Instructor Information:

Teacher: Alicia Lyons

Room: Belle Vernon Area High School, Room 15

Contact: Phone: 724-808-2500; ext. 2015
Email: alicia.lyons@bellevernonarea.net

Website: http://www.bellevernonarea.net/bvaahs

Required Text: Argument 0500, selected course readings chosen by Communications and Rhetoric Department, University of Pittsburgh, College In High School Program

Breaking Down Barriers: How to Debate, by Jim Hanson
Communication Matters, by McCutcheon, Schaffer, Wycoff

Additional Resources: Additional handouts given in class

Course Description:

The Argument and Debate course is taught in a fun, yet challenging classroom setting. Students receive encouragement and gain confidence as they practice argument and debate skills in a spirit of fellowship. The argument and debate fundamentals of types of arguments, constructing arguments, defending positions, choosing evidence, documenting sources, studying logical reasoning, recognizing fallacies of reasoning, cross-examining opponents, delivering rebuttal
speeches, writing debate ballots, and giving oral critiques are integral components of this course. Another important part of this course is to teach students to analyze and test sources, evidence, and logic for validity. Use of the library collection, various databases, and Internet websites are used as research tools throughout the year. Assigned readings, writings, and research will be integrated into the course. Debate formats may include SPAR debate, public forum debate, Barbara Jordan debate, Lincoln-Douglas debate, policy debate, and congressional debate. With all debate formats, students will serve as moderators. As part of the course requirement, students will participate in a public forum debate with an audience twice the size of their class. Course work is challenging, reasonable, and workable with the other courses a student takes.

Students who take this course may opt for three college credits from the University of Pittsburgh (upon payment of appropriate fees). These college credits may be transferred to other colleges. Due to the fact that students can receive college credit for this course it will be treated as a college course with higher standards and expectations in order to better prepare students for post education.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course, the successful student will be able to:

The following objectives are required in the University of Pittsburgh Communications 0500 course and in our BVA Argument and Debate class:

1. **Introduction to Argument**
   - [Distinguish] The difference between argument and other forms of communication, e.g. persuasion and rhetoric.

2. **Types of Argument**
   - [Differentiate] Aristotle's categories: ethos, logos, pathos
   - [Identify] Fact, definition, value and policy
   - [Define] Inductive and deductive
   - [Use in debates] Argument by example, analogy, cause and sign
   - [Recognize] Informal fallacies

3. **Constructing an Argument**
   - [Construct] Constructing a valid argument
   - [Use] Principles of organization

4. **Research Methods and Evidence**
   - [Use a systematic research process] The research process
   - [Use various forms of evidence for support] Evidence for a claim
   - [Use tests of evidence] Standards for evaluating evidence

5. [Deliver an argument persuasively] **Delivery of Argument**
6. [Effectively refute arguments] **Refutation of Arguments**
7. [Effectively prepare, deliver, and respond to a cross-examination] **Cross-Examination**
8. [Evaluate through ballot writing and oral comments a debate] **Evaluation and Criticism of Arguments**
**Academic Honesty:**

Any work submitted by the student shall be his/her own. Work taken from others shall be deemed as unacceptable. Any doubts will initiate the completion of an alternative assignment or a zero on the required effort, depending on the severity of the infraction.

**Class Policies and Expectations:**

1. Every student shall have and keep an up to date binder that will include all handout, notes, journal entries and homework in a neat, organized chronological order. Binders will be graded once for every nine week grading period. Every student is responsible for any notes, assignments and assessments that are missed due to absences. Assignments and daily work are posted on belleveronarea.net. Students have as many days as they missed after the day they return to turn in make-up work and tests.
2. Students will not get ready to leave until the teacher instructs them to. Work in this class will be done from bell to bell.
3. Students will be expected to adhere to the BVAHS Code of Conduct.
4. Students will arrive to class on time and be seated, ready to learn when the bell rings. Students that enter after the bell rings will be marked tardy.
5. Students needing to use the restroom must carry their agenda books with them at all times and also use the class sign-out sheet.
6. Students are to respect all classroom equipment and furniture.
7. Following school policy: No cell phones or electronic devices are to be used during class unless instructed or given permission to do so.
8. Students will raise their hands and listen to others with respect while they are talking unless it is a class debate or discussion. Only one person should be talking at a time.
9. No swearing or inappropriate language. It will not be tolerated.

If any of these rules are broken students will first receive a warning, and if the behavior continues further action will be taken and will result in a call home and or write up.

**Disabilities:**

If you have a disability that requires special accommodations, please let Miss Lyons know. Classroom assignments and activities will be customized to meet your individual needs.
Course Grading Criteria:

All course work will be graded according to the Belle Vernon Area School District grading policy. Total points will be accumulated for all evaluated efforts in this class rather than having letter grades per each effort. The grading scale is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Emphasis will be on formal assessments. Therefore grades will be weighted in this course.*

**Formal Assessments** will account for 90% of a student’s grade (quizzes, tests, projects, performance-based rubrics, essays, graded homework, etc.)

**Informal Assessments** will account for 10% of a student’s grade (homework for completion, class participation, exit tickets, etc.)

*For students who are enrolled in the University of Pittsburgh 0500 Argument course, the grade sent to Pitt will be the final average of the course. It will be a letter grade, not a percentage.*

Assignments per Quarter:

**Quarter 1**
- Defining basic debate terms.
- What Is an Argument?
- Compare and Contrast: Persuasion, Rhetoric, Discussion, Coercion
- Participate in four Spontaneous Debates (SPAR) using the debate terminology.
- Test on Basic Debate Terms
- Formal SPAR Four Person Debate
  - Basic Research Process
  - Write and Present a Constructive Speech
  - Use Two Sources, 2 Arguments, and 50 Words of Evidence for Each Argument
  - Write and Present Three Responses in a Rebuttal Speech
Write 1 Brief
Delivery of a Debate
Flowchart Every Class Debate
Write a 50 Word Debate Ballot for Every Class Debate
Write a Self-Evaluation for the Debate
Numerous Daily Points for Classwork, Writing Assignments, Revisions, Practices

Quarter 2
Formal Fall Four Person Debate
Internet Research Process, Using Valid Sources
Identify and Evaluate Forms of Evidence
Write and Present a Constructive Speech
Use Three Sources, Two Arguments, and 50 Words of Evidence
Document Sources with Title, Author or Organization, Website Address
Flowchart Five Responses in a Rebuttal Speech
Flowchart Five Spontaneous Closing Statement Responses
Write Three Briefs
Write a 100 Word Debate Ballot with Three Clashes for Every Debate
Flowchart Every Debate
Write a Debate Ballot for Every Debate
Numerous Daily Points for Classwork, Writing Assignments, Revisions, Practices

Quarter 3
Public Forum Pitt Debate with Cross-Examination (assigned Pitt topic)
How to Cross-Examination as a Questioner and as a Respondent
Method 1: Write a Practice Cross-Examination with a Partner
Write a Fun Cartoon Cross-Examination Individually
Method 2: Write a Cross-Examination Using Leading Questions as Facts
How to Deliver a Cross-Examination as a Questioner and as a Respondent
Research Process: Using Database Research
Analyzing Validity of Sources, Websites, Authors, Organizations
Writing of Constructive Arguments and Evidence Using a Conversational Style
Continued Strategies of Rebuttal Responses and Closing Statements
Writing a Ballot Using Own Viewpoint Since It’s a Public Forum
Continued Brief Writing

Quarter 4
Toulmin Argument Model
Types of Arguments: Fact, Value, Policy
Inductive and Deductive Arguments
Fallacies of Argument
Student Congress Debate
Student Congress Duties: Presiding Officer, Secretary, Pro Speaker, Con Speaker, Questioner
How to Write a Resolution
How to Write the Authorship or Sponsorship Speech
Define and Use Basic Parliamentary Motions and Procedures
How to Write Briefs, Both Pro and Con, for Selected Resolutions
Serve as Either a Presiding Officer or Secretary
Speak Five Times
Ask Ten Cross-Examination Questions

**Lessons, speeches, and assessments will be customized to meet the needs and interests of our class members.**

**TOTAL POINTS** = Numerous Points for Daily Class Work, Writing Activities, Revisions, Constructive Speeches, Debate Delivery, Rebuttal Responses, Closing Statement Responses, Flowcharts, Ballot Writing, Points Vary Each Quarter.

**Academic Standards:**

Students will be re-acquainted with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards that have been adopted by the Department of Education, along with the Common Core Standards that are in the process of being implemented nationwide. Students will be made aware of the importance of the standards and the efforts to meet them.

1.5 Speaking and Listening

Students present appropriately in formal speaking situations, listen critically, and respond intelligently as individuals or in group discussions.

1.4 Writing

1.4 Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content.

**Edline:**

Grades will be updated frequently on Edline. If you lost or cannot remember log in information, please contact our Child Accounting Department at 724-808-2500 ext. 1108.

**Schoolwires (Website):**

My website will be updated every weekend. A weekly agenda will be posted.

*The following signatures state that all parties are aware of the preceding syllabus.*
Student Signature____________________Date____________________

Parent Signature____________________Date____________________

Teacher Signature____________________Date____________________
**Course Outline:** **Course work will vary to meet the needs and interests of the students.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter</th>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>4th Quarter</th>
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<td>III. Public Forum Pitt Debate with Cross-Examination (assigned Pitt topic)</td>
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<td>Speak Five Times (adjust)</td>
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<td>Flowchart Every Class Debate</td>
<td>Write a Self-Evaluation for the Debate</td>
<td>Continued Brief Writing</td>
<td>Ask 10 Questions (adjust)</td>
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<td>Write a 50 Word Debate Ballot for Every Class Debate</td>
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