

# *ENC 3312: Advanced Argumentative Writing, Section 8026, Class# 26756, Fall 2020*

*Instructor:* Zack Shaw

*Synchronous Class Meetings on Zoom:* T (3:00 pm – 3:50 pm) and R (4:05 – 4:55 pm)

*Asynchronous Class Days:* T (3:50 pm – 4:55 pm) R (4:05 pm – 4:55 pm)

*Instructor Email:* Z.shaw@ufl.edu

*Office Hours on Zoom:* By appointment (feel free to email me for an appointment or stay after class to talk)

**Please Note: Class will be held on Zoom synchronously at times in bold in the schedule below. For weeks 1, 3, 4, and 8, we will have a 50-minute Zoom class on both Tuesdays and Thursdays, and for every other week, we will have a 50-minute Zoom class on Tuesday alone.**

## **Course Description**

Though argumentation has traditionally been associated with newspaper op-eds and essays, it takes many other forms in the digital era. Memes, tweets, Facebook posts, and YouTube videos often convey argumentation in visual and textual formats. The best argumentative composers constantly ask how they can prove the claims they make with compelling evidence that makes sense. This upper-division course satisfies the Gen Ed writing (WR) credit focuses on making arguments in both written and multimodal formats, with a particular emphasis on visual rhetoric. We'll spend part of the semester specifically considering the role of media, technologies, and visual culture in composing arguments. We will examine rhetorical argumentative structures and theories, ranging from classical to contemporary rhetoric. Finally, we will consider how we read arguments in order to develop better strategies for composing our own arguments. The assignments for the course will allow students to be creative and think critically through text, images, and a range of media, all while engaging with current sociopolitical ideas and debates.

## **COVID Statement**

This class will be comprised of a mix of asynchronous and synchronous learning (via Zoom), with instances of the latter explicitly identified in the Course Schedule section of this syllabus, and on Canvas. This format has been chosen after considering the various challenges of online instruction in general, as well as the specific challenges of teaching a composition and discussion-based class online.

Also, I am fully cognizant that current events have had different and disproportionate effects (health, financial, etc.) on all of us and those close to us so I want to advocate for a mutual sense of understanding and communication as we work through this term. As your instructor, my role

is to introduce you to our class material, help you understand it, and support you in the successful completion of the term as you develop your own insights and arguments. Please reach out to me if there are ever any outside circumstances impacting your work in this class and we will work together on finding a solution.

## Required Texts

*All readings, including the textbooks, will be made available on Canvas.*

### Textbooks:

Williams, Joseph M. and Joseph Bizup. *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. 2015. ISBN: 978-0-321-95330-8

Kirszner, Laurie G., and Stephen R. Mandell. *Practical Argument: a Text and Anthology*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, Macmillan Learning, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-319-02856-5

## Course Projects

**Total Word Count: 6000**

- *Class Participation* (150 pts – 1400 words) Everyone must come to class on time and prepared to contribute meaningfully to the discussion; this means that if there is a reading listed on days with Zoom classes on the syllabus, you'll come to class having read the material beforehand. As this will be an online version of the course I was initially planning to teach, your participation will be split evenly between your participation in the Zoom sessions (75 points) and in the discussion board posts (75 points, 1400 words over 14 posts), which will be due each Thursday. Use the discussion board as a place to prove to me that you've done the reading for each week, and also to answer the prompts for each post; I expect to see you connect the ideas from the readings and even quotes where possible to the discussion board. According to the attendance policy (below), there will only be 15 total synchronous classes for the course, and each unexcused absence after the first three will affect your participation grade and missing more than five classes will result in a failing grade for the course.
- *Argument Analysis* (1000 words, 175 pts) For this assignment, you will use the argumentative and rhetorical "tools" we have examined up to this point in class. Your task is to locate a written argument (a news editorial, an essay, a film or book review, a review of another kind of media, etc.) and analyze the structure of the argument. Once you have a good sense of how the argument is constructed and have determined whether that construction is or is not effective in making the argument, write an analysis of the argument. Remember, part of your task in writing this analysis is to show more than just how the argument was constructed, but also to argue that your analysis is accurate and logical. Your task is **not** to argue with the argument (**not** to say "I disagree because..."), but to consider how that argument is made, what authorial biases might be prevalent in the making of the argument, what the structure of the argument is, and what the author could do to further

prove their argument true. Be sure to include a URL of the argument you are analyzing, so I can read the original argument.

- *Argument Response* (800 words, 150 pts) There are probably dozens of arguments that you'd like to respond to right now. So here's your opportunity. For this assignment, identify an argument that has been posed in writing—this can be anything from a political argument to a film review. Your task is to evaluate the rhetorical situation of the original argument and respond to it. Make your argument. Be sure to consider how you structure your argument, your style, tone, and approach. I'll be grading for all of the basics, but will also be looking for the sophistication of your argumentative strategies. Don't just point out the obvious. Dig into the argument. This is not an opportunity to voice an opinion; rather, it is the chance to show that you understand how to evaluate and respond in writing to argument. Keep in mind that your essay will be relatively short—about 3 pages—so you won't have too much space in which to respond. So, pick your topic carefully. Try to avoid topics like “evolution” or “creation” and instead focus on concise, controlled arguments.

**Political Caveat:** Our class will be an open space where we should be able to embrace and see the logic within different ideologies, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds. The current political climate of the United States is terribly bifurcated, though it hasn't always been this way and nor will it stay this way—hopefully. Everyone's perspectives and opinions are valid, provided that they do not infringe upon the rights of other people or suggest a bigoted world view.

- *Image Argument* (800 words, 150 pts) Construct either an image or a sequence of images that argues something, whether by its sequencing or by ideological argumentation within a single image (we will discuss examples of this in class). Your images should not contain text. Please keep in mind the differentiation between rhetoric (the use of signs and signifiers motivated by beliefs or argumentation) and argument (the concrete process of claims supported by evidence); your image arguments will almost certainly have rhetorical perspective, yet they should also attempt to make a definitive argument. Next, answer the following prompt in a traditional essay format: Do visual arguments matter? Can images argue? Given what we have discussed thus far in the semester, what role do visual arguments play in contemporary American (U.S.) culture/media/information? For this assignment, write an argumentative essay about the value and use of visual arguments. I will be looking for how you structure your argument and the appeals you use. Be alert to how you use evidence versus opinion.
- *Multimodal Meta-media Argument* (1000 words, 175 pts) This is a group assignment that we will complete in pairs (with one group of three if necessary), and everyone will be responsible for 1000 words separately (you can let me know who wrote which section). Choose one of the following options for your multimodal argument:
  - The Persuasive Video Podcast (video script – about 800 words, media statement – about 150-200 words): With your partner, record a Zoom session structured like a video podcast (we will discuss examples of video podcasts in class). Make a collaborative argument, with a thesis statement, about media (a

show on Netflix, a YouTube channel, a recent film, etc.). You might argue about the different layers of communication in your media (how the sound is working in conjunction with the visual, or even how they aren't working well together). Analyze the audiovisual rhetoric of the media you're working with, making an evaluative argument. You might imagine this is one episode out of a series where you do something like this in each episode. You may also decide to use humor for your video podcast, but just be sure to stay persuasive as well. Keep it specific, rather than general, because you should plan on using about 1000 words on your script and saving the final 150-200 words for a brief statement about how you were able to make your argument multimodal and why you decided to use certain features like audio jingles or clips from the media you're discussing. Tell me briefly, why you feel that your argument is effective.

- The Public Service Announcement (video script – about 150-500 words, media statement – the remaining words to reach 1000 total): Make a short (2-6 minutes) persuasive video about something that should be changed or something that people should be aware of today. You might decide to take a humorous stance with this, but if you do so, it should still be persuasive. Consider your audience and how you will meet the demands of your audience by your use of rhetorical appeals. In your media statement, describe the process of making the announcement and the choices you made in order to cater to the audience you were targeting. Also describe why you feel this media format is effective at making an argument to this targeted audience. How were you able to communicate in multiple ways beyond the actual verbal communication you presented—how is your argument multimodal and why is that significant for your audience? What was the editing process for the video and how does it contribute to the rhetoric/rhetorical appeal of the video?
- Imagetext Argument (divide the 1000 total words between the image-text argument and a media statement – you'll likely have more words for the media statement): *Imagetext* is the term for a category of visual-verbal media first used by W.J.T Mitchell to describe how text and images are read and seen in complex and reflexive ecologies. To make your imagetext argument, you might draw small comics panels with characters and speech bubbles, or you may make a found image collage using images found on Google (keep the URL for your images and submit them in the media statement). You may decide to make a Zine with your partner and take photographs of your Zine for your submission. I'm open to any kind of argument that you would like to make in this format (something you'd like to see changed in today's world, an argument about media or even about the relationship between text and images or about the lack of sound), but be sure to keep a target audience in mind. You may decide to use humor, but again, please remain persuasive. In the media statement, discuss who the target audience of your imagetext argument is and how you feel this imagetext media format is particularly well-suited for this

audience. Explain the choices you made in making this media format, how you feel it was particularly effective as a form of communication, what its shortcomings might be, and/or how you might revise this for a second attempt or second version. Discuss the lack of sound communication in your imagetext argument as well.

- *Making an Argument* (1000 words, 200 pts) Using the information provided throughout the course, select one of the topic questions listed below, make a focused claim in response to that question, and write an argumentative essay about the topic. You may alternatively argue for something that is not included in the list below (to be honest, I would much prefer to read about your own original arguments, but the possibilities below could help stimulate ideas or work as choices that are relevant to you). Be sure to establish a strong, specific claim within the topic, conduct research to learn more about the topic beyond what you may already know, provide substantial reasons for your claim, and supply reliable evidence in support of that claim.
  - What is the best film from the past decade and why?
  - What is the most important film from the past decade and why?
  - Should sustainability be an integral part of all college curricula?
  - How important is or isn't the consumption of meat to good nutrition?
  - How has information technology "improved" your life?
  - Is it acceptable to use animals in scientific research?
  - Is a college degree really valuable in the current economic climate?
  - Should colleges begin using electronic textbooks exclusively rather than print textbooks?
  - Should college students be required to demonstrate proficiency in a second language?
  - Should animals be kept in zoos?

#### Grading Scale

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

## Course Policies

### 1. Assignments.

You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.

## 2. Attendance Policies.

ENG 3312 is a participation-oriented, skills-based writing course, which means that you will build your skills incrementally and systematically in each class throughout the semester. Much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class.

- If you miss more than 5 Zoom class sessions you will fail the course. Each absence beyond 3 will lower your participation grade.
- 3 times late to class (by 5 minutes or more) will equal one absence.
- Only absences involving religious holidays or university-sponsored events are exempt.
- When you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you've missed *and* come to the next class prepared; contact a classmate to find out what work you've missed.
- Absence is not an excuse for late work. You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.
- Here is a link to the UF Attendance Policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

## 3. Paper Format & Submission.

Papers will be double-spaced, and in a readable 12-point font. They must be submitted via the designated Canvas

## 4. Late Work.

Meeting all assignment deadlines is key to avoid falling behind. However, if you find yourself unable to turn an assignment in on time, the procedure is as follows:

- You must notify me at least 24 hours in advance.
- The assignment must then be turned in no later than three days after the initial due date.
- The maximum score possible for any late work is an 80%, or a B-

## 5. Paper Maintenance Responsibilities

Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.

## 6. Plagiarism & Academic Honesty.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the [Student Honor Code](#). The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007  
<<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>)

*University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.*

## **7. Classroom Behavior.**

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds.

Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

Laptops and phones are only open for composing research or reading. No Internet scrolling during class.

## **8. Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodation should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)), which will provide appropriate documentation to give to your instructor early in the semester.

## **9. UF Grading Policy**

For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## **10. Grade Appeals**

In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade with Dr. Kenneth Kidd ([kbkidd@ufl.edu](mailto:kbkidd@ufl.edu)), the Undergraduate Coordinator of the English Department. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

## **11. Course Evaluations**

Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

## **12. Sexual Harassment.**

*UF's policy on Sexual Harassment:* The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community:

<https://titleix.ufl.edu/policy-statement/>

## **13. Policy on Environmental Sustainability.**

Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing electronic versions of print texts when they are available, or used copies of print texts. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing

them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County Friends of the Library annual book sale).

#### 14. U Matter, We Care.

The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

### Tentative Schedule

\*\* Subject to Change \*\*

Week 1 – Introduction	<p>9/1 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Introduction to the class, overview of the syllabus and assignments, and introduction to assignment 1</p> <p>9/3 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Review Williams and Bizup Lesson 2 and Lesson 3; Read <a href="#">Passive Voice webpage</a>; Becoming an Activist activity; Discussion board post #1 – What writing classes have you taken so far at UF and how have they valued/graded for argumentation? Read: Williams and Bizup, Lesson 1 and Lesson 2</p>
Week 2 – What is active writing?	<p>9/8 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Review Williams and Bizup Lesson 3; To Be or Not To Be—read <a href="#">To Be Webpage</a>; Verb Salad Activity Read: Williams and Bizup Lesson 3</p> <p>9/10 – Discussion board post #2 – Take a sentence from an essay you’ve submitted before for a writing class and revise it to be more active; post both the before and after sentences</p>
Week 3 – Rhetorical Analysis	<p>9/15 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – What is rhetoric?; rhetorical appeals; What is rhetorical analysis? 1-minute speeches and rhetorical appeals Read: Kirsznner and Mandell What is a Rhetorical Analysis? PDF Page 204, skim 205-207, 208-224</p> <p>9/17 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b>; What is Rhetorical Analysis?; Chris Kluwe Rhetorical Analysis PDF; Discussion about Chris Kluwe’s rhetoric; Discussion board</p>



	<p>post #3 – What are your thoughts about our rhetorical analysis of Kluwe’s writing? How might you use this exercise in the future when reading other writing or writing your own material?</p>
<p>Week 4 – Concise Writing</p>	<p>9/22 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Review Lesson 8; Word Jenga activity; simplifying writing Read: Williams and Bizup Lesson 7 and Lesson 8</p> <p>9/24 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b>; check in on Argument Analysis; view and discuss the Commas, Semi-colons, and Dashes PowerPoint in the files tab on Canvas; Discussion board post #4 – How might clarity become problematic with sentences that are long and indirect? Is it still possible to write creatively while simplifying writing this much? Feel free to respond to others’ posts as your post Read: Williams and Bizup Lesson 4</p> <p><b>**Argument Analysis Due 9/24 at 5 pm</b></p>
<p>Week 5 – Technical Description: What is it and how do we move beyond it to make arguments?</p>	<p>9/29 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Introduction to Argument Response Assignment; Bob Ross Technical Description Activity in Zoom Breakout groups</p> <p>10/1 – Discussion board post #5 – Did you enjoy the Bob Ross activity? Did you find it difficult or easy to describe exactly what you were viewing to your partner? In what cases do you need to have description or summary in your argumentative writing? Read: <a href="#">Technical Descriptions and Definitions Webpage</a></p>
<p>Week 6 – Evidence and Logic; Crafting the Perfect Thesis Statement</p>	<p>10/6 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Thesis Statement Checklist – What’s in a Good Thesis Statement?; Examples from the “archives”</p> <p>10/8 – Discussion board post #6 – Find an example of a previous thesis statement you’ve written, paste it in your post, and explain why it is not as strong as it could be (using the checklist we made in class for what’s in a good thesis statement), and how you could improve it. After, compare it to the checklist once more – does your comparison show improvement from the first draft? Feel free to use bullet points or attachments if you feel it’s necessary to help you consult the checklist and make comparisons. Read: Indiana University “Recognizing and Fixing Weak Thesis Statements”</p>
<p>Week 7 – Evidence and Logic; what you can do with sources</p>	<p>10/13 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Logical Fallacies; What do I need to prove and how do I do it?; Do I need to Prove it? Activity</p>

	<p>Read: Purdue Owl webpages: <a href="#">Logic in Argumentative Writing</a>, <a href="#">Using Logic</a>, <a href="#">Logical Fallacies</a>, <a href="#">Using Logic in Writing</a>, <a href="#">Improprieties</a></p> <p><b>**Argument Response Assignment Due 10/14 at 5 pm</b></p> <p>10/15 – Discussion board post #7 – What are the best ways to find sources according to <i>Practical Argument</i>? Do you have any tips and tricks you can provide to other students, links, helpful websites, advice about platforms/journals/databases?; alternatively, you can post about comments you have about the Purdue webpages on logic</p> <p>Read: <a href="#">UNC Writing Center Webpage on Evidence</a></p>
<p>Week 8 – Can images argue? Visual Rhetoric, Argumentation, and media</p>	<p>10/20 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Introduction to Image Argument Assignment; discussion of Barthes’ “Rhetoric of the Image” in breakout groups Read: Roland Barthes “Rhetoric of the Image”</p> <p>10/22 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b>; Can Images Argue PowerPoint; Discussion board post #8 – Find an image online and conduct a very brief rhetorical analysis about its colors, framing and positioning, and etc. Include the image or a link to your image in your post. Is the image arguing something or evoking a specific rhetoric? (this might be easiest with advertisements, but try your best to find something with no text or minimal text)</p>
<p>Week 9 – Visual Rhetoric, Argumentation, and media</p>	<p>10/27 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Argumentation in Film – what media does what (media ecologies)?; visual rhetoric PowerPoint</p> <p>10/29 – Discussion board post #9 – Comment on Berger’s book, “Ways of Seeing”; feel free to comment on others’ posts as your response; you can discuss something that interests you, something you hadn’t thought about, something you don’t understand, something you don’t agree with, or other ideas you have Read: John Berger <i>Ways of Seeing</i> p. 7-33</p> <p><b>**Image Argument Assignment Due 10/30 at 5 pm</b></p>
<p>Week 10 – Audiovisual rhetoric: Making meaning and being persuasive with sound</p>	<p>11/3 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Introduction to Multimodal Meta-media Argument; <i>Psycho</i> shower scene and remixing</p> <p>11/5 – Discussion board post #10 – Comment on the <i>Kairos</i> hypertext article, “Navigating the Soundscape: Composing with Audio”; feel free to comment on others’ posts as your</p>

	<p>response; you might discuss something that interests you, something you hadn't thought about, something you don't understand, something you don't agree with, or other ideas you have</p> <p>Read: Rodrigue et al. "Navigating the Soundscape: Composing with Audio" <a href="#">Introduction</a>, <a href="#">Music</a>, <a href="#">Sound Effects</a></p>
<p>Week 11 – Audiovisual rhetoric: Making meaning and being persuasive with sound continued</p>	<p>11/10 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Review "Navigating the Soundscape: Composing with Audio" and discussion board posts; copyright and the struggle of modern media making—what is yours and what is mine</p> <p>Read: Watch <a href="#">this YouTube video</a> from Tom Scott</p> <p>11/12 – Discussion board post #11 – Comment on the YouTube video from Tom Scott; feel free to respond to each other's posts and also about what you knew before, or didn't know but know now</p> <p>Read: Kirsznner and Mandell PDF pages 775-780, skim 780-785</p>
<p>Week 12 – Making Peer Review Work for You</p>	<p>11/17 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Introduction to Making an Argument Assignment; cause and effect argumentation; connect with your peer reviewer</p> <p>Read: Kirsznner and Mandell Understanding Cause and Effect Relationships PDF pages 711-715, 718-721</p> <p>11/19 – Discussion board post #12 – What would you like your peer reviewer to focus on most in their review of your work? In your previous experiences with peer review, what has worked well, and what hasn't?</p> <p><b>**Multimodal Meta-media Argument Due 11/20 at 5 pm</b></p>
<p>Week 13 – Thanksgiving break!</p>	<p>11/24 – Writing Day – Discussion board post #13 – Reflect on the multimodal composing project; did you enjoy the project and do you see yourself making media in the future?</p> <p>11/26 – No class—Thanksgiving Break!</p>
<p>Week 14 – Peer Review: Arguing about how to make our arguments more argumentative!</p>	<p>12/1 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – How to peer review effectively; Peer Review Workshop</p> <p>12/3 – Discussion board post #14 – What worked well with this peer review? How will you approach peer review next time?</p> <p>Read: Kirsznner and Mandell Revising Your Essay PDF pages 453-458</p>
<p>Week 15 – Semester Review</p>	<p>12/8 – <b>Synchronous Zoom Class Session</b> – Zoom check in for Last Day of Class; semester review; evaluations</p>

	<b>**Making an Argument Assignment Due 12/9 at 5 pm</b>
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