



# The Beijing Center

北京中国学中心

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**Spring 2021**

## **TBC 1550 Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

Credit Hours: 3.0

Class Times and Location: TBA

Instructor: TBA

E-mail: academics@thebeijingcenter.org

### **Course Description**

An introduction to the study of argumentation, critical evaluation, and the use of language in interpretation of diverse forms of discourse. Explores practical applications of critical thinking skills in everyday situations such as problem-solving and evaluation of arguments. This course examines the role of formal and informal methods of reasoning in several forms of discourse. Focus will be put on the cultivation of argumentative skills relevant to academic, public, and interpersonal methods of communication. Principles of argumentative discourse applied to contemporary issues and analysis of the relationship between evidence and the process of reasoning will be included.

### **Learning Outcome**

On successful completion of this course (i.e. by *passing* this course), you will be able to

1. Identify and analyze a variety of rhetorical and argumentative techniques
2. Analyze and assess a variety of rhetorical and argumentative texts
3. Compose and present original arguments to a critical audience
4. Distinguish between legitimate and fallacious forms of reasoning
5. Apply these tools to real-world decision-making

### **Textbook**

(Text)

Moore, B.N. and Parker, R., *Critical Thinking* (12th ed.) McGraw Hill, 2016

(Reference)

1. Ericson, J., Murphy, J., Zeuschner, R., *The Debater's Guide*, 4th, Southern Illinois Press, 2011
2. Freeley and Steinberg, *Argumentation and Debate*, 2008

### **Course Requirements**

#### **1. Attendance Policy**

Attendance is required. Students are expected to come to class on time. 2 late arrivals will be considered as equivalent to 1 absence on the attendance record. I reserve the right to drop a student after 2 unexcused absences (including late arrivals and or circumstances not discussed with the instructor).

Only valid medical or family emergencies qualify as an absence, and documentation of the same must be presented to the professor no later than the next class meeting.

## 2. Grading

(a) Four Presentations and Debate Sessions: 40% (@10%)

*Throughout the semester there will be four individual presentations for students to apply their knowledge on the topics covered in class, on pre-assigned classical/contemporary issues.*

*For (team) debate sessions will be held for students to practice the argumentation techniques they learned and integrate what they have researched into articulations.*

(b) Class Participation: 5%

(c) Midterm Examination: 25%

(c) Final examination: 30%

94-100 = A    90-93 = A -    87-89 = B+    84-86 = B    80-83 = B-

77-79 = C +    74-76 = C    70-73 = C-    67-69 = D+    60-66 = D

59 and below = F

## 3. Academic Honesty Statement

Please click the following link to see The Beijing Center's policy on Academic Integrity: <http://thebeijingcenter.org/academic-integrity>

## Course Schedule

### Week 1

Beliefs, Claims, and Cognitive Biases (Ch 1)

### Week 2-3

Deductive and Inductive Arguments (Ch 2)

First Presentation and Debate

### Week 4

Vagueness, Ambiguity, and Generality (Ch 3)

### Week 5-6

Credibility of Sources (Ch 4)

Second Presentation and Debate

### Week 7

Review and Midterm Exam

### Week 8-9

Rhetoric, the Art of Persuasion (Ch 5)

Third Presentation and Debate

### Week 10-11

Relevance Fallacies (Ch 6)

### Week 12

Deductive Logic: Truth-Functional Argument (Ch 10)

**Week 13**

Fourth Presentation and Debate

**Week 14**

Final Examination