

## COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL THINKING (COM 210)

*"It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it"*  
-Joseph Joubert

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**Instructor:** Shanna Carlson

**Online/In Person Office Hours:** T/Th 11a-12p  
or by appt

**Email:** Via Messages on Reggie Net

**Section:** 210.02

**Office:** Fell 056 (in the basement)

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### REQUIRED TEXTS

Freeley, A. J., & Steinberg, D. L. (2014). *Argumentation and debate: Critical thinking for reasoned decision making*. (13 ed.). Cengage Learning. ISBN: 978-1133311607

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Personal computer to download Verbatim onto (requires Microsoft Word to be installed already, which you can now get for free through the university) (<http://paperlessdebate.com/verbatim/SitePages/Home.aspx>)
- regular access to and a good working knowledge of a computer (tablet or smart phone is not sufficient) with dependable, high-speed Internet access a supported browser (Firefox is highly recommended); I SUGGEST YOU ONLY USE FIREFOX
- Web chat/conference capability (this means you will need some kind of webcam and microphone) Generally the one that is installed on laptops is sufficient.
- the ability to navigate the different lessons of the course website; send and receive email messages (within the ReggieNet learning management system and also your regularilstu.edu email); upload and download attachments in email and/or ReggieNet
- a number of software packages installed and available on the computer you will use, including the following:
  - **MS Word.** You should have student access to Office 360 as an ISU students (see help desk for assistance on this)
  - **Adobe Reader** This is a free program which allows you computer to view/read PDF files. It is standard install on departmental and personal computers; however, you can check for the most recent version on the Adobe Reader Download Page
  - **Quicktime.** Quicktime is a free program that allows you to listen to audio files or watch video files. You can download Quicktime from the Quicktime Download Page.
  - **Adobe Flash Player.** You download the free Flash Player from the Flash Player Download Page
  - **Java.** This should also be part of the standard install on your departmental machine, and is likely also installed on your personal computer. You can check for the latest update at the Java Download Page.

Please see the video, "[How to Succeed in Online Courses](#)" for more information.

- Legal Size Printer paper (8.5x14). You will need no more than 25pgs for the semester. You can buy these as single sheets from almost any print shop like Office Depot or PIP (located in the Bone Student Center). If you want to do arts and crafts and tape some 8.5x11 sheets of paper together you are allowed to do that as well.
- Pens that are 2 different colors
  - I recommend gel pens such as G2s .05 or Pentel EnerGel Pens (this will allow you to write the quickest when actually debating)

**CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:** Principles of critical thinking, argumentation, and advocacy and their expression in electronic, oral and written contexts.

### **COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL THINKING (COM 210) COURSE GOALS**

- 1) Students will hone their research and critical thinking skills
- 2) Students will become more critical consumers and producers of ideas and information (using analytical reasoning skills in the reception, collection, and presentation of ideas).
- 3) Students will enhance their ability to link claims together to form full arguments
- 4) Students will become more effective communicators in a democracy (demonstrating ethical communication, considering multiple perspectives on controversial issues, and managing conflict).

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

#### FORMAT

- All debate briefs are to be formatted using Verbatim and following the How-To video for those requirements
- All references are to be cited using **APA style**

WORKLOAD EXPECTATION: It is expected that you structure your time in a way that allows you to complete the work on time, I recommend you set aside a specific block of time (or multiple blocks of time) each day to accomplish the tasks necessary to stay caught up. It is expected that you will need to spend between 1 and 2 hours per day, 3 days a week for the 16-week duration of this course. As in any course, **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN LEARNING**. I can give you all the material and activities in the world, but you must engage with them. This is especially true for online courses.

You may face some technical difficulties along the way, but you should always have a backup plan (use another family computer or one in the library, for example) for gaining access to the necessary resources in order to be successful in this course. If you wait until the last minute to complete a task I will unlikely be able to assist you with your issue before the due date has passed. Finally, class members will be participating in a number of online discussions through ReggieNet and Flip Grid, and it is expected that you contribute your thoughts, insights, and comments there regularly and in a respectful manner (see Netiquette section below).

Main Assignments:

<b>INTRODUCTIONS</b>	Each student will be required to upload an introduction about themselves that includes their name, class (Soph, Jr., Senior), what they are majoring in, your preferred pronouns (she/he/they), and an interesting fact about themselves to Flip Grid (link is on Reggie Net).
<b>CHAPTER ASSIGNMENTS</b>	Each chapter of the text has key words and their definitions. This will be your daily assignment. I know that it seems like busy work, but doing these will prepare you for the midterm. You may not turn in these definitions after the assigned date. <b>Do not just type the exact definition from the book, turn it into your own words and synthesize the material.</b> These will be turned in online via Reggie Net. Each chapter will have a word document associated with it under Assignments on Reggienet. You will need to download the associated word document, fill out the definitions for the listed words, <b>save as a pdf file</b> and then upload to Reggienet by 11:59pm CST the Thursday the week the chapter is assigned. These will be your study guides for the midterm and the final! You are only harming yourself if you do not take the assignment seriously.
<b>PARTICIPATION</b>	Communication as Critical Thinking is a skills-based, developmental course, participation is essential to a positive learning experience. We will have weekly discussions on Flip Grid where you will be expected to upload your response to my prompt and then respond to two other student responses. Your initial post must be up by Wednesday at 11:59pm every week and your 2 responses must be up by Sunday at 11:59pm. Each week will be worth 15pts. If you do not upload an initial post by the Wednesday deadline you will lose an automatic 5pts for the week AND only be able to earn half credit for the responses. The reason for this grading system is because not posting your initial post makes it harder for others to get their 2 response posts done. <b>Please be courteous to your fellow classmates and meet the deadlines.</b>
<b>QUIZZES</b>	Throughout the semester there will be 6 quizzes, each worth 20 points. The quizzes will be over material covered in class. The lowest score will be dropped after all quizzes are taken. There will be a syllabus quiz worth 20pts, it WILL NOT count as one that can be dropped.

<p><b>EXAMS</b></p>	<p>There will be 2 exams. Exams will assess your understanding of debate and argumentation concepts and theories, as well as your application and integration abilities. Both exams will take place through the Testing Center. <b>You will need to schedule your session at-least 3-5 days prior to the exam deadline.</b> Spots can fill up very quickly in the Testing Center, as soon as I have submitted the test I will make you aware so that you can schedule a time to take it ASAP. Not being able to get a spot will not be accepted as a reason to take the test at a later date. <a href="#">CLICK HERE</a> for information on making your appointment and what you will need to bring with you to the appointment. If you live in an area that DOES NOT participate in the Testing Center services (see above link) then contact me and we will work out a time for you to take the test another way. I have also had students that have been overseas working during a testing period, if this is you please notify me ASAP so that we can also discuss an alternate time/way for you to take the test.</p>
<p><b>DEBATES</b></p>	<p>There will be 2 throughout the semester. You are REQUIRED to do BOTH debates in order to pass the class. Failure complete either debate will result in a failing grade of the class. In preparation for each debate you will be REQUIRED to mEet with me for 30 minutes to ensure that all your questions are answered and that you are well prepared for each debate. Failure to meet with me for either debate will result in a 30% reduction in your final debate score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Lincoln - Douglas debate: One on One debate over a specific resolution discussing philosophical values and concepts. (1AC - 3mins/CX - 2mins/1NC - 4mins/CX - 2mins/1AR - 3mins/1NR - 3mins/2AR - 2mins/Prep 2mins per person)</li> <li>b. Policy Debate: Two on Two team debate over a specific resolution discussing political implications of taking an action. (1AC-4mins/CX-2mins/1NC-5mins/CX-2mins/2AC-5mins/CX-2mins/2NC-5mins/CX-2mins/1NR-2mins/1AR-3mins/2NR-2mins/2AR-2mins)</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHAT IS DEBATE? ESSAY</b></p>	<p>You will need to write a 2pg essay that explores the question “What does debate mean to you?” You are expected to write a full essay (intro, body, conclusion) that explores what YOU think debate is. You may use no more than 2 resources for this assignment and any resources MUST be cited using APA (if you have APA questions PLEASE contact me so I can help you). This will be your first essay and will help me understand your writing capabilities and for you to understand my grading and expectations for essays. It will be worth 25pts. It will be due the first week of class.</p>

<b>ARGUMENT/REBUTTAL ESSAY</b>	<p>These two essays will be due throughout the semester. The argument essay will be a 2pg essay that responds to one of the approved topics on Reggie Net. You will be expected to use ACADEMIC research to support your position and provide a FULL argument that fulfills the Toulmin model. After this one is turned in and graded you will receive a classmate's essay (no name of course) and will be expected to write a rebuttal to the position they took. This means if they answer "Yes" to one of the prompts you have to make an argument for "No" to the <b>same</b> prompt. This assignment is meant to give you practice at writing an argument in essay form since the debates evaluate your ability to make an argument orally. More details will be provided on Reggie Net for each essay. Failure to turn in the Argument Essay will result in an automatic 0 for the rebuttal essay. Deadlines are very important in online classes, especially in regards to assignments that involve other students.</p>
<b>NEWS PODCAST JOURNAL</b>	<p>In order to encourage you to become more aware of local, national, and world current events we are going to do a podcast journal. To earn full points you will need to listen to a podcast for 14 CONSECUTIVE days and write a small journal entry each day. You will need to listen to one of the podcasts listed below (you can switch between them each day, but these are the only ones I will count for credit). In a word document give the date and then the name of the podcast you listened to, then in 3-5 sentences tell me about your favorite part or what you found to be most interesting from the segment. DO NOT just summarize the podcast, I want to know what you took away from the podcast and why that portion of the podcast stuck out to you. Most of these are 15-30 minutes long (some are longer). Once you have completed the journal in word, save it as a pdf and upload it to the Assignment on ReggieNet. You can turn it in before the due date, but it will not be accepted after the due date!</p> <p><b>Accessing the podcasts</b> (contact me if you have any issues)</p> <p>On your computer: Just do a google search and you should quickly find the podcast online and be able to stream it easily.</p> <p>Apple devices: There is an app available for free (<a href="https://www.apple.com/itunes/podcasts/fanfaq.html">https://www.apple.com/itunes/podcasts/fanfaq.html</a>)</p> <p>Androids: Download the free app Podcast Addict OR NPR One. Then search for the podcast and subscribe or search every time.</p> <p><b>Podcast Options:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BBC World Service</li> <li>NPR News Now</li> <li>Up First: NPR</li> <li>PRI's The World</li> <li>Global News Podcast</li> <li>This Morning with Gordon Deal</li> <li>World News Tonight with David Muir</li> </ul>

EXTRA CREDIT: Extra credit opportunities will arise throughout the semester and I will announce them as they become available. If you have an event or activity that you believe should count for extra credit, please talk with me about it and maybe we will make it available to the class (**I love your ideas and a lot of extra credit assignments have originated with student ideas**). These will be posted under announcements on our ReggieNet.

**ONGOING EXTRA CREDIT:**

**SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH POOL WEBPAGE:** Additionally, there will be a few extra credit opportunities for research participation. The extra credit points will be added to your final grade, and may not necessarily appear in the gradebook immediately upon your completion of the opportunity. There are no guarantees for extra credit, and it is each student's responsibility to be aware of and take advantage of such opportunities. You may receive extra credit for participating in any of the studies in the School of Communication's Research Pool. The Research Pool is updated as research studies are opened/closed, and it is your responsibility to access the Pool and be aware of available opportunities. The Research Pool can be accessed via:

**<https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/>**

For each research study you participate in, I will award 2 points of extra credit (up to 10 total points). After the final exam there will be no further opportunities for extra credit or to otherwise improve your grade.

\*Please also be aware that federal guidelines indicate that instructors offering extra credit for research participation must offer a reasonable alternative (such as a research paper) for students who want to earn extra credit but do not want to participate in a study.

## EVALUATION

Flip Grid.....	15pts/week assigned
LD Debate... ..	100pts
Policy Debate.....	200pts
Flows of Debates.....	TBD
Chp Assignments.....	80pts
Quizzes.....	100pts (6 total, 20pts each, lowest score dropped)
Mid Term.....	100pts
Final.....	100pts
Podcast Journal.....	80pts
What is Debate?.....	25pts
Argument/Rebuttal Essay.....	100pts (50pts each)
Activities.....	TBA
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>TBA</b>

The grading scale is a standard ten percentage point scale:

90-100% = A; 80%-89% = B; 70%-79% = C; 60-69% = D; below 60% = F

### **MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:**

**I am not here to trick you or to make you look foolish.** I want to help you in any way possible to learn the material presented in class and to teach you the basic skills that you will need to communicate in college and in the work force. This class is designed to improve your written and spoken ability to make a logical and complete argument.

Please do not hesitate to ask questions, or ask for help, in or out of class. (Unless there is a privacy issue at stake, in-class is often best, since your classmates may have the same questions or concerns that you do, and then you are helping them, too.) If you have any special needs that it would help for me to be aware of, please let me know.

## **COURSE POLICIES:**

### INSTRUCTOR CONTACT POLICY:

**Email:** Students should email me using the **messages** feature within our Reggnet course. I will try my best to respond to emails within 24 hours Monday to Thursday and 48 hours Friday to Sunday. That means if you email me on a Monday, you can expect a response from me no later than Tuesday. If you email me on Saturday, you can expect a response no later than Monday. I typically will not respond to emails after 8pm or before 10am.

**Online Office Hours:** I will hold office hours online via our ReggieNet "Chat Room" page. Chat Rooms are not private, so all messages sent and received in the Chat Room are visible to all members of the class. Students who wish to discuss private issues like grades or other concerns are encouraged to email me or stop by my physical office. If a student wishes to arrange a meeting to discuss things via a service like Skype/Zoom, that can easily be scheduled via email.

**PROBLEMS:** All work is expected on the date it is due. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** I will work with you if you have a legitimate reason for your absence (determined by me) AND arrangements have been made with me prior to the due date and time. I want to help you in any way possible but will not accept less than your full effort. Like most instructors, I am more understanding if you keep me informed: If you encounter problems, please let me know right away.

**NETIQUETTE:** Netiquette is online etiquette. It is important that all participants in online courses be aware of proper online behavior and respect each other. Ensure that you use appropriate language for an educational environment. This means that you need to 1) use complete sentences, 2) use spell check, 3) avoid slang and uncommon abbreviations, 4) avoid obscene and/or threatening language. Failure to follow these rules will result in a reduction in your participation grade, repeated offenses will result in a failing grade for the course. I will give you 1 warning before I begin reducing your participation points. 3 repeated offenses and you will be banned from online discussions, and if necessary from the debates (which will result in a failing grade for the course).

**CHEATING/PLAGIARISM:** Students are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the *Code of Student Conduct*. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and unacknowledged collaboration on speech topics and/or the presentation of someone else's work warrants plagiarism.

Students found to inadvertently commit acts of dishonesty will receive appropriate penalties specific to the assignment in question (up to and including a 0 on the assignment). Students found to commit intentional acts of dishonesty will receive a failing grade in the course and will be referred for appropriate disciplinary action through Community Rights and Responsibilities. If you have questions regarding this please click here:

[Academic Integrity](#).

**GRADE APPEALS:** If you disagree with a grade you have been given in this class, you have up to **ONE WEEK** after the assignment was returned to make an argument. In order to do this, **YOU MUST** submit a formal written complaint with a full argument arguing for the grade you believe you deserve. I will inform you of my decision within 48hrs of receiving your appeal. If it is a simple mathematical error please feel free to contact me without having to file an appeal. I have made mistakes before so please do not hesitate to discuss your grade with me, positive changes have been made in the past. 😊 Also note, if you make an appeal I will NEVER lower your grade, you can only move up or stay the same.

## STUDENT RESOURCES

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS: Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at [StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu](http://StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu).

Accommodation Examples: Extended Exam Times, Notetakers, Academic Aide, Modified Attendance Policies, etc

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES: Life at college can get very complicated. According to recent research, nearly 40% of college students are at-risk for developing generalized anxiety disorder and are less likely to seek help for it compared to other mental health issues. Students also sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience depression, and struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. However, many of these issues can be effectively addressed with a little help. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. Student Counseling Services is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. **The services are FREE and completely confidential. Find out more at [Counseling.IllinoisState.edu](http://Counseling.IllinoisState.edu) or by calling (309) 438-3655.**

CRISIS RESOURCES: There is a free walk-in crisis service provided by ISU Student Counseling Services. If you find yourself in a mental crisis of any kind please take advantage of this service. Student Counseling Services explains crisis services as “Much like a visit to the emergency room of a hospital, **crisis contacts occur the day that a student makes initial contact with us, and the contact takes priority over the student’s previously scheduled activities** (e.g., class, work, meetings). A counselor would meet with you to do an assessment of the circumstances surrounding your crisis, identify and implement strategies for dealing with the crisis, and make recommendations as to how to proceed. A follow-up appointment may be scheduled. At times you may have a brief wait if the counselor is meeting with another student.”

There is also a phone number that you can contact if you are uncomfortable seeking face-to-face interactions. According to Student Counseling Services **“If you have an emergency after our normal weekday business hours or on the weekend, please call the Student Counseling Services main number at (309) 438-3655. You will be given the option to press "2" to speak to a counselor immediately, or dial 1-855-256-2188. The counselor will provide information, support, referrals, and, if needed, will arrange for emergency services.”**

There are also national resources available to you:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Hopeline Network
- 1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)
- Text Telephone: 1-800-799-4TTY (1-800-799-4889)
- Military Veterans Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (Press 1)
- Suicide Hotline in Spanish: 1-888-628-9454
- LGBT Youth Suicide Hotline: 1-866-4-U-TREVOR
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 from anywhere **in the United States**, anytime, about any type of crisis. A live, trained Crisis Counselor receives the text and responds, all from our secure online platform. The volunteer Crisis Counselor will help you move from a hot moment to a cool moment.

Confidential Advisors: Free, 24/7 Confidential Advisors are available through Student Counseling Services. **Confidential Advisors provide emergency and ongoing support to survivors of sexual violence.** Confidential Advisors are staff specially trained to respond to students, explain their rights and options, and liase with necessary campus authorities as requested by the student. You may need your student ID information so have that ready when calling.

(309) 438-3655

Student Services Building Room 320

I am also here for you! If you desire assistance in using any of these services OR just want a familiar face please feel free to visit my office at any time. I have an open door policy, any time that I am working in my door will be open and you are MORE than welcome to visit.

REGGIENET ASSISTANCE: If you need help with ReggieNet, please contact the University Computer Help Desk at 309-438-4357 or helpdesk@ilstu.edu. There is a YouTube channel for Reggienet. [Click here](#) to watch quick how-to videos created by CTLT for quick assistance. Ensure you check **Tech Alerts** if you are having an issue, they update when there is a campus wide technical problem.

JULIA N. VISOR ACADEMIC CENTER: The Julia N. Visor Academic Center, a division of University College, provides the following free services for students:

- Free tutoring in a variety of academic subject areas, including support for many of the courses in the Inner Core of the General Education program.
- One – on - one writing assistance to anyone in the University community. Appointments can take place in the Visor Center or on Skype. **USE THIS RESOURCE!!!!!! I take writing VERY seriously, grammar matters in communication and argument creation.**
- Study skills assistance individually and in small groups, as well as study skills workshops, for students who want to improve their ability to achieve academic success.
- A variety of academic support programs targeted to help students achieve their full academic potential. The center is located at Vrooman 012 (between Manchester and Hewett dorms). They can be reached by phone at (309) 438 - 7100 or by visiting their website at [www.UniversityCollege.IllinoisState.edu/tutoring](http://www.UniversityCollege.IllinoisState.edu/tutoring)