University at Albany (SUNY)
College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity

CEHC 210: Critical Inquiry and Communication
Spring 2017
(Monday/Wednesday 4:15-5:35 pm; 116 Social Sciences)

Instructors:
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Mission of the Course
The purpose of this course is to aid students in the development of their critical thinking and communication skills. The course is required for the BA/BS in Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity. For the first quarter of the course, students will work in teams to develop literature reviews of student selected topics. Then students will individually build arguments, counter arguments, and evaluations of arguments using the literature reviews. At the end of the semester, the student teams will build a briefing book and debate with each other. Finally, students will work alone on a final paper.

If you have questions about the appropriateness of your background for succeeding in the course, please see the instructor during the first week of class.

Course Learning Objectives
Upon completion of this course, you should be able to accomplish the following activities:
1. Develop a literature review which synthesizes information on a topic.
2. Develop persuasive arguments that include claims, counter-claims, and evidence.
3. Assess the strengths and weakness of arguments.
4. Communicate arguments in both written and oral forms.
5. Critically assess evidence within arguments.
6. Utilize technology to effectively and efficiently build arguments.
7. Work effectively in teams to find answers to questions, develop solutions for complex challenges, and present persuasive arguments in relation to critical issues in homeland security, emergency preparedness, and cybersecurity.

Requirements of the Course
Students' final grades will be based on the following assignments:
1) Team literature review (10%), 100 points
2) Four individual writing assignments (40%), 400 points
3) Team debate (oral and written) (20%), 200 points
4) Final individual paper (20%), and 200 points
5) Participation and other assignments (10%), 100 points
Total 1000 points
First, students working in eight teams of five students will develop a literature review of a topic related to emergency preparedness, homeland security, or cybersecurity. The students will develop a summary of the major articles on the topic and then synthesize these summaries into a coherent literature review of 10-15 pages. The eight literature reviews created by the student teams will be used for the four individual written assignments and the four student team debates.

Second, students working individually will complete four individual writing assignments (and each individual writing assignment will have three parts). Students will begin by developing an argument and presenting evidence to support this argument (2 pages). Students will then exchange their paper with a classmate and both will develop a counter argument with evidence to the claim (1-2 pages). Finally, students will give both arguments to a third student who will evaluate the arguments (1 page). The entire assignment (e.g., Betty Smith’s argument, counter argument, and evaluation) will be graded by the rubric provided and each entire assignment will be worth 10% of the student’s total grade. Students will complete this process four times (with each assignment counting for 10% of the final grade and all four assignments counting for 40% of the grade).

Third, student teams will participate in one debate which is worth 20 percent of the grade. Developing the ability to express ideas and persuade others in an oral argument is essential to any career. In fact, whether you are an investment banker on Wall Street or a legislative aid on Capitol Hill, many if not most of your arguments will be oral rather than written. Given that there will be eight teams in the class, there will be four policy debates (with two teams in each debate). Each team will prepare a 20 page briefing book that will include arguments in favor of the proposition, arguments against the proposition, refutations to these arguments, and counter-refutations to the refutations. On the day of the debate, a coin toss will determine which side of the proposition each team will defend. The debates will be videotaped and placed on the class web page for viewing by students in the future.

Fourth, students will work individually on a final paper which builds an argument from start to finish. Students will select a topic which must be approved by the instructor. Students will then build a literature review and develop a paper which makes a complete argument for or against a proposition. The final paper, which should be 7-10 pages in length, is worth 20% of the grade.

Fifth, participation and other assignments (e.g., quizzes) will be 10% of the grade. At the college level of education, the expectation is that students will attend every class session and actively participate in class every discussion each week. We expect students to have read and thought about the material assigned for that week. If language or some other barrier inhibits you from participating actively, you should meet with one of the instructors during the first two weeks of class to devise a solution. Attendance is not participation.

Evaluation of Team Members: Twice during the semester students will rate the performance of their fellow teammates. Based on these evaluations, the team portion of the grade (i.e., the team literature review and the team debate) will be adjusted to account for an overall assessment of superior and inferior teamwork. This provision is designed to minimize free riding in teams.

Learning Disabilities: Students with learning disabilities must notify the instructor within the first two weeks of the course in order to make suitable arrangements.

Websites
- In this course we will use PB Works Wiki to share information.  
Blackboard will be used for instructor communication with all class members and the electronic posting of assignments for review for plagiarism. However, we probably will not make use of Blackboard beyond these uses. https://blackboard.albany.edu/

E-mail Contact
All students are required to update the Blackboard preferences with an email address that redirects all course email to their primary email account. This will ensure that they get all emails from the instructor and group members in a timely fashion. This must be done by the end of the first week of class.

Plagiarism and Cheating
The emergence of the internet has changed our world forever. The amount of information at our fingertips has increased geometrically over the last decade. Library searches which took hours to complete in the past can be done in a matter of minutes today. Public and private documents that were difficult, if not impossible, to gain access to in the past are now a mouse click away. While this technological revolution has enhanced the learning process in many ways, it has also increased the amount of plagiarism. Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of another’s words or ideas without giving credit to that person. While this includes copying text word for word without the use of quotation marks, it also includes paraphrasing another person’s work without proper citation. Intellectual honesty is a core value of university and the foundation of faculty and student development. Plagiarism, therefore, undermines the entire university community.

In the past couple of years, a number of students have been caught plagiarizing from internet sources. The punishments have ranged from failing the assignment to failing the course to suspension from the university. This has been a painful and time consuming experience for everyone involved. In order to eliminate this problem, all students will be required to submit their written assignments electronically via the Blackboard website prior to handing in hard copies at the start of class. All paper submissions will be checked for plagiarism using the Turnitin software program (or a similar program). Your written assignments will also be placed in a database with past submissions. This database will also be searched for plagiarized material. Students guilty of plagiarizing any material will receive a failing grade for the course and the evidence will be automatically turned over to the Office of Community Standards (i.e., judicial affairs).

All students must complete the UAlbany Library’s tutorial on plagiarism entitled "Plagiarism 101" (http://library.albany.edu/infolit/plagiarism1) by the third week of class.

Required Readings
The instructor selected required readings will be available via the course wiki. However, most readings will be selected, posted, and evaluated by the students and available via the course wiki.

The course workload is based on the assumption that you will devote at least seven hours per week engaging this class (with three hours of participation during class meetings and four hours of work outside of class). I assume that the average student can read 30 pages per hour and write original essays at a rate of approximately 300 words (or one single-spaced page) per hour (including draft, revision, and final proofreading). Thus, a combination of outside work in a week might involve one hour of streamed video, sixty pages of reading, and writing a one page counter argument to another student’s essay. Please budget your time accordingly.
Outline of Classes and Required Readings

Week 1
Class #1 (1/23): Introduction to Course
Assignment Due: none
Instructor Assigned Reading: none

Class #2 (1/25): What is a literature review?
Assignments Due:
1. Read instructions for literature reviews and the Knopf article
2. Update wiki with your personal page.
3. Bring index card with personal info and picture to class.
Instructor Assigned Reading:
   - Instructions for Literature Review (handout on wiki)

Week 2
Class #3 (1/30): Effective Searching and Building a Literature Review
**** NOTE: CLASS MEETS IN THE COMPUTER LAB IN tbd ****
Assignment Due: Add at least three items to the team literature review.
Instructor Assigned: none

Class #4 (2/1): Overview of Argumentation
Assignment Due: Add at least three items to the team literature review.
Instructor Assigned Readings:
   - If you have read the Rousseau work and feel you have mastered it contents, you may read an alternative text from the following list:

Week 3
Class #5 (2/6): Concept Definition and Causal Mechanisms
Assignments Due:
1. Add at least three items to the team literature review.
2. Complete "Plagiarism 101" tutorial (http://library.albany.edu/infolit/plagiarism1)
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #6 (2/8): What is Evidence?
Assignments Due:
1. Add at least three items to the team literature review.
2. Complete “Metaliteracy Task: (https://metaliteracybadges.org/blog/quest/informedconsumer/)
Instructor Assigned Readings: none
Week 4
Class #7 (2/13): Finding Evidence
**** NOTE: CLASS MEETS IN THE COMPUTER LAB IN tbd *****
Assignment Due: Add at least three items to the team literature review.
Instructor Assigned Readings:
- Instructions for Written Assignments (handout on wiki)

Class #8 (2/15): Evaluating Evidence
Assignment Due: Add at least three items to the team literature review.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Team Literature Review Due on Friday February 17th at 5pm. Penalty of 1/3 of a grade per day for a late literature review.

Week 5
Class #9 (2/20): Topic #1: General Discussion
Assignments Due:
1. 5-6 discussion questions about readings.
2. Read literature review and select annotated bibliography summaries.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #10 (2/22): Topic #1: Constructing Arguments
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 1a: construct one argument in favor of the proposition with supporting evidence. Approximately 2 pages in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring two copies to class.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Week 6
Class #11 (2/27): Topic #1: Attacking Arguments
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 1b: examine the argument in favor of the proposition supplied by your fellow student and construct one counter-argument against the proposition with supporting evidence. Approximately 1-2 pages in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring two copies to class.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #12 (3/1): Topic #1: Evaluating Arguments
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 1c: examine the two argument provided by your fellow students and evaluate the arguments. Approximately 1 page in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring three copies to class.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Week 7
Class #13 (3/6): Topic #2: General Discussion
Assignments Due:
1. 5-6 discussion questions about readings.
2. Read literature review and select annotated bibliography summaries.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #14 (3/8): Topic #2: Constructing Arguments
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 2a: construct one argument in favor of the proposition with supporting evidence. Approximately 2 pages in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring two copies to class.

Instructor Assigned Readings: none

**SPRING BREAK: March 13th to 17th. Have fun! Be safe! Recharge!**

**Week 8**

Class #15 (3/20): **Topic #2: Attacking Arguments**
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 2b: examine the argument in favor of the proposition supplied by your fellow student and construct one counter-argument against the proposition with supporting evidence. Approximately 1-2 pages in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring two copies to class.

Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #16 (3/22): **Topic #2: Evaluating Arguments**
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 2c: examine the argument provided by your fellow students and evaluate the arguments. Approximately 1 page in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring three copies to class.

Instructor Assigned Readings: none

**Week 9**

Class #17 (3/27): **Topic #3: General Discussion**
Assignments Due:
1. 5-6 discussion questions about readings.
2. Read literature review and select annotated bibliography summaries.

Instructor Assigned Readings: none.

Class #18 (3/29): **Topic #3: Constructing Arguments**
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 3a: construct one argument in favor of the proposition with supporting evidence. Approximately 2 pages in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring two copies to class.

Instructor Assigned Readings: none

**Week 10**

Class #19 (4/3): **Topic #3: Attacking Arguments**
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 3b: examine the argument in favor of the proposition supplied by your fellow student and construct one counter-argument against the proposition with supporting evidence. Approximately 1-2 pages in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring two copies to class.

Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #20 (4/5): **Topic #3: Evaluating Arguments**
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 3c: examine the argument provided by your fellow students and evaluate the arguments. Approximately 1 page in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring three copies to class.

Instructor Assigned Readings: none

**Week 11**

(4/10): **No class due to holiday**
Assignment Due: none
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #21 (4/12): Debates and Oral Arguments
Assignments Due:
1. Read final paper instructions and propose final paper topic.
2. Read debate instructions.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Week 12
Class #22 (4/17): Topic #4: General Discussion
Assignments Due:
1. 5-6 discussion questions about readings.
2. Read literature review and select annotated bibliography summaries.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #23 (4/19): Topic #4: Constructing Arguments
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 4a: construct one argument in favor of the proposition with supporting evidence. Approximately 2 pages in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring two copies to class.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Week 13
Class #24 (4/24): Topic #4: Attacking Arguments
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 4b: examine the argument in favor of the proposition supplied by your fellow student and construct one counter-argument against the proposition with supporting evidence. Approximately 1-2 pages in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring two copies to class.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #25 (4/26): Topic #4: Evaluating Arguments
Assignment Due: Writing Assignment 4c: examine the two argument provided by your fellow students and evaluate the arguments. Approximately 1 page in length doubled spaced with one inch margins. Bring three copies to class.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Week 14
Class #26 (5/1): Team Debate #1
Assignments Due:
1. For two teams participating in the debate: written briefing books due. Approximately 20 page in length doubled spaced, 11-point font, and one inch margins. Bring one copy to class.
2. For all other students: read the literature review and selected annotated bibliography summaries.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #27 (5/3): Team Debate #2
Assignments Due:
1. For two teams participating in the debate: written briefing books due. Approximately 20 page in length doubled spaced, 11-point font, and one inch margins. Bring one copy to class.
2. For all other students: read the literature review and selected annotated bibliography summaries.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

**Week 15**
Class #28 (5/8): *Team Debate #3*
Assignments Due:
1. For two teams participating in the debate: written briefing books due. Approximately 20 page in length doubled spaced, 11-point font, and one inch margins. Bring one copy to class.
2. For all other students: read the literature review and selected annotated bibliography summaries.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

Class #29 (5/10): *Team Debate #4*
Assignments Due:
1. For two teams participating in the debate: written briefing books due. Approximately 20 page in length doubled spaced, 11-point font, and one inch margins. Bring one copy to class.
2. For all other students: read the literature review and selected annotated bibliography summaries.
Instructor Assigned Readings: none

**FINAL PAPER** due Wednesday May 17th by 5pm. Late papers will be penalized one third of a grade per day.