

English 20803.007: Writing as Argument

Fall 2018

Course Objectives

When someone says the word “argument,” you probably have a specific idea of what kind of interaction that entails. In this class, however, we will be expanding the definition of “argument” to include anything that works to create change in an audience. This means we encounter arguments all the time: on social media, on TV, in movies, in our daily conversations. Just because arguments are ubiquitous, though, does not mean all arguments are well-constructed or ethical. In this class, you will learn how to analyze arguments according to their rhetorical situation and evaluate how effective and ethical those arguments are. You will also produce your own arguments based in your particular values, while also recognizing the validity and importance of the values others hold. You will have the opportunity to create arguments in various forms and modes for various audiences, and you will learn to express how and why you make the rhetorical choices you do.

This course, like all courses at TCU, has outcomes explaining what students should achieve in the course. The outcomes listed here are the goals we will work toward. So, at the end of ENGL 20803, you should be able to demonstrate:

- Facility with the language and analysis of argument
- The ability to write an argument for a specific rhetorical situation
- Competency in using sources, (primary, secondary, electronic) in argument construction
- The ability to critically engage with digital environments

Course Materials

Texts:

Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters, *Everything is an Argument* (7th edition)
Caulfield, [Web Literacy for Student Fact-Checkers](#)
[The Purdue OWL](#)
Other readings posted on D2L

Materials:

A notebook or paper for in-class writing assignments, plus a folder for handouts
A two-pocket folder for turning in essay portfolios

Instructor
Sara Kelm

Office
Reed Hall 402

Office Hours
TR 9:30-11a
& by appointment

Email
s.kelm@tcu.edu

Course Information
ENGL 20803.007
TR 8:00-9:20a
REED 125

Final Exam
Thursday, Dec. 13
8-10:30a

*All course policies,
guidelines, and
regulations are subject
to change at the*

Course Projects and Requirements

This class will have three major projects (each with multiple parts), one minor project, and two VICs. Each project will go through multiple revisions, and most final versions will be accompanied by a Statement of Goals and Choices. At the start of each unit, you will receive a detailed assignment sheet.

Unit 1: Evaluating Values (10%)

In this minor project, you will do a narrative exploration of one of your main values: where it comes from, what it means to you, and how it impacts your position on issues. We will talk about the difference between beliefs and values, positionality, bias, and perspective as you craft this **personal values essay**.

Unit 2: Listening Rhetorically (25%)

In this unit, you will select an issue that you will be working with for the rest of the semester. Given the values you identified in unit 1, you will find an issue that is timely, contended, and significant. You will present this issue to the rest of the class and hear feedback from your classmates on this topic. Then you will dive into the conversation around this issue, finding a variety of perspectives. Some must be scholarly, but others can be from the mass media; all must be reputable, current, and key to understanding this topic. The final project for this unit will have two parts. By the end of the unit, you will **map** the issue by creating a visual representation of the conversation on your topic, using at least five sources. This might be a digital representation or a mixed media representation, but somehow it must demonstrate visually all five positions and their relationships. Along with this visual representation, you will provide a Statement of Goals and Choices (SOGC) to describe the rhetorical choices you made. Additionally, you will write an **issue analysis** in which you describe what you know about your topic so far. You will want to discuss the issue's stasis question, common rhetorical appeals, audience, values, stakeholders, and location of the arguments about the issue. You will also discuss why this issue matters at this point in time, locating it both within your values and the larger culture/time period (exigence).

Unit 3: Conversing Rhetorically (30%)

Now that you have mapped the issue, you take a position on the issue for a particular audience. Your position needs to be based on research that you do, but the **argument** itself may take many forms, depending on your audience. You could do an op ed for a newspaper, a TED talk, an infographic, a traditional research paper, a visual argument, or some sort of ethnography/narrative. You will include an extensive SOGC, as well as an **annotated bibliography** of 8-10 reputable sources upon which you will build your argument. We will work on the annotated bibliography throughout the semester, and you have opportunities to get feedback from me on some of your annotations.

Unit 4: Modeling Rhetoric (15%)

In this final unit, you will have a conversation with a partner about a "controversial" issue. This issue could flow out of your previous assignments, or it could be a completely new topic. Your conversation could be serious or silly, but you will work toward consensus, understanding, or assent. Then you will work together to **model your conversation** for an outside audience, using a different medium: a podcast, a diorama, a play script, a video, etc. Along with this model, you each will complete a **conversation analysis** using the terms and concepts you've learned throughout this semester. Lastly, you and your partner will **present your conversation model** to the class, discussing the rhetorical choices you made. MAKE SURE YOUR END-OF-SEMESTER PLANS TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OUR FINAL EXAM TIME, as you both need to be present for this final and you will not be able to reschedule your presentation.

Value/Issue Check-ins (VICs)

(10%): Twice times during the semester, you will complete a 500-750 word reflection on where you are in learning about your issue, connecting what you're learning to your values and the world around you. The VICs are a place to work through some of the controversies and contradictions as you encounter new ideas and try to reconcile them with what you already know. While the VICs are fairly

informal, you will refer to sources you are reading on your topic. More information will be forthcoming.

Your final course grade will be based on the following percentages:

Unit I: Evaluating Values (Personal Values Essay)	10%
Unit II: Listening Rhetorically	25%
Issue Map & SOGC (13%)	
Issue Analysis (12%)	
Unit III: Conversing Rhetorically	30%
Annotated Bibliography (10%)	
Argument for a Specific Audience & SOGC (20%)	
Unit IV: Modeling Rhetoric	15%
Conversation Model and Analysis/SOGC (10%)	
Final Presentation (5%)	
Value/Issue Check-ins (VICs)	10%
Process Work/Participation	10%

Process Work: Process work includes reading assignments, in-class writings, informal out-of-class writings, written feedback to peers, reading quizzes, etc. This work, while often informal, will be some of the most important work we do for the course. Most work will be evaluated on the on the $\sqrt{+}/\sqrt{/}\sqrt{-}$ system (see Evaluation and Grading). Not doing these assignments adequately—or not doing them at all—will hamper your participation grade and/or your project grade. *Note: Most reading quizzes will be announced ahead of time, and you are allowed to use any handwritten notes.*

Participation: Simply being physically present every Tuesday and Thursday is not enough; you must engage with the material and other classmates. Your participation grade for each unit will be based on both a self-evaluation and an evaluation by me. Too many absences will have a negative impact on your participation grade. More information will be forthcoming.

Workshops: For each major writing assignment, you will submit drafts to be workshopped in small groups, by the whole class, and/or by me. Each workshop draft should include an author's note explaining to readers: 1) the state of your draft (first draft, third, etc.) and what you were trying to accomplish in this draft; 2) what you think is going well; and 3) what you are having trouble with or would like advice on. Failure to submit *full* drafts when due can affect your grade for each project. In workshops, you are expected to read your peers' drafts carefully and provide a thoughtful, substantive response both verbally and in writing. Your work in peer review will be evaluated on the $\sqrt{+}/\sqrt{/}\sqrt{-}$ system (see next Evaluation and Grading).

Conferences: Early in the semester, we'll meet to discuss your goals and work for the course. Please come prepared—you will plan the agenda for our time together. We will also meet in Unit 3. Attendance is required for these conferences; if you need to reschedule, contact me ahead of time. Additionally, you are always welcome to meet with me during office hours. If we have set up a meeting or conference and you do not attend, I reserve the right to award you an unexcused absence

Evaluation and Grading

Your projects will be graded on the following grading scale:

A	93 – 100%	Excellent
A-	90 – 92.9%	
B+	87 – 89.9%	
B	83 – 86.9%	Good
B-	80 – 82.9%	
C+	77 – 79.9%	
C	73 – 76.9%	Satisfactory
C-	70 – 72.9%	
D+	67 – 69.9%	
D	63 – 66.9%	Unsatisfactory
D-	60 – 62.9%	
F	59.9% or below	Unacceptable/Incomplete

For each major project of the semester, you'll complete multiple drafts and then turn in a portfolio that contains all drafts of the project, SOGCs, informal work toward the project (in-class writing, research notes and articles, etc.), and author's notes. In preparation for constructing your portfolios, please save *all* of the process work/writing that you do for this class together. Make sure you save each version of your draft on your computer as well. The final draft must be submitted both online through D2L and in hard copy at the beginning of class on the day the project is due. **A project is not considered turned in until it is submitted both digitally and in hard copy** (see the late work policy on the next page).

Your process work will be graded on the following grading scale:

√+	95%	Work is thorough, thoughtful, and completed on time
√	85%	Work is complete and turned in on time.
√-	75%	Work is partially completed and on time.
--	50%	Work is turned in one class after the assignment is due.
X	0%	Work is not turned in or turned in over one day late.

Grades: Simply fulfilling the minimum requirements of the course warrants an average grade (*i.e.*, C). Coming to class every day and completing assignments is not something that earns extra credit or an outstanding grade; it is a basic expectation for coursework. A higher than average grade will be based on: 1) the quality and development of your work; 2) consistently demonstrating critical and creative thinking in your writing/projects; 3) your ability to guide writing/a project through the stages of revision; and 4) a willingness to take risks by exploring new subjects, genres, and techniques.

You are always welcome to talk to me about a grade received on an assignment. However, **you must wait 24 hours before coming to talk to me during office hours.**

Revision: You may choose to *substantively* revise **one** of the following: the personal values essay, the issue analysis, or the argument for a specific audience. Revising the essay doesn't guarantee the grade will be improved. If you want to revise, you must first submit a detailed revision plan and schedule a conference with me at least one week before the revision deadline. Revisions need to be submitted by the **LAST DAY OF CLASS**. If you submitted your original portfolio late, the late penalty will still apply to the revised essay. (Note: if you turn in a revision plan and then decide not to revise, there is no penalty.) *I reserve the right to require revisions in cases where work is unsatisfactory.*

When you submit projects on D2L, name your files like this:
LastNameFirstName_AssignmentName.docx

Attendance Policy

Improvement in writing is a complex process that requires much practice and feedback from readers. Regular attendance is necessary to your success in this course.

Excused Absences: It is a Composition Program policy that in writing workshop courses, only official university absences are excused (and you are responsible for bringing me notification of university absences *before* the event). Students representing TCU in a university-mandated activity that requires missing class should provide official documentation of schedules and turn in work *in advance*. **You are responsible for the material you miss because of an absence.** Check D2L to review PowerPoints and assignments, and be prepared for the next class period.

Unexcused Absences: Three weeks of unexcused absences (6 classes total) constitute grounds for failure of the course. Absences due to sleeping in and long weekends are NOT excused--they all count toward the three weeks absence limit. Other ways of accumulating unexcused absences are (1) sleeping in class; (2) working on assignments not related to ENGL 20803 while in class or using an electronic device without permission; or (3) failing to attend the entire class meeting by arriving more than ten minutes late or leaving class early. Since illness is likely at some point during the semester, I urge you to save your unexcused absences for times when you are too sick to come to class (and please don't come to class when you are ill). Students whose absences are due to circumstances beyond their control should contact me right away. Students may appeal this policy by scheduling a meeting with the Director of Composition.

Tardies: Do not be late. Three tardies will equal one absence. Additionally, if you are more than ten minutes late, I will count you absent. If you leave early, I will count you absent. Too many tardies/absences will affect your participation grade.

Late Work: All work will be due at the beginning of class. The assignment is not turned in until all documents (both electronic and paper) are handed in. Process work may be turned in one class after the work's due date for half credit. If a project is turned in after class on the day it is due, the highest it may receive is a 90%. Each day after that, it will lose 5% each day. In extenuating circumstances or in the case of excused absences, the student should make arrangements with me as soon as those circumstances are known. Arrangements must be made *in advance of the due date*, save in the case of an emergency (generally one that involves police, emergency departments, and/or sirens). Technology issues do not fall under the "emergency" category (see below).

Technology and Late Work: As with most university courses, this class will require the use of technology, so you will need to have reliable access to a computer and the internet, both which are available in several places (including the library) on campus. We also have computers in our classroom. Problems with technology (i.e.: computer crash, printer malfunction, internet connectivity issues, etc.) are not acceptable excuses for submitting late work. Plan ahead to avoid last minute crises related to turning in assignments. Expect electronics to break when you need them most. Back up your work regularly on GoogleDrive, Box, or a USB drive. Also, please note that most assignments will be submitted online through D2L, and some of those deadlines will be due before the next day's class.

Classroom Policies

Office Hours: While I plan to be on campus during my office hours each week, I occasionally use that time to run errands around campus. Thus, it would be wise to send an email and let me know if you are planning to stop by during my office hours so I can be sure to be available.

Sustenance: As we are in a computer classroom, no food or drinks are allowed. That said, as long as you are *extremely* careful, I will make exceptions for water, coffee/tea, and energy bars. Anything liquid must be kept far away from any of TCU's electronics. If there are any issues, I will rescind this offer.

Technology: Using devices for anything other than designated class work means you are not engaging in the activities of our class. When appropriate, you may take notes or complete in-class work on your computer, but please keep all other screens (and windows) closed. If using the computer distracts you or those near you from focusing on class work, I reserve the right to ask you to put away your electronic device for the day. All phones should be turned to silent or airplane mode during class unless permission has been granted by the instructor. Any student seen using their cell phone, computer, or other technology during class for something other than classwork may be counted absent without warning.

Readings: Whenever there are assigned readings, you must bring a copy of the reading to class, whether the reading is from the textbook, a link, or a PDF posted to D2L. If you do not have the reading required for discussion during class time, you may lose credit for participation for the day.

E-mail: The majority of my communication will come through e-mail. I expect you to **check your TCU e-mail daily**, and you can expect me to do the same. E-mails to me and your colleagues should be professional and polite, with a subject, a greeting, and a closing. I reserve the right to not respond to e-mails that do not follow this professional format. I do not often respond to emails between the hours of 7 PM and 8 AM, so to ensure a timely response from me, email me during business hours.

D2L: All materials for this course (assignments, required course readings, in-class activities, student drafts for peer response, and grades) will be uploaded to D2L, accessible through <http://d2l.tcu.edu>.

TCU Resources

- [Center for Digital Expression](#) | Scharbauer 2003 | cdex@tcu.edu | 817-257-5194 | Available to assist students with audio, video, multimedia, and web design projects.
- [William L. Adams Center for Writing](#) | Reed 419 | 817-257-7221 | An instructional service with the mission of helping improve writing of students, staff, and faculty from all academic disciplines.
- [TCU Computer Help](#) | 817-257-5855 | IT provides support for TCU computing accounts and services.
- [Mary Couts Burnett Library](#) | reference@tcu.edu | 817-257-7117 | The Library provides resources and services for the research and information needs of the TCU community.
- [TCU: Student Affairs | Counseling & Mental Health Center](#) | 817-257-7863 | Promoting psychological health, well-being, and resources for TCU students to cope with challenges.

Classroom Community (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement)

Every student in this class will be respected as an individual with distinct experiences, talents, and backgrounds. You are invited to bring your entire identity into this class, while recognizing that others will do the same. Students will be treated fairly regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, socioeconomic status, or national identity. Make no assumptions about the identities and beliefs of your colleagues. Be aware of the words you use and how you use them. Racist, homophobic, classist, ableist, xenophobic, and/or other discriminatory language (especially in regards to religion and culture) will not be tolerated.

Diversity is necessary to create an intellectual environment that fosters inquiry. Our classroom is a place for the free exchange of ideas in an environment of mutual respect. Each of us is responsible for sharing ideas and listening to the ideas of others in a constructive manner that supports the goals of the class. Students whose behavior distracts or disrespects others will be asked to leave, be counted absent, and be required to meet with me before our next class period. Similarly, all members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in online communication. Participating in the virtual realm should be done with personal integrity and respect for others. If I deem any digital exchange to be inappropriate or offensive, I will forward the message to the Chair of the department and appropriate action will be taken, not excluding expulsion from the course.

TCU Disability Statement (*verbatim from TCU Undergraduate Catalog*)

Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 11. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Contact the [Center for Academic Services](#) at (817) 257-7486 for more information.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. *Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator.* Guidelines for documentation may be found at http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp. Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.

Safe Zones Statement

My goal is for each student to feel comfortable and able to connect with course content and online discussions. I have completed the TCU Safe Zone training offered by the office of Inclusiveness and Intercultural Services. Please know that I welcome, affirm, and celebrate persons in the LGBTQIA communities of Texas Christian University. I will not allow homophobic comments in threaded discussions and will strive to use inclusive language. For more information please consult: <https://sds.tcu.edu/allies/>

Anti-Discrimination and Title IX Information

TCU prohibits discrimination and harassment based on age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ethnic origin, disability, predisposing genetic information, covered veteran status, and any other basis protected by law, except as permitted by law. TCU also prohibits unlawful sexual and gender-based harassment and violence, sexual assault, incest, statutory rape, sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, bullying, stalking, and retaliation. We understand that discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence can undermine students' academic success and we encourage students who have experienced any of these issues to talk to someone about their experience, so they can get the support they need. [Review TCU's Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Related Conduct](#) or to file a complaint: <https://titleix.tcu.edu/title-ix/>.

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I will seek to keep any information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility under TCU policy and federal law and I am required to share any information I receive regarding sexual harassment, discrimination, and related conduct with TCU's Title IX Coordinator. Students can receive confidential support and academic advocacy by contacting TCU's Confidential Advocate in the Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education office at (817) 257-5225 or the [Counseling & Mental Health Center](#) at <https://counseling.tcu.edu/> or by calling (817) 257-7863. [Alleged violations can be reported to the Title IX Office](#) at <https://titleix.tcu.edu/student-toolkit/> or by calling (817) 257-8228. Should you wish to make a confidential report, the Title IX Office will seek to maintain your privacy to the greatest extent possible, but cannot guarantee confidentiality. Reports to law enforcement can be made to the Fort Worth Police Department at 911 for an emergency and (817) 335-4222 for non-emergency or TCU Police at (817) 257-7777. If you find yourself in a position where you are in need of these services, please know I will support and advocate for you however I can.

Academic Misconduct *(see TCU Undergraduate Catalog)*

Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life. Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

- *Cheating:* 1) Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; 2) Using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; 3) Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; 4) Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; 5) Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself;
- *Plagiarism:* The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit therefore.
- *Collusion:* The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.
- *Fabrication and falsification:* Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves altering information for use in any academic exercise. Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
- *Multiple submission:* The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.