Calendar Description: This course provides a survey of the multidisciplinary field of rhetorical studies. In addition to introducing key concepts, theoretical frameworks, and critical debates, this course examines the role of rhetoric in a range of academic disciplines and social contexts.

The systematic study of effective composition, argument, and persuasion—the art of rhetoric—dates back at least to the epics of Homer and flourishes today in countless academic disciplines and domains of social life. In fact, the historical “empire” of rhetoric is so vast that it “digests regimes, religions, and civilizations” (Roland Barthes). This class introduces essential concepts, issues, and controversies in the history and theory of rhetoric by analyzing selections from seminal texts from antiquity to the present. In addition to demonstrating the relevance of rhetorical theory and criticism to a variety of social and intellectual fields (law, politics, science, literature, feminism, and others), the class explores emerging forms of rhetorical practice spawned by new media technologies, such as advertising, digital rhetoric, and information warfare. Students will leave the class with a firm grasp of rhetorical theory and a deeper appreciation for rhetoric as an inventive, critical, and multimodal art.

**Syllabus**

**September**
5 Administration
10 The Sophistic Revolution: Gorgias, “Encomium of Helen” (Reading Response due)*
12 The Sophistic Revolution: Aristophanes, *Clouds* (RR due)
17 No class
19 No class
24 The Sophistic Revolution: Aristophanes, *Clouds* (RR due)

**October**
1 “Classical” Roman Rhetoric: Cicero, *The Orator* (RR due)
8 Rhetoric and Feminism: Helene Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa” (RR due)
15 Reading Week
17 Reading Week
24 Rhetoric and Race: Gloria Anzaldua, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” (RR due); **Essay 1 Due in Dropbox**
31 Rhetoric and Science: Bruno Latour, “The Rhetoric of Science” (RR due)
November
7  Rhetoric and Media Studies: Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media (RR due)
12 Rhetoric and Videogames: Ian Bogost, “The Rhetoric of Videogames” (RR due)
14 Rhetoric and Advertising: Chris Miles and Tomas Nilsson, “Marketing as Rhetoric”; Ignas Kalpokas, “Information Warfare on Social Media: A Brand Management Perspective” (RR due)
21 Coda—Rhetoric and Poetry: Gerard Manley Hopkins, Poems (RR due)
26 Make-up day?
28 Quiz (in class)
30 Essay 2 due in Dropbox

*Link to the Gorgias text in case you do not have the reader yet:

UW LEARN
This course will use UW LEARN for announcements, posting reading responses, submitting assignments, etc. Please familiarize yourself with this website and visit it regularly.

Requirements
10% Participation in class discussion
20% Reading responses
30% Essay 1 (due October 24)
35% Essay 2 (due November 30)
5% Quiz (in-class)

Participation (10%)  
Students are expected to contribute to class discussion on a regular basis. This involves 1) participating in daily group work (15 minutes) and 2) discussing reading responses, raising ideas for discussion, responding to others, asking questions, etc.

Reading Responses (150 + words) (20%)  
For each class, students are required to write a reading response that provides 1) three reasons why the text under discussion for the day is important to the study of rhetoric as you understand it and 2) a page number to support your reason (so we can find an example in the text). It need not be a unified paragraph. On days when there are two texts under discussion, please offer two reasons for each text (four reasons in total). In addition to demonstrating that you have read and reflected on the texts, responses serve as the basis for informed class discussion. They also form an archive that can be consulted while writing essays and preparing for the quiz. You must post your response first in order to see your colleagues’ posts.

Responses should be 1) submitted to the LEARN “Reading Responses” Dropbox by 1:00 PM the day they are due and 2) pasted into the “Reading Responses” section of the LEARN website (under the “Connect”/“Discussion” tab) for colleagues to read. Please also print and bring a copy to each class for discussion purposes. Late responses will not be accepted (the Dropbox closes). Responses are read but
graded quantitatively, not qualitatively: credit is earned for completing the assignment, so please make sure you follow the guidelines.

**Format**: a minimum of 150 words; Times New Roman 12 pt.; double-spaced; Word doc or docx. Please state the word count of your response at the top of the page.

**Essay 1 (1750 words) (30%)**
Write an essay in which you compare and/or contrast any two texts on the first half of the syllabus (up to and including Edgeworth and Irigaray). Do not merely summarize these works. Instead, isolate a key issue, theme, or problem and offer an interpretation and argument that evaluates their significance to the field of rhetorical studies as you understand it. Be sure to develop an argument over the course of the whole essay rather than simply conjoining two distinct papers. In addition, be sure to support your argument with relevant citations from the text.

**Format**: 1750 words; Times New Roman 12 pt.; double-spaced; Word doc or docx; 1” margins. Please state the word count of your response at the top of the page. Submit to the Essay 1 Dropbox.

**Essay 2 (2250 words) (35%)**
Write an essay in which you compare and/or contrast any two texts on the second half of the syllabus (after Edgeworth and Irigaray). Do not merely summarize these works. Instead, isolate a key issue, theme, or problem and offer an interpretation and argument that evaluates their significance to the field of rhetorical studies as you understand it. Be sure to develop an argument over the course of the whole essay rather than simply conjoining two distinct papers. In addition, be sure to support your argument with relevant citations from the text.

**Format**: 2250 words; Times New Roman 12 pt.; double-spaced; Word doc or docx; 1” margins. Please state the word count of your response at the top of the page. Submit to the Essay 2 Dropbox.

**Quiz (in-class) (5%)**
The quiz consists of 20 short-answer questions that ask you to 1) define key rhetorical terms (see Glossary on LEARN site) and 2) answer general questions about course content and lectures.

**Grading**
Essays will be graded according to the following criteria: 1) grammar; 2) style; 3) structure and coherence; 4) content; 5) argumentation, including use of evidence; 6) originality. An “A” range essay will be excellent in most of these areas; a “B” range essay will be good in most of them; a “C” range essay will be adequate in most of them; and a “D” range essay will be inadequate in most of them.

**Policies**
**Reader**
All required texts are assembled in the *Course Reader*, available in the UW bookstore in South Campus Hall. Students are **required** to purchase and bring the reader to every class. If it is not in stock, place an order and it should arrive in a day or two.

**Attendance**
In keeping with the University of Waterloo’s attendance policy, students are “expected to attend all meets” of the course and may be required to “present documentation proving the reasons for non-attendance” (UG Calendar). Students who miss more than 5 classes without providing adequate documentation may be penalized 2% of their final grade for each subsequent absence. Chronically absent students are unlikely to pass the course.

**Electronic Device Policy**
The university classroom is a social space that revolves around the collaborative work of interpreting texts and discussing ideas. This means that we need to be present and pay respectful attention to each other and to the material under discussion. For this reason, please turn off and put away laptop computers, cellular phones, and other electronic devices in class. I am, of course, happy to accommodate students with legitimate reasons for needing a laptop (beyond merely preferring one for taking notes, etc.). If you require—rather than prefer—a laptop for taking notes, please send me an email request.

**Late Penalties**
Unless an extension has been requested and granted in advance, the professor reserves the right to subtract 5% per day from the assignment grade.

**Collegiality**
Students are expected to be informed, attentive, and collegial in class. Gossiping, note-passing and other types of uncivil behaviour will be discouraged.

**Food**
Many students suffer from food allergies, sensitivities, etc., so please do not bring food to class (though drinks are fine).

---

**University of Waterloo Policy on Academic Offences (including plagiarism)**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm)

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm)

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm)

**Academic Integrity website (Arts):** [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)