SAGRADO
Universidad del Sagrado Corazón

SYLLABUS

TITLE: The Power of Arguments

CODE: GCM 201

PREREQUISITE: GCM 112, GCM 102

CREDITS: 3 credits | 45 hours contact | 15 hours Lab | 1 term

DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on developing advanced argumentative skills by exploring, constructing, analyzing, and presenting compelling arguments in both oral and written contexts. Through the reading and critical analysis of argumentative texts, debates, and essays, students will learn to identify fallacies, evaluate the logic of arguments, and apply persuasive strategies. With a practical approach, the course fosters effective communication, idea organization, and the construction of solid arguments tailored to diverse audiences and contexts. The integrated Language Laboratory reinforces these skills through practical exercises in writing, grammatical accuracy, and oral expression. By the end of the course, students are expected to achieve at least a **C1 proficiency level** (CEFR), demonstrating their ability to communicate effectively in complex and professional scenarios.

JUSTIFICATION

This course develops students' ability to construct, analyze, and present arguments effectively, a crucial skill in academic and professional environments. The integration of the Language Laboratory ensures the practical application of writing and speaking skills, preparing students to achieve C1 proficiency and excel in diverse communication contexts.

COMPETENCES

The course develops in the student the following competencies:

- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Exploration & Investigation

OBJECTIVES

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

1. Apply rhetorical principles to enhance communication in contemporary public and written contexts.
2. Identify and analyze the essential components of arguments.
3. Differentiate between arguments, debates, and opinions to ensure clarity in discourse.
4. Develop thesis statements for speeches and essays, supporting them with relevant and credible evidence.
5. Demonstrate assertive communication skills in diverse and inclusive settings.
6. Articulate and defend arguments in discussions on contemporary social and political issues.
7. Progress to a C-1 level of language proficiency in English, integrating reading, writing, and speaking skills.

CONTENT

I. The Power of Arguments
   A. What is the argument?
      1. Definitions and key components of an argument**
      2. The role of arguments in communication
      3. Differentiating arguments, debates, and opinions
   B. The nature of assertiveness and persuasion**
      1. What does it mean to be assertive?
      2. What does it mean to be persuasive?
   C. Arguments and Society: Expanding Perspectives in Public Discourse
      1. Exploring complex social issues in 21st-century discussions
      2. Contemporary forums for debate and argumentation (e.g., social media, town halls) as platforms for diverse viewpoints and participation

II. The Principles of Argumentation
   A. Logical, dialectical, and rhetorical approaches
      1. Classical rhetorical principles (ethos, pathos, logos)**
      2. Logical reasoning and dialectics
   B. The purpose of argumentation

1. The evolution of argumentation: From the Classics to “alternative facts”
2. Why argumentation matters in contemporary discourse

C. Types of fallacies**
1. Identifying and analyzing common logical fallacies
2. Avoiding fallacies in constructing arguments

III. Constructing and Evaluating Arguments
A. The origins of claims
1. Premises and biases
a. Observation
b. Facts
c. Inferences
d. Assumptions
e. Opinions

B. Evaluating and challenging claims
1. Critical thinking in argumentation**
2. Developing and responding to counterarguments

C. Supporting claims with evidence
1. Types of evidence: Facts, statistics, examples**
a. Evaluating credibility and relevance of sources

D. Crafting thesis statements
1. Characteristics of effective thesis statements**
2. Aligning thesis statements with evidence

IV. The Role of Language in Constructing Arguments
A. Fundamentals of language in argumentation
1. Semiotics: The signifier and the signified
2. Context and its impact on communication

B. Language and the construction of meaning
1. How arguments shape meaning
2. How meaning influences arguments
3. Argumentative knowledge construction

C. Expressing arguments effectively
1. Oral communication**
a. Delivery techniques: Tone, pacing, and audience engagement
b. Adapting arguments to diverse audiences

2. Written communication
a. Structuring arguments in essays and papers
b. Refining clarity and style**

Note: *The Language Laboratory is fully integrated into this course to enhance students' mastery of the technical aspects of language use. Lab activities focus on improving grammar accuracy, vocabulary development, and clarity in both oral and written communication. These sessions are designed to reinforce the skills needed for constructing and presenting effective arguments. Topics where the lab will provide additional focus are marked with* ***two asterisks*** *** in the course content outline. Participation in the lab is mandatory and contributes to the overall course grade, supporting the application of theoretical concepts through practical exercises.*

METHODOLOGY

The following strategies of the active learning methodology are recommended:

- Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)
- Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)
- Content-Based Instruction (CBI)
- Coteaching
- Flipped Classroom
- Cooperative Learning
- Blended Learning
- Process Writing Approach

EVALUATION

Compositions	25%
Oral presentations	25%
Immersion experience	30%
Proficiency Test (Final)	20%
Total	100%

LEARNING ASSESSMENT

Assessment in this course is designed to evaluate students' development of bilingual academic communication skills in English and Spanish, focusing on progressing toward level C1 proficiency in English. At the end of the semester, students will take a **Language Proficiency Test** to measure their reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities in the target language (English). A **minimum score equivalent to level C1** is required to demonstrate proficiency and meet the course objectives successfully. **This test requires**

students to have a valid government-issued (Real-ID, Licence, or Passport) in order to complete the test.

Additionally, the **Institutional Assessment Rubric** will be applied to two key activities in the course to ensure alignment with academic standards and provide comprehensive feedback on students' performance. Regular participation in lab-integrated activities will prepare students for these assessments.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acker, J. (2019). Talking About Gender, Race and Class: Bringing Capitalism Back In: An Outline of a Preliminary Argument. *Fast Capitalism*, *2*(2).

Blair, J. A. (2012). The rhetoric of visual arguments. In *Defining visual rhetorics* (pp. 53-74). Routledge. http://comphacker.org/pdfs/335/__Defining_Visual_Rhetorics.pdf#page=54

Carter, P., & Jackson, N. (2004). For the sake of argument: Towards an understanding of rhetoric as process. *Journal of management Studies*, *41*(3), 469-491. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2004.00441.x

Freeley, A. J. & Steinberg, D. L. Argumentation and Debate: Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making, Twelfth Edition CEINAGE http://staff.uny.ac.id/sites/default/files/pendidikan/Rachmat%20Nurcahyo,%20SS,%20M.A./__Argumentation_and_Debate__Critical_Thinking_for Reasoned_Deci sion_Making.pdf

Kuzborska, I. (2019). Rhetorical Reading for Writing Strategies. *Journal of ELT Research*, 1-7.

Sánchez, I. M., & Villarreal, J. P. M. (2019). Double-click Rhetoric: Rhetorical Strategies of Communication in the Digital Context. *" Res Rhetorica"*, *6*(1).https://www.resrhetorica.com/index.php/RR/article/view/334

Find more information resources related to the course topics on the library page http://biblioteca.sagrado.edu/

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

To obtain detailed information on the process and the required documentation, you must visit the corresponding office. To guarantee equal conditions, in compliance with the ADA (1990) and the Rehabilitation Act (1973), as amended, all students who need reasonable accommodation services or special assistance must complete the process established by the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Universidad del Sagrado Corazón to take courses with or without academic credit. A lack of academic integrity is any act or omission that does not demonstrate the honesty, transparency, and responsibility that should characterize all academic activity. Any student who fails to comply with the Honesty, Fraud, and Plagiarism Policy is exposed to the following sanctions: receive a grade of zero in the evaluation and/or repetition of the assignment in the seminar, a grade of F (*) in the seminar, suspension, or expulsion as established in the Academic Integrity Policy effective in November 2022.

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