COMM 3700: Argumentative Discourse
Fall 2015
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Auburn University

TEXTBOOK:

Hollihan, T. A., & Baaske, K. T. (2005). *Arguments and arguing* (2nd ed.). Long Grove, IL:
    Waveland Press.

COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The purpose of this course is to develop those skills of argumentation involved in effective
reasoning and communication. In developing these skills, we will study various types of
arguments, note the tests to which each is susceptible, and analyze examples of arguments. Other
topics covered in the course include the ethics of advocacy, the types and tests of evidence, and
preparing a case and adapting it to an audience. Upon completion of this course you should be
able to:
        1. identify and state an arguer's central argument.
        2. analyze and evaluate an arguer's basic assumptions and implications.
        3. establish an argument based on reasonable assumptions.
        4. provide supporting evidence that is relevant, effective, and adequate for the purpose,
audience, and situation.
        5. anticipate and deal effectively with possible objections or opposing arguments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Two examinations**. The course has a mid term exam and a final exam. The exams will consist
of multiple choice, completion, and open-ended questions. The majority of the questions will be
recall questions, but there will also be analytical questions as well. Each examination is worth
100 points.

2. **Exercises and questions.** Each unit will have a number of exercises or questions related to the
content of the chapter and lecture. The exercises will be applications of theories and principles
covered in the unit. The questions will be recall or open-ended questions about theories and
principles covered in the unit. Each set of exercises and questions is worth 10 points. I will
randomly collect 10 of these assignments, making these assignments worth 100 points.

3. **Editorial analysis paper.** You will choose an editorial from a major news source for a 700 to
800-word analysis. I must approve the editorial before you begin. The paper should focus on
identifying and evaluating the theories and principles of argumentation we have covered up to
that point. The paper will be graded for the accuracy of the identification and the thoughtfulness
of the evaluation along with the principles of good writing. The paper is worth 100 points.

4. **Argument paper**. You will construct a 700 to 800-word argument on a topic of your choice. I must approve the topic before you begin. Your paper should demonstrate your ability to utilize the theories and principles covered this semester. The paper is worth 100 points.

5. **Argument presentation.** You will present a three to five minute summary of your argument for the class. In your presentation you should include the salient points of your argument but adapt your approach for a listening audience rather than a reading audience. The speech will be will be graded for the accuracy of the concepts used and the thoughtfulness with which they are applied as well as the principles of public speaking. The presentation is worth 100 points.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Week	Topic	Reading
1	Introduction and General Confusion Argumentation as Human Symbolic Activity Introduction to Argumentation	Chapter 1 Brockreide and Rowland articles on Canvas
2	Introduction to Argumentation Continued Introduction to Argumentation Continued Foundations of Argument	Chapter 2
3	Foundations of Argument Continued Audiences and Fields of Argument Audiences and Fields of Argument Continued	Chapter 3
4	Audiences and Fields of Argument Continued Language of Argument	Chapter 4
5	Language of Argument Continued Argumentation and Critical Thinking Argumentation and Critical Thinking Continued	Chapter 5
6	Toulmin Model of Argument Toulmin Model of Argument Continued Types of Argument	Brockreide and Ehninger article on Canvas Chapter 6
7	Types of Argument Continued Types of Argument Continued Grounds for Argument	"How do I Reason with My Audience?" article on Canvas Chapter 7
8	Grounds for Argument Continued Building Arguments Building Arguments Continued	Chapter 8
9	Proving Arguments Refuting Arguments Refuting Arguments Continued	"How do I Prove My Argument?" article on Canvas Chapter 9
10	What to Avoid in an Argument What to Avoid in an Argument Continued **Mid Term Exam**	"What to Avoid" article on Canvas **Argument Analysis Due**
11	Academic Debate Academic Debate Continued Academic Debate Continued	Chapter 10 Chapter 11
12	Argumentation in Politics	Chapter 12

	Argumentation in Politics Continued	
	Argumentation and the Law	Chapter 13
13	Argumentation in Business Organizations	Chapter 14, **Argument Paper Due**
	Argument Presentations	
14	Argument Presentations	
15	Argument Presentations	
16	Final Exam	