Course Name: Analysis of Argument  
Course Prefix: COMM  
Course Number: 1270  
Submitted by: Ryan Cheek, ryancheek@weber.edu

Current Date: 11/12/2014 College: Arts & Humanities  
Department: Communication  
From Term: Fall 2015

Substantive

new   
Current Course Subject: N/A  
Current Course Number:

**New/Revised Course Information:**

Subject: COMM  
Course Number: 1270

Check all that apply:*This is for courses already approved for gen ed. Use a*[*different form*](http://documents.weber.edu/catalog/forms.htm)*for proposing a new gen ed designation.*

* DV
* CA
* HU
* LS
* PS
* SS
* EN
* AI
* QL
* TA
* TB
* TC
* TD
* TE

Course Title: Analysis of Argument  
Abbreviated Course Title:   
Course Type: LEC  
Credit Hours: 3  
**or**if variable hours: to

Contact Hours:Lecture: 3  
Lab:   
Other:

Repeat Information:Limit: 0  
Max Hrs: 0  
Grading Mode: standard

This course is/will be:

a required course in a major program  
a required course in a minor program  
a required course in a 1- or 2- year program  
elective

Prerequisites/Co-requisites: NONE

Typically Taught:

Spring [Full Sem]

Course description (exactly as it will appear in the catalog, including prerequisites):Students will learn to analyze, evaluate, develop and refute arguments using formal argumentation methods and research based evidence. The course is designed to increase student competence and confidence in constructing, defending and critiquing a broad range of arguments found in public discourse.

Justification for the new course or for changes to an existing course. (Note: Justification should emphasize academic rationale for the change or new course. This is particularly important for courses requesting upper-division status.)1) COMM 1270 increases the diversity of lower division offerings: in the Department of Communication. Current offerings are very rigid and students declared in the new Associate of Communication degree would benefit from the added flexibility of lower division offerings.   
2) Studying argumentation improves the decision-making skills: of students by teaching them to understand and critically evaluate the arguments that surround them in everyday life. From buying a new car to deciding which business proposal is more lucrative, students will benefit from knowing how to dissect, analyze, refute and qualify arguments presented to them.   
3) Argument development skills prepare students for future opportunities: such as graduate school and professional advancement. Students that can develop coherent arguments write better papers and are more likely to be successful on the GRE. Additionally, employers are more likely to promote employees who know how to advocate for themselves and their company.   
4) COMM 1270 fulfills a current need: for an introductory argumentation course to provide concurrent credit for high school debate students participating in the summer Weber State Debate Institute. Currently, the University of Utah provides COMM 1270 concurrent credit to forensics students that participate in their high school forensics institute. For the sake of institutional consistency and competitiveness, it is imperative that Weber State be in a position to do the same.   
5) Adding COMM 1270 directly benefits transfer students: by increasing the consistency of offerings between USHE institutions. The University of Utah, Salt Lake Community College and Dixie State University offer this course. Students transferring to or from those institutions would be guaranteed that those credits count across institutions. 

**INFORMATION PAGE   
for substantive proposals only**

1. Did this course receive unanimous approval within the Department?trueIf not, what are the major concerns raised by the opponents?

2. If this is a new course proposal, could you achieve the desired results by revising an existing course within your department or by requiring an existing course in another department?No. The closest analog course in the department is COMM 2270 Argumentation & Debate, which specifically focuses on translating argumentation theory into the context of competitive collegiate debate formats. COMM 1270 should be seen as a preparation course for students to build basic argumentation skills before applying them to a competitive debate context. Additionally, modifying existing department courses fails to meet the specific goal of increasing lower division offerings in the department for associate degree seekers. Finally, this class would be helpful for students that want to expand the skill set of argumentation but do not wish to participate in debate.

3. How will the proposed course differ from similar offerings by other departments? Comment on any subject overlap between this course and topics generally taught by other departments, even if no similar courses are currently offered by the other departments. Explain any effects that this proposal will have on program requirements or enrollments in other department. Please forward letters (email communication is sufficient) from all departments that you have identified above stating their support or opposition to the proposed course.COMM 1270 substantially differs from offerings in other departments. There are two courses taught by other departments that similarly focus on argumentation, but are substantively different from the current proposal. First is ENGL 2010 Intermediate College Writing. While there is some overlap in the focus on argument, ENGL 2010 primarily focuses on the development of writing skills instead of argument analysis skills. Second is PHIL 1250 Critical Thinking. Again, there is some overlap in the focus on good and bad reasoning and argumentative writing, but not on the analysis of argument from a rhetorical perspective. COMM 1270 would be the only intro level course at the university that teaches the foundations of argument theory and models as they relate to public discourse. The current proposal should have no impact on the program requirements or enrollments of other departments. Finally, even if there is overlap between these courses, that shouldn’t be a deterrent to approving the current proposal. The study of argumentation appeals to a wide range of students and should be studied from the perspective of multiple disciplines to maximize the mastery of such an important skillset.

4. Is this course required for certification/accreditation of a program?no

If so, a statement to that effect should appear in the justification and supporting documents should accompany this form.

5. For course proposals, e-mail a syllabus to [Faculty Senate](mailto:kbrown4@weber.edu) which should be sufficiently detailed that the committees can determine that the course is at the appropriate level and matches the description. There should be an indication of the amount and type of outside activity required in the course (projects, research papers, homework, etc.).