Speech 104
Argumentation and Debate

Catalog Statement
SPCH 104 provides students with instruction and practice in the principles of argumentation and the various forms of debate. It includes the analysis of propositions, research, evidence and reasoning. Students are required to practice various forensic debating techniques through the presentation of their outlined affirmative and negative cases after investigating major contemporary issues; to read a college-level argumentation and debate textbook and apply its principles in the preparation of their cases and to critically analyze debate cases.

Total Lecture Units: 3.0
Total Laboratory Units: 0.0
Total Course Units: 3.0

Total Lecture Hours: 48.0
Total Laboratory Hours: 0.0
Total Faculty Contact Hours: 48.0

Recommended Preparation: Eligibility for ENGL101. ESL students should complete ESL 155.

Course Entry Expectations
Prior to enrolling in the course, the student should be able to:
- organize and write thesis-based essays which meet the standards for English 101 entrance;
- use organized, detailed examples, facts, logical explanations, and other appropriate support for thesis statements;
- critically analyze selected works that deal with important contemporary issues;
- summarize, analyze and synthesize information, express and apply standards for judgment, compare and contrast, and evaluate evidence in order to form and state reasoned opinions;
- gather and organize information through library research;
- demonstrate a command of grammar, diction, syntax and mechanics sufficient for English 101 entrance: communicating (both orally and in writing) in standard English, with few major errors in grammar and punctuation.

Course Exit Standards
Upon successful completion of the required coursework, the student will be able to:
- define and explain argumentation and debate in their various forms;
- analyze and argue both inductively and deductively;
- effectively evaluate written and oral arguments;
- create valid and well-supported affirmative and negative arguments;
- identify correct and fallacious reasoning;
- engage in cooperative group thinking for problem solving;
- participate in various debate formats;
demonstrate understanding of how critical thinking pervades all aspects of our lives;
recognize and identify underlying values and assumptions in arguments;
explain and exhibit ethical argumentation.

Course Content

Total Faculty Contact Hours = 48.0

Argumentation as a Human Symbolic Activity (3 hours)
Senses of the Term Argument
Argumentation and Individual Decision Making
Argumentation and Democratic Decision Making
Argumentation and Values
Ethics and Argumentation

The Foundations of Argument (3 hours)
The Narrative Paradigm
The Limits of Argument
The Study of Argumentation

Audiences and Fields of Argument (3 hours)
Knowing Your Audience
Assessing Your Audience
People Evaluate Arguments Differently
The Principle of Presence
Argument Fields

The Language of Argument (3 hours)
Understanding Language
Language and Good Stories
Metaphor

Argumentation and Critical Thinking (3 hours)
Propositions
Types of Propositions
The Techniques for Analyzing Propositions

Types of Arguments (3 hours)
Inductive Arguments
Deductive Arguments
The Deductive Syllogism
The Toulmin Model

The Grounds for Arguments (3 hours)
Premises
Examples
Statistics
Testimony

Building Arguments (3 hours)
Defining Research
Planning the Research Process
Sources of Information
How to Record the Evidence
What to Look for When Researching
Organizing Your Advocacy

Refuting Argument (3 hours)
The Refutation Process Defined
Forced Listening (Step One)
Critically Evaluating Arguments (Step Two)
Formulating a Response (Step Three)
Presenting Your Response (Step Four)

Visual Argument (3 hours)
Physical Images
The Power of Images
Tests of Visual Arguments

Academic Debate: Overview (6 hours)
The Debate Orientation
The Resolution
Three Types of Academic Debating Format
The Nature of Debate Arguments
Flow Sheeting as Systematic Note Taking

Academic Debate: Additional Insights (6 hours)
The Resolution
Hasty Generalization
Plans and Counterplans
Thinking Strategically
Specialized Debate Formats

Argumentation in Politics: Campaigns and Debates (1.5 hours)
Issues and Voters
Voter Attitudes
Campaigns and Stories
The Structure and Form of Campaign Arguments
Political Debates

Argumentation and the Law (1.5 hours)
The US Judicial System
The Assumptions of the System
The Attorney - Client Relationship
The Role of Attorneys in Pretrial Phases
The Role of Attorneys in the Trial

Argumentation in Business and Organizations (1.5 hours)
Competing Interests in Organizations
Preparing Arguments to Meet Objectives
Shaping the Message: Devising Strategies
The Oral Presentation
Encountering Resistance
Follow – Up Activities

Building Arguments (1.5 hours)
Arguing and Conflict Mediation Strategies
A Conversational Theory of Management
Strategic Dimensions of Conversational Argument
Argumentation and Self – Esteem
The Importance of Empathic Listening

Methods of Instruction

The following instructional methodologies may be used in the course:
• class lecture and discussion;
• collaborative learning;
• class debates;
• educational technologies.

Out of Class Assignments

The following out of class assignments may be used in the course:
• essays of analysis, evaluation, argumentation;
• reading assignments from textbooks and/or journal articles;
• quizzes;
• journaling (e.g. identify the most commonly used argumentation style and analyze whether adapting a different style would be beneficial);
• preparation for oral presentations and group projects.

Methods of Evaluation

The following methods of evaluation may be used in the course:
• discussions of text material, current issues and debate topics;
• group and individual oral debates;
• debate briefs;
• essays evaluating debates;
• quizzes and tests;
• final exam.

Textbooks


Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the required coursework, the student will be able to:
• research and employ evidence so as to logically construct sound oral and written arguments;
• engage in critical evaluation of fact, value and/or policy propositions;
• exhibit ethical argumentation in various debate formats.