Syllabus

Contact Information
Instructor: Erin Messmer
Email: messmere@etsu.edu
Phone: (423)-439-6519
Office: Campus Center Building, Room 104

Student Hours
Due to COVID-19, I will primarily be working from home this semester. The best way to reach me is by email. I will be happy to meet with you virtually by appointment via Zoom. Email me if you would like to meet and we will set up a time. I'm also available to meet in person on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:45-2:00 PM.

Meetings and Location
Location: Live and Virtual, via Zoom. See Goldlink schedule for live class location. A link will be posted to D2L for each Zoom meeting.
Class Meeting Schedule: See schedule for dates/times of meetings.

Course Information
This class is a hybrid format, meaning that we will meet in both live and online synchronous formats. We will always meet at our designation class time. All written assignments will be turned in using the D2L platform. You will need to use Zoom to complete synchronous class meetings and speaking assignments. You should have a Zoom account through ETSU and can access it on D2L.

All material will be available on a week-to-week basis. The course is not self-paced, and assignments will be due on designated dates. Please note that because of the fluid nature of COVID-19, class locations and schedule details may change. I will always provide you with as much advance notice as possible.

Face Mask Policy
Please wear a mask or other appropriate Face Covering to class. Wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth communicates the care and respect you have for yourself, the care and respect you have for those you live with, and the care and respect you have for other members of this classroom community. The best evidence we have, from public health professionals, is that wearing masks is one of the best ways to protect against the spread of COVID-19 and other airborne illnesses. Students with medical conditions that inhibit their ability to wear masks should register through disability services by contact Disability Services by telephone at 423-439-8346 or by email at littleme@etsu.edu to request an accommodation. A link to the policy may be found here.

Mission Statement
The Department of Communication and Performance advances the understanding of communication by focusing on the ways people communicate with each other personally and professionally, embracing the complexity of human diversity, and examining the ways in which identity and meaning are created through the stories we tell and are told.

Course Information

Credit Hours
This course is worth 3 credit hours.

Course Description and Purpose
An introduction to oral argumentation and debate, including case construction techniques, and case analysis and criticism.

Course Goals
The course aims to teach you to do the following things: (1) Demonstrate verbal and nonverbal communication competencies in listening, message construction, and message presentation; (2) Make responsible communication choices that are mindful of human diversity; (3) Develop critical thinking skills in the decision-making process as well as enhance listening skills; (4) Critically analyze the claims and arguments of other speakers; (5) Evaluate the credibility of evidence; and (6) Analyze and adapt to audience needs, motivations, expectations, and diversity.

Course Objectives
Through course assignments and lectures, you should be able to do the following by the end of the semester: (1) Use logic and reasoning to construct and critique arguments; (2) Locate, evaluate, and cite research; (3) Create and critique fact, value, and policy claims; (4) Respectfully and analytically respond to others’ arguments; (5) Prepare and deliver effective oral presentations.

Major Topics
This course will focus on basic argument building, crafting formal argumentation speeches, presenting ideas in opposition to others, and effective listening and critiquing of others’ arguments.

Course Requirements

Textbooks and Readings
The textbook for this class is **FREE!** It is an Open Educational Resource (OER), called “Arguing Using Critical Thinking” by Jim Marteney. It can be accessed at [this link](#).

We will also be using supplemental readings and videos during the semester. All materials will be provided to you on D2L.

**Technical Requirements**

You should have computer access to Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and an Adobe PDF program to view some documents. You should have access to a webcam and microphone, as well as a video player such as Quicktime, and speakers. You will also be accessing your ETSU email and D2L regularly and will need know how to work your Zoom account.

**Course Policies and Expectations**

**Assignments and Submission Guidelines**

**Argument Speech: 25 points**

To assess your understanding of argument development, you will develop an individual argument speech. You will choose a proposition of fact, value, or policy, and present a complete argument that support that proposition. The speech will be 2-3 minutes long.

**Fact Case Topic: 5 points**

You and your partner will be assigned a group D2L Dropbox. Together, you should brainstorm and determine at least three topic ideas written as a fact proposition. One person from the group should submit them to the appropriate D2L Dropbox. You will both receive the same points for this assignment.

**Fact Case Rough Draft Outline: 10 points**

Individually, submit a rough draft of your speech outline to the appropriate D2L Dropbox. To receive full credit, you should have at minimum an introduction, conclusion, transitions, and the basic ideas for your stock issues written. Use the template on D2L to assist your writing.

**Fact Case Speech: 100 points**

Using the feedback from your rough draft, construct a final draft of your speech and rehearse it. You and your partner will coordinate a time to host a Zoom meeting and do your fact debate. The format of the debate will be posted to D2L. Your individual speech in the debate will be 5-6 minutes long and will verbally cite four sources. Once the Zoom debate is over, the host of the meeting must submit the link of the meeting to the D2L Dropbox. One submission for both members will work. A prepared outline of your individual speech and a works cited page of your sources in APA format should also be submitted to the appropriate D2L Dropbox. Further details will be provided on D2L.

- **Speech**: 70 points
- **Outline**: 20 points
- **Works Cited**: 10 points

**Value Case Topic: 5 points**

You and your partner will be assigned a group D2L Dropbox. Together, you should brainstorm and determine at least three topic ideas written as a value proposition. One person from the group
should submit them to the appropriate D2L Dropbox. You will both receive the same points for this assignment.

**Value Case Rough Draft Outline: 10 points**
Individually, submit a rough draft of your speech outline to the appropriate D2L Dropbox. To receive full credit, you should have at minimum an introduction, conclusion, transitions, and the basic ideas for your stock issues written. Use the template on D2L to assist your writing.

**Value Case Speech: 100 points**
Using the feedback from your rough draft, construct a final draft of your speech and rehearse it. You and your partner will coordinate a time to host a Zoom meeting and do your value debate. The format of the debate will be posted to D2L. Your individual speech in the debate will be 5-6 minutes long and will verbally cite four sources. Once the Zoom debate is over, the host of the meeting must submit the link of the meeting to the D2L Dropbox. One submission for both members will work. A prepared outline of your individual speech and a works cited page of your sources in APA format should also be submitted to the appropriate D2L Dropbox. Further details will be provided on D2L.

- Speech: 70 points
- Outline: 20 points
- Works Cited: 10 points

**Team Debate Topic: 5 points**
You and your debate group will be assigned a group D2L Dropbox. Together, you should brainstorm and determine at least three topic ideas written as a value proposition. One person from the group should submit them to the appropriate D2L Dropbox. You will all receive the same points for this assignment.

**Team Debate Rough Draft Outline: 10 points**
One member of your team will submit a rough draft of your team’s opening policy case to the appropriate D2L Dropbox. At a minimum, you should have an introduction, conclusion, transitions, and the basic ideas for your stock issues written. Use the template on D2L to assist your writing. Your group will receive the same points for this assignment.

**Team Debate: 150 points**
Two teams (each consisting of 2-3 people) will argue the advocate and opponent sides of a policy case. The team debate will be completed using Zoom. Both teams will coordinate a time and date to have the debate. Each team must build a case together, verbally citing 3 sources. The debate will follow the format of NPDA (Parliamentary Debate). Each debate will be graded as a group (the advocate and opponent teams will receive separate grades). Once the debate is completed, the host of the meeting will submit the link to the meeting to the appropriate D2L Dropbox.

Each team will submit to me an outline and works cited page in APA format. Detailed information will be given in class and posted on D2L.

- Debate: 100 points
- Outline: 40 points
- Works Cited: 10 points

**Peer Ballots: 20 points**
You will complete a debate ballot of a classmate’s speech using the form provided on D2L. Debate ballots are used to assess and judge a debate, providing feedback to the debaters. When submitting your debate, you will also attach the link to a class Discussion Board so classmates can review your speech.

You will watch a debate in our virtual meeting, complete the peer ballot, and then submit it to the Discussion Board. All parts of the form must be completed and thoroughly answered to receive full credit.

All peer ballots are worth 10 points each.

Tests: 150 points
There will be three tests this semester. These exams will be worth a total of 50 points each.

The tests cover the following chapters:

- **Test 1**: Chapters 1, 4, 5, & 6 (Argument & Claims, Evidence & Reasoning)
- **Test 2**: Chapters 3, 7, 8, 10, & 11 (Fact and Value, Responsibility and Fallacies)
- **Test 3**: Chapters 2, 3, 11, 8, 9, & 7 (Culture and Ethics, Co-Orientation, & Policy)

Online Assignments: 10 points
The following assignments are due on the designated due dates by 11:59 PM in the appropriate D2L Dropbox. They are meant to help you build your argumentation skills and are very important towards your understanding of the course material.

- **Plagiarism Module (10 points)**: On D2L, there is a template in the Content folder listed “Citations and Plagiarism”. There is a PDF file in that template titled, “Training Presentation-PDF”. Before your first major speech (Fact), you will need to read that file and take a Citation and Plagiarism Skills Assessment, which can be found in the Assessment folder of our D2L page. You must score 80% or higher on the module. You will be allowed multiple attempts. You will not get the points for this assignment unless you earn 80% or higher before your Fact Speech is turned in.

Extra Credit
Extra credit may or may not be offered over the course of the semester. Any extra credit opportunities will have deadlines and will add points to your final point total, not your final average.

Classroom and Communication Policies

Email Communication
All emails should come from your ETSU email account, as is ETSU policy. I check email regularly during the workday. Give me 24 hours to respond to your original email. If I have not responded after that time frame, please email me again. I check email from 8:15 AM-4:30 PM during the work week and periodically on the weekends. I will respond to emails sent outside of that time frame the next business day.

Diversity in the Classroom
I and this class environment recognize and affirm the importance of diversity. You will be interacting with people who have different thoughts, beliefs, and backgrounds than you. It is
expected that you be respectful of these differences and that you truly listen to your classmates. Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and other identities will not be tolerated.

If you experience any discrimination in this class at the hands of a classmate, please let me know. I am here to listen to and support you.

**Attendance and Participation**
Attendance in this class is important. You are expected to check D2L regularly and complete your assignments on-time. You are also expected to attend our virtual class meetings to further your learning and communication/connection with me and your classmates. If you have any serious situations happening that will interfere with your attendance this semester, let me know in advance.

If you miss more than three classes, we will set up an appointment to discuss your course progress to help ensure your success in the class.

**Course Concerns**
If you have concerns about this course or the instructor, you should take the following steps.

1. **Discuss the matter first with the course instructor.**
   Talk with your course instructor about your concern. If your concern is unsatisfactorily addressed with your instructor, you can then take your concern to Step 2 below.

2. **Discuss the matter with the Department Chair.**
   After you have attempted to work with your instructor on the matter, if a satisfactory resolution is not found, you can then contact Dr. Amber Kinser, Chair of the Department of Communication and Performance kinsera@etsu.edu. Be prepared to discuss what steps you have taken with the instructor. Except in confidential matters, the Chair will confer with the faculty member and review the course policies as stated in the syllabus to determine an appropriate response. If your concern is unsatisfactorily addressed with the Department Chair, you may then take your concern to next step, which the chair can identify for you.

**Departmental Presentation Day Policy**
You are expected to be present on Presentation Days. The absence policy for those days is as follows:

- Foreseeable absences should be arranged with me in advance. “Foreseeable” includes university-approved absences (athletic obligations), doctor’s appointments, 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 me before the missed class.
- In all cases, contacting your instructor in advance of the absence is preferred. That said, you will only be allowed to make-up a missed presentation if the absence was unforeseeable, unpreventable, urgent in nature that necessitated missing class. You must document the event with the instructor within {24} hours of the missed class.

This includes virtual attendance. You will be assigned a day to attend a Zoom meeting and perform your speech. If you can’t attend that meeting due to the above unforeseen circumstances, you will need to follow the above policy.
**Testing Policy**

All tests will be taken on D2L. They will be open for the duration of the week (Monday-Friday) and will close at 11:59 PM on the Friday they are due. Once opened, you will have one attempt to complete the test.

**Late and Missing Submission Policy**

The reality is that life is complicated, and things happen. Ideally, you should be as prepared as possible and submit your work on time. However, computers have glitches, people get sick, childcare falls through, etc. I get it...I’ve been there.

So, the late work policy is simple. If you are turning something in late, email me and let me know. You have 3 days from the due date to submit the assignment. *No questions asked, no points deducted.* Submissions after this 3-day period will only be accepted at my discretion. For example, I won’t accept an outline that you are submitting two months late because you forgot to turn it in. However, I will consider providing more of an extension on an assignment if an urgent medical matter is happening and you communicate with me about it the week the assignment is due.

Keep in mind, however, the sooner you turn in an assignment, the better. For example, if you turn in a rough draft outline late, we will already be moving onto presenting speeches. That won’t be enough time for me to give you adequate feedback and you to make edits for your presentation. So, it is in your best interest to submit your work on time.

**Academic Misconduct**

Plagiarism, misrepresentation, fabrication, and/or cheating are not tolerated at any academic institution. This class is no exception. Any intentional infraction will result in an automatic 0/F on the assignment, as well as a report to the Dean’s Office. You can read more about ETSU’s Academic Misconduct Policy [here](#).

**Grading Policy**

Your points will be added at the end of the semester and divided by 600, the total amount of points you can earn. That percentage will then equate to a letter-grade. Averages that end with a decimal of .5 or higher will be rounded up to the next whole number.

A grade of FN applies when zero attendance is involved.

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