

## SPCH 9 – Argumentation: Analysis of Oral & Written Communication

**Instructor:** Brandon Gainer  
**Times:** Fully Online Course

**Prerequisites:** ENG 1A/1AH

Fulfills IGETC Area 1B: Critical Thinking /English Composition  
 Fulfills CSU GE Area A3: Critical Thinking



### Instructor Contact Info

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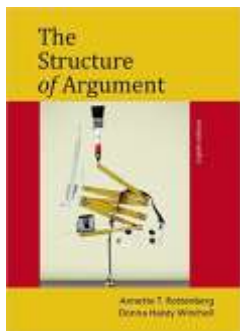
### Office Hours

**Wed.:** 2:00-3:25 [Online;  
 via Canvas]

**Thurs.:** 2:30-4:00pm [MLC  
 210]  
 6:30-7:30 PM [F31E]

### Course Materials

Below is the primary text  
 for the course



Rottenberg, A.T. &  
 Winchell, D.H. *The Structure  
 of Argument* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.)

### Course Overview

Welcome to SPCH 9! This course studies argumentation and critical thinking in the context of reading, discussion, & writing. We will be studying argumentation as a means of testing the validity of viewpoints through inquiry and reasoning. Ultimately, we aim to establish both reasonable and defensible arguments while addressing and resolving differences.

This is not a course in oral communication (SPCH 1) or a debate course (SPCH 8). While we incorporate aspects from both classes and will examine verbal arguments, we do focus primarily on writing. My hope is that you leave this class a much stronger and focused writer than you were when you entered.

### SPCH 9 Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Apply the principles of logic and sound reasoning to argumentative writing and speaking
2. Research and evaluate information to develop informed, ethical arguments with valid reasons and evidence.
3. Analyze issues from diverse perspectives and communicate confidently and responsibly about global, cultural, social and environmental issues.
4. Formulate strategies for writing a progression of well-organized critical essays that demonstrate increasingly complex writing and critical thinking.
5. Discuss and debate views on controversial issues using appropriate argumentation methods and structures

### Succeeding in SPCH 9

- ✓ Give yourself ample time to complete assignments: Writing a paper at the last minute is rarely a good idea.
- ✓ Make use of on campus tutoring such as the WRC if you struggle with writing.
- ✓ When possible, have someone else read over your paper; A second set of eyes can catch something that you missed.
- ✓ Don't obsess over writing things "perfectly" – there are many approaches to creating a strong argument and paper.
- ✓ Be an active participant online! Posting a comment can often spark ideas or discussion that helps build community.

## Course Policies:

### **A Foreword Regarding Technology**

Online courses can be a challenge for many, thus I will do what I can to ease the process and resolve any issues within my control (assignments not showing up, being unable to access documents, etc.). Regardless, discomfort or unfamiliarity with technology, or technical difficulties (software, hardware, or Wi-Fi issues) will not be an acceptable excuse for late or incomplete work in this course. If you experience issues with Canvas, contact their technical support at 1-844-592-2207.

### **How the Course Works**

Although this is an online course, it is not to be mistaken for a correspondence course (where all materials are provided and you have until the end of the term to complete them). This course requires you to log on regularly and complete assignments, discussions and other materials. While I have set up assignments each day, you do have the flexibility to work ahead as long as you complete items by the due dates.

**Attendance:** Failure to log in and complete the assignments during the first week of the session will result in being dropped from the course. As the quarter progresses, more than two weeks of inactivity (not responding to discussion posts or logging in) may result in being dropped from the course.

**Assignment Help:** If you are unclear on the expectations of an assignment, don't hesitate to ask! If you need an in-depth explanation, it's best to schedule an appointment during office hours to discuss it. However, keep in mind that I will not proofread or edit an assignment for you. Additionally, I do not respond to any e-mail inquiries regarding how to "do" an assignment within 24 hours of its due date: By that point, I'm expecting you to utilize your critical thinking skills and have confidence in your ability to figure it out.

**Contacting the Instructor:** I am accessible via e-mail, office hours, or by phone. Remembering the following will ensure smooth communication between both of us:

- Putting your name, the course and its time helps me recognize your e-mail faster.
- After 8 PM on weekdays, I generally do not answer e-mails. I typically **won't** respond over the weekend.
- If I haven't responded to your e-mail within 24 hours (on a weekday) feel free to give me a nudge

**Submitting Assignments:** All assignments, unless specified otherwise, will be submitted through Canvas and are generally due by 11:59 PST on the respective date (see the course calendar for specific deadlines). Also:

- For assignments requiring a file submission, please only use .doc, .docx, or .rtf format: I will not accept the assignment otherwise.
- Unless I explicitly request it, please do not e-mail me an assignment.
- Any edits to an assignment done after the due date will count as a late submission.

**Late Work:** Late work is penalized up to 50% after the first day and not accepted beyond that. Additionally, late submissions receive significantly less, or no feedback.

**Academic Honesty:** Instances of academic misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, cheating, submitting work from another course) will result in disciplinary action which may include recommendation for dismissal and a failing course grade. Further information on the college's academic integrity policy can be found [here](#).

**Accommodations:** Please notify me as early as possible in the term to discuss course accommodations needed due to medical or other conditions.

## Student Resources

- [Writing & Reading Center](#)  
Half-hour and drop-in sessions for help on essays
- [Smart Thinking](#)  
For practice in presentation skills

### Assignment List

Guidelines for each assignment will be posted online via Canvas.

Category	Assignment Name	Point Total
<b>Essays</b>	Essay #1 - Writer Identity	25
	Essay #2 - Societal Issue	50
	Essay #3 – Issue Analysis	75
	Essay #4 – Policy Issue	100
	Essay #5 – Opposing Viewpoints	30
<b>Online Postings</b>	Weekly Discussion Postings	180
<b>Exercises</b>	Various Writing Exercises	40
<b>Total</b>		<b>500 points</b>

Point Scale
A = 500-470
<b>A-</b> = 469-450
<b>B+</b> = 449-435
<b>B</b> = 434-420
<b>B-</b> = 419-400
<b>C+</b> = 399-385
<b>C</b> = 384-350
<b>D+</b> = 349-335
<b>D</b> = 334-320
<b>D-</b> = 319-300
<b>F</b> = 299 and below

### Assignment Revisions

You will have the opportunity to revise & resubmit certain assignments for a higher grade if you are displeased with the score as long as the following criteria are met:

- The original draft was submitted on time.
- You submitted a **complete** draft.
- You received a **passing** grade (D or better) on the assignment.
- You schedule an appointment with the WRC (and submit proof) prior to submitting the revision.

### Regarding Assignments

- There are a total of 220 points worth of discussions in the course. However, only the first 180 are calculated into your final grade: This means that you can miss roughly 3-4 discussions without your final grade being affected.
- Assignments are generally due on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays by 11:59. Unfortunately, accommodating everyone's schedule in an online course is impossible.
- Any extra credit opportunities during the quarter will be announced on Canvas. Please, however, do *\*not\** constantly ask about them. The easiest way to get a good grade in this course is to stay on top of your work and take advantage of revision opportunities, rather than turn in sub-par work and hope extra credit is offered.

## Tentative Course Calendar

Any changes to topics, readings, and/or due dates will be posted in the news forum on Canvas.

Date	Topics & Readings	Assignment(s) due
<b>Week 1</b> 4/10 - 4/14	Course Orientation & Overview Analyzing Writing: Perspectives & Myths Critical Thinking: Why it matters.	<b>4/14:</b> Student Info Sheet; Icebreaker Forum Defining Critical Thinking Writing Rules: Myth or Not?
<b>Week 2</b> 4/17 - 4/21	Argumentation Structure ( <b>Chapters 1-2</b> ) Multimodal Arguments ( <b>Chapter 3</b> )	<b>4/17: Essay #1</b> <b>4/19: Initial Posts:</b> Analyzing Arguments; Rhetoric & Advertising in Media; Iconic Images <b>4/21: Responses:</b> Analyzing Arguments; Rhetoric & Advertising in Media; Iconic Images
<b>Week 3</b> 4/24 - 4/28	Research & Source Documentation ( <b>Chapters 11 &amp; 13</b> )	<b>4/26: Initial Post:</b> Writing Workshop #1 <b>4/28: Responses:</b> Writing Workshop #1
<b>Week 4</b> 5/1 - 5/5	Analyzing & Supporting Claims ( <b>Chapters 5 &amp; 6</b> ) Tests of Evidence	<b>5/1: Essay #2</b> <b>5/3: Initial Post:</b> Analyzing Claims <b>5/5: Responses:</b> Analyzing Claims
<b>Week 5</b> 5/8 - 5/12	Understanding Warrants ( <b>Chapter 7</b> )	<b>5/10:</b> Practice with Warrants <b>5/12:</b> Understanding Warrants <b>Annotated Bibliography</b>
<b>Week 6</b> 5/15 - 5/19	Clarifying your Argument ( <b>Chapter 8</b> ) Logical Fallacies ( <b>Chapter 10, p.384</b> )	<b>5/17:</b> Fallacies in your Life <b>Initial Post:</b> Writing Workshop #2  <b>5/19:</b> Clarifying Key Terms <b>Responses:</b> Writing Workshop #2
<b>Week 7</b> 5/22 - 5/26	Logic & Reasoning ( <b>Chapter 10</b> )	<b>5/22: Essay #3</b> <b>5/24: Initial Post:</b> Reasoning Exercise #1 <b>5/26: Response:</b> Reasoning Exercise #1  Reasoning Exercise #2
<b>Week 8</b> 5/29 - 6/2	Language & Persuasion ( <b>Chapter 9</b> )	<b>5/31: Initial Posts:</b> Practice with Language <b>6/2: Responses:</b> Practice with Language
<b>Week 9</b> 6/5 - 6/9	Drafting & Revising Arguments ( <b>Chapter 12</b> )	Online Debates
<b>Week 10</b> 6/12 - 6/16	<b>Conferences &amp; Finals Preparation</b>	<b>6/14: Policy Essay Framework</b> <b>Initial Post: Writing Workshop #3</b> <b>6/16: Responses: Writing Workshop #3</b>
<b>Week 11</b> 6/19 - 6/23	Responding to Arguments ( <b>Chapter 4</b> )	<b>6/21: Essay #4</b> <b>6/23: Responses:</b> Policy Rebuttal
<b>Finals</b>	<b>Final Exam Period</b>	<b>6/27: Essay #5</b>