CMST 2063
ARGUMENTATION AND DEBATE
FALL 2013

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TEX\textT:

\textit{“Only an open conflict of ideas and principles can produce any clarity.”} - Christopher Hitchens

\textbf{The Course:}

CMST 2063 is a course seeking to develop students' capability to construct, analyze and evaluate the competing claims which characterize civic discourse in a contingent world. In other words we seek to increase awareness of the methods of interaction demanded by an open society and acquire a wider range of strategies for dealing with the possibilities, pressures, and responsibilities offered therein. Following Protagoras and Isocrates, we hold that the ability to use language to address practical problems while furthering the core values of freedom, self-control, and virtue is a hallmark of liberal education and a required skill for maintenance of a free society. This course is informed by our confidence that an understanding of the basic precepts of argumentation and debate along with their application is fundamental to the maturation of civic merit in the individual as well as society as a whole.

\textbf{The Rules:}

1) Attendance and participation are both essential. You should come to class on time. Tardiness is becoming an increasingly annoying problem. If you are late, enter quietly to minimize the disruption. If you are late on presentation days, wait outside the door to avoid disrupting a presentation in progress. I will take roll. All absences after three will be penalized at the rate of three points each (NOTE: THIS IS A DEDUCTION). If any of these imperatives are beyond your abilities; DROP THE CLASS NOW!

2) All assignments must be completed on time. Late assignments will lose 20% from the earned point total per class period late. Moreover, assignments not completed on-time will be dealt with harshly. Due to scheduling problems inherent in this class, I will only entertain late assignments in the most unusual and most extreme circumstances. Mostly, I will not hear them at all. In other words, if you are going to be unable to be prompt: DROP THE CLASS NOW!

3) Make-up work is your responsibility. If you fail to make arrangements with me to make up a missed assignment for which you have a \textit{documented} excuse (see attendance above) within 24 hours of the assignment's due date you will receive a zero. I will not repeat lecture material -- see a classmate for missed notes.

4) You will be responsible for all material in the book, manual, and lectures. Additionally, mastery of in class assignments alone will not result in a top course grade. One must also demonstrate a superior appreciation for the body of theory that undergirds practice. If you feel that too much weight is placed on the exams; DROP THE CLASS NOW!

5) If you are taking this class under the illusion that it is an easy class; DROP THE CLASS NOW! NEVER approach me and say something like “I really need an A in this class because of my scholarship and my other classes are really hard and . . ..” This IS a hard class – in many ways much harder than a subject that provides tight formulas for which there are objectively correct answers. There will be NO extra credit.

6) \textit{ALWAYS REMEMBER: YOUR LACK OF PREPAREDNESS, YOUR PERSONAL PROBLEMS, AND YOUR SCHOLARSHIP ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AND YOURS ALONE. NONE CONSTITUTE A CRISIS FOR ME. MY OBLIGATION IS TO THE STUDENTS WHO ARE HERE, PREPARED, AND MOTIVATED. I REFUSE TO DIMINISH THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THE LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR.}
The Assignments:

With the exception of exams, assignments will mainly be presented in class, many with a group component. There will be four “informal assignments,” two “formal assignments,” and two exams. The informal and formal assignments are included in the course manual, but will be modified for class presentation. I will discuss the particulars of each assignment before it is due. The Mid-Term will consist of multiple choice questions and focus on understanding of the vocabulary of argumentation. The Final will include a similar component along with an essay element which will allow you to reflect on a core principle from the course as a whole.

Attendance is critical here (see the policy on attendance above in the Rules section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>POINT VALUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IA 1</td>
<td>(Free Speech Scavenger Hunt*) 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA 2</td>
<td>(Arresting Images) 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA 3</td>
<td>(If the Glove Does Not Fit*) 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA 4</td>
<td>(Preparatory Debates*) 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA 1</td>
<td>(Multi Genre/Media Argument) 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA 2</td>
<td>(Formal Debate*) 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>200</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Designates Group Assignment

Total 1000

The Grading Scale and Rationale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>LETTER</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>&gt;900</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Comprehensive mastery of subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>800-899</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Superior grasp of subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>700-799</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Typical grasp of subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>600-699</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Vague grasp of subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤599</td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>No grasp of subject matter and/or missing assignments and/or lack of effort.</td>
</tr>
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IMPORTANT NOTE:

Communication Studies departmental policy requires that students obtain critical class materials from Moodle through their PAWS accounts. Failure to do so could adversely affect an individual’s final grade. For information on your PAWS account contact the Computing Services Application Service Center at 578-0100 or use the PAWS link at www.lsu.edu.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations can be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letter, you must meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.
THE SCHEDULE (tentative)

WEEK 1
Introduction. Rhetoric and Argumentation: C.1
Manual Section One: Gifts from the Ancients

WEEK 2
Basics of Argumentation: C.2
Manual Section One, ctd.

WEEK 3
Propositions: C.3
IA 1

WEEK 4
Propositions, ctd.: C.4

WEEK 5
Propositions, ctd
IA 2

WEEK 6
Reasoning and the Toulmin Model: C.5
Manual Section Two: Modern Models for Arg.

WEEK 7
Evidence and Proof: C:6
IA 3

WEEK 8
Forms of Argument: C.7

MID-TERM EXAM

WEEK 9
Fallacies: C.8

WEEK 10
IA 4: Appendix A
Manual Section 3: A Focus on Debate Application

WEEK 11
Fact: C.9

WEEK 12
Value: C.10
FA 1

WEEK 13
Policy: C.11

WEEK 14
FA 2

WEEK 15
FA 2

WEEK 16
Final Exam*

*University policy requires that this exam be given during the scheduled final exam period. Keep this imperative in mind when scheduling end-of-semester plans.