

LOGIC AND ARGUMENTATION

Bachelor in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics - FHCD

2022-2023. 6 ECTS

Coordinator: Mercedes Rivero Obra

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Course description

Arguments are an essential part of our social, political, and private life. Considered to be essential in our human communication and interaction, arguments have received plenty of attention since Ancient Greece and in particular, since Aristotle. His *Rhetoric* has determined the way we study argumentation for centuries. We have theories, methods, and means to analyze, construct, and evaluate the perfect argument. And yet, we continue to argue about essential questions such as what is justice or the good. The discussion is not restricted to humanities: in the past years, the pandemic has provided an example of how arguments are constructed and used in the public sphere. This raises a good number of questions, such as: if we have mastered the science of argumentation, why do we continue to argue? If evidence and facts is at the basis of a good argument, why do we continue to argue? If we are rational animals and thus, we can be persuaded and convinced by rational argument, why do we continue to argue? In this course, we will get familiar with the inception of argumentation and its ties to logic, epistemology, politics, and ethics. From there, we will turn our attention to the epistemological and ethical limits and problems of argumentation. The course is divided in two parts: lectures, on Wednesdays and seminars on Fridays. In the former, students will get acquainted with concepts, theories, questions, and frames in relation to history, method, and ethics of argumentation. On the latter, students will be in charge of presenting a topic of debate. Therefore, the nature of the seminar is essentially practical.

Program

***Assigned readings might change throughout the semester, as well as the order of the program. If necessary, updates will be provided with at least one week's notice.**

1: history of argumentation and theory of argumentation.

1st week

02.01 Lecture. Course presentation and introduction: Argumentation in the history of philosophy. Sophistry vs Argumentation.

02.02 Seminar. Seminar organization, examples, and brief introductory debate. Reading: *Apology*, Plato.

2nd week

02.08 Lecture. Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: logic, ethics, and modern argumentation

02.10 Seminar. Discussion *Aristotle's Rhetoric*.

3rd week

02.15 Lecture. Argumentation I: What is an argument? How to identify and construct one.

02.17 Seminar. Q&A. Debate: research and organization.

4th Week

02.22 Lecture. Argumentation II: basis for argumentation. Reasoning and cognition.

02.24 Seminar. Q&A. 1st Debate

5th Week

03.1 Lecture: Argumentation II: Inductive and Deductive arguments.

03. 3 Seminar: Q&A. 2nd debate

6th Week

03.8: Lecture. Argumentation III: Bad argumentation. Biases and fallacies.

03.10. Seminar: Q&A. 3rd debate

2: The ethics of (good and bad) argumentation

7th Week

03.15. Lecture: why do we argue? Problems and limits of rational argumentation.

03. 17 Seminar. Presentation: fragment, *Why we argue?* by Scott of Aikin and Robert B Talisse.

8th week

03.22 Lecture. What is knowledge?

03.24 Seminar. Presentation "Knowledge and the state of nature", E. Craig. "

9th week

03.29 Lecture. Trust, belief, and truth.

03.31 Seminar. Presentation debate: *The Ethics of Belief*, K. Clifford and *Will to Believe*, William James

10th Week

04.12 Lecture. Justification of knowledge.

04.14. Seminar: Presentation, reading TBC.

3. The politics of argumentation

11th week

04.19 Lecture. Epistemology and modernity.

04.21 Seminar. Presentation: *Sapere Aude*, I. Kant. Fragments: *Conocimiento Expropiado*, Fernando Breoncano

12th week

04.26 Lecture. Social epistemology: dependency and public participation.

04.28 Seminar. Presentation reading. TBC.

13th Week

05.3 Epistemic Injustice: knowledge and power.

05.5 Seminar. Presentation: *Epistemic Injustice* (fragments), by Miranda Fricker.

14th week

05. 10 Final conclusions: why knowing how to argue matters.

05.12 Final debate: what responsibility do we have when constructing arguments?

Evaluation

There are three kinds of evaluation: continuous evaluation, final evaluation, and extraordinary evaluation .

Continuous evaluation

A minimum attendance of 80% is required to be eligible for continuous evaluation. It is necessary to pass all tasks to be eligible for continuous evaluation.

Debate: 20%

Presentation: 20 %

Final essay: 60%

Final evaluation TBC

Extraordinary evaluation TBC

Task and deadlines

Final essay 60%

*See also document on Aula Global "About Final Essays"

- ❖ Extension: 3000 words min - 3500 words max.
- ❖ It does not include bibliography, footnotes, etc.
- ❖ Essays below 3000 words will not be graded.
- ❖ Deadline: 17.05 at 23h59

The essay should be about a topic seen in class. Prompts and associated bibliography will be given to the students before April 7th. However, if students want to propose their own topic, they are encouraged to do so. In that case, these are the requirements:

- 1) Schedule office hours before April 1st.
- 2) Present topic, thesis, and bibliography before April 25th

Deadline for doubts and questions about the essay: May 11th

Debate 20%

For the first part of the course, seminars will be dedicated to the organization of a debate. For the debate, students will be assigned a topic and a position on the topic. Students will be in charge of doing research, and organizing the debate. In the sessions where the debate will take place, two groups will expose their positions (15-20 minutes each), debate (30 minutes), and then open the debate to the rest of the class (30 minutes). After the debate, no alter than Friday after their presentation (7 days) at 10 am, each of the groups presenting should upload a summary of the session of a minimum of 1000 words.

Presentation 20%

In the second part of the course, seminars will be dedicated to the presentation and analysis of texts seen in class. The second part of the course presents a critical approach to theory of argumentation, posing special attention into its ethical and political aspects. In these sessions, one group will present the text assigned. Students have to unpack basic claims, present the main thesis, present questions, problems, and provide a conclusion. The group will be in charge of leading the debate with the rest of the class. Students presenting have to submit a summary of their presentation no later than the Monday before their presentation at 10am.

Note on plagiarism

It is considered plagiarism for any work presented as original that is not original. This includes using someone else’s works without proper citation, or our own previous work without proper citation. It is also considered plagiarism to use unauthorized materials during an exam, to facilitate unauthorized materials during an exam, and to copy from another student’s exam with or without the latter’s knowledge. Plagiarism entails the loss of the course for the entire academic year (including extraordinary evaluation).

Evaluation Calendar

Task	Date	Word count	%
Final essay	17.05, at 23h59	Min 2000 - max 2500. See info above as well as document on Aula Global.	60%
Debate	One class. Date to be assigned	See structure above. Summary: 500-1000 words. Friday after their presentation (7 days) 10 am.	20%
Presentation	One class. Date to be assigned.	See structure above. Submit a summary of your presentation at least 48h before your presentation date. Monday at 10 am.	20%
Final exam		TBC	

Extraordinary session		TBC	
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