English 292
Contemporary Issues in Rhetoric and Professional Writing
Fall 1990

Neil Randall
HH 224, HH 174
ext 3397, 6833
NRANDALL@WATDCS

INTRODUCTION

English 292 is an introduction to rhetorical theory of the past and present, and to current research in the fields of composition and professional writing. The course will provide students with the theoretical and practical overviews necessary to successful study in the Rhetoric and Professional Writing option.

Half the course deals with rhetorical theory, the other half with issues in professional writing. By the end of the course, students will be familiar with the major rhetorical theorists of the ancient and modern worlds, and with several research concerns in different areas of professional writing. In addition, students will be equipped to conduct library research into professional writing, and will have a grasp of the concepts underlying empirical testing in writing research.

STRUCTURE

Both sections of English 292 meet together, on Tuesday and Thursday from 1:00-2:30 p.m. Each 90-minute session will consist of a lecture or presentation on a specific topic. The Tuesday sessions will deal with professional writing, while the Thursday lectures will explore rhetorical theory.

ASSIGNMENTS

20% - an essay (1200 words) on ancient rhetorical theory (due October 11).
20% - an essay (1200 words) on 20th-century rhetorical theory (due November 20).
15% - a library assignment on human-computer interaction and technical documentation (due November 1).
25% - a bibliographic research paper (1000 words) on a professional writing area of your choice, in consultation with the instructor (due November 29).
20% - a 90-minute final examination (date TBA).
REQUIRED TEXT


SCHEDULE

Numbers in parentheses indicate required reading from the text.

Sep 11 - Introduction; The Review.
Sep 13 - Ancient Rhetoric (1-14); Plato (18-28).
Sep 15 - Magazine journalism; Freelancing for magazines.
Sep 20 - Aristotle (30-52)
Sep 25 - A visit from IBM and BNR representatives.
Sep 27 - Isocrates, Cicero, Quintilian (53-70).
Oct 02 - Information Development: The Documentation Process.
Oct 04 - McLuhan (235-296) and Ong (no reading required).
Oct 09 - Usability Testing.
Oct 11 - Weaver (297-317).
Oct 16 - Graphic Communication: The Advertisement.
Oct 18 - Burke (318-351).
Oct 23 - Elements of Graphic Design and Communication
Oct 30 - Composition Research: Theories.
Nov 01 - Perelman (389-427).
Nov 08 - Rhetoric and Media Studies (494-521).
Nov 15 - Dramatism (447-493).
Nov 20 - Hypermedia and Other Technologies.
Nov 22 - No class.
Nov 27 - No class.
Nov 29 - Rhetoric and the Power of Language (546-634).