



Basic Course Information

Semester:	Winter 2026	Instructor Name:	Patrick Kjellander
Course Title & #:	COMM 180 – Oral Argumentation and Debate	Email:	patrick.kjellander@imperial.edu
CRN #:	15156	Webpage (optional):	
Classroom:	N/A	Office #:	https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/4710979225
Class Dates:	01/05/26 – 02/04/26	Office Hours:	Mon/Wed 1-3 PM or via appointment
Class Days:	N/A	Office Phone #:	
Class Times:	N/A	Emergency Contact:	
Units:	3	Class Format/Modality:	Online Asynchronous

Course Description

An introduction to debate with an emphasis on the creation, critique, and refutation of oral arguments involving current social, political, and legal issues. (C-ID: COMM 120) (CSU/UC)

Course Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s)

N/A

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

1. Persuasively create, refute, and support oral arguments in English with sensitivity to audience, context, and setting
2. Employ critical thinking to evaluate the relevance, accuracy, and credibility of supporting evidence
3. Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal delivery techniques while presenting oral arguments and supporting evidence

Optional Textbook

Freely, Austen; Steinberg, David. 2013. *Argumentation and Debate*. 13th Cengage. ISBN: 978-1133311607

Accessibility Statement

Imperial Valley College is committed to providing accessible learning experiences for all students, regardless of course modality. Every effort has been made to ensure that this course complies with all state and federal accessibility regulations, including Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. However, if you encounter any content that is not accessible, please contact your instructor or the area dean for assistance. If you have specific accommodations through **DSPS**, contact them for additional assistance.

We are here to support you and ensure that you have equal access to all course materials.

Updated 11/2024



Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

This is a debate course. Therefore, completing the assigned debate speeches is **MANDATORY**. A total of two speeches (Debate 1 and 2) must be completed to pass the class. This class will also have a variety of lectures, quizzes, discussions, and tests. For a complete list and point values, see the latest information on Canvas.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal delivery skills while managing speaking anxiety in a variety of faculty-supervised and faculty-evaluated oral presentations in the English language.
2. Compose and deliver sound and compelling oral arguments tailored to diverse audiences in a variety of settings and contexts, demonstrating rhetorical sensitivity to equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility.
3. Apply rhetorical strategies and principles of logic to analyze and evaluate historical and contemporary public discourse.
4. Refine the use of ethos, pathos, and logos (i.e., the three Aristotelian appeals) while applying rhetorical organizational strategies to create and arrange oral arguments in the English language.
5. Evaluate the relevance and reliability of primary and secondary sources; skillfully select, summarize, and employ different types of evidence to support arguments in oral debate.
6. Critically listen to classmates' oral arguments and provide constructive feedback in the English language.
7. Demonstrate ethical communication strategies when preparing and participating in live oral presentations and debates, employing honesty, accuracy, active listening, credible sources, unbiased terminology, and sound reasoning while avoiding condescension, distortion of information, use of fallacies, and degrading and/or intimidating language.

Course Grading Based on Course Objectives

Final Grades: Your final grade in class will be determined based on how many points you have earned on all the assignments combined. **However, if you do not complete the assigned mandatory debate speeches, you will not pass the class, even if you scored above a certain percentage.** The grade breakdown is as follows:

A=90% - 100%

B=80% - 89%

C=70% - 79%

D=60% - 69%

F=below 60%

Financial Aid

Your Grades Matter! To continue to receive financial aid, you must meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirement. Making SAP means that you are maintaining a 2.0 GPA, you have successfully completed 67% of your coursework, and you will graduate on time. If you do not maintain SAP, you may lose your financial aid. If you have questions, please contact financial aid at finaid@imperial.edu.

IVC Student Resources

IVC wants you to be successful in all aspects of your education. For help, resources, services, and an explanation of policies, visit <http://www.imperial.edu/studentresources> or click the heart icon in Canvas.



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Course Policies

Attendance/Drop Policy: It is the student's responsibility to drop all classes which they are no longer attending. I may withdraw a student from the class after the add/drop deadline for excessive absences. Excessive absence is reached if you are absent for more than two consecutive weeks OR missing two consecutive modules and corresponding assignments within said modules, without communication. Students who remain enrolled in the class past the withdrawal deadline will receive a letter grade (A, B, C, D, or F).

Late Work Policy: Any assignment submitted after the due date published on Canvas will be considered late. Should you submit an assignment late, your final grade on the assignment will be penalized by 10%. After that, late work will be penalized at an additional 10% per day. Late work will only be accepted up to 10 days from the day it is due. Only emergencies are acceptable exceptions to this rule.

Artificial Intelligence – AI policy:

IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism **unless** you have been instructed to use AI by your instructor. In case of any uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification. In my class, you will **NOT** be instructed to use AI. This means that you should **NOT** use it to write your speeches/discussions, and you should **NOT** use it to conduct research, as it is unreliable and does not demonstrate your research or critical thinking skills.

Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

Module	Topic	Assignments
1	Introductions + Syllabus	Ice-Breaker Discussion + Syllabus Quiz
2	Goals, Skills, and Functions of Argumentation	Discussion + Quiz
3	The Elements of Arguments	Discussion + Quiz
4	Ethics	Quiz
5	Locating and Evaluating Evidence	Quiz
6	Listening	Discussion + Quiz
7	Midterm	Midterm
8	Fallacies and Appeals	Discussion + Quiz
9	Speech Delivery	Quiz
10	Methods of Persuasion	Topic Selection + Quiz
11	Debate 1	Debate 1 Speech Video
12	Peer Feedback	Discussion
13	Debate 2	Debate 2 Speech Video
14	Peer Feedback	Discussion
15	Critical Thinking	Discussion + Quiz
16	Final Exam	Final Exam
17	Extra Credit	Extra Credit Discussion (Optional)