

CMN 2040
Argumentation and Critical Thinking
Fall 2013

Coleman 1731, Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9-9:50 a.m. (CRN #91703)

Instructor: Dr. T. M. Linda Scholz

Office: Coleman 2030

Email: tscholz@eiu.edu (**Note:** I frequently check my Panther e-mail account, therefore, this is the best way to reach me. I DO NOT frequently check D2L e-mail. To ensure delivery, please use your EIU e-mail to contact me.)

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:00 – 10:50 a.m.; Monday and Wednesday, 12-12:50; and by appointment.

Teaching Assistant: The teaching assistant is here to assist you in your learning process. He is not here, however, to provide you exam questions or to do assignments for you! He has taken this class in the past and has great insights to offer as you proceed through the semester.

❖ **Micah Hamilton:** mjhamilton@eiu.edu

Required Textbooks:

Lunsford, A. A., Ruskiewicz, J. J., & Walters, K. (2010). *Everything's an Argument* (5th ed). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Makau, J. M. & Marty, D. L. (2001). *Cooperative Argumentation: A Model for Deliberative Community*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Required D2L Readings:

Additional reading will be posted on the D2L site for the course.

Course Description and Objectives

Course Descriptions: This class will study how to build, critique, and adapt arguments within a climate of disagreement. You will practice gathering and evaluating evidence, selection and evaluation of reasoning, and the production, criticism and refinement of both oral and written arguments.

Course Objectives:

- a. Learn the practical and ethical elements of arguing in the public sphere.
- b. Gain the ability to identify and analyze the components of argument.
- c. Hone critical thinking skills through evaluation of claims and support.
- d. Learn to critically evaluate oral and written arguments.
- e. Learn skills of impromptu argumentation.
- f. Hone public speaking skills.

Accommodations

It is imperative that you are getting the most out of your educational experience. If you have a special need that qualifies for accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (217-581-6583) to arrange support services. Please also inform the instructor by providing the necessary documentation specifying the accommodations needed for the class **within the first week**.

Student Conduct Standards: Classroom Environment and Policies

All faculty in the Department of Communication Studies uphold the standards of good scholarship and expect our students to do the same. We expect that students earning a degree in Communication Studies will develop superior reasoning/critical thinking, argumentation, writing, and presentational skills while also building a comprehensive knowledge of their content area. Students in communication studies classes will be expected to read all assigned materials, write extensively, complete their own work, and engage in respectful interactions in the classroom. We, as a faculty, agree to hold our students to these standards.

The majority of students are in college specifically to acquire a degree in the hope of finding an adequate job to attain a particular standard of living in the future. Therefore, you should consider college your “on the job training.” In other words, for now COLLEGE IS YOUR JOB and your professors are your managers. You should make this a priority in your life (particularly when you consider the amount of money that is being invested in your education). It is imperative that you understand that when you are an EIU student you are bound to the Student Conduct Standards.

Academic Honesty/Conduct: Although the Student Conduct Standards comprise a lengthy document, and although each aspect of it is highly important, aspects of Standard I will be highlighted here so that there are no misunderstandings of what is considered appropriate behavior conducive to creating an appropriate learning environment. **If you are caught cheating, you will fail this course.** If you are confused about what constitutes cheating and or plagiarism, please ask. Also consider the aspects of Standards II, III, IV and V when interacting with the instructor, graduate teaching assistants, and peers in and outside of the classroom, when responding to class materials, etc.

Standard I. Eastern students observe the highest principles of academic integrity and support a campus environment conducive to scholarship. Violations of this standard:

- a. Conduct in subversion of academic standards, such as cheating on examinations, plagiarism, collusion, misrepresentation or falsification of data.
- b. Theft or the unauthorized possession of examinations; alteration, theft, or destruction of the academic work of others, or academic records, library materials, laboratory materials, or other University equipment or property related to instructional matters or research.
- c. Submitting work previously presented in another course unless specifically permitted by the instructor.
- d. Conduct which disrupts the academic environment; disruption in classes, faculty offices, academic buildings, or computer facilities.
- e. Complicity with others in violations of this standard.

The following items are also considered key aspects of these standards:

Language and Communication in the Classroom. My intent is to establish an environment where you are able to ask questions openly, and respectfully. In an effort to co-construct this environment be courteous and respectful to one another AND to the instructor. This class is discussion-driven, and I do want to hear from all of you. However, please self-monitor and avoid dominating each discussion. There will be times when it will be imperative that you be concise with your comments so that other students have an opportunity to speak. Additionally, in communication studies we repeatedly discuss the power of language. Since the language we speak and write leads us toward particular perceptions, inclusive language will help us to perceive one another on more equal terms, participating equally in the world. In efforts to be effective communicators, please use inclusive and respectful language. Be aware of how you phrase comments and questions. Avoid the use of “bashing” or derogatory language toward one another and toward others outside of this class. Additionally, be open to other perspectives. Each of you has a perspective to offer as it pertains to your individual experiences. Lastly, please refrain from having side conversations during class with your peers, passing notes to one another, etc.—this is incredibly disruptive. Part of being effective communicators entails

good listening skills as well. Each day will provide you with an opportunity to put effective communication skills into practice.

CELL PHONES: Given that the university has created an emergency text message system for campus community safety, it is understandable why students have concerns about keeping cell phones handy. Unfortunately, as you all know perhaps better than I, few students who opt to have their cell phones out during class are monitoring text messages for possible campus-related emergency texts. Therefore, I ask that cell phones be turned off and put away. Text messaging or any other form of cell phone use (or inappropriate use of any other electronic device) during class is very disruptive, disrespectful and will NOT be tolerated, and may result in the dismissal of the student for that class period. You are in this class to learn the subject matter, and not to have personal conversations with friends and family via your cell phone, or laptop. Surely, your friends and family can wait to speak with you before or after class. Be respectful of your instructor and peers, and put your cell phones away.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is critical to your success in this class. Lectures, peer facilitation days, films, and class discussions are designed to make the material comprehensible to you. Attendance is expected at every class meeting. Lack of consistent attendance and participation can and will affect your overall grade. I consider more than three absences to be excessive. I understand that emergencies do occur, and that illness is often times inevitable. Be aware that in-class work may not be made up except by prior arrangement for a university excused absence and/or if you provide proper documentation proving a legitimate emergency (official doctor's note, court papers, and the like). Regardless of the reason for your absence, I will not provide you a personal lecture in my office or via e-mail, nor will the class facilitators. It is up to you to get notes from a classmate. And the answer to the perpetual question "Did I miss anything?" is always: YES!

LATE WORK: I WILL NOT accept late work, e-mailed assignments, any assignments turned into my mailbox, or assignments turned in on flash drive, etc. (unless you have made prior special arrangements directly with me). Assignments are DUE IN CLASS AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS. Any papers turned in to me in class after class has commenced can result in a grade reduction. If you know that you are going to be absent on a day on which an assignment is due, make arrangements to turn in the assignment before, directly to me. Always have a backup of your work. Quizzes and exams CANNOT be made up unless you have made prior arrangement for a university excused absence and/or if you provide proper documentation proving a legitimate emergency (official doctor's note, court papers, and the like). Missing class the days during which you are scheduled to give presentations will result in a failing grade for that assignment.

NOTE ABOUT TARDINESS AND EARLY EXIT: Class begins at the designated time, and ends at the designated time. Consistent tardiness and/or consistent early exit are distracting to students and the instructor, and are also disrespectful. If you have a class or work schedule conflict that interferes with your ability to come to class on time and remain in the class until its official end, please consider taking this class during a different semester or make appropriate adjustments that will not interfere with your timely, regular, and complete participation. Lastly, if you come to class late on day during which a quiz was given at the beginning of class, you will NOT be able to make up that quiz.

Assistance Outside of Class

If you need additional time to talk through the class material, or to discuss the progress of your work, I am happy to do so. You can stop by my office during my regularly scheduled office hours. You are also welcome to stop by outside of my regularly scheduled office hour, and if I am there, I will be happy to talk. Finally, you can set up an appointment. I also check Panther e-mail regularly during the day throughout the week, and will respond to questions that you have. However, there may be times when a question warrants a lengthy response, and so I may ask that you come to my office. Lastly, be sure to check your school e-mail and the course's D2L site regularly for any announcements regarding class issues, etc.

Questions about Grades

If you have questions about your grade, I ask that you follow this procedure:

- a. First, we will abide by the **“24-hour rule.”** This means that after you’ve received the grade, reflect upon it for 24 hours before you come talk to me. To assist in your reflection, you should look through your notes and readings.
- b. Second, after 24 hours have passed, e-mail me to request an appointment to come in and talk with me in person.
- c. Finally, our meeting should determine if indeed there was an error made in grading, and/or provide you with clarification on concepts, and/or create strategies for more effective future study and writing habits, etc.

Despite the amount of times that you come in and talk with me, this will not guarantee you a specific grade in the course. In other words, the points you earn on assignments are totaled and those points will coincide with the overall grade you earn in the class. Please be aware of where you stand throughout the semester. If you need assistance calculating your grade, I am happy to assist you. Do not wait until the last few days of the semester to figure out where your grade stands. Once the semester is over, it’s over, and no more points will be allotted. In short, I do not curve nor do generally I offer extra credit. Your grades will be posted on D2L.

Expectations of the Readings

This course requires a lot of reading, research, and substantive writing; therefore, consider the time that you are willing to allot to careful and thorough reading and studying. You need to do the readings as they are assigned in order to come to class prepared to understand the material, and to perform successfully during your facilitation, class discussions, on your quizzes, your papers, etc. It is okay if you face challenges comprehending some of the material, class discussions are designed to help you work through complications. Do not assume that by merely reading the titles of the reading that you know what the chapter is about. A quick skim before class will not be sufficient either. You will be quizzed on the material, you will take three exams on the material, and you will be expected to apply the material during presentations. If you do not read, it will be difficult for you to do well on these assignments.

Course Assignments

Cooperative Argumentation Analysis (100 points): After reading and discussing chapter 3, “Cooperative Argumentation” in the Josina M. Makau and Debian L. Marty textbook, you will view the film *12 Angry Men* in class. Using “Cooperative Argumentation” as your model, you will write a 3 - 4 page analysis of how the characters in the film illustrated (or not!) the tenets of the cooperative model. A more detailed description of the assignment will be posted on D2L. **See schedule for due date.**

Impromptu (50 points): Impromptu is a delivery type that most college students (including communication students) dread, and yet it is one of the most used and useful delivery styles! In fact, you already use it more than you realize. At school you use it during question and answer sessions, or even during informal rebuttals in your classes. In the work place you will (or do) use it in meetings, presentations, and even interviews. For the purposes of this class, you will use it during the required impromptu assignment, as well as during your final deliberative presentation. The message here is: stay well informed on current issues so that you are able to have a fluid conversation about them. In short, on the day that you are scheduled to speak I will hand you a topic, and you will have a few minutes (e.g., 3 minutes) to prepare a short speech that presents an argument related to the topic. I will post a helpful outline on D2L prior to the assignment that will help you to prepare.

Peer Evaluation of Impromptu Argument (50 points): During the Impromptu assignment, you will be assigned a peer. You will evaluate your peer’s **argument** using the textbook reading as a guide. The

evaluation will be 2 - 3 pages typed, and double-spaced. A more detailed description of this assignment will be posted on D2L. **See schedule for due date.**

Deliberation (200 points, total). During the semester, the material that you will have read and the activities in which you will have participated will have prepared you for this last big assignment. You will choose a topic of interest early on in the semester. I recommend that you look at the essays in the back of the *Everything is an Argument* textbook to assist you with your topic choice. We will also discuss different topics in class that might spark your interest. You will spend a significant amount of time researching information about this topic. You will then create a speech where a clear argument is presented about your topic of focus. After you present your argument (which will follow specific guidelines I will provide you with in class), you will then facilitate a discussion with the class (for which guidelines will also be given). The goal of this assignment is to work cooperatively with the class and with those students who may present “opposing” ideas about your topic in an effort to provide your audience with sound “information” regarding the topic of controversy. The goal is NOT to win or lose! You will be graded on your application of the argumentation concepts that we will have discussed in class. There are two components to this assignment: a) an outline that presents your arguments; and b) the in-class presentation and facilitation. A more detailed description of the assignment will be posted on D2L, and we will also be discussing this assignment in detail in class. **The point break down follows:**

- ☞ **In-depth Outline (and sources) (100 points)**
- ☞ **Presentation and Facilitation (100 points)**

Exams (Exams 1 and 2 = 100 points each; Final exam = 150; Total 350 points): You will be given three exams during the course of the semester. Two will be administered during the semester, and the other will be administered during finals week. The third exam will be somewhat comprehensive. The exams will consist of multiple-choice and matching questions. Study guides for each exam will be posted on the course D2L site.

Pop Quizzes (100 points; 10 at 10 points each): You will be given ten pop quizzes throughout the semester to assist you with your readings efforts. These pop quizzes will be randomly assigned. The quizzes will also prepare you for the exams.

Participation (50 points): Throughout the semester, you will be required to participate in different in-class activities including: brief current event presentations, extensive group activities, on the spot debates/discussions, as well as outside class activities (I.E., assisting students in CMN 2020 by filling out their surveys and/or participating in focus groups, etc.). The total points that you receive will reflect your consistent level of participation. In order to assist in tracking your participation, you will be signed in daily.

Total points possible in the course: 900.

Grade Scale

900-810 = A
809-720 = B
719-630 = C
629-540 = D
539 and below = F

Tentative Schedule
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Coleman 1731, Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9-9:50 a.m. (CRN #91703)

(The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule if needed)

Readings are to be completed for the day on which they are noted.

Key: EIA = *Everything is an Argument*
CA = *Cooperative Argumentation: A Model for Deliberative Community*

WEEK 1

August 19— **Introductions: to the course and to each other**

August 21— **Unit One: Understanding Argument/ation**
D2L reading: “Fighting for Our Lives” from *The Argument Culture* by Deborah Tannen.

August 23— **Unit One, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch. 1, “Everything is an Argument”

WEEK 2

August 26— **Unit One, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch1, cont’d

August 28— **Unit One, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 2, “Arguments Based on Pathos”

August 30— **Unit One, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 3, “Arguments Based on Character”

WEEK 3

September 2— **Labor day. No class.**

September 4— **Unit One, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 4, “Arguments Based on Facts and Reason”

September 6— **Unit One, cont’d**
Reading (CA): ch 1, “Critical Thinking”

WEEK 4

September 9— **Unit One, cont’d**
Reading (CA): ch 3, “Cooperative Argumentation”

September 11— *Film: 12 Angry Men*

September 13— *Film: 12 Angry Men*

WEEK 5

September 16— *12 Angry Men* discussion of paper

September 18— **EXAM #1**

September 20— **Unit Two: Analyzing Arguments**
Reading (EIA): ch 5, “Rhetorical Analysis”

WEEK 6

September 23— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 6, “Academic Arguments”

September 25— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 16, “What Counts as Evidence”

September 27— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 20, “Documenting Sources”
Due: *12 Angry Men Cooperative Argumentation Analysis*

WEEK 7

September 30— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 17, “Fallacies of Argument”; and discussion of reasoning types

October 2— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Continue discussion of ch 17, and reasoning types

October 4— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 7, “Structuring Arguments”

WEEK 8

October 7— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Continue discussion of ch 7, “Structuring Arguments”

October 9— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Reading (CA): ch 4, “Elements of Argumentation”

October 11— **Fall Break. No class.**

WEEK 9

October 14— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 10, “Evaluations”

October 16— **Unit Two, cont’d**
Reading (CA): ch 5, “Context and the Deliberative Community”

October 18— **Unit Two, cont’d; Review Impromptu Assignment. Small group practice rounds**

WEEK 10

October 21— **IMPROMPTU**

October 23— **IMPROMPTU**

October 25— **IMPROMPTU**

Discussion of final deliberative assignment and of peer critique.

WEEK 11

October 28 — **EXAM #2**

October 30— **Unit Three: “Doing” Argumentation**
Reading (EIA): ch 13, “Style in Arguments”

November 1— **Unit Three, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 14, “Visual Arguments”

WEEK 12

November 4— **Unit Three, cont’d**
Reading (EIA): ch 15, “Presenting Arguments”
Due: Impromptu Peer Critique

November 6— **Unit Three, cont’d**
Reading (CA): ch 2, “Ethical and Effective Dialogue”

November 8— **Unit Three, cont’d**
Continue dialogue discussion

WEEK 13

November 11— **Preparation for deliberation assignment**

November 13— **DELIBERATION**

November 15— **DELIBERATION**

WEEK 14

November 18— **DELIBERATION**

November 20— **DELIBERATION**

November 22— **National Communication Association Convention**

November 25-29— **Thanksgiving Break. No Class.**

WEEK 15

December 2— **DELIBERATION**

December 4— **DELIBERATION**

December 6— **DELIBERATION**
Course Wrap-up. Last day of class.

December 10 (Tuesday)— FINAL EXAM: 8 am – 10 am