

Comm 2335: Argument and Debate

Fall 2021

Instructor: Dr. Erica Bailey

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Office hours:

In person: MW 1:00 – 2:00, T 12:15 – 1:30

Virtual: MTW 9:00 – 11:00

Welcome to Argumentation & Debate! This course is foundational in communication studies and for citizens of a democracy. Our democracy is founded on the free and lively debate of issues to build policy. When debate is stifled, or entered into deceitfully, democracy suffers. This class intends to teach you how to research well and to create moral arguments and sound, humane policy proposals.

Textbook required:

- Herrick, James A. (2019) *Argumentation: Understanding and Shaping Arguments* 6th Ed. State College, Penn: Strata Publishing.
- Link for Texas UIL debate materials: <http://www.uiltexas.org/speech/debate>

Course Description: Argumentation is often defined as the study of practical reasoning—the process of justifying decisions, in the presence of opposition, made under conditions of uncertainty (usually lack of complete information and conflicting values). The natural places where public argument occurs are in law courts, legislative assemblies, and committees within complex organizations. Although argumentation and persuasion are inextricably linked because one argues in order to persuade, the traditional assumption about argumentation is that it is addressed to a knowledgeable audience and tries to adhere to high standards of evidence and reasoning. Oral advocacy before the Supreme Court is perhaps our paradigm example of argumentation within the American tradition, while a political convention speech or a campaign commercial are good examples of persuasion, in that they are addressed to a very large audience with differing levels of knowledge, often oversimplify complex issues, and rely heavily on existing group prejudices and emotional associations. Debate is an academic and political tool for helping audiences understand differences between competing factual, legal, value, and policy positions. It has taken various forms but it remains an essential tool both of Western law, and of democracy. This class will prepare both the high school teacher for HS UIL debate contests and the citizen for civil dialogues in the public arena.

This course will focus on practical, productive, and ethical uses of reasoning and oral argument. Students will be introduced to many argumentative concepts, tests for evidence, and different types of arguments. The overall goal is to help students recognize, understand and develop civil responsibility through professional and personal judgments based on the proper methods of ethical argument construction. In particular, you will learn the skills of:

Storytelling: How to tell a story that is accurate to the facts, sufficient to meet the requirements of the law, and persuasive to your hearers.

Arguing: How to establish your position on contested issues, in order to convince your hearers.

Ethical Reflection (Thinking): How to construct and consider questions which move to the heart of an issue for the purpose of reflecting upon them and deciding the best course of action. Student Learning Objectives (Communication & Mass Media Department):

LG2: Recognize and understand key issues related to communication theory and media/speech ethics (assessed by the ethics portion of Exam 1).

LG3: Create original communication products (speeches, campaigns, papers, videos, etc.) both individually and in collaboration with other students (assessed by the final CX presentation with cross examination).

Grading Policy:

10% LD Debate 1

20% Test 1: Ch 1-9 & Appendix A materials

20% LD Debate 2

20% Test 2: Ch 10-18 & Appendix materials

10% CX opening Aff/Neg

20% CX Debate 2

60% of the grade from performances and 40% of the grade from text/lecture materials

Attendance: Regular attendance on your assigned day is expected in this course. Debate days cannot be rescheduled.

Class Etiquette: Please be a courteous student and peer. Use of cell phones in class will result in you being counted absent for the day, and will result in a 0 for any work completed on that day. Students may not use Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, or any other social media outlet to post pictures or videos of other students or their performance in the classroom. Failure to comply with this rule will result in you being reported to the Dean of Student Life. Additionally, laptops are not permitted in the classroom. We will be up and moving around during most class sessions so it is safest to keep laptops put away.

Face Coverings: As a member of the Texas Tech University System, Angelo State University has adopted the mandatory Facial Covering Policy to ensure a safe and healthy classroom experience. Current research on the COVID-19 virus suggests there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. Therefore, in compliance with the university policy students in this class are required to wear a mask/facial covering before, during, and after class. Faculty members may also ask you to display your daily screening badge as a prerequisite to enter the classroom. You are also asked to maintain safe distancing practices to the best of your ability. For the safety of everyone, any student not appropriately wearing a mask/facial covering will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. The student will be responsible to make up any missed class content or work. Continued non-compliance with the Texas Tech University System Policy may result in disciplinary action through the Office of Student Conduct.

Honor Code Policy: Violations of academic integrity are very serious matters and are clearly documented in the ASU Student Handbook. The work a student submits in a class is expected to be the student's own work and must be work completed for that particular class and assignment. Plagiarism means intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's

own. This may include your own previous work. Plagiarism includes quoting or paraphrasing from other sources without acknowledging/citing the source of your information or presenting quoted material as your own words. You must be very clear about attribution of sources and you must know how to cite sources in a paper. Please see full Honor Code Policy at http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent/documents/pdf/Student_Handbook.pdf

Academic Disability Statement: Angelo State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact Student Services at 942-2191. See this webpage for more information: <https://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/disability-services-policy-statement.php> If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible so I can make those accommodations for you.

Religious Holiday Observance:

- A. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code 11.20.
- B. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.
- C. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence, however; the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

Title IX at Angelo State University: Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance. This is done in order to connect students with resources and options in addressing the allegations reported. As a student, are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU's Office of Title IX Compliance and the Title IX Coordinator. You may do so by contacting:

Michelle Miller, J.D.
Title IX Coordinator
Mayer Administration Building, Room 210
325-942-2022
michelle.miller@angelo.edu

You may also file a report online 24/7 at www.angelo.edu/incident-form. If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the University Health Clinic at 325-942-2171, Counseling Services at 325-942-2371 or the ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345.

The Office of Title IX Compliance also provides accommodations related to pregnancy (such as communicating with your professors regarding medically necessary absences, modifications required because of pregnancy, etc.). If you are pregnant and need assistance or accommodations, please

contact the Office of Title IX Compliance utilizing the information above. For more information about Title IX in general you may visit www.angelo.edu/title-ix.