



COMM 1270-090 Analysis of Argument

Spring Semester 2025

Online

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Office Hours: By appointment
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Course Description

Study of argumentation – reasoning, issues, audience analysis – in decision-making contexts. Analysis and critical evaluation of persuasive and argumentative messages.

This course meets the Humanities Exploration (HF) general education (GE) requirement.

This course has no pre-requisites.

This is a three (3) credit hour course.

Course Outcomes and Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- understand basic principles of effective argumentation and critical thinking
- explore contemporary public policy issues where decision-making is crucial
- engage with case studies from a variety of argumentation spheres

To meet the course objectives, you will:

- analyze how public arguments are constructed as they occur in various social contexts both through visual diagramming and written critique
- apply effective argumentation principles to produce reasoned arguments, in both written and oral formats

Course Requirements

To meet the course objectives, you will complete the following activities. Grading will be based on how well your work meets specific criteria for each activity.

- Reflections – 10%
- Toulmin diagram – 20%
- Argument brief – 15%
- Mock Debate (affirmative) – 15%
- Mock Debate (negative) – 15%
- Mock Debate (compromise) – 15%
- Mock Debate (presentation) – 10%

Grading Scale

All assignments will total 100 points. Final grades will be determined by meeting specific percentages along a 100-point scale. This means that you always know where your grade currently stands and what your potential grade will be by adding your current points and looking at how many possible points remain. For example, if you currently have received 65 points and there are 30 possible points left from assignments that have not yet been submitted, your potential grade range is 65-95 with a maximum potential grade of an A (95%).

Grading Scale, Achievement & GPA Equivalence

Points Earned	Letter Grade	Performance & Achievement	GPA
94.0+	A	excellent performance, superior achievement	4.0
90.0-93.9	A-		3.7
87.0-89.9	B+	good performance, substantial achievement	3.3
84.0-86.9	B		3.0
80.0-83.9	B-		2.7
77.0-79.9	C+	standard performance and achievement	2.3
74.0-76.9	C		2.0
70.0-73.9	C-		1.7
67.0-69.9	D+	substandard performance, marginal achievement	1.3
64.0-66.9	D		1.0
60.0-63.9	D-		0.7
≤59.9	E	unsatisfactory performance and achievement	0.0

University Policies

Americans with Disability Act (ADA)

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities.

All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the [Center for Disability & Access](#) (CDA). CDA will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. Prior notice is appreciated. To read the full accommodations policy for the University of Utah, please see Section Q of the [Instruction & Evaluation regulations](#).

In compliance with ADA requirements, some students may need to record course content. Any recordings of course content are for personal use only, should not be shared, and should never be made publicly available. In addition, recordings must be destroyed at the conclusion of the course.

If you will need accommodations in this class, or for more information about what support they provide, contact:

Center for Disability & Access

801-581-5020

disability.utah.edu

65 Student Services Building

201 S 1460 E

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Safety at the U

The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more safety information and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.

To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, contact:

Campus Police & Department of Public Safety

801-585-COPS (801-585-2677)

dps.utah.edu

1735 E. S. Campus Dr.

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Addressing Sexual Misconduct

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status, or genetic information.

If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to university officials:

Title IX Coordinator & Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

801-581-8365
oeo.utah.edu
135 Park Building
201 Presidents' Cir.
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Office of the Dean of Students
801-581-7066
deanofstudents.utah.edu
270 Union Building
200 S. Central Campus Dr.
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

To file a police report, contact:
Campus Police & Department of Public Safety
801-585-COPS (801-585-2677)
dps.utah.edu
1735 E. S. Campus Dr.
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

If you do not feel comfortable reporting to authorities, the U's Victim-Survivor Advocates provide free, confidential, and trauma-informed support services to students, faculty, and staff who have experienced interpersonal violence.

To privately explore options and resources available to you with an advocate, contact:
Center for Campus Wellness
801-581-7776
wellness.utah.edu
350 Student Services Building
201 S. 1460 E.
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Academic Misconduct

It is expected that students comply with University of Utah policies regarding academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. This includes the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools without citation, documentation, or authorization. Students are expected to adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession/discipline for which they are preparing. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty or who violates the professional and ethical standards for their profession/discipline may be subject to academic sanctions as per the University of Utah's Student Code: [Policy 6-410: Student Academic Performance, Academic Conduct, and Professional and Ethical Conduct](#).

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on an individual assignment, and/or failure in the course. Academic misconduct, according to the University of Utah Student Code:

"...Includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information...It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct."

For details on plagiarism and other important course conduct issues, see the U's [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Preliminary Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Due</u>
Jan 6-10:	What is Argumentation?	N/A	
Jan 13-17:	We're Bad at Disagreement...	Reflection 1	Jan 19
Jan 20-24:	Persuasion (Rhetoric)	N/A	
Jan 27-31:	Critical Thinking (Analysis)	Reflection 2	Feb 2
Feb 3-7:	Argument Structures	N/A	
Feb 10-14:	Types of Argument: Fact	N/A	
Feb 17-21:	Types of Argument: Definition	Toulmin Diagram	Feb 23
Feb 24-28:	Types of Argument: Evaluation	N/A	
Mar 3-7:	Types of Argument: Causal	Argument Brief	Mar 9
Mar 10-14:	Spring Break	N/A	
Mar 17-21:	Types of Argument: Proposal	N/A	
Mar 24-28:	Fallacies	Affirmative	March 30
Mar 31-Apr 4:	Style & Presentation	N/A	
Apr 7-11:	Multimodal Arguments	Negative	April 13
Apr 14-18:	"Healthy" Arguments	N/A	
Apr 21-22:	Make Your Case	Compromise + Presentation	April 30

April 22nd is the last day of classes. April 23rd is Reading Day. Final Exams are from April 24th through April 30th. This course does not have a final exam (Debate Presentations are due the last day of the Final Exam period).