

COM 3450 Argumentation  
Fall 2006

Instructor: Dr. Tammy Ostrander, T 4146, ext. 6173

Texts: A Rulebook for Arguments, Anthony Weston, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.

Course Description: This course focuses on the study of argumentation as a combination of evidence and reasoning. Our discussions will be framed by the Toulmin model of reasoning. Using this model, we will study the four primary types of warrants and the four primary types of argumentative claims.

About the Course: Meeting times: MW 3:30 – 5:10 Credits: 4 (upper division)  
General Education Area: Analytical Reasoning (Area V)

Participation & Attendance: Prompt and regular attendance is expected. Participation is a necessary component to any course in argumentation and will also be expected.

Policies: All speaking assignments must be presented on the assigned day. Papers are due at 3:30 in class on the day listed. Late papers will not be accepted. Please write your CSS Box Number on all assignments.

Academic Honesty: All work is assumed to be original work produced only by the student submitting the work for a grade. Excessive help, plagiarism, failure to cite references and sources, or other misrepresentations of work submitted for a grade will be considered dishonest and will result in a failing grade for the assignment or class. Any student who has questions about what constitutes academic honesty should discuss those issues with the instructor.

Disabilities: Students who have any disability which may affect their performance in this class are encouraged to speak with the instructor at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate accommodations may be made.

Public Service Announcement for Students Applying for Majors in Communication or Advertising and Public Relations: The CSS Catalog strongly recommends that you apply to your major near the end of your sophomore year. The Department of Communication and Theatre Arts requires you to apply and be accepted into your major at least one calendar year before your graduation date (this May to graduate next May). Whenever possible, you should apply to graduate the first semester of your junior year, but at any rate, complete application materials must be submitted to the CTA department chair no later than April 1. Please inform your advisor of your intended graduation date whenever you meet. Meeting the required deadlines and completing the appropriate paper work is your responsibility.

Grades:

- A = 90% - 100% = Excellent
- B = 80% - 89% = Very good
- C = 70% - 79% = Satisfactory/Average
- D = 60% - 69% = Passing/Below Average
- F = Below 59% = Unsatisfactory

Please see assignment descriptions at the end of the syllabus.

Warrant Test	80
Warrants 4 @ 20	80
Fallacy Test	80
Propositions 3 @ 150	450
Case/Presentation	150
Participation	60
Final	<u>100</u>
Total	1000

Participation will be recorded on most days. Points will be accrued as follows:

Freely offers substantive, unprompted comments	4 points
Offers an occasional comment	3
Responds when prompted	2
Present, without comments	1
Absent	0

A student will earn 0 points for participation even if the absence is “excused.”

Schedule:

		9-6	Argumentation & Artistic Proofs
9-11	Toulmin Model	9-13	Chp's 2, 3, 5 Warrants
9-18	<u>Warrants Due, Warrant Test</u>	9-20	Chp 4 Authority, Disputable ?'s
9-25	Disputable ?'s con't., Topics	9-27	Chp 10 Fallacies
10-2	<u>Fallacy Test</u>	10-4	Community Day – No Class
10-9	Evidence, Proof, & Juries	10-11	Fact Propositions
10-16	<u>Fact Proposition Due</u>	10-18	Presentations
10-23	Presentations	10-25	Value Proposition
10-30	Mid Semester Break – No Class	11-1	<u>Value Proposition Due</u>
11-6	Presentations	11-8	Presentations
11-13	Policy Propositions	11-15	NCHC Conference – No Class
11-20	<u>Policy Due</u>	11-22	Thanksgiving Break – No Class
11-27	Presentations	11-29	Definitive Proposals
12-4	<u>Definitive Proposals Due</u>	12-6	Presentations
12-11	Something Interesting	12-13	Review & Wrap-up
Final Exam Tuesday, Dec. 19 at 12:00			

## College, Benedictine Liberal Arts, and Course Outcomes

Benedictine Liberal Arts Designation: Area V – Analytical Reasoning: Courses in Analytical Reasoning require students to examine problems by reducing them to their constituent components. In this course, these components will be various types of evidence and various processes of reasoning. This analysis will be used to solve problems and respond to arguable questions. Both the process and the solution or proposition must then be effectively communicated to an audience.

College Outcomes: Ways of Knowing: Argumentation is a process that incorporates the ability to analyze and evaluate evidence and create one or more possible interpretations of facts that exist in the world. These reasoned conclusions will involve systematic analysis of data, require investigation and critical reflection through application of the Toulmin model and practice of the 4 types of warrants. Effective Communication: Effective communication includes the discovery and exchange of personal ideas and experiences through language appropriate to a person's audience, and the accurate reception and restatement of the ideas and experiences of others. Students will be expected to construct and revise messages so that they are appropriate for the intended audience. They will also be expected to communicate effectively in a public presentation, in small groups, and in class as well as in writing.

### Argumentation Course Outcomes:

- (1) Students will be able to identify and produce argumentative claims based on four types of reasoning or warrants. [Analytical Reasoning, Ways of Knowing]
- (2) Students will also understand the differences between four types of argumentative propositions or questions. [Analytical Reasoning, Ways of Knowing]
- (3) Students will produce fully developed cases for each argumentative question. [Analytical Reasoning, Effective Communication]
- (4) Students will practice their public speaking skills by engaging in class debate, and arguing a case against an opponent. [Analytical Reasoning, Effective Communication]
- (5) Students will differentiate between appropriate written arguments and oral arguments by being aware of the demands of a listening audience versus a reading audience. [Analytical Reasoning, Effective Communication]

## Assignment Descriptions

### Warrant Test (80 points, due Sept. 18)

Students will be shown a 45 minute video clip of an episode from a television series. They will be asked to identify the four warrants used in the resolution of the problem presented. This assignment requires students to identify the four major patterns of analysis and reasoning used in problem solving, and follow the sequence of evaluation and interpretation of evidence. [AR, WK]

### Warrants (80 points, due Sept. 18)

Students will be asked to compose warrants that demonstrate understanding of the 4 different patterns of reasoning. Warrants will be graded on clarity, conciseness, and accuracy of the form of reasoning being demonstrated. [AR, WK, EC]

### Fallacy Test (80 points, due Oct. 2)

Students will be asked to identify the logical fallacies listed on the test. A logical fallacy hampers any argument through faulty thinking, incorrect analysis and interpretation, and poor communication. [AR, WK, EC]

### Propositions (450 points, various dates)

Students must submit 3 of 4 possible propositions that address the 4 types of disputable questions. The propositions require students to take a stand on an issue and build a well-reasoned and well-supported argument. Propositions will be evaluated on clarity of writing and thought, acuteness of reasoning and analysis, and creativity. In this respect, "creativity" refers to the thoughtful consideration of all possibilities rather than something that is entertaining. [AR, WK, EC]

### Case/Presentation (150 points, various dates)

Like the propositions, students will build a case on an issue assigned in class. These cases will be argued in front of the class with a student jury deciding the outcome. Cases will be evaluated on the same criteria as the propositions as well as appropriate oral delivery. [AR, WK, EC]

### Participation (60 points, ongoing)

Please refer to the grading scale that appears earlier in the syllabus. Participation will not be recorded on days that do not lend themselves for discussion e.g. test days. Participation is graded on quality as well as the quantity. As educated citizens we must learn to express our ideas in productive ways. [EC]

### Final (100 points, Dec 19)

The final exam will be a cumulative test to measure the students command of the course content.