

# WR 122: Argument

## Winter 2022

### THE PURPOSE OF THIS SYLLABUS

Welcome to Writing 122! This syllabus contains all the vital information about this course—what you'll be learning, what will be expected of you, and what you can expect from me. In short, it states what is required of both of us during the term. This is a valuable document, so please refer to it often. **The better you know the syllabus, the better the chance that you'll do well in the course!**

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

- Name: Matt Usner
- Email: [matt.usner@linnbenton.edu](mailto:matt.usner@linnbenton.edu)
- Phone: (971) 208-7175 (call or text)
- Virtual Office Hours: I'm happy to schedule a Zoom meeting with you at any point during the term if you have questions or concerns; just call, text, or email me to set up a time.

### WEEKLY CLASS MEETINGS VIA ZOOM

Thursdays 10:00 AM to 11:50 AM via Zoom. Use [THIS LINK](#) to access our meetings. If you've never used Zoom, start [here](#). Please have it downloaded and ready to go before our first virtual meeting. Also, take a look [here](#) for some success strategies for making the most of our Zoom meetings.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITE

WR 122: Argumentation "Emphasizes the logical means of supporting claims in argumentative essays, thesis statements, and reasoning. Includes logic, style, and research. Prerequisite: WR 121 English Composition or equivalent with a grade of 'C' or better."

### COURSE OVERVIEW

The focus of our coursework will be *argument*--by which I mean a process of inquiry driven by *reason*. This course is grounded in the premise that argument is everywhere—at school, at home, in the workplace, in our communities, and in the world at large. Argument is used to try to persuade us of all kinds of things, such as voting for someone, or buying something, or believing something. In this class, we'll aim to understand, analyze, and construct different types of arguments. Along the way, I hope you'll reflect on some of your existing ideas and beliefs--and be nudged to consider new perspectives. My goal is to make this class a productive space that promotes viewpoint diversity and stimulates thoughtful, informed discussion.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who complete this course will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of audience, purpose, and genre in reading and writing.
- Analyze and compose a variety of argumentative texts.
- Use appropriate argumentative elements and strategies in written texts, such as persuasive appeals, counterarguments, and Toulmin and Rogerian methods.
- Practice foundational and advanced research methods by finding, evaluating, incorporating, and citing appropriate sources.
- Write in clear, effective language.

## REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- Access to the online textbook *How Arguments Work* by Anna Mills. The book can be accessed online [here](#) or downloaded in PDF [here](#). The readings from it will be on our Moodle site.
- Access to Google Docs and Drive. Google Docs is a free text editing program included with [Google Drive](#), a free, cloud-based file storage system that you can access from your school email. From your LBCC email inbox, click on the “Google Apps” tile icon at the top right corner and choose “Drive.” Let me know if you need help.

## ONLINE LEARNING WITH MOODLE

There are no required physical textbooks for this course. All course content will be posted on our class Moodle site, and this is where you will be submitting your assignments. Course content will be organized into weekly sections. Each week’s section will be made available at **10:00 AM on the Thursday before the upcoming week**. So for example, the Week 2 materials will be available starting at 10:00 AM on Thursday of Week 1. I always encourage you to start your weekly work as early as you can, but be aware that this isn’t a self-paced course where you can work ahead and finish the term early. If you are new to Moodle, I suggest taking a look at the college’s [Current eLearning Students](#) page. You can also contact the Student Help Desk at 541-917-4630 or [student.helpdesk@linnbenton.edu](mailto:student.helpdesk@linnbenton.edu).

Because online learning requires a high level of independence and self-motivation, students who lack time management skills and self-motivation typically don’t fare well in this course. You give yourself the best chance to do well in the course by being proactive: logging-in to our course site frequently, reading online instructions carefully, paying close attention to the course calendar, and contacting me well ahead of time when you have questions, not a few hours before an assignment is due. Students who are not earning a passing grade at midterm and/or are not actively pursuing the course (i.e., many missed assignments, infrequent log-ins, etc.), may want to consider withdrawing (see more information about this below in the “Last Day to Withdraw” section).

Because this is a fully online course, you need to be comfortable with basic computer skills and have frequent access (ideally daily access) to a computer and the internet. You’re in good shape if you know how to navigate a web browser, post to a discussion forum, send and receive email, open PDFs, use Zoom, and use a text-editor such as Google Docs or Microsoft Word. **The college does not recommend using your phone as your sole computer device for online classes.** You may wish to review [the college’s minimum and standard recommendations for student technology equipment](#) for more information.

## REQUIRED ZOOM SESSIONS ON THURSDAYS 10:00-11:50 AM

Our class has required Zoom sessions each Wednesday from 11:00 to 11:50 AM. (The link to access these sessions is in the “Virtual Meeting Times Via Zoom” section above and will also be posted on Moodle.) These weekly sessions will not be lectures. Yes, I will be doing some talking, but the majority of the time will be devoted to discussing, working on, and giving/receiving feedback on assignments. **Be sure that you have access to a computer or tablet--not just your phone--during Zoom sessions so that you can be working on our assignments.** Our goal will be to make this real-time presence a worthwhile experience. **Your attendance and participation at these sessions is required and will constitute a portion of your final grade.** I will log-on at approximately 9:50 A.M each Thursday. Please join by no later than 10:00 AM. I would really appreciate if we all have our cameras on--this really helps build community. We see each other only once a week; let’s make that time together as valuable as possible! (I’ve listed a few success strategies for Zoom sessions [here](#); take a look!)

## COMMUNICATING WITH ME

Aside from our weekly Zoom meetings, my main communication tool with you is **email** so it's **essential that you check [your LBCC account](#) at least once daily**. In addition to having useful reminders for upcoming tasks, my emails will also often provide valuable course content that complements the current assignment we are working on. **Checking email frequently and reading my messages carefully is your best way to stay current in the class!** I have a 24-hour turnaround when replying to emails Monday through Friday, although I typically reply much sooner than that. On weekends, I typically do not check email. When you have questions about an assignment, do not wait until a few hours before it is due to email me. Instead, be working on the course content early, and allow yourself time for questions--and time for me to answer those questions. I'm also happy to videoconference with you; just email me to schedule a time.

## ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Major Assignments:** These are the most rigorous assignments of the term.
  - Argument Analysis: An argument analysis focuses on the specific methods that the author of a text uses to achieve their purpose--or not achieve, as the case may be. In this type of analysis, you are making an argument about how effective the writer's use of language and argumentative techniques are.
  - Annotated Bibliography: This assignment will require you to gather a collection of sources that present various perspectives on the debate you will be taking a stance on in your Researched Argument.
  - Researched Argument: The longest and most complex of the major assignments, the researched argument will require you to present an argument on a debatable issue.
2. **Minor Assignments:** There will be **6 smaller writing assignments**. I call these "minor" to distinguish them from the "major" assignments, but that's not to say that they are not important. They will be a bit less rigorous than the major assignments, but they are designed to reinforce key skills needed for the major writing assignments. These will typically (but not always) be due by Sunday.
3. **Reading Responses:** There will be **6 reading response assignments**. These will be fairly short, informal responses to some of our reading assignments. Think of these responses as opportunities to engage meaningfully with our readings--to identify key ideas, to pose questions, to make connections to our other writing assignments. These will be due by Wednesday of most weeks.

In addition to the assignments outlined above, **your active participation is also required during our weekly Zoom Sessions each Thursday from 10:00-11:50 AM**.

## GRADING AND REVISION POLICY

My experience teaching college writing has shown me that most students concern themselves more with writing for a grade than with writing to learn the practices and mindsets that writers use to communicate effectively. Dr. Asao Inoue of Arizona State University sums up this idea nicely:

*[U]sing conventional grading systems to compute course grades often leads us to think more about our grade than about our writing, to worry more about pleasing a teacher or fooling one than about figuring out what we really want to learn, or how we want to communicate something to someone for some purpose. Additionally, conventional grading may cause us to be reluctant to take risks with our writing or ideas. It doesn't allow writers to fail at writing, which many suggest is a primary way in which people learn from their practices.*

For the reasons outlined above, I use a grading system that clearly spells out what work is required to attain

a final course grade. **The higher the grade, the more work that is required. In other words, if you want an A as your final grade, it will require more work than if you want a B.** When it comes to improving your writing, my firm belief is that “more is better.”

Instead of assigning letter grades or points or percentages for your assignments, I will give them one of three marks:

- **Complete:** this means that you submitted your assignment on time, and it meets all of the standards spelled out in the instructions. (This is good!)
- **Incomplete:** this means that you submitted your assignment on time, but it needs to be revised in order to be considered complete. (This is ok because I’ll give you feedback to help you revise!)
- **Not Completed:** this means that you did not submit your assignment by the due date, and no credit or makeup will be given. (This is a missed opportunity that can’t be made up, but depending on the final course grade you’re pursuing, it may not have a negative impact. See the grading table below for details.)

**As long as you submit your assignments on time, most of them can be revised within one week after I give feedback on them.** (Note: Peer feedback assignments are excluded from this revision policy.) You can revise **as often as you wish until Wednesday of Week 11.** This means that you may be submitting assignments multiple times until they are marked complete. That’s ok; writing is a process that needs to be practiced often! Be aware, however, that **if a revision is not completed within a week of my giving you feedback, the option to revise will then be forfeited, and the assignment will be permanently marked “incomplete.”**

**An important note: Not completing an assignment by its due date means that no credit or revision option will be given.** Missing a due date means that you forfeit the opportunity to complete that assignment. Thus, it’s always in your best interest to submit an attempt--no matter how basic--by the due date.

Even though your assignments won’t be receiving traditional letter grades or points, you will be receiving lots of feedback from me. You will know how well you’re doing in the course based on my feedback and on the number of assignments you have successfully completed compared to how many you need to complete to earn the grade you desire.

**The table below spells out the requirements needed to earn a final grade of A, B, and C. Study it carefully!** (I suggest you copy [this completion checklist](#) to keep track of your progress.)

	To earn an A you must...	To earn a B you must...	To earn a C you must...
<b>Major Assignments</b>	Earn a “complete” on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>2</u> Argument Analyses</li> <li>● <u>1</u> Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>● <u>1</u> Researched Argument</li> </ul>	Earn a “complete” on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>1</u> Argument Analysis</li> <li>● <u>1</u> Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>● <u>1</u> Researched Argument</li> </ul>	Earn a “complete” on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>1</u> Argument Analysis</li> <li>● <u>1</u> Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>● <u>1</u> Researched Argument</li> </ul>
<b>Minor Assignments</b>	Earn a “complete” on <b><u>6 out of 6</u></b> minor assignments.	Earn a “complete” on <b><u>5 out of 6</u></b> minor assignments.	Earn a “complete” on <b><u>4 out of 6</u></b> minor assignments.
<b>Reading Responses</b>	Earn a “complete” on <b><u>6 out of 6</u></b> responses.	Earn a “complete” on <b><u>5 out of 6</u></b> responses.	Earn a “complete” on <b><u>4 out of 6</u></b> responses.
<b>Zoom Attendance</b>	Be an active participant in <b><u>8 out of 9 Zoom sessions.</u></b>	Be an active participant in <b><u>7 out of 9 Zoom sessions.</u></b>	Be an active participant in <b><u>6 out of 9 Zoom sessions.</u></b>

For grades of D or F, I will determine which is most appropriate based on how close you are to earning a grade of C.

## IMPORTANT COURSE POLICIES AND CAMPUS RESOURCES

- **No-Show Policy:** Students may be **dropped from the class** if they do not complete the first week's assignments or attend the first Zoom session.
- **Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** Presenting someone else's ideas in writing as if they are your own is plagiarism, and it is a serious academic offense. **Any plagiarized elements in your writing will result in, at minimum, a zero for the assignment and, at maximum, automatic course failure.** If you ever borrow information from an outside source to put in an essay, you must cite it properly. If you're not sure how to do this, please ask me for help before submitting your assignment. Once you submit an assignment, the policy mentioned above will be enforced. I strongly suggest that you review [the college's administrative rule on academic integrity and honesty](#).
- **LBCC Student Email:** You are responsible for all communication sent to [your student email](#), so be sure that you are checking it frequently.
- **The LBCC Writing Center:** [The LBCC Writing Center](#) (WH-200) is a fantastic free resource for students interested in improving their writing skills.
- **The LBCC Library:** [The LBCC library](#) is located on the first floor of Willamette Hall.
- **Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR):** LBCC is committed to inclusiveness and equal access to higher education. If you have approved accommodations through [the Center for Accessibility Resources \(CFAR\)](#) and would like to use your accommodations in this class, please talk to your instructor as soon as possible to discuss your needs. If you believe you may need accommodations but are not yet registered with CFAR, please contact them for steps on how to apply.
- **Non-Discrimination Policy:** Everyone in the LBCC community has the right to think, learn, and work together in an environment of respect, tolerance, and goodwill, and we will honor that in our class.
- **Title IX Reporting Policy:** If you or another student are the victim of any form of sexual misconduct (including dating/domestic violence, stalking, sexual harassment), or any form of gender discrimination, LBCC can assist you. You can [report](#) a violation of our [sexual misconduct policy](#) directly to our Title IX Coordinator. You may also report the issue to a faculty member, who is required to notify the Coordinator, or you may make an appointment to speak confidentially to our Advising and Career Center by calling 541-917-4780.
- **Basic Needs:** Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the [Roadrunner Resource Center](#).
- **Last Day to Withdraw:** Each term, the Friday that concludes Week 7 is the last day for students to withdraw from a course. If you are still enrolled after this point, you must receive a grade. Be aware that withdrawing from a course can impact your financial aid, so be sure to contact the [Financial Aid Office](#) before withdrawing.

## COURSE CALENDAR

The week-by-week schedule below contains all course topics and assignment due dates; follow it carefully!

DATE	TOPICS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND DUE DATES
<b>WEEK 1</b> Mon 1/3 to Sun 1/9	<b>THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT ARGUMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Response #1 <b>due Wed</b> (see Moodle Week 1 for reading)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoom session on Thursday, 1/6 from 10:00-11:50</b> (use <a href="#">THIS LINK</a>)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 2</b> Mon 1/10 to Sun 1/16	<b>UNDERSTANDING AND SUMMARIZING ARGUMENTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Response #2 <b>due Wed</b> (see Moodle Week 2 for reading)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoom session on Thursday, 1/13 from 10:00-11:50</b> (use <a href="#">THIS LINK</a>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minor Assignment #1: Argument Summary and SOAPStone Analysis <b>due Sun</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 3</b> Mon 1/17 to Sun 1/23	<b>BEGINNING TO ASSESS ARGUMENTS (LOGOS)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Response #3 <b>due Wed</b> (see Moodle Week 3 for reading)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoom session on Thursday, 1/20 from 10:00-11:50</b> (use <a href="#">THIS LINK</a>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minor Assignment #2: Argument Assessment <b>due Sun</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 4</b> Mon 1/24 to Sun 1/30	<b>ANALYZING APPEALS (PATHOS AND ETHOS)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Response #4 <b>due Wed</b> (see Moodle Week 4 for reading)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoom session on Thursday, 1/27 from 10:00-11:50</b> (use <a href="#">THIS LINK</a>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minor Assignment #3: Appeals Analysis <b>due Sun</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 5</b> Mon 1/31 to Sun 2/6	<b>WRITING AN ARGUMENT ANALYSIS AND OFFERING PEER FEEDBACK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Response #5 <b>due Wed</b> (see Moodle Week 5 for reading)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoom session on Thursday, 2/3 from 10:00-11:50</b> (use <a href="#">THIS LINK</a>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Sign up by Thursday if you're doing Minor Assignment #4: Peer Feedback</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Argument Analysis #1 draft <b>due Sun</b> (required only for those participating in <b>Minor Assignment #4: Peer Feedback</b>)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 6</b> Mon 2/7 to Sun 2/13	<b>INTRODUCING THE RESEARCHED ARGUMENT AND CHOOSING A TOPIC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minor Assignment #4: Peer Feedback <b>due Tue</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Argument Analysis #1 final draft <b>due Wed</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoom session on Thursday, 2/10 from 10:00-11:50</b> (use <a href="#">THIS LINK</a>)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Post your topic choice for Researched Argument by Thursday Zoom</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 7</b> Mon 2/14 to Sun 2/20	<b>FINDING SOURCES AND EVALUATING CREDIBILITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Response #6 <b>due Wed</b> (see Moodle Week 7 for reading)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoom session on Thursday, 2/17 from 10:00-11:50</b> (use <a href="#">THIS LINK</a>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minor Assignment #5: Evaluating Credibility <b>due Sun</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 8</b> Mon 2/21 to Sun 2/27	<b>WRITING AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoom session on Thursday, 2/24 from 10:00-11:50</b> (use <a href="#">THIS LINK</a>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Bibliography <b>due Sun</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Argument Analysis #2 final draft <b>due Sun</b> (required only for those pursuing an A)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 9</b> Mon 2/28 to Sun 3/6	<b>WRITING A RESEARCHED ARGUMENT AND OFFERING PEER FEEDBACK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Zoom session on Thursday, 3/3 from 10:00-11:50</b> (use <a href="#">THIS LINK</a>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Sign-up by Thursday if you're doing Minor Assignment #6: Peer Feedback</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Researched Argument draft <b>due Sun</b> (required only for those participating in <b>Minor Assignment #6: Peer Feedback</b>)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 10</b> Mon 3/7 to Sun 3/13	<b>WORKING ON REVISIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minor Assignment #6: Peer Feedback <b>due Tue</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Researched Argument final draft <b>due Wed</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ No required Zoom session this week; contact me for individual appointments</li></ul>
<b>WEEK 11</b> Mon 3/14 to Sun 3/20	<b>LAST CHANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS AND SUBMIT REVISIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ All revisions <b>due by Wednesday 3/17 at 11:59 PM</b>; no work accepted after this.</li></ul>