**COMM 312 Argumentation| Course Syllabus and Schedule | Spring 2023**

**Oldfather Hall 304 – 11am T/R**

**Contact Information and Virtual Office Hours**

Justin W. Kirk, Ph.D.

jkirk11@unl.edu

Office Hours - Tuesday/Thursday 12:30 – 1:45 PM or by Appointment

Louise Pound Hall 371

<https://unl.zoom.us/j/2537322032>

**Course Description**

This course offers students a survey of relevant theories of argumentation and challenges students to develop contemporary applications and approaches to argumentation.

**Course Objectives**

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

 Identify and analyze the soundness of constituent elements of arguments.

 Construct arguments for public persuasion based on argumentation models and theories.

 Analyze and contest public arguments with refutation and analysis tools developed in argumentation scholarship.

 Develop methods for testing argument theory in the real world.

**Required Texts**

*Argumentation in Everyday Life* by Jeffrey P. Mehltretter Drury, SAGE Publications, Inc., 1st Edition.

You can purchase the textbook directly from the university bookstore. It is also available online at multiple book resellers. You do not need to purchase anything other than the textbook for the course.

**Mission of the Department of Communication Studies**

The mission of the faculty and students of the Department of Communication Studies is to examine human symbolic activity as it shapes and is shaped by relationships, institutions, technology, and culture.  This work concerns the creation, analysis, and critique of messages ranging from face-to-face to digital media contexts.  The department’s research and teaching devote particular attention to scholarly initiatives aimed at understanding and explaining the role of communication in (a) facilitating civic engagement, mediating public controversies, and organizing for social change, (b) constituting individual and family health, promoting healthy behaviors, and helping persons navigate relational challenges, and (c) creating, maintaining, and challenging personal, social, and community identity in a complex and diverse world.

**Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The Department of Communication Studies is committed to achieving inclusive excellence as outlined by the university’s [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](https://diversity.unl.edu/diversity-home). As communication scholars and teachers, we believe communities and relationships are enriched when we give voice and value to diverse perspectives based on  “group and social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, indigeneity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, and [(dis)ability](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.accessiblesociety.org_topics_demographics-2Didentity_dkaplanpaper.htm&d=DwMGaQ&c=Cu5g146wZdoqVuKpTNsYHeFX_rg6kWhlkLF8Eft-wwo&r=RFKwJPdq0RWaz8f8toQHZAA0nQqJS1atEtkKU2O4lFHjP8ofiztzf_y03_3kVD7A&m=XK1RFliLFYX8hVpFqsUpYheC0p4jq7gsKrfLNk2Hzlg&s=JPTf5c5CKJStzrDm8Vy7-xvHyOk99aU6xm1KLh2Vbww&e=)), historically underrepresented populations, and cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations.” We are committed to continual reflection and refinement of curriculum, scholarly endeavors, and community engagement to achieve goals of inclusiveness and equal opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to discuss these with your instructors, the Chair of the department ([Dr. Jody Koenig Kellas](https://comm.unl.edu/jody-koenig-kellas)), members of the department’s [Committee on Diversity and Inclusion](https://comm.unl.edu/committees), or the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

**Readings, Participation, and Classroom Etiquette**

As a student, your responsibility is to read the assigned material prior to class, completed the assigned quiz, outline, or reading reflection prior to attending class. Classroom experiences contribute positively to the university learning environment and so you are expected to participate in discussion in a way that is respectful of others’ perspectives and experiences. This course is designed to deal with difficult and often problematic material. As adults and students in a university environment, I expect every student to approach the material in a critical, scholarly, and responsible manner. The purpose of the class is to provide you with the tools necessary to examine and analyze a brutal, violent, and often extremely anxiety-inducing world. We will not shy away from difficult discussions, rather we will seek them out and as your instructor, I need your assistance to take this journey. Understanding that the content can be difficult to confront at times, I will do my best to provide trigger warnings and content warnings for any material deemed sensitive or violent. If I do not meet your expectations in this regard, please let me know directly so that I can remedy the situation.

**Attendance/Engagement**

Attendance, engagement, and participation in class are essential to success in this course. You are expected to attend every class period. Lectures will not be recorded but Power Points of the lectures will be posted on Canvas prior to the start of class. If you are unable to attend class due to illness or other conflict, reach out as soon as you are able and provide me with documentation supporting your inability to attend the class. If the absence is excused, you will be allowed to make up the work within seven days of the original due date. Remember that while health and safety are priorities for me in the classroom, University policy supersedes any desire on my part to provide extenuating flexibility outside of specifically designated exceptions. If you feel that either the course or University policy prevents you from succeeding in this course, please contact me directly and we can work to find an accommodation.

**Netiquette: Communication Courtesy Code**

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, discussions, and chats. If I deem any of them to be inappropriate or offensive, I will first schedule a time to meet with the student to discuss the issue, then if the issue is not resolved I forward the message to the Chair of the department and appropriate action will be taken. The same rules apply online as they do in person. Be respectful of other students. Foul discourse will not be tolerated.

**Office Hours/Appointments**

As an instructor, I have always enjoyed helping my students succeed in my courses. To do this the best I can, I require that all students email me prior to attending my office hours with information regarding the time in which they will be coming in and the information/questions that they are wanting to discuss. With these two pieces of information I will be better able to prepare for our meeting, which subsequently will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of it. While office hours are maintained weekly, I am also available for appointments that are outside of the stated office hours.

**Student Concerns and Feedback**

Your experience with remote learning in this course is important to me. If you have questions, concerns, or positive feedback, please contact me at jkirk11@unl.edu. If I am unable to respond, or you feel I've not adequately addressed your concerns, you can contact my direct supervisor, Department Chair Jody Kellas at jkellas2@unl.edu. If your concern is still not resolved, please contactjune.griffin@unl.edu.

**Assignment Turn In**

All assignments must be submitted through Canvas as explained in each assignment description. Assignments will not be accepted via email or any other format. All assignments will automatically be run through Turnitin to be screened for plagiarism. It is your responsibility to use Canvas effectively to turn in your assignments and to ensure that your assignment is properly submitted before the assignment due date according to course specifications. **PLEASE NOTE: Your assignments MUST be Microsoft Word documents or PDFs.** If you are saving your assignments on your MAC, you must add the .doc or .docx file extension to your document in order for it to be accepted.

**Late Assignments**

All assignments are due prior to class on the day assigned unless otherwise specified. Please check Canvas regularly for changes to any assignment requirements, including due dates. Due to the nature of this course, falling behind on assignments will make it difficult for you to succeed in the class.

**Accommodations**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

**Course Credit**

Please note that Communication Studies majors must earn a grade of ‘C’ or better to receive credit for the course. All assignments and exams must be completed in order to earn a ‘C’ or better in the course. The Department of Communication Studies “Grading and Grade Appeals” policy document is linked to the department’s website: https://comm.unl.edu/forms-andpolicies. Students are encouraged to discuss their progress with me anytime throughout the semester. Please visit me during my office hours or make an appointment for discussing grades rather than before or after class.

**Incompletes**

Incomplete grades are rarely assigned in this class. Please plan to complete all work for the course within the semester you are taking it. In the event, you experience circumstances that you see as potentially warranting an incomplete, please note that you must have completed at least 75% of the work in the course and you must approach me before the last week of classes with a proposal for completion of the work.

**24/7 Rule**

Given the role of grading in the teaching and learning process, it is vital that students actively review their feedback and stay engaged in the process throughout the semester. If you have a question or concern about feedback and/or the grade on a particular assignment, you are expected to take 24 hours from the time of receiving the feedback to consider it and determine how you can incorporate it into your understanding moving forward. If, after considering the feedback in depth, you have continued questions about the assessment, you should address those questions with me within 7 days of receiving the feedback to ensure a productive conversation and the opportunity to learn from the feedback and assessment as they move forward in the class.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and grounds for university action. According to the University’s Undergraduate Bulletin (2013-2014), plagiarism is considered an act of Academic Dishonesty and is defined as, but not limited to “Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting examinations, theses, reports, speeches, drawings, laboratory notes or other academic work in whole or in part as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person.” Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given an “F” grade and may be grounds for failing the course. It is the policy of the Department of Communication Studies to file a report with the Dean of Students for any infraction (no matter how minor it may seem). It is your responsibility as a student to familiarize yourself with and adhere to these guidelines (see http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code for the university policies and descriptions of all academic dishonesty and http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/integrity#plagiarism for helpful tips on avoiding plagiarism). It is my responsibility to report any cases of cheating or plagiarism to the administration. All assignments must be your own original work and must be prepared specifically for this course. For all written assignments, I expect you to cite your sources according to the 6th edition of the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Style Manual. More importantly, be very clear when you are quoting vs. paraphrasing sources. *The use of any uncited sources, using someone else’s words or ideas without quoting, using falsified sources, or turning in work that is not yours and/or is not original for this course will result in immediate failure of the course and a referral to the appropriate campus authorities.* Claiming academic ignorance about standards for writing is not an acceptable excuse for plagiarism committed.

**Existing and Emerging AI Writing Tools.**

As we begin to learn more about the ways Artificial Intelligence as seen in existing and emerging tools like Chat GPT can both support and circumvent the learning process, it is important that you know that you are expected to complete all your work in this course without using these resources unless expressly asked to during the assignment instructions. We are still learning about the impact of these tools on the educational process and the work you are asked to complete in this course is directly tied to supporting your learning of the key learning outcomes. If you have questions about this, please talk with me outside of class.

**Title IX**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same accountability and the same support applied to offenses against other protected categories; such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, UNL offers several resources for reporting and support (https://www.unl.edu/equity/title-ix). Located in Canfield Administration 128, Tami Strickman is UNL's Title IX coordinator. Her contact number is 402- 472-3417. In the Student Union, Jan Deeds runs the Women's Center and is supervisor of PREVENT (the on campus student organization aimed toward sexual assault awareness and bystander intervention). Her contact information is jdeeds1@unl.edu, and 402-472-2598. Also located in the Student Union, Voices of Hope provides support in answering questions and guidance in reporting options. Please find the many resources offered by Voices of Hope at http://involved.unl.edu/gender/advocate. Additional support is offered through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) located in the University Health Center on the second floor. The contact number for CAPS is 402-472-7450. In addition, be aware that as the director of the debate program at the University, I am a mandatory Title IX reporter and will report any incidents I am made aware of that rise to the level of a reportable incident.

**Resources for International Students**

[ESL Support LabLinks to an external site.](https://www.unl.edu/piesl/esl-support-lab)

[Intensive English ProgramLinks to an external site.](https://global.unl.edu/english/)

[Academic Success ProgramLinks to an external site.](https://www.unl.edu/piesl/academic-support)

[OASISLinks to an external site.](https://www.unl.edu/oasis/academic-success-and-intercultural-services)

[Academic Mentoring/Coaching for International Students: First Year Experience Team](http://success.unl.edu/international)

[International Peer Mentors](http://success.unl.edu/international#mentors)

[Writing Center](http://www.unl.edu/writing/home)

**Assignments**

**Reading** - All course readings will be from the text and provided as needed on Canvas

**Propositions** – You will be required to bring a total of 10 argumentative propositions to class. They will be due on Thursdays

**Chat GPT Conversations** – You will be required to engage in 10 arguments with the Artificial Intelligence tool, Chat GPT. Logs of these arguments will be uploaded to canvas each week on Tuesdays

**Analyze an Op/Ed** – You will analyze one Op/Ed piece written after January 1, 2023

**Write an Op/Ed** – Write an Op/Ed piece on a topic of your choice. Submit the piece to a local, regional, or national newspaper

**Exam** – You will take a midterm exam over the textbook content

**Reflection Papers** – You will write 3 reflection papers on some aspects of the course material throughout the semester

**Chat GPT Portfolio and Paper** – You will turn in a research portfolio including a 5-7 page analysis about your experience arguing with a machine

 **Grading**

  10 propositions @ 5pts each 50pts

 10 Chat GPT conversations @ 10pts each 100pts

 Analyze an Op/Ed 50pts

 Write an Op/Ed 50pts

 Exam 100pts

 3 reflection papers @ 25pts each 75pts

 Chat GPT portfolio and paper 75pts

 **Total 500pts**

In order to pass the course you must complete all assignments and receive a minimum of 350 points to receive a C for the course.

**Course Schedule**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Topic  | Reading Due | Assignments Due |
| 24-Jan | Introduction to Argumentation Theory |  |
| 26-Jan | **No Class - Debate Team Travel** |
| 31-Jan | Introduction to Argumentation Theory | Chat GPT conversation #1 |
| 2-Feb | Introduction to Argumentation Theory | Chapters 1-3 Drury | Proposition #1  |
| 7-Feb | Building Solid Arguments | Chapter 4 Drury | Chat GPT conversation #2 |
| 9-Feb | Building Solid Arguments | Chapter 5 Drury | Proposition #2 |
| 14-Feb | Building Solid Arguments | Chapter 6 Drury  | Chat GPT conversation #3 |
| 16-Feb | Building Solid Arguments | Chapter 7 Drury | Proposition #3Diagram an Argument |
| 21-Feb | Contesting Arguments | Chapter 8 Drury | Chat GPT conversation #4 |
| 23-Feb | Contesting Arguments | Chapter 9 Drury | Proposition #4Analyze an Op/Ed |
| 28-Feb | Contesting Arguments | Chapter 10 Drury | Chat GPT conversation #5 |
| 2-Mar | Contesting Arguments | Chapter 11 Drury | Proposition #5Write an Op/Ed |
| 7-Mar | Crafting Arguments | Chapter 12 Drury | Reflection Paper #1 |
| 9-Mar | Crafting Arguments |   | Textbook Examination  |
| 14-Mar | **No Class - Spring Break** |
| 16-Mar | **No Class - Spring Break** |
| 21-Mar | Classical Argument Theory | Canvas Reading |  |
| 23-Mar | **No Class - Debate Team Travel** |
| 28-Mar | Classical Argument Theory | Canvas Reading | Chat GPT Conversation #6 |
| 30-Mar | Classical Argument Theory |   | Proposition #6 |
| 4-Apr | Perelman and the New Rhetoric | Canvas Reading | Chat GPT Conversation #7 |
| 6-Apr | Perelman and the New Rhetoric | Canvas Reading | Proposition #7 |
| 11-Apr | Philosophy and Argument | Canvas Reading | Chat GPT Cpnversation #8 |
| 13-Apr | **No Class - Debate Team Travel** |
| 18-Apr | **No Class - Debate Team Travel** |
| 20-Apr | Informal Argument | Canvas Reading | Proposition #8Reflection Paper #2 |
| 25-Apr | Informal Argument | Canvas Reading | Chat GPT Conversation #9 |
| 27-Apr | Pragma-Dialectics | Canvas Reading | Proposition #9 |
| 2-May | Pragma-Dialectics | Canvas Reading | Chat GPT Conversation #10 |
| 4-May | Postmodern Argument | Canvas Reading | Proposition #10 |
| 9-May | Feminist Argument  | Canvas Reading | Reflection Paper #3 |
| 11-May | Visual Argument | Canvas Reading | Chat GPT Portfolio Due |
| 15-May | Finals Week  |