

Course Outline
SPCM 144
Argumentation and Debate
3 Semester Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

Argumentation and Debate

Covers the principles and practice of argument and debate in public speaking; emphasizes analysis, evidence, reasoning, case construction, refutation and delivery; develops practical skills in argument and debate.

Prerequisite: SPCM 101 or SPCM 102 or permission from department coordinator.

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Develop and clearly phrase a debatable resolution;
2. Identify forms of argument and use them ethically to support a claim;
3. Formulate and present rebuttal arguments to refute opposing claims;
4. Apply skills in critical thinking when conducting research and examining evidence to support claims ;
5. Analyze arguments, discern weakness in claims, and discriminate between effective and ineffective arguments;
6. Develop and present claims into a clear, well organized, coherent case.

Major Topics

- Types of formal and informal debate structures
- Developing debate topics and resolutions
- Researching debate issues
- Analyzing and selecting evidence
- Types of claims and arguments
- Fallacious reasoning
- Building a coherent, logical case
- Drawing conclusions from evidence
- Ethical and unethical uses of evidence
- Persuasive strategies and audience analysis

Course Requirements

- At least one research exercise involving analysis of persuasive arguments, claims, evidence and persuasive strategies.
- One mini-debate exercise
- Two formal, researched debates
- One analysis report of a professional debate (Presidential Debate, Congressional Debate, televised hearing or trial, etc)
- Two exams