

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

**Instructor:** Brandon Gainer  
**Location & Times:** MLC110; 1:30-3:45 PM; Wednesday  
**TBA Hour:** 1:30-3:45 PM (Monday)  
**Office Hours:** 4:00-5:30 PM; Tuesday/Wednesday

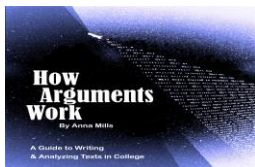
**Prerequisites:** ENG 1A/1AH  
 Fulfills IGETC Area 1B & CSU GE Area A3



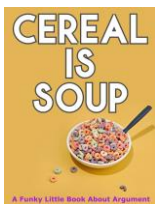
## Instructor Contact Info

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 Office: F31-E

## Course Materials



**Mills, A. (2022) *How Arguments Work – A Guide to Writing & Analyzing Texts in College***



**Pribe, S. (2022) *Cereal is Soup: A Funky Little Book About Argument***

**Van Cleave, M.J. *Introduction to Logic & Critical Thinking***

These books are free OER resources and accessible online via Canvas.

## Course Overview

Welcome to COMM 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 (COMM 1) or a debate course (COMM 8). While we incorporate aspects from both classes and will examine verbal arguments, we do focus primarily on writing. Thus, while I hope that you do gain some practice in your speaking skills, my hope is that you leave this class a much stronger and focused writer than you were when you entered.

## COMM 9 Student Learning Outcomes

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

1. Critically analyze the logic of arguments.
2. Write a progression of well-organized critical essays that demonstrate increasingly complex writing and critical thought.
3. Deconstruct, examine, and confidently debate contemporary, socially relevant issues through development and presentation of arguments.
4. Find, evaluate and cite sources in writing and presentations using appropriate documentation format.

## Succeeding in COMM 9

- ✓ Give yourself ample time to complete assignments: Writing an essay at the last minute typically causes careless errors!
- ✓ Make use of campus tutoring services (WRC or Online tutoring).
- ✓ 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 essay.
- ✓ Show up to class! Sometimes, an in class discussion or comment can spark an idea you would not have had otherwise.

## Course Policies:

### Course Modality, Participation, & Attendance

As a hybrid course, half of our instructional time is online. This means that certain components of our class (instructional video and content; quizzes; additional discussion; etc.) are conducted through Canvas. Our on site time will be focused more on learning engagements, peer collaborations and activities that function better in person. Given that we only meet once a week, missing a single class is significant thus exceeding **2** absences on site may result in being dropped from the course. Missing the first class meeting without notice prior to the first meeting may also result in being dropped from the course.

Even though this is not a fully online class you'll still need some familiarity and knowledge of Canvas. I'll do my best to resolve issues I have control over (e.g. broken links; content page issues), but discomfort or unfamiliarity with technology, as well as repeated technical difficulties will not be accepted as a justification for late or incomplete work. If you experience issues with Canvas, then make use of their technical support by utilizing the "Help" button found in the global navigation.

**Time Commitment:** According to our college's web page on [credits and load limitations](#) the formula is that each unit of a class equals one hour is with an additional 2 hours of outside preparation for every unit. So for a 5 unit class, that's 15 hours total (hence why "12 units" is considered "full time"). I'll make sure that the work you're doing in this class is not merely "busy work". I also acknowledge that you have commitments outside of class and will work towards helping you succeed. Regardless, please plan your time appropriately.

**Contacting the Instructor:** My campus e-mail or messaging me through Canvas (inbox or Pronto) are the quickest ways to reach me, but you may also visit during office hours, or call my office line. When sending an e-mail, the following will ensure smooth communication between both of us:

- Please put your **name, the course** and its **time** in the subject line (e.g. "Brandon Gainer – COMM 9). Since I receive many e-mails per day, this will make it easier to respond more quickly to you.
- After 6:00 PM on weekdays, I generally do not answer e-mails. I do not respond on the weekends.
- If my office hours don't work for you, still reach out: We might be able to coordinate an alternate time.

**Submitting Assignments:** All assignments, unless specified otherwise, will be submitted through Canvas

- For assignments requiring a file submission, please only use **.doc**, **.docx**, **.pdf** or **.rff** format: I will not accept the assignment otherwise. If I cannot open the file, it does not count as being submitted.
- Please do not bring me a hard copy of an assignment or e-mail it unless I request so specifically.
- Assignments are usually due on Wednesdays and Saturdays, either at 1:30 PM or 11:59 PM PST.
- I usually default to the course calendar in the syllabus; if I make a mistake and there's an inconsistency between it and the Canvas calendar, then typically, I'll pick the later date.

**Late Work:** Assignments may be submitted up to 24 hours **after** the due date, albeit with a 25% deduction from the final score and reduced (or no) feedback). Beyond 24 hours, the assignment receives a 0 unless you schedule a time to meet with me during office hours to discuss your circumstances and make a case. Such instances, however, remain at the discretion of the instructor (meaning I can still say no even with an explanation) and must be initiated within **5 days** of the missed assignment.

**Academic Honesty:** Instances of academic misconduct will result in disciplinary action, which can include receiving a 0 on the assignment, or a recommendation for dismissal from the course. This includes, but is not limited to: **plagiarism**, **submitting work from a previous course**, **submitting work written by an outside party**, or **misrepresenting facts to receive a changed grade**, etc. Further information on the college's academic integrity policy can be found [on De Anza's website](#)..

**Accommodations:** If you are eligible for accommodations by Disability Support Services (DSPS), please follow up to ensure that your accommodations have been authorized for the current quarter. If you are not registered with DSPS and need accommodations, please go to the DSPS office in the Registration & Student Services Building (RSS) - Room 141 for information on eligibility and how to receive support services. You can also go online to their website for additional information: [Disability Support Services and Programs](#). for additional information.

## Assignments

Guidelines for each assignment will be posted online via Canvas. Below is a general description of each assignment category that you'll be assessed on throughout the term, as well as how it's weighted. If any assignment guidelines are unclear then don't hesitate to ask for clarification! If you need an in-depth explanation, then scheduling an appointment to talk live will work best. While I'm glad to answer essay related questions, I will not **proofread, edit, or substantially review** drafts of major essays before submission (the campus tutoring services work best for that).

**Essays [50%]:** This class is required to have students write a minimum of 6000 words in order for it to articulate for transfer. Your progress here is measured primarily through a series of research essays and activities meant to supplement and build you up to them. You'll have the freedom to choose your topic so long as you can connect it to a socially relevant topic and audience. You will be allowed to revise select essays upon meeting certain criteria specified on Canvas.

**Discussions [15%]:** These are based on readings, content posted on Canvas, or an extension of our in-class activities. The discussions may also sometimes pre-empt an on site class activity or discussion. I primarily grade these on **completion** (did you address the criteria) and **coherence** (is it relatively free of typos and grammatical errors). Discussions will usually have 2 due dates: One for your initial post (which shows in Canvas) and one for your responses. Your lowest score in this category (excluding the icebreaker) will be dropped.

**Quizzes [10%]:** There are a select few quizzes in this class. These are generally intended as knowledge checks or to reinforce key topics which will help you craft a more effective argument for your major essays. Your lowest quiz (excluding the syllabus quiz) will be dropped. **The 24 hour late rule does not apply to quizzes**

**Presentations [12%]:** There are two major presentations in this class: One in week 4, which is a solo presentation and one in week 11 which is a group presentation linked to a major project. I will have certain expectations regarding extemporaneous delivery, clear citation of sources and organization, but I am not assessing these with the same scrutiny that you'd see in a section of COMM 1 or COMM 10.

**Writing Exercises [13%]:** These are applied activities designed to help you build a better essay. While these are graded by rubric, I'm primarily looking at these for **completion** than perfection. These are noted on the course calendar as "Exercise #1, #2, etc." While these are due at the end of the week, a number of them might inform your understanding of other assignments, so if you can complete them earlier, do so.

### Online Hour

50% of this course (one hour) is designated as the online portion of this class. Your quizzes, online discussions, and certain writing exercises used to assess your performance in this area. Although we'll discuss and prepare for these assignments in class, they are intended to be completed online, outside of our class meeting times.

**Extra Credit:** Extra credit will not be offered in this class. The leniency built into the course with revision opportunities and dropped assignments far exceed any extra credit I could offer, giving you ample opportunity to succeed in this class. Given this, I will not respond to any requests to adjust a grade. Repeated requests to "bump" a grade throughout, or at the end of the term will be considered a violation of the De Anza Code of Conduct (Board Policy 5510) and treated as such.

## Tentative Course Calendar

Any changes to topics, readings, and/or due dates will be posted on Canvas

Date	Topics & Readings	Assignment(s) due
<b>UNIT I: Introduction to Critical Thinking &amp; Argumentation</b>		
<b>Week 1</b> 4/12/2023	Course Orientation Critical Thinking & Argumentation: Why They matter? ( <b>Priebe Ch.0; Mills Ch.1</b> ) <u>Essay #1 Overview</u>	<b>4/12:</b> Quiz #1; Student Intake form; Icebreaker; <b>4/15:</b> Discussion #1
<b>UNIT II: Argumentation Basics</b>		
<b>Week 2</b> 4/19/2023	Argumentation Structure ( <b>Mills Ch.2; Priebe Ch.1; Ch.3 pages 86-90</b> ) <u>Essay #2 Overview</u>	<b>4/19:</b> Essay #1 (1:30 PM) <b>4/22:</b> Quiz #2
<b>Week 3</b> 4/26/2023	Research & Source Documentation ( <b>Mills Ch.6 &amp; 7; Priebe Ch.4</b> ); APA Overview & Basics	<b>4/26:</b> Exercise #2 (1:30 PM) <b>4/29:</b> Quiz #3
<b>Week 4</b> 5/3/2023	Refuting & Presenting Arguments ( <b>Mills, Ch.2.6, 2.7; Priebe, Ch.1.4 Ch.3, p.84-86</b> ) <b>Issue Advocacy Presentation</b>	<b>5/3:</b> Presentation Outline (1:30 PM) <b>5/6:</b> Discussion #2
<b>UNIT III: Analyzing &amp; Evaluating Arguments</b>		
<b>Week 5</b> 5/10/2023	Analyzing, Evaluating & Supporting Claims ( <b>Mills Ch. 4, 9, &amp; 10</b> ) <u>Essay #3 Overview</u>	<b>5/10:</b> Essay #2; (1:30 PM) Exercise #3 <b>5/13:</b> Quiz #4
<b>Week 6</b> 5/17/2023	Understanding Warrants ( <b>Mills Ch.4.4; 4.5</b> ) Logic & Reasoning ( <b>Mills 7.5; Priebe 41-43; Van Cleave p.17-24; p.139-169</b> )	<b>5/17:</b> Discussion #3 <b>5/20:</b> Discussion Responses; Quiz #5
<b>Week 7</b> 5/24/2023	Faulty Arguments: Logical Fallacies ( <b>Mills 4.9; Priebe p.44; Van Cleave Ch.4</b> ) <i>Clarifying Arguments</i>	<b>5/24:</b> Discussion #4 <b>5/27:</b> Exercise #4; Discussion responses; Quiz #6
<b>UNIT IV: Writing for Persuasion – Bringing it All Together</b>		
<b>Week 8</b> 5/31/2023	Policy Argumentation <u>Project Overview &amp; Group Formation</u>	<b>5/31:</b> Essay #3 (1:30 PM) <b>6/3:</b> Exercise #5
<b>Week 9</b> 6/7/2023	Debating the Issues Language & Persuasion ( <b>Mills Ch.8</b> )	<b>6/7:</b> Discussion #5
<b>Week 10</b> 6/14/2023	Refining & Presenting your Argument Writing your Rebuttal ( <b>Mills, Ch.5</b> ) <b>Policy Project Workweek</b>	<b>6/17:</b> Exercise #6
<b>Week 11</b> 6/21/2023	<b>Policy Project Presentation Week</b> <u>Essay #5 Overview</u>	<b>6/21:</b> Essay #4 (1:30 PM) <b>6/24:</b> Discussion #7; Exercise #7
<b>Week 12</b> 6/28/2023	<b>Final Exam Period – 1:45-3:45 PM</b> <b>Closing Arguments</b>	<b>Essay #5 (by 1:45 PM);</b> <b>Final Discussion (by 3:45 PM)</b>