catalog Description:

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL 836 or ENGL 846, or equivalent. Lecture-laboratory course in the principles and techniques of argumentation and debate. Research in significant social problems.

Analysis of propositions, issues, evidence and reasoning. Training and experience in the forms of debate. Transfer credit: UC; CSU (A1). (CAN SPCH 6).

Schedule of Classes Description:

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL 836 or ENGL 846 or equivalent. Principles and techniques of argumentation and debate. Research in significant social problems. Analysis of propositions, issues, evidence and reasoning. Training and experience in the forms of debate. Transfer: UC; CSU (A1). CAN SPCH 6

4. COURSE JUSTIFICATION:

This course is designed for students who seek to fulfill the following:

- I. This course is transferable to the UC and CSU systems.
- II. This course is applicable for the AA/AS Degree.
- III. This course satisfies the CSU General Education Requirement; Area A1.
- IV. This course satisfies the IGETC Requirement; Area 1, Group C
- V. This course satisfies the CAN Spch 6 requirement.

5. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLO'S):

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Create and compose argumentative texts and/or oral presentations.
- Distinguish between factual statements and inferential reasoning in texts and oral rhetoric
- Evaluate the validity and soundness of arguments.
- Classify and analyze common fallacies of language and thought in argumentative prose and/or oral presentations.

6. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

- Identify and state the main idea, thesis, position, or unifying theme in expository and/or argumentative prose and/or oral presentations
- Identify and analyze the structure of arguments underlying texts
- Identify instances of inferential reasoning and deductive and inductive logic
- Distinguish factual statements from judgmental statements
- Recognize and clearly state assumptions (including unstated, cultural, ethnic and/or gender-based assumptions) in an argument or in oratory
- Draw and justify inferences about the intention of the author and/or speaker based on the student's analysis of the author's and/or speaker's use of language

7. COURSE CONTENT:

Critical reading/thinking techniques.

1. Consider the various functions of language and the analytical techniques appropriate to each
2. Identify stated and unstated premises and conclusions of arguments
3. Identify argument structures
4. Analyze the effect of diction, figurative language, and analogy in style and argument
5. Identify and evaluate inductive arguments
6. Identify deductive arguments and evaluate their validity
7. Distinguish types of evidence and evaluate their accuracy, relevance, sufficiency, and fairness
8. Evaluate clarity; vagueness and fallacies of ambiguity
9. Evaluate explanations

Critical speech techniques

1. Employ, in a number of oral & written presentations, strategies such as analysis, synthesis, and summary, that emphasize various argumentative modes of development, including causal analysis, evaluation, refutation, and interpretation.
2. Construct and deliver sound arguments
3. Evaluate clarity: vagueness and fallacies of ambiguity
4. Supply sufficient and organized support for specific claims
5. Distinguish types of evidence and evaluate their accuracy, relevance, sufficiency and fairness
6. Use specific examples, information, data, or principles to support generalizations
7. Use definitions (reportive, stipulative)
8. Use inductive and deductive reasoning
9. Use sophisticated diction in the service of clarity, and the effect of figurative language, and analogy in style and argument
10. Use rhetorical devices to achieve emphasis

8. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

A variety of methods will be employed, including but not limited to, lecture and discussion, substantial reading from primary and secondary sources, written exercises, group work, related outside assignments, oral presentations (speech and debates), research projects and exams. Analyze the effect of diction, figurative language, and analogy in style and argument. Evaluate clarity: vagueness and fallacies of ambiguity

Distinguish types of evidence and evaluate their accuracy, relevance, sufficiency and fairness Identify argument structures. Students will read texts that represent multiple cultures and perspectives. The

approximate reading load will be one to two chapters of a college level argumentation and debate text, as well as, following up with current events for class discussion.

9. ASSIGNMENTS:

Typical assignments may include individual and group debates, persuasive speeches, and argumentative essays. Some possible assignments are:

Team Debates

- **Position Papers/Outlines (all teams)**
- **Team Debates:** Topics to be determined

Overview

The purpose of these team debates is (1) to help you understand how there can be many different perspectives regarding a particular issue, (2) to give you a sense of how the communication regulatory policy process works, (3) to give you the opportunity to learn how to share ideas and learn from each other, and (4) to expose you to some current policy debates.

- Each team involved in this policy issue will also offer testimony to the rest of the class. During these oral arguments each team will be expected to do more than simply restate its position. Each team will be expected to address the points raised by the opposing teams in their written comments. (This is why the written comments will be shared to the class before the debate.) After each team has presented its arguments, the rest of the class will ask questions and discuss the issues before reaching a decision.

The Argumentative Essay

For our purposes, the *argumentative essay* will be defined upon very narrow lines. The structure of our essay will be rigid, with very little exception allowed. Many authorities define argumentative writing simply as highly persuasive writing; however, we will go further and state that argumentative writing is writing which solves a specific problem by clearly defining that problem, thereby establishing that the problem does in fact exist, and examines the most likely resolutions to that problem and then proving in a reasonable and logical fashion that the solution which the writer proposes is in fact the best solution.

In order to facilitate this process, a specific mode and organization for the essay is herewith provided.

Structure

The organization of the argumentative essay will follow the format immediately below:

- The writer will first establish that a problem exists by defining and/or describing the problem in sufficient detail so that a reasonable reader will recognize the problem as in fact a problem.
- The second step is to inform the reader of solutions to the problem by beginning with a solution or solutions which the writer will ultimately prove to be in some way inadequate.
- The third step is to demonstrate the lack of suitability of this/these solutions.
- The fourth step is to deliver the best solution to the problem.
- The fifth and final step is to conclude the essay.

Subject

The student will choose the subject matter of this assignment. The student must receive permission from the instructor to pursue and develop this assignment. The student will meet with the instructor in conference, extensively, in preparing this assignment. No exceptions to these matters will be allowed without the approval of the instructor.

Persuasive Speeches

A speech designed to persuade the audience for, or against, a question of policy, fact, or value. Speakers may seek either passive agreement or immediate action from the audience, though they should be encouraged to seek the latter if there is appropriate action for the audience to take. This speech will require considerable research and skillful handling of the methods of persuasion. In either case, students should be sure to deal with all three basic issues of policy speeches- need, plan, and practicality. Students who speak on a question of fact will need to give special attention to evidence and reasoning. Students who speak on a question of value must be sure to identify their standards for judgment and to justify their value judgment in light of those standards.

It is not enough to summarize encyclopedia information about the topic you are speaking. As in any persuasive speech, you need to explain ideas clearly and to think about ways to relate the topic to the audience. You may be encouraged to use a visual aide, but you are not required. Delivery of the speech is to be extemporaneous. Developing an audience analysis questionnaire will help identify and adapt to the target audience is strongly recommended. Library research is required for this speech.

10. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:

Grade option

Multiple methods of evaluating and measuring student achievement will be used. Students will be evaluated primarily on the level of critical thinking, reading, writing, oral presentations, and research skills they demonstrate through a progression of writing/oral assignments as well as through quizzes, exams, participation in class discussion, presentations, reading response journals and other individual and group work.

11. RECOMMENDED or REQUIRED TEXT(S):

Barnet, Sylvan, and Hugo Badau. Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing : A Brief Guide to Argument.

Boston: Bedford/Saint Martin's, 2007.

Freeley, Austin, and David Steinberg. Argumentation and Debate. 12th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2008.

Hill, Bill, and Richard W. Leeman. The Art and Practice of Argumentation and Debate. New York:

McGraw-Hill Humanities, Social Sciences & World Languages, 1996.

Inch, Edward, Barbara Warnick, and Danielle Endres. Critical Thinking and Communication : The Use of Reason in Argument. Danbury: Allyn & Bacon, Incorporated, 2005.

Kahane, Howard, and Nancy Cavender. Logic and Contemporary Rhetoric. 10th ed. Belmont, CA:

Thompson Wadsworth, 2006.

Memering, Dean, and William Palmer. Discovering Arguments : An Introduction to Critical Thinking and Writing with Readings. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2001.

Rottenberg, Annette T., and Donna Winchell. Elements of Argument. 9th ed. New York, NY:

Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008.

White, Fred D., and Simone J. Billings. The Well-Crafted Argument : A Guide and Reader. Boston:

Houghton Mifflin College Division, 2004.