

Oral Argumentation 1.5.20  
Winter 2021  
David A. Frank  
Professor

Email: Dfrank@uoregon.edu

MW: 10:15-11:45

No office hours finals week

Mondays

1:00 – 3:00 and by appointment

Ten Weeks: Monday January 4 – Wednesday March 10

No Class: MLK Day: Monday, January 18

Final Exam Schedule: 10:15 – 12:15 Wednesday, March 17

Written Test	15%	Wednesday, Jan 20.
Brandeis Brief #1	15%	Sunday Jan 24: 11:58 PM
Brandeis Brief #2	10%	Thursday, March 18: 11:58PM
Oral Argument	15%	Weeks 4 -6
LD #1	15%	Weeks 7-8
LD #2	15%	Weeks 9-10
Oral Critiques	15%	Weeks 4-10

In this course we will examine theories of reasoned-based argumentation in the oral mode, and then incorporate those theories into the practice of making effective speeches that advocate for particular positions on arguable issues of public concern. We will analyze and critique oral arguments as they function in the realm of public debate. For our purposes, oral advocacy is an act of inquiry and a search for shared understanding. This means you have to listen as carefully as you speak.

Learning objectives:

- 1). Students will develop assessment criteria for effective oral advocacy, and students will be asked to use those criteria to evaluate themselves and their peers.
- 2). Students will develop the skills to practice and evaluate effective oral argumentation in controversial matters of public concern with attention to fundamental theories of ethics and rhetoric.
- 3). Students will develop practices of listening, speaking, responding, discussing, and researching to enhance their invention of arguments and their positions as informed advocates in a discourse community of thinkers and inquirers.
- 4). Students will cultivate habits of noting, examining, and responding to the various and multiple reasonable and unreasonable positions one can take on controversial matters. To discern what divides “reasonable” and “unreasonable” will be our ongoing challenge.

## Team and Breakout Room Number

### Team and Breakout Room One

- Team One: *Watson, Chloe* and *Whitford, Amelia M*

### Team and Breakout Room Two

- Team Two: *Westlake, Claire* and *Barnum, Jaden L*

### Team and Breakout Room Three

- Team Three: *Biggs, Claire M* and *Siegel-Hanly, Isaac W*

### Team and Breakout Room Four

- Team Four: *Olson, Klaire* and *DiGrande, Ava C*

### Team and Breakout Room Five

- Team Five: *Caldera, Angelina R* and *Walker, Bailey*

### Team and Breakout Room Six

- Team Six: *Mehta, Irisa* and *Christensen, Ashley N*

### Team and Breakout Room Seven

- Team Seven: *Gieselman, Jake R* and *Clark, Wade A*

### Team and Breakout Room Eight

- Team Eight: *Barrett, Gavin* and *Le, Brian Q*

## Resolutions/Questions

Oral Argument Question: Should the Biden Administration prosecute felony crimes committed by the Trump Administration (January 20, 2016 to January 20, 2020)?

Lincoln-Douglas Resolution. Resolved: That the Biden Administration should prosecute felony crimes committed by the Trump Administration (January 20, 2016 to January 20, 2020).

10 weeks                      Monday

Week One                      Monday, January 4

Grammar of Oral Argumentation - Heavenly Argumentation

Wednesday, January 6

Theories of Oral Argumentation

Week Two                      Monday, January 11

Judging Oral Argument

Oral Argument example

LD Debate example

Researching the question

Elizabeth Peterson

Humanities Librarian

Wednesday, January 13

Martin Luther King and Oral Argument

Week Three

Monday, January 18

No Class, MLK Remembrance

Wednesday, January 20:

Examination

Week Four

Brandeis brief due (Sunday January 24/11:48PM)

Monday, January 25

Brandeis brief presentations - Oral Argument preparation

Wednesday, January 27

Oral argument: 4 advocates

Barrett, Gavin  
Watson, Chloe  
Caldera, Angelina R  
Mehta, Irisa

Week Five

Monday, February 1

Oral Argument: 4 Advocates

Christensen, Ashley N  
Le, Brian Q  
Siegel-Hanly, Isaac W  
Clark, Wade A

Wednesday, Feb 3

Oral Argument 4 Advocates

Olson, Klaire  
DiGrande, Ava C  
Gieselman, Jake R  
Walker, Bailey

Week Six

Monday, February 8

Oral Argument 4 advocates

Whitford, Amelia M  
Westlake, Claire  
Barnum, Jaden L  
Biggs, Claire M

Wednesday, Feb 10

LD debate preparation

Week Seven

Monday, Feb 15

Round One: Two LD debates

Affirmative - Negative  
Team Eight: Barrett, Gavin and Le, Brian Q  
Team Nine: Watson, Chloe and Whitford, Amelia M

Wednesday, Feb 17

Two LD debates

Affirmative - Negative  
Team Five: Caldera, Angelina R and Walker, Bailey  
Team Seven: Gieselman, Jake R and Clark, Wade A

Week Eight

Monday, Feb 22

Three LD debates

Affirmative - Negative  
Team Two: Westlake, Claire and Barnum, Jaden L  
Team Three: Biggs, Claire M and Siegel-Hanly, Isaac W  
Team Four: Olson, Klaire and DiGrande, Ava C

Wednesday, Feb 24

Three LD debates

Affirmative - Negative  
Team Eleven: Gieselman, Jake R and Clark, Wade A  
Team Six: Mehta, Irisa and Christensen, Ashley N  
Team One: Watson, Chloe and Whitford, Amelia M

Review of Round One

Week Nine Monday, March 1

Round Two: Two LD debates

Negative – Affirmative  
Team Eight: Barrett, Gavin and Le, Brian  
Team Nine: Gieselman, Jake R and Clark, Wade A

Wednesday, March 3

Two LD debates

Negative – Affirmative  
Team Five: Caldera, Angelina R and Bailey, Walker  
Team Seven: Gieselman, Jake R and Clark, Wade A

Week Ten Monday, March 8

Three LD debates

Negative – Affirmative  
Team Two: Westlake, Claire and Barnum, Jaden L

Team Three: Biggs, Claire M and Siegel-Hanly, Isaac W  
Team Four: Olson, Klaire and DiGrande, Ava C

Wednesday, March 10

Negative – Affirmative

Team One: Watson, Chloe and Whitford, Amelia M  
Team Eleven: Barrett, Gavin and Le, Brian Q  
Team Six: Mehta, Irisa and Christensen, Ashley N

10:15 – 12:15 Wednesday, March 17

Debates as needed

**1. Written Test** **10%** **Wednesday, Jan 20.**

Test will cover:

- A. Argument grammar
- B. Argument standards for judgment
- C. Two argument analyses

**2. Brandeis Brief** **20%** **Sunday Jan 24: 11:58 PM**

A Brandeis brief captures the arguments that have evolved out of a social controversy. In your Brandeis brief, you will survey the arguments that have evolved out of the pandemic crisis we are facing and that you will debate. Your brief will survey the evidence, data, and judgments on the question you will answer in your oral argument and consider as you debate the resolution.

Oral Argument Question: Should the Biden Administration prosecute felony crimes committed by the Trump Administration (January 20, 2016 to January 20, 2020)?

Lincoln-Douglas Resolution. Resolved: That the Biden Administration prosecute felony crimes committed by the Trump Administration (January 20, 2016 to January 20, 2020).

*Here are the expectations of the brief (Please Review the Jarvis and Nowak examples in Canvas)*

*15 pages*

*Effective use of MLA style*

*[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_in\\_text\\_citations\\_the\\_basics.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_in_text_citations_the_basics.html)*

*Effectively draws from the best evidence (at least 10 sources in each section) using the criteria provided by Elizabeth P*

*Divided into four sections.*

***Section One: Definitions and criteria (10 points)***

*Both the question and the resolution invite you to define “Trump Administration” “Biden Administration” “Felony Crime” and “prosecute.”*

*You should consult dictionaries and other sources as needed.*

*You will need to establish criteria to assess effectiveness.*

*These criteria should come from sources with credibility.*

***Section Two: Arguments in favor of the resolution (30 points)***

*You should include at least 20 separate and distinct sources of evidence in favor of the resolution.<sup>1</sup> You should include 1) the Evidence 2) The Citation 3) The Qualification.*

*Example:*

*Source One:*

*Evidence*

*It will be up to the attorney general to decide whether filing criminal charges against Donald Trump and his aides best serves justice, but public reporting suggests there is evidence that could support such charges.*

*Citation*

McQuade, Barbara and Joyce White Vance. "Perspective | a Rap Sheet for a Former President." 2020-10-16 [https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/rap-sheet-trump-crimes/2020/10/16/c6a539da-0e61-11eb-8a35-237ef1eb2ef7\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/rap-sheet-trump-crimes/2020/10/16/c6a539da-0e61-11eb-8a35-237ef1eb2ef7_story.html).

*Qualification*

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<sup>1</sup> Some articles will host several seemingly independent lines of argument. However, they will be used to thread a coherent narrative. Please find articles that are independent from one another.

The reporters are from the *Washington Post*, which is one of the oldest and most credible newspapers in the country.

***Section Three: Arguments against the resolution (30 points)***

*You should include at least 15 separate and distinct sources of evidence against the resolution.<sup>2</sup> You should include 1) the Evidence 2) The Citation 3) The Qualification.*

*Source One:*

*Evidence*

*The problem with [A Biden Administration seeking the prosecute crimes committed by the Trump Administration] is that there is little evidence that Mr. Trump did commit crimes as president. A conviction, given what we know now, is all but impossible. The calls to investigate him echo the president's own calls to investigate Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden based on mere speculation — calls that most people, especially liberals, rightly condemned.*

*Citation*

*Posner, Eric. "Opinion | Why Prosecuting Trump Is a Very Bad Idea." 2020-12-03  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/03/opinion/trump-prosecution.html>.*

*Qualification*

Eric Posner is an American law professor at the University of Chicago School of Law. He teaches international law, contract law, and bankruptcy, among other areas. As of 2014, he was the 4th most-cited legal scholar in the United States.

***Section Four: The best evidence (30 points)***

Compare and evaluate the evidence offered with the standards and criteria for argument assessment. Offer the five strongest examples of the best evidence drawn from above.

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<sup>2</sup> Some articles will host several seemingly independent lines of argument. However, they will be used to thread a coherent narrative. Please find articles that are independent from one another.



### **3. Oral Argument**

**20%**

**Weeks 4 -6**

1). Based on evidence set forth in your Brandeis brief, develop a five-minute argument, using the central thought method, in which you present a judgment that answers this question:

Should the Biden Administration prosecute felony crimes committed by the Trump administration between January 20, 2016 and January 20, 2021?

2). Incorporate into your presentation an assessment of the arguments presented:

A. In favor of the Biden Administration prosecution by Matt Ford (article in Canvas.Files.Oral Argument):

Ford, Matt. "The Case for Prosecuting Trump and His Cronies." 2020, <https://newrepublic.com/article/160168/president-biden-prosecute-trump-2021>.

B. Against the Biden Administration prosecution by Randall D. Eliason (article in Canvas.Files.Oral Argument):

Randall D. Eliason. "Opinion | the Case against Indicting Trump." 2020-11-22 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/11/22/case-against-indicting-trump/>.

C. In favor of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission alternative by Jennifer Rubin (article in Canvas.Files.Oral Argument)

Jennifer Rubin. "Opinion | after Trump, We Will Need a Truth Commission." 2020-07-20 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/07/20/after-trump-we-will-need-truth-commission/>.

2). Craft this argument so that it will persuade the students and the professor in this class. To accomplish this goal, please do an audience analysis and adapt your arguments to your audience and your audience to your arguments.

### **4. Lincoln-Douglas collaborative debates 40% Weeks 7-10**

### **5. Oral Critiques**

Critiques

1. All students will do a self-evaluation and award themselves a grade.
2. All students will do evaluations of all the Oral Arguments and LD debates.

**Submit evaluations within 24 hours of the event.**

**10%**

**Weeks 4-10**

## 1. Self-Evaluation

24 hours after the performance, each student will submit a complete critique of his or her oral arguments. The critique will have:

- At least three full paragraphs
- Specific judgments about the content and delivery of the arguments.
- An assessment of the evidence in use.
- Use of the video – for example,  
“At 2:30 I made a good argument about X.”  
“At 4:20 I did a good job recovering from a dysfluency.”

## 2. Peer evaluation

Each student will assess the oral arguments of their peers using the criteria identified in class.