COMM 230

Argument and Advocacy

Spring 2013

Instructor: Jon Loging
Office: Honsey Hall 206
E-mail: Jon.Loging@blc.edu
Office Phone: 344-7**420**
Home Phone: 507-676-1441
Office Hours: By Appointment
Messages may be left on voice mail or sent by e-mail. No home phone calls after 9 pm. Appointments may be made by calling, via email, or by speaking with the instructor.
OPEN DOOR POLICY: *If my office door is open, please come in. If it is shut, please respect my privacy. I am either working with a student, on the phone, or in need of quiet time to finish work. If you have an appointment, please knock. Otherwise, please make an appointment, call, or email me.*

Course Description

While studying the requirements of cogent argument, students practice advocacy and refutation in value and policy disputes, giving special attention to rational approaches to moral issues.

Bethany Lutheran College Academic Catalog 2012

Students will learn to understand how people develop opinions by analyzing context, values, and moral/ethical beliefs. Students who can understand how opinions form are more successful at advocating for their position.

Jon Loging 2008

Required Reading

Ruggiero, Vincent Ryan. Thinking Critically About Ethical Issues. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008.

Carnegie, Dale. How to Win Friends & Influence People. Revised ed. New York: Pocket Books, 1981.

Format

This class is discussion based and requires students to take an active role in their education. Students will display their knowledge through in-class presentations and with homework assignments. Students need to apply what is learned in class with the theories learned in the texts.

Students need to have a general understanding of public speaking and the basics of persuasion. These skills can be learned in COMM 111 – Fundamentals of Speech, which is why it is a prerequisite for this class.

Disabilities

Please inform the instructor of any documented mental or physical disabilities as soon as possible. Arrangements will be made to assist students who need it.

Major and Course Objectives

The Communication Major has five main objectives for its students to achieve. A student in the Communication Major will be able to…

1. …demonstrate competence in oral and written communication that is both ethical and effective.
2. …describe and apply principles of ethics and professionalism as a specialist in communication.
3. …demonstrate an aptitude with a variety of media.
4. …evaluate the social and historical significance of communication through the analysis of principles and theory.
5. …collaborate with diverse colleagues in a variety of contexts.

Students taking COMM 230 – Argument and Advocacy have specific objectives for the course that also fulfill the Communication Major objectives. Below are the course objectives and the major objectives they fulfill.

A student who has taken COMM 230 – Argument and Advocacy will be able to…

1. …use Stephen Toulmin's patterns of argument. (COMM Objective #1 and 4)
2. …construct logical arguments supported by evidence. (COMM Objective #1)
3. …identify logical fallacies and counter them with proper responses. (COMM Objective #1)
4. …practice ethical argumentation and advocacy. (COMM Objective #1 and #2)
5. …analyze and critique argument and advocacy in today's current events. (COMM Objective #1)
6. …find and organize necessary resources to support claims and advocacy. (COMM Objective #1)

Competencies

The Bethany Communication Major lists sixteen core competencies that it believes are vital to a successful Communication education. Communication is one main component of a liberal arts education. These competencies will assist students as they work toward a successful life. The following are some of the sixteen competencies that students will learn in this class:

A student in Argumentation and Advocacy will learn the following competencies which are necessary for earning a degree in Communication at Bethany Lutheran College:

1. The student will understand the challenges involving information and communication in the 21st century.
2. The student will understand the power of language.
5. The student will be literate.
6. The student will be well-informed.
8. The student will be thoughtful and critical.
9. The student will be ethical.
10. The student will be able to deal with complexities.
11. The student will be a problem-solver.
12. The student will be able to collaborate.
14. The student will become more service-oriented.

If you are interested in the Communication major, please see the instructor for more information.

Cell Phones/Laptop Computers

Interruption of class by cell phones will not be tolerated. Students should **turn off** their cell phones before class. If a cell phone rings, or vibrates enough to be noticed, the instructor reserves the right to answer the phone and then confiscate the phone for an undetermined period of time. The student's final grade will be affected with repeat occurrences.

Technology can be a wonderful thing. It can also be a major distraction. Laptop and tablet computers are welcome in class if they are being used for the purpose of learning in the class. No Facebook, email, chatting, web surfing, or other non-class related activity should happen. Students who abuse this privilege will not be allowed to use their computer during class time.

Attendance

Due to the discussion nature of this class, attendance becomes very important. Students may only have one unexcused absence or three excused absences. Starting with the fourth absence, the student's grade will be lowered.

It is the student's responsibility to inform the teacher of an absence **before** the class that they will miss. Email is the preferred method to inform the teacher. It is still the student's responsibility even if a coach or advisor sends a notice to the faculty.

All assignments are still due on the day they were assigned. No extensions will be given.

Late work

Written assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class. Late work will only be accepted with permission of the instructor. Permission must be obtained as soon as possible **before** the assignment is due. Crashed computers, printer problems, and dogs that eat homework are your problems, not the instructor's. All excuses are good excuses, but none will be accepted. All other late work will only receive evaluation. No credit will be given.

Written work and citations

When turning in work, please remember the following statement, "**Be the professional you want to be**". You are attending college to prepare for a professional career. Start acting like the professional you would like to become. Set the standard for yourself. Let your work reflect the commitment you have to excellence.

All written work that is handed in will be typed. Hand written work not typed will not be accepted. Work of more than one page must be stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Use the following format: Double spaced with one inch margins on all sides. Point 12 Times New Roman font. Name, class, and section will be on top of the first page, along with pages numbers on all consecutive pages following MLA format. All sources will be properly cited using MLA format. See the MLA Example on Campusweb. You may print on both sides of the paper if you choose to do so.

All written work must be handed in at the beginning of class on the day it is due. **Emailed assignments or work handed in late will receive no credit.**

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious breach of ethics and will not be tolerated in the classroom. If you intend to pass off another's work as your own, expect to face serious consequences. Minor offences such as forgetting to cite a source may reduce your grade for that assignment. Giving a speech which you did not write will earn you a failing grade for the semester.

The MLA Handbook* has defined plagiarism as follows:

1. repeating another's sentences as your own
2. adopting a particularly apt phrase as your own
3. paraphrasing someone else's argument as your own
4. presenting someone else's line of thinking as though it were your own.

In short, to plagiarize is to use someone else's work as your own, without crediting or citing the source. Direct word-for-word copying is permissible if the material appears in quotation marks and if the source is cited. Rephrasing and summarizing is permissible if the source is cited. With spoken work, the source must be given during the speech.

The instructor reserves the right to fail any student involved in plagiarism.

* *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, Dissertations* (New York, Modern Languages Association, 1977)

Assignments

This class is designed to be a dynamic class, changing to fit the current needs of the class. The assignments listed below are only part of the assignments students will complete. Other assignments will be given during the semester in response to the needs of the class.

Quizzes/Exams

Students will randomly be quizzed on material from lectures and readings. This is to insure they are keeping up with the reading and understand the material. There will be two exams through the course of the semester. (10% of final grade)

Hearing

Students will be divided into groups and given a side of a current issue. Each group will be involved with two hearings, one in favor of an issue and another opposed to the issue. The hearings will happen in class and the classmates who are not participating will be deciding the outcome of the hearing. (15% of final grade)

Debate Tournament

Students will be divided into three person debate teams. During several class periods, students will debate each other on a variety of topics. The goal is to persuade the judge of the round to their side of the issue using logic, wit, and other persuasive techniques learned in class. (15% of final grade)

Debate Analysis

Students will observe a debate, either in person or via multimedia (subject to approval by the instructor). The students will then analyze the arguments and determine which side of the debate won and why. (15% of final grade)

Proposal Defense

Students will create a proposal for some policy change. They will create documentation supporting that change, present the proposal to the class, and then defend their position and continue the advocacy. (25% of final grade)

Carnegie Assignments

Students will do smaller assignments based on the Dale Carnegie book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. These assignments will also include quizzes on the reading. Students will be given adequate time to complete the assignment. (10% of final grade)

Get WIRED!

A requirement for all Communication majors is an internship. In order to be eligible to do an internship, students must complete the Get WIRED! sessions. Get WIRED! is an excellent resource to give students the skills they need to be hired in their field.

Get WIRED! is a three part series with attendance required at each of the three parts. Students must attend all three sessions to complete this requirement. The first week of each series covers resumes and some cover letter information. The second addresses interviewing, professional etiquette and a brief overview of what employers are looking for in job candidates. The third part of each series addresses the internship and an introduction to the internship paperwork.

Students must complete the Get WIRED! series in order to receive full credit for the assignment. The schedule for sessions is as follows:

January 31, February 5 & 12 @ 3pm
and
April 16, 23, 30 @ 3pm

Students must pre-register for the Get WIRED! sessions. Students **MUST** attend all three sessions in order to receive credit for this assignment. Students' attendance will be verified by the Career Center. (5% of final grade)

Mock Interviews

The Bethany Career Center also offers Mock Interviews to give students job interview experience. Students in Argument and Advocacy are required to participate in one of the mock interview sessions. Part of the class is to learn how to advocate for yourself. The schedule for the mock interviews is as follows:

Thursday, February 14
and
Thursday, May 2

Students must register with the Career Center a minimum of one week before each session. Students register for a 30 minute interview/critique session. Students must turn in an updated resume and cover letter at the time of registration. Student attendance will be verified by the Career Center. (5% of final grade)

Note about Get WIRED! and Mock Interviews The Bethany Career Center offers these classes at multiple convenient times. It is the student's responsibility to register and attend these sessions. The Career Center has been instructed not to make special considerations for students outside of the scheduled sessions. Drastic outstanding circumstances will be taken into consideration. Do not expect the instructor or the Career Center to be lenient on this requirement.

On-Campus Research

In order to minimize confusion, clutter, and apathy, students are not allowed to survey the student body as a whole through email or paper survey or questionnaires. In order to do such research, students would need permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Please talk with the professor before starting on-campus research.

Discussion

Due to the discussion nature of this class, some "rules" will be put in place in order to maintain respect and the education value of the discussion.

1. **Only one person speaks at a time.**
   The class does not have to raise their hand before speaking (though that is nice). However, no one should intentionally interrupt another classmate. Be patient. Think through your point. It might not be as good as you think!
2. **Pay attention!!**
   Even if you are not speaking, pay attention to the person who is. Do not start side conversations. Do not work on other class assignments. You might be called on to give your point of view. It would be beneficial to you to know what you are talking about.
3. **Show understanding of the previous speaker.**
   Do your best to tie what you have to say with that of the previous person or persons. Continue the discussion. Do not simply throw in your two cents just to be heard.
4. **Inquire if the speaker had more to add.**
   If you are responding to a specific point, ask the person who made the point if they have a follow-up to your point. It helps to conclude one topic at a time. It hurts discussions to have to constantly go back five minutes to rehash another point.
5. **Do not shift topics until the current topic is done.**
   Just because you want to talk about a different aspect of a topic does not mean it is time to do so. Wait for the opportune time. Discussion is a group effort. Think about everyone and not just yourself.
6. **"It depends…" is an option if only followed by a credible argument.**
   Life is rarely a black and white place. Therefore, you may answer a question with "It depends…" However, you must have a credible argument to back up your point. You must use an argument that pertains to the current discussion. Do not go to extremes. Stay within the scope of the current discussion.
7. **Ultimately, the instructor is in charge.**
   While it might not often seem like it, the instructor will be the discussion leader. The conversation may go on without input from the instructor. Keep the discussion going until the instructor tells you to stop.

Disclaimer

The instructor reserves the right to modify, amend, or change the syllabus as the curriculum and/or program requires. Students will be notified with sufficient time to complete their assignments.