



Semester:	Fall 2025	Instructor Name:	Deborah Zipnick, MMC, JD
Course Title & #:	COMM 180 Argumentation & Debate	Email:	deborah.zipnick@imperial.edu
CRN #:	11168, 10517, 11167		
Classroom:	zoom	Office #:	virtual
Class Dates:	8/11–12/6	Office Hours:	Fridays by appointment
Class Days:	T/R for 11168, T for 10517, and R for 11167	Office Phone #:	n/a, please message through Canvas
Class Times:	1:00p – 2:25p (11168), 8a-11:10am (10517) and 6:30p-9:40p (11167)		
Units:	3	Class Format/Modality:	synchronous

Course Description

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

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

None.

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. write a case for an argumentative debate;
2. write and submit five properly worded debate propositions;
3. use logos to support their arguments during the debate process.

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.



Textbook

[https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Communication/Argument_and_Debate/Arguing_Using_Critical_Thinking_\(Martenev\)](https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Communication/Argument_and_Debate/Arguing_Using_Critical_Thinking_(Martenev))

Additional Resources:

1. John Meany and Kate Shuster. 2003. *On That Point! An Introduction to Parliamentary Debate. Discipline Classic International Debate Education Association*. ISBN: 978-0972054119 PDF Version: <https://tinyurl.com/On-That-Point> to prepare for quizzes, prepare for debates, and participate in lecture/discussions.
2. OER Textbook: Various. 2023. The Debatatabase Book. International Debate Education Association. URL: <https://idebate.net/resources/debatabase> for debate preparation.
3. Britannica ProCon: <https://www.procon.org/> for debate preparation.

Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

Lecture, discussion, group work, debates, debate cases/position papers, critiques of debates, homework.

Course Grading Based on Course Objectives

Debates 60%

Debate Preparation (group work, homework, assignments) 20%

Debate Critiques and Participation in class activities 20%

Academic Honesty (Artificial Intelligence -AI)

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 do so 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. Students should not use AI or copy and paste info from the internet for this class.

Course Policies

Attendance/Drop Policy: A student who fails to attend the first class is automatically dropped from the course. Successful students attend every class session. It is the student's responsibility to drop all classes they are no longer attending. However, a student may be withdrawn after the add/drop deadline due to excessive absences. Students who remain enrolled in a class beyond the published withdrawal deadline, will receive an evaluative letter grade in this class (A, B, C, D, 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 5 days from the day it is due for a maximum 50% deduction. **Only emergencies are acceptable exceptions to this rule.**

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.



Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

Week	Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic	Readings/ Due Dates
Week 1	Syllabus and expectations	Chapter 1
Week 2	Introduction to Debate	Chapter 2
Week 3	Taking Notes and Topic Interpretation	Chapter 3
Week 4	Valuing your strengths	Chapter 4
Week 5	Research and Evidence	Chapter 5
Week 6	Opposition Strategy Points of Information	Chapter 6
Week 7	Debate 1	Chapter 7
Week 8	Debate 2	Chapter 8
Week 9	Debate 3	Chapter 9
Week 10	Debate 4	Chapter 10

Week 11	Debate 5	Chapter 11
Week 12	Debate 6	Chapter 12
Week 13	Debate 7	
Week 14	Debate 8	
Week 15	Review	Prepare for final
Week 16	Final	
	Check your grades!	

*****Subject to change without prior notice*****