

**Syllabus for Communication Studies 160: Argumentation and Critical Thinking**  
**Miramar College, Spring 2026**  
**CN 24134: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:35–11:00, Room H-201**

Professor: Paul “Pablo” Martin, M.A.

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- You can also communicate with me via the [Pronto app](#) or [Canvas messages](#).
- You can also post your question anonymously in the “[Have a Question? Ask it here!](#)” discussion forum in Canvas.

**Student Support Hours (aka Student Visiting Hours and Office Hours):**

- Tuesday and Thursday: 8:30-9:30 and 1:30-2:30 (in person, H-110L—if you wish to meet via Zoom during this time, please notify me beforehand)
- Wednesday: 12:00-1:00 (Zoom: <https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/93742123704>)
- By appointment (in person or via Zoom: <https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/93742123704> — please email me or talk with me before or after class to schedule a time)

**Other Important Contacts:** School of Liberal Arts Administrative Assistant, [Jeanette Moore](#)  
– 619-388-7873

[Canvas](#) (this is where you can access all of your courses’ online content)

[MySDCCD](#) (this is where you can access everything else related to your student account at Miramar and SDCCD)

*Note: if I need to make any changes to this syllabus, I will notify you both via Canvas and Pronto (and in person for classes that meet on campus).*

**Required Texts:**

This course uses OERs (Open Educational Resources) and are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike 4.0 International License](#).

All assigned readings are available via linked assignments within Canvas (our course LMS) and Perusall (a third-party app)—make sure that you access each reading/assignment directly through our Canvas shell. The links below are for information only.

1. [How Arguments Work: A Guide to Writing and Analyzing Texts in College](#) (Mills et al., 2020)
2. [Arguing Using Critical Thinking](#) (Martene, 2020)
3. [Fundamental Methods of Logic](#) (Knachel, 2017)
4. This class relies on a variety of other free tools and materials in addition to this Open Educational Resource (OER) textbook. These can be found through our [Canvas](#) shell.

### **Other Required Materials:**

1. Have a working email account that is current in both [MySDCCD](#) and [Canvas](#) (these systems *should* share information with each other). The SDCCD provides all students with a [free MS Outlook email account](#).
2. A way to access [Canvas](#), our course management system (any private or public computer, such as can be found at the Miramar or any public library with an Internet connection, will suffice).
3. A paper or digital copy of the syllabus.

### **Important Dates for the Spring Semester**

Classes begin (16-week session): February 2

Last Day to Add or Drop with no "W" recorded: February 9

Lincoln Day Holiday: February 13

Washington Day Holiday: February 16

Spring Break: March 30 through April 3

Cesar Chavez Day Holiday: April 3

Last day to withdraw from a course (with a "W" rather than an evaluative grade): April 17

Last day to file a petition for the [Pass/No Pass grade option](#): April 17

Last day to file an Application for Graduation (and ensure your name is in the commencement program): March 15

Last day to file an Application for Graduation and be a Spring graduate: April 30

Memorial Day Holiday: May 25

Last day of classes (16-week session): June 1

(You can [see an exhaustive list of dates here](#), or [click here for other helpful news and information](#))

### **A Description of the Course**

This course is a study of argumentation and development of critical thinking through the rhetorical tradition. Emphasis is placed on research, analysis of propositions, testing of evidence, and development of constructive and refutation cases through the writing and revision of a sequence of critical compositions as a foundation for oral debate. Students locate, evaluate, and integrate outside sources into their writing assignments, which total at least 6,000 words for the semester. This course is designed for communication studies majors and anyone interested in argumentation and the development of critical thinking skills through composition and spoken discourse.

Student Learning Outcomes (based on the state's approved Course Outline of Record):

1. Critically evaluate reasoning and evidence.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the reasoning process.
3. Analyze, advocate, and criticize ideas in oral and written communication.
4. Recognize fallacies of reasoning and argue ethically.
5. Complete thorough research.
6. Employ critical thinking skills in oral and written communication.
7. Identify which kinds of arguments are most effective in different cultural contexts.

## Course Specifics

- All of the assignments and materials you will need to complete this course are free and available on [Canvas](#).
- This course is organized using weekly modules within our Canvas Shell—everything that is required of you will be available there.
- This course is designed to give you as much freedom in selecting the topics you want focus on as possible.
- This course requires you to regularly interact with your colleagues and me, your professor, as you complete the various assignments each week. (This means that if you are taking this course online, you won't be able to work too far ahead.)
- If you are especially passionate about this topic or are otherwise interested in taking this course for honors credit, please let me know within the first few weeks of class. (See [SDCCD Honors Program](#) learn more.)

## Assignment Overview

- A. Reading Assignments, 1-2 per week: 10 points each
- B. Minor Activities, roughly 5 over the course of the semester: 5 points each
- C. Exercises to apply concepts from the reading, roughly 5 over the course of the semester: 10 points each
- D. Activities to assist with the writing process, roughly 6 over the course of the semester: 10 points each
- E. Summary, Assessment, and Response Essay (a minimum of 1000 words or roughly 3 pages; for Honors Students, the essay should be 1250-1750 words or roughly 4-5 pages): 50 points
- F. Argument Analysis Essay (a minimum of 1000 words or roughly 3 pages; for Honors Students, the essay should be 1250-1750 words or roughly 4-5 pages): 50 points
- G. Research Essay (a minimum of 1500 words or roughly 4 pages; for Honors Students, the essay should be 2000-3000 words or roughly 6-9 pages): 100 points

## Schedule:

1. A calendar as well as links to all of the assignments, readings, and other course materials can be found in [Canvas](#). I recommend you allow notifications from Canvas and Perusall, and/or use a calendar to track all of your classes (such as the ones I have available on the "Important Course Information & Resources" page in Canvas).
2. Work that is submitted after the deadline will be penalized 7% per day, with a maximum penalty of 50%. If anything is preventing you from completing an assignment on time, please contact me before it's due, or as soon as you can. I know that life can provide us with unexpected challenges, and I want to be accommodating to your needs. So please be in communication with me via the [Pronto app](#), [Canvas messages](#), or [email](#).
3. All assignments and work for this class are due before class begins on the date listed in Canvas. (If I need to make any changes to these due dates, I will notify you both during class and via Canvas or Pronto.)