ARTS&SCI 1BB3/Argumentation  
McMaster University  
Term 2, 2014/2015  

Class:  
Time:   Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 11:30am-12:20pm  
Location:  TSH B106  

Instructor  
Instructor:  Dr. Matthew Grellette  
Office:   UH 314  
Office Hour:  Fridays 12:30-1:20pm or by appointment  
Email:   grellemj@mcmaster.ca  

Course Description:  
Almost everyone uses arguments, because almost everyone wants to demonstrate that they have 
the correct view of things. Yet most people argue without being trained, even though the ability to 
detect bad arguments and to construct good ones is a skill which can be developed and enhanced. 
This course provides you with some basic training in the skills of argumentation. Specifically, it will 
provide you with some of the conceptual tools to recognize, understand, evaluate, formulate and 
attack arguments.  

Text:  

Online:  
This course uses Avenue to post the course outline, reading assignments and other notices.  

Evaluation:  
Take Home Assignments (2)............. . . . . 30%  
Group Debate...................... . . . . . . . . . . .30%  
Final Exam.................. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 40%
Take Home Assignments:

Two take home assignments will be assigned throughout the term (each worth 15%). These will encourage students to consider both public and personal arguments.

Debate and Debate Essay:

Each student will take part in a formal team-debate. Here two teams will engage in oral argumentation regarding an agreed upon subject. The debate will include introductory and concluding remarks, as well as justificatory and critical segments. Afterwards, each team will be asked to provide a written debrief of the debate. Your overall grade will be based on your debate performance and the quality of the essay. All members of a team receive the same grade.

Final Exam:

The final exam deals with all of the material covered in the course. The date will be determined by the Registrar.

Late Work:

Late assignments will be penalized 5% of the assignment’s worth per day late. Missed assignments will be dealt with via the MSAF (described below).

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):

This is an on-line, self-reporting tool for students to report absences due to minor medical situations that last up to 5 days and to request accommodation for any missed academic work that is worth less than 30% of the final grade. Please note that this tool cannot be used during any final examination period. It is the prerogative of the instructor to determine the appropriate relief for missed term work. You may submit a maximum of one request per term. The form should be filled out immediately when you are about to return to class after your absence. It is your responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately (within two working days) about the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent for more than 5 days, have missed academic work worth 30% or more, or exceed one request per term, you must see Shelley Anderson or Rebecca Bishop in the Arts & Science Program office (C-105). You will be required to provide supporting documentation.

Policy on Academic Integrity:

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned
academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences—e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at: http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1) Plagiarism—e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.

2) Improper collaboration in group work.

3) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes. Announcements will be made in class and by using the course email distribution list.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or email sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.

Written Work Submission Guidelines

The written work submission guidelines have been chose to support the more sustainable use of paper, energy, and toner, and meet the Gold standard of the Office of Sustainability www.mcmaster.ca/sustainability. All written work should be submitted in the following format: double-sided printing; no title page; sans-serif font.
Course Schedule:

Week 1: Jan 6, 8, 9  The Nature of Argument - Ch 1, Govier

Week 2: Jan 13, 15, 16  Pinning Down Argument Structure - Ch. 2 Govier

Week 3: Jan 20, 22, 23  Pinning Down Argument Structure Con’t

Week 4: Jan 27, 29, 30  Looking at Language - Ch. 3 Govier
   *Assignment #1 Issued: Jan 27th

Week 5: Feb 3, 5, 6,  Good Arguments - Ch. 4 Govier
   *Assignment #1 Due: Feb 3rd

Week 6: Feb 10, 12, 13  Premises: What to Accept and Why - Ch. 5 Govier

Mid-Term Break (Feb 16-21)  No Class

Week 7: Feb 24, 26, 27  Working on Relevance - Ch. 6 Govier
   *Debate Session #1: Feb 27th

Week 8: Mar 3, 5, 6  Arguments from Analogy - Ch. 11 Govier
   *Debate Session #2: Mar 6th

Week 9: Mar 10, 12, 13  Inductive Arguments - Ch. 9 Govier
   *Debate Session #3: Mar 13th

Week 10: Mar 17, 19, 20  Causal Inductive Arguments - Ch. 10 Govier
   *Debate Session #4: Mar 20th
   *Assignment #2 Issued: Mar 20th

Week 11: Mar 24, 26, 27  Deductive Logic: Categorical
   *Debate Session #5: Mar 27th
   *Assignment #2 Due: Mar 27th

Week 12: Mar 31 / Apr 2  Deductive Logic: Propositional
   *Debate Session #6: Mar 31st

Week 13: Apr 7  Propositional Logic Con’t