Professor:      Dr. Tamás Bodor
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*"If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear."*

-George Orwell

## Course Description and Purpose

The course seeks to foster your critical thinking and argumentation skills. Upon the completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Summarize fairly and accurately an argument regardless of your agreement/disagreement with the argument
- Locate the thesis as well as the stated and unstated premises of an argument
- Evaluate the strength of the evidence and the soundness of the reasoning supporting the thesis
- Locate sources and incorporate them into your own writing/argument while properly document all borrowing
- Develop your own thoughtful arguments
- Communicate your argument effectively for diverse audiences (Division of Communication Program Learning Outcomes)
- Recognize and describe ethical dilemmas pertaining to persuasive arguments (Division of Communication Program Learning Outcomes)

## Required and Recommended Texts

There is one required textbook to this course:

- Ziegelmueller, G. W. & Kay, J. (1997) *Argumentation: Inquiry & Advocacy*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon (Third edition)

The book is available through text rental. Additional required readings and study materials shall be made available on the course website (D2L).

## Required Equipment

**This class uses "Turning Point Cloud" to do interactive polling.** You will need to purchase a Turning Technologies code from the bookstore to participate in the class. You will be required to check out a **clicker** from the **UWSP IT Service Desk** to respond to polling.
Check out of the clicker is at the **UWSP IT Service Desk in room 027 ALB, basement of the UWSP Library.**
Device checkout is **free of charge.**

**Returning clickers:** Clickers must be returned to IT Service Desk before the end of finals. Students with unreturned clickers will be billed a late fee and/or may be billed the replacement cost of the clicker.

For Service Desk hours:  http://www.uwsp.edu/infotech/Pages/HelpDesk/default.aspx

**You will need your UWSP Student ID to get your clicker.**

Turning Point Account
You will need to create a Turning Technologies account in order to register your device to the class. Please use your UWSP email address to create an account here: https://account.turningtechnologies.com/account/

You can find help with Turning Point Cloud here:
https://www.turningtechnologies.com/support/turningpoint-cloud

## Activities and Grading

Your final grade will be contingent upon the following activities and assignments taking place over the course of the semester:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **I. Quizzes and homework:** | | **20%** |
| **II. Exams:** | | **30%** |
| 1. Exam #1: | 15% | |
| 2. Exam #2: | 15% | |
| **III. Debate critique paper:** | | **10%** |
| **IV. One on one debate:** | | **10%** |
| **V. Team debate** | | **15%** |
| **VI. Participation in discussions:** | | **10%** |

*Grading scale for final grade:*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *95 – 100% = A* | *84 – 86% = B* | *74 – 76% = C* | *60 – 66% = D* |
| *90 – 94% = A-* | *80 – 83% = B-* | *70 – 73% = C-* | *< 60% = F* |
| *87 – 89% = B+* | *77 – 79% = C+* | *67 – 69% = D+* | |

## Attendance

You must be present in class in order to understand the assignments and carry them out effectively. Also, if you are not here, you cannot participate in class discussions. Therefore, more than 2 unexcused absences will result in a reduction of one letter grade. Thus, for instance, if you were receiving a B- and you have 3 unexcused absences, your grade will be C-. Excused absences (for illness, death in the family, or other unforeseen circumstances that prevent you from attending class) can be arranged only if proper documentation -- from a physician or a university official – is presented.

## Missed/Late Assignments

You are expected to present your argument on the class day when you are scheduled. If you miss your presentation, it will be impossible to make it up.

Written assignments must be handed in via D2L or at the end of the class as specified by the assignment. Late assignments receive a failing grade.

If you miss a quiz, an exam or an assignment, unless you are granted an excused absence, you will not be permitted to make it up.

## Academic Honesty

When completing your assignments, you are expected to do original work. That is, you must avoid any form of plagiarism. I consider plagiarism - as defined by *Dictionary.com* – the "use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." A student caught on plagiarizing shall receive a failing grade for his/her assignment. Further academic misconduct shall be sanctioned in accordance with the *UWSP Chapter 14 – Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures*.

## Conduct in Class

To provide a fruitful experience and an effective learning environment for all of us, I expect each of you to conduct yourself with respect for your fellow students, in line with the *UWSP Communal Bill of Rights*. Also,

- Students are to be seated in class by 12:30PM, by which I will be ready to teach. I consider lateness disruptive and an emergent pattern of lateness will be treated as equivalent to absences.
- Any use including the visual display of **cell phones** is not tolerated in this class. By the beginning of class, all cell phones must be **turned off and put away** until the end of class. I consider any use of cell phones, including text messaging, as disrespectful and disruptive. Also, since those who engage in such conduct are mentally absent, **cell phone use will result in marking the offender as absent from class**.
- Use of **laptop** computers and **tablets** is **not allowed** in class. Exception is made in case of students who are unable to take paper notes due to some documented physical condition.
- UWSP is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire a condition during the semester where you need assistance, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center on the 6th floor of Albertson Hall (library) as soon as possible. DATC can be reached at 715-346-3365 or DATC@uwsp.edu.

## Course Schedule

(Note: This schedule is subject to change. Should changes occur, they will be announced in class)

| Date | Topics and Activities | Activities & Assignments Due |
|---|---|---|
| 23-Jan | Class introduction | |
| 25-Jan | A perspective on argumentation; Basic concepts 1 | Ch 1 & 2 |
| 30-Jan | Basic concepts 2 | |
| 1-Feb | Small group exercise | |
| 6-Feb | The nature of argument | Ch3 |

| Date | Topic | Reading |
|------|-------|---------|
| 8-Feb | Discovering data | Ch4 |
| 13-Feb | Testing data | Ch5 |
| 15-Feb | Inductive arguments | Ch6 |
| 20-Feb | Deductive arguments | Ch7 |
| 22-Feb | Fallacies | Ch8 |
| 27-Feb | Exam 1 | |
| 1-Mar | Analysis of fact/value controversies | Ch9 |
| 6-Mar | Analysis of policy controversies | Ch10 |
| 8-Mar | Organizing and briefing arguments | Ch11 |
| 13-Mar | Fields and forums | Ch12 |
| 15-Mar | Narration | Ch13 |
| 20-Mar | Communicating argument | Ch14 |
| 22-Mar | Exam 2 | |
| 27-Mar | Spring break - no class | |
| 29-Mar | Spring break - no class | |
| 3-Apr | Debate prep workshop | |
| 5-Apr | One on one debates 1 | |
| 10-Apr | One on one debates 2 | |
| 12-Apr | One on one debates 3 | |
| 17-Apr | One on one debates 4 | |
| 19-Apr | One on one debates 5 | |
| 24-Apr | Discussion day: processing the experience | Debate critique paper due |
| 26-Apr | Team debate 1 | |
| 1-May | Team debate 2 | |
| 3-May | Team debate 3 | |
| 8-May | Team debate 4 | |
| 10-May | Closing discussion | |
| | | |
| 16-May | 10:15-12:15AM: Potential make-up day for debate | |