

# Inventing Arguments

English 335 Fall 2014  
T/Th 12-13:20, 214 McKenzie

Prof. James Crosswhite, PLC 258, Hours: T/Th 2-3:30, [jcross@uoregon.edu](mailto:jcross@uoregon.edu)

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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What is argumentation? What are its central elements, processes, forms, structures, techniques, goals? How does one create or imagine arguments? In this course, we will explore some of the central concepts in rhetoric and argumentation theory, but the major focus will be on practicing argumentation, especially the inventing of arguments. We will use the study of rhetoric and argumentation to support that practice. You will gain a knowledge of some important concepts in rhetoric and argumentation theory, and you will gain skill in discovering the questions that drive controversies and the arguments that can be made on all the different sides of an issue. Be prepared to be called on in class, to think and speak on your feet, to work in groups, to participate in debate, and to learn by practicing and in part by trial and error.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

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Everyone enrolled in the course should read a major newspaper or news website on a daily basis. I recommend the *New York Times*, but feel free to choose something different. I will occasionally draw examples of arguments and controversial issues from the NYT for use in class. You will need a good source for examples, too. Required readings for the course will be available on Blackboard.

## **REQUIRED TIME**

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From UO Catalog: "In planning a term's studies, students should anticipate that each credit requires at least three hours a week for class meetings or homework." This is a 4 credit course, so plan for an average of 12 hours a week. That's three in class and nine outside of class.

## **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE BREAKDOWN**

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### **Writing**

Three essays. I will provide instructions and grading rubrics for each of these essays. The first two will be 1000-1500 words. The third will be 1500-2000 words. Each will be an exercise in inventing arguments that also develops an arrangement and style appropriate to the argumentation.

Three exercises. I will also provide instructions for these. Each will be an exercise in invention of about 300-700 words.

## Participation

For each day of class that reading is assigned, the reading must be completed before class begins. Each day you come to class, come prepared to participate in discussions and exercises. If the readings are posted online, print them out and bring them to class with you—or bring your notes. No electronic devices open during class.

Attendance is required. I take attendance each day. Be sure that I call your name each day, and shout out if I do not. **If you are late, and miss my taking attendance, it is your responsibility to notify me, at the end of class, that you have attended.** Do not assume that I saw you arrive and recorded your attendance. *I will calculate final grades directly from my records, and I cannot fairly accommodate requests to correct my records at the time that final grades are given.* To cover illness or other events that make it impossible for you to attend, you are allowed two absences (one week of class). I recommend saving those absences for illness, athletic events, or unforeseen demands on your time. If you get sick with something contagious, do not come to class as long as you are contagious. If the illness lasts for longer than a week, or if a situation beyond your control causes you to miss more than two classes, be sure to contact me before the absences have accumulated, so that we can agree on a course of action. Written work may be submitted electronically only if you are sick or otherwise unable to attend class.

Being on time is also required. Lateness counts in considering your participation.

## Grades

Essay #1 – 25%

Essay #2 – 25%

Essay #3 – 35%

Exercises – 15%

No late work, please. Any late work will be graded down one full grade for each day late. Note: I cannot accept a late final paper.

Participation counts and may raise or lower your final grade.

Two absences, *for whatever reason*, count as absences, but have no penalty. Beyond two absences, for each of the next two absences, three percentage points will be deducted from your total. After four absences (two weeks), each absence will cost five percentage points.

If an emergency arises or a situation out of your control temporarily prevents you from completing work on time, contact me immediately so that we can agree on a plan—before the work is due if that is possible. Email is the best way of reaching me for this.

## **COMPLETION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

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Please include your **name**, the **date** you are submitting the work, the **course** number or name, the **word count**, and **my name** on your written work.

Please give your written work a title.

You should staple papers that have multiple pages.

Papers should be double spaced, with one inch margins.

Please use a 12 or 14 point font. Include the word count for your essays.

There are computers available for you to use in the Knight Library and in other locations on campus.

Written work may be submitted in class or under my door at PLC 258 before 5pm.

I accept electronic written work only in cases of illness or emergency.

## **RESPECT, CONSIDERATION, AND PARTICIPATION**

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The course requires your active involvement. Active and respectful participation is inconsistent with cell phone use, texting, internet surfing, side conversations, arriving late, leaving early, sleeping, distracting other people, and coming to class unprepared. If you do not give your full attention, you will not receive what the course has to offer. **Please close and put away all laptops and electronic devices when class begins.** Listen to others respectfully, and expect the same of them. And feel free to speak up. What you have to say is important and unique. It will take effort and the best kind of cooperation to unlock the energies that are available to us as we pursue our work. This will require respectful attention to each other, and probably some kindness toward one another, too.

## **A LITTLE MORE**

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If you have a disability that may affect your ability to participate in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can make arrangements for your full participation.

Please be aware also that the Teaching and Learning Center (68 PLC; phone: 346-3226) provides support for all students. The Center offer tutors to help you with your writing assignments and provides other kinds of academic help. Look into it. Your fees help to pay for this.

An "Incomplete" can be given only in cases when some minor but essential aspect of the course cannot be completed because of unforeseen circumstances beyond a student's control.

All work submitted for this course must be your own and must be written exclusively for this course. If you plagiarize or cheat, the penalty may be an "F" in the course. The use of sources (for example, other people's language or paraphrases of their language or ideas) must be properly documented. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

## SCHEDULE

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1

Sep 30 Introductions

The Aims and Bounds of Argument and the Contact of Minds

The Structure of Arguments

Oct 2 Finding the right questions in a Controversy

**Read:** Stasis Questions (BB)

**Read:** Preliminary Readings on Intelligence (BB)

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2

Oct 7 **Read:** Readings on Intelligence II (BB)

Oct 9 **Stasis Exercise Due**

**Read:** Arrangement (BB).

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3

Oct 14 Metaphors and Argumentation

**Read:** Readings on Metaphors (BB)

Oct 16 Metaphors and Argumentation continued

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Oct 21 Pathos

**Read:** Pathos in Classical Rhetoric (BB).

Oct 23 **First Paper Due**

Second paper topic: Virtue and Character

**Read:** Readings on Character and Virtue (Blackboard)

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5

Oct 28 Logos 1: Causes, Effects, Means, Ends

**Read:** Reading on Causes, Effects, Means, Ends (BB)

Oct 30 Character and Virtue: Continued

**Read:** Second Readings on Character and Virtue (BB)

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Nov 4 **Second Exercise Due**

Logos 2: Thinking in Twos.

**Read:** Handout (BB) (additional optional reading also available)

Nov 6

Logos 2: Continued

**Read:** "Dissociation in the Wilderness Debate" (BB)

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Nov 11 Logos 3 - Person/Act Arguments

**Read:** Readings on Person/Act (BB)

Nov 13 Logos 3: Person/Act Arguments continued

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8

Nov 18 **Second Paper Due**

Prototypes and Their Effects

**Read:** Prototypes and Their Effects (Blackboard)

Nov 20 Third Paper Topic: Teaching Writing, Speaking, and Reasoning

Read: The Common Core (BB)

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9

Nov 25 **Third Exercise Due**

**Read:** Symposium: On the Framework for Success in Post-secondary Writing (BB)

Nov 27 Thanksgiving (no class)

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10

Dec 2 Review. Special focus on questions and arguments for final paper.

**Read:** *How to Write* (Blackboard)

Dec 4 NO CLASS. Special Office Hours: 12-3.

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**Final Paper Due** anytime before and up until 8am Wednesday, Dec 10. Just slide the paper under the door at 258 PLC.