



PÉCS SUMMER SCHOOL CLASS SYLLABUS



TITLE OF THE CLASS:

DEBATE ACADEMY SUMMER PROGRAM: INTRODUCTION TO ARGUMENTATION, RHETORIC & DEBATE - A COURSE IN THE ART OF PERSUASION

GENERAL DATA

Date:	July 19 - August 02, 2026
Location:	University of Pécs, N/A
ECTS credits:	6
Class Lecturers:	Maja Nenadovic, PhD Tvrtko Noa Pater

DESCRIPTION AND AIMS:

This course will provide students with an introduction to argumentation theory, rhetoric, and practical skills-building exercises in debate and public speaking. All of the theories discussed in the course will be connected to present-day issues, as well as to students' personal research interests. Furthermore, through individual assignments, the students will be required to connect the theory and practical exercises to their field of study, i.e. major, thus building on their understanding and knowledge of argumentation, communication and debates in that particular discipline and/or thematic area.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a practical course that aims to enhance students' critical thinking, active listening, argumentation and presentation skills, this highly interactive training program anticipates the following learning outcomes:

- ✓ students gain a general understanding of argumentation theory and rhetoric;
- ✓ they are able to build arguments using reason and evidence;
- ✓ they recognize fallacious reasoning and are able to respond to it critically;
- ✓ students learn how to debate and to engage persuasively through argumentation;
- ✓ students are able to evaluate debates and also self-reflect on their own performance;
- ✓ students understand the basics of policy debate;
- ✓ students are able to use their argumentation, debate and persuasion skills to advocate for an issue of common/public concern;
- ✓ students are able to effectively persuade and communicate with an audience thoughtfully, with a minimum of anxiety.



LEARNING MATERIALS:

Selected reading from:

- Argumentation Theory (Toulmin)
- Rhetoric: The Classics (Plato, Aristotle, Cicero)
- Dialogue (Bohm)
- Practical reading on Fallacies and Cognitive biases (School of Thought educational materials)
- British Parliamentary debate format (Snider; Johnson)

COURSE STRUCTURE

The Debate Academy is organized into progressive learning phases:

1. Foundations of Argumentation and Debate
 - a. Introduction to argumentation theory
 - b. Principles of rhetoric and persuasion
 - c. Structure of arguments (claims, warrants, impacts)
 - d. Logical fallacies and cognitive biases
 - e. Introduction to British Parliamentary debate format
 - f. Speaker roles, team strategy, and framing
2. Applied Debate Practice
 - a. Students participate in structured practice debates aligned with thematic topics, including:
 - i. International criminal law and justice
 - ii. Political decision-making and governance
 - iii. Climate change and environmental justice
 - iv. Human rights dilemmas and ethical trade-offs
 - b. Practice sessions focus on:
 - i. case construction
 - ii. rebuttal and clash
 - iii. strategic framing
 - iv. teamwork and role coordination
 - v. adaptive thinking during debates
3. Competitive Debate Simulation
 - a. Multiple rounds of practice debates
 - b. Structured feedback and coaching
 - c. Progressive skill development across sessions
 - d. Formal debate tournament rounds
 - e. Finals debate and reflective closing

TEACHING METHODS

- Interactive lectures
- Small-group exercises
- Debate simulations
- Peer feedback and coaching



- Reflective debriefing sessions
- Tournament-style competitive debates

ASSESSMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Participants are expected to:

- actively participate in debates and exercises;
- collaborate constructively with teammates;
- engage respectfully with opposing views;
- demonstrate progression through practice and feedback;
- contribute to final debate tournament rounds.

Assessment is primarily formative, focusing on skill development, engagement, and reflective learning.

EXPECTED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Participants will strengthen:

- critical thinking and analytical reasoning;
- structured argumentation;
- public speaking and persuasion;
- teamwork and strategic collaboration;
- ethical reasoning and civic dialogue competence.