**Instructor**: C. Ellen Young

**Online Office Hours:** T- 5:00pm-6:45pm, W- 11:30am-3:45pm Campus Center Bldg Rm 104

**Textbook**: Inch, Edward S. and Barbara Warnick. *Critical Thinking and Communication: The Use of Reason in Argument*. Second custom edition for East Tennessee State University. Boston: Pearson, 2010.

**Required Materials:**

* 3 Ring Binder- Medium Sized- this will hold all course documents and assignments this semester
* Textbook- You will **have** to use this book.

**Learning Outcomes**

* Demonstrate verbal and nonverbal communication competencies in listening, message construction, and message presentation.
* Make responsible communication choices that are mindful of human diversity.
* Develop critical thinking skills in the decision-making process as well as enhance listening skills.
* Critically analyze the claims and arguments of other speakers.
* Evaluate the credibility of evidence.
* Analyze and adapt to audience needs, motivations, expectations, and diversity.

**Course Goals**

* + Understand the impact of well-developed critical thinking capabilities in personal argumentation and communication circumstances
	+ Evaluate multiple venues of research in search of valid arguments and data to support varied points of view
	+ Synthesize said research to create valid arguments
	+ Appreciate and respect Audience Diversity via listening, presenting, and arguing

**COURSE PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW:** SPCH 2320, Argumentation & Debate, is an introductory course designed to teach students the skills and fundamentals needed to perform formal and informal arguments and debates. Students will apply said skills in individual and group settings with the purpose of exiting the course with the ability to critically analyze arguments (formal or informal) and respond in an educated and professional manner using the research, evaluation, reasoning, and presentation skills taught in this class.

This is an oral intensive course, which means **you must be prepared for class, participate with your classmates on assignments, and to deliver individual and group debates.**

A few of the major topics we will cover**:**

* Construction of an argument and debate formats
* Conducting debates with civility and respect for all peoples, cultures and points of view
* Claims, reasoning, and evidence
* Proper research and citation ability
* Ethics and public address
* Analyzing and connecting with the audience
* Critical thinking skills
* Debate delivery effectiveness
* Using appropriate language

## COURSE POLICIES

**Absence Policy:**

You are allowed to miss the equivalent of one (1) *week* of class.

* Once a week classes: 1 excused absence
* Twice a week classes: 2 excused absences

THESE ABSENCES DO NOT APPLY ON PRESENTATION DAYS. SEE PRESENTATION ATTENDANCE POLICY BELOW.

**Tardy Policy:**

You will be marked “tardy” if you are more than 5 minutes late for any class or class-related proceeding. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked absent (unless with a documented excuse). No penalties will accrue unless you gather more than 3 tardies. 3 tardies will equal 1 absence, 4 tardies will equal 2 absences, and etc. If your maximum amount of absences has been reached, you will then receive a 5 point grade deduction for each additional absence. This deduction affects your FINAL average in the class.

**Presentation Day Absences:**

Foreseeable absences should be arranged with the instructor in advance. “Foreseeable” includes university-approved absences (athletic obligations) or court dates. These absences must come with proper documentation (e.g. schedule of classes to be missed signed by pertinent athletic director), and must be approved by the instructor *before* the missed class.

You will only be allowed to make up a missed presentation if the absence was unforeseeable, unpreventable, urgent in nature, necessitated missing class, and for which documentation proving its occurrence can be provided by a professional relevant to the emergency (e.g., emergency room physician).

**Assignments and Absences**

Your work is due in class and on time whether you are present or not. You also are expected to be on time and remain for the entire class period.

(1) **Grade Reduction.** A final grade reduction of **5 points** will result for each additional absence (90 becomes 85, for example) above the absences permitted for this class (see above). This policy is enforced.

(2) **Assignment Due Dates.** I reserve the right to refuse any late assignments unless there are documented and are extenuating circumstances. Except in very extenuating circumstances--*which you and I have discussed in advance*--there are no make-ups or extensions. If a student is absent on the day I return assignments, it is the student’s responsibility to come to my office to retrieve the assignment.

(3) **Late assignments are accepted at the discretion of the instructor.**

### ADA

In accordance with the American Disabilities Act of 1991, students with special needs may request that the professor and class make reasonable accommodations. Students who have documented special needs (physical, learning, etc) must work with the Office of Disability Services (439-8346. TDD: 423-439-8370). Disability Services, then, will make arrangements with me for reasonable accommodation (e.g., testing at Disability Services).

Students should **not hesitate** to speak with me or any other professor about physical or learning "disabilities." These are not uncommon challenges for today's students. I strive to be discreet with any information students give me.

# CLASSROOM ETHICS AND CLIMATE

1) **Academic Dishonesty:** Keep in mind the academic policy in your student handbook. If I catch you cheating, plagiarizing, etc. you will receive an “F” on the assignment and/or in the course (at my discretion).

2) **Positive Learning Environment.** I am committed to helping create and maintain a positive learning environment; therefore, I encourage an open, but sensitive and professional, dialogue. I retain the right to temporarily remove any student from the class who is disrupting that positive learning environment (Per Dr. Steven Bader, Dean of Students).

3) **Cell phones and Beepers.** *Absolutely no cell phones and/or beepers are to be turned on in class! Texting, including receiving texts, is not allowed during class.* This is disruptive to me and your fellow students. If you anticipate receiving an emergency phone call, you must seek my consent prior to the beginning of class AND you must turn the phone on vibration. If a student consistently violates this policy, I will remove him/her from class.

### GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

1) **First Step:** Meet with me, your primary Instructor.

2) **Second Step:** Meet with the SPCH 2320 course supervisor, Dr. Wesley Buerkle (BUERKLE@etsu.edu). He will only meet with a student once there is a documented attempt to resolve the grievance between the student and primary instructor.

3) **Third Step:** Meet with the Department Chair. Dr. Kinser is always willing to hear students’ feedback. However, let’s make sure that it doesn’t get to this point.

4) **Fourth Step:** Students also have the option of going to the Office of Undergraduate Student Advisement (439-8557). The university handles grade appeals the semester after the grade-in-question is earned. Dr. Dan Brown is available to speak with students about this process and their rights.

**For more about student rights and codes of conduct, I highly recommend that each student carefully review the Student Handbook, especially since you are bound by the procedures and policies set forth in the manual.**

GRADES

First Ind. Debate \_\_\_/100 pts.

First Ind. Debate Issues Brief \_\_\_/25 pts.

First Ind. Debate Peer-Evaluation \_\_\_/25 pts.

Second Ind. Debate \_\_\_/100 pts.

Second Ind. Debate Issues Brief \_\_\_/25 pts.

Second Ind. Peer-Evaluation \_\_\_/25 pts.

Team Debate \_\_\_/100 pts.

1 Team Debate Critique Paper \_\_\_/50 pts.

1 Team Issues Brief \_\_\_/50 pts.

Quiz #1 \_\_\_/75 pts.

Quiz #2 \_\_\_/75 pts.

In-Class/ Homework Assignments \_\_\_/50pts.

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Total \_\_\_\_/700 pts

**Grading Scale**

A 93-100 A- 90-92

B+ 88-89 B 83-87 B- 80-82

C+ 78-79 C 73-77 C- 70-72

D+ 68-69 D 60-67 F 59 and below

TENTATIVE Course Schedule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Material Covered/ What is Due** |
| **1/17** | Classes Start- * Syllabus
* Overview of Course
* Argumentation Thoughts
* Chapter 1- Argument and Critical Thought
 |
| **1/24** | Chapter 2- Co-Orientational View of ArgumentChapter 4- Claims and Propositions**In-class Assignment #1** |
| **1/31** | Chapter 5- EvidenceChapter 6- Reasoning **In-class Assignment #2** |
| **2/7** | Chapter 7- Communication Arguments Chapter 9- Case ConstructionIn-Class **Assignment #3- 5 sources-**  |
| **2/14** | **In-class Assignment #4- Outline Template-** **Quiz #1**- This quiz will cover all chapters to date. |
| **2/21** | Arguments of Fact- **(Issue Brief Due)-** * **Peer Critique**
 |
| **2/28** | Chapter 8- Argument Analysis and Criticism Chapter 3- Argument Cultures and Ethics **Analysis of Overall Performance** |
| **3/6** | SPRING BREAK! |
| **3/13** | Chapter 10- Arguing about Values |
| **3/20** | **Due-** Topics for Value- All Topics must be approved by the instructor |
| **3/27** | **TBA****Due**- Rough Draft of Value Outline  |
| **4/3** | Arguments of Value**- (Issue Brief Due)-*** **Peer Critique**
 |
| **4/10** | Chapter 11- Arguing about Policies  |
| **4/17** | Workshop Day**In-class Assignment #5**  |
| **4/24** | Arguments of Policy |
| **Finals****Week**  | Arguments of Policy**Quiz #2 (possibly online)** |

**Individual Debate Assignment**

Argumentation and Debate

* This assignment consists of delivering a case about a controversial issue so as to persuade your audience. Be it a case on a fact, value, or policy, all cases must be delivered in an organized, interesting and concise manner to keep your audience’s attention. You will have **two** individual debates this semester.

**Requirements**:

**Time Limit: 5-7 minutes.** If you do not fall within this time limit you will receive a grade deduction. Practice; practice, practice, to make sure you get 5-7 minutes.

**Sources**: These should be cited verbally in your debate and listed in the bibliography of your issues brief (outline). Usually 5-10 sources are normal for a debate. You are required to cite 5-10 sources. Make sure they are from credible sources.

**Stock Issues**: Make sure your presentation clearly demonstrates these points in an organized and concise manner. Make sure you have transitions between them and don’t forget to give us an introduction and conclusion to wrap your case up.

**Issues Brief**: You must turn in a typed issues brief on the day you give your debate. **Handwritten** ones will **not** be **accepted**. The issues brief will be graded separately from the speech. It should follow the examples given in class and include all the stock issues that are pertinent to your debate.

**Peer-evaluation**: During the presentations, you will take two (2) copies of the PAF (found online) and evaluate two (2) of your classmates *while they present.* You will take extensive notes, flow their arguments, and then provide oral feedback when asked.

**Attendance**: It is vital to attend every class period during debate time whether or not you are presenting on those days. **It is unfair for a student to speak to ten people where another has to speak to 25.** This is a shared assignment ***and I will not tolerate absence.*** If you choose to be absent on a day where others present, that absence will not be excused unless it is a university approved absence. *If you miss on your presentation day, the presentation day absence policy cited under the Attendance category will apply to you.*

**Team Debate Assignment**

**Argumentation and Debate**

This assignment consists of delivering a case about a controversial issue so as to persuade your audience.

* Each team will be designated in Affirmative and Negative Teams.
* One group will be for a case, while the other against. The teams and topics will be assigned to you. Be it a case on a fact, value, or policy, all cases must be delivered in an organized, interesting and concise manner to keep your audience’s attention.

**Requirements**:

**Time Limit and Organization**: The team debates will last a total of 44 minutes. Time will be strictly kept, so practice! Here is how the time and organization breaks down:

Affirmative constructive (affirmative’s case) - 6 minutes

* Confer with your group - 2 minutes

Cross-examination by negative of the affirmative’s case – 3 minutes

* Confer with your group – 2 minutes

Negative constructive (negative’s case) – 7 minutes

* Confer with your group – 2 minutes

Cross-examination by affirmative of the negative’s case – 3 minutes

* Confer with your group – 2 minutes

Affirmative rebuttal – 4 minutes

* Confer with your group – 2 minutes

Negative rebuttal – 6 minutes

* Confer with your group – 2 minutes

Affirmative rebuttal – 3 minutes

Total debate time = 44 minutes

**Sources**: These should be cited verbally in your debate and listed in the bibliography of your issues brief (outline). I will need ONE issue brief from each team. The issues brief will follow the same format as your individual debate and will be worth 25 points. The mores sources the merrier, but you need at least **ten** **sources** cited. Make sure they are from credible sources.

**Team-Debate evaluation**: This is NOT an evaluation of how the debate went, rather a critique of how the group interaction worked in developing your case.

* Be sure to mention your group members and what they added or detracted from the process.
* Possible topics to write about include, what jobs did everyone do,

how group meetings went, what problems arose, what did you group do effectively, etc.

* 1-2 full pages in length

**Attendance**: It is vital to attend every class period during debate time whether or not you are presenting on those days. **It is unfair for a student to speak to ten people where another has to speak to 25.** This is a shared assignment ***and I will not tolerate absence.*** If you choose to be absent on a day where others present, that absence will not be excused unless it is a university approved absence. *If you miss on your presentation day, the presentation day absence policy cited under the Attendance category will apply to you.*

**Other requirements**: It is important for everyone on the team to take a part in presenting the debate.

* It is up to the team to decide who gets what part, but I must hear from everyone.
* No issues briefs will be allowed. Notecards will be used and the debate dress code is in effect.
* Proper debate etiquette is required as well. If a member of a team is talking, there will be no discussion among the teams!