English 309A: Rhetoric: Ancient to Enlightenment
Spring 2018
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Office Hours (HH 256): Tuesday and Thursday 4:00–5:00

Calendar Description: “Study of rhetorical theories from antiquity through the Renaissance to the eighteenth century, with an emphasis on how these theories reflect changing attitudes towards language, society, and the self.”

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 spheres of social life. In fact, the historical “empire” of rhetoric is so vast in historical and geographical scope that it “digests regimes, religions, and civilizations” (Roland Barthes). With this context in mind, this class introduces students to the basic concepts, issues, and controversies in the history and theory of rhetoric by analyzing selections from key texts from antiquity to the eighteenth century. After tracing out the origins and development of rhetoric in ancient Greece and Rome, the course charts the metamorphoses of the *ars rhetorica* through the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Enlightenment. In addition to demonstrating the centrality of rhetoric to a variety of academic disciplines and social fields (law, politics, philosophy, literature, feminism, and others), the course will also show that rhetoric is not merely an art of stylistic ornamentation but an inventive, critical, and multidisciplinary enterprise that continues to shape our social reality.

**Learning Outcomes**

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1) describe the basic outlines of the history of rhetoric
2) define essential concepts of rhetorical theory and criticism
3) assess how rhetoric functions in a variety of academic disciplines and social fields
4) analyze and criticize texts and multimedia artefacts from a rhetorical perspective

**Syllabus**

**May**

1  Introduction
3  No class: buy reader, Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*
8  Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*
10 Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Aristophanes, *Clouds*
15 Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Aristophanes, *Clouds*
17 Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*
22 Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Aristotle, *Rhetoric*
24 Ancient Roman Rhetoric: Cicero, *The Orator*
29 Ancient Roman Rhetoric: Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*
31 Ancient Roman Rhetoric: Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*

**June**

5  Medieval Rhetoric: Martianus Capella, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*; Introduction to Shakespeare
7  No class; **Essay 1 due in LEARN dropbox**
14 Medieval Rhetoric: Priscian, *Fundamentals Adapted from Hermogenes*; Shakespeare, *Othello*
19 Renaissance Rhetoric: George of Trebizond, *Five Books on Rhetoric, Praise of Eloquence*; Shakespeare, *Othello*
26 Renaissance Rhetoric: Margaret Cavendish, *The Worlds of Olio*; Shakespeare, *Othello*

**July**
3 Renaissance Rhetoric: Thomas Wilson, *Art of Rhetoric*; Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
5 No class
12 Enlightenment Rhetoric: Margaret Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*; Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
19 Conclusions; Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
24 In-Class Quiz
26 **Essay 2 due in LEARN dropbox**

**LEARN and the “Blogora”**

This course will use UW LEARN for announcements, reading responses, discussion posts, submission of assignments, etc. Please familiarize yourself with this website and visit it regularly. The on-line learning environment offers unique opportunities for the lively and informed exchange of ideas and multimedia artefacts. The “Blogora” (Blog+agora) is therefore designed to be an informal, collective space for investigating rhetoric, especially as it functions in everyday life. Please feel free to use the Blogora to post any insights into rhetoric you wish to share with your colleagues. These posts—which are optional—may take any form and discuss any aspect of rhetoric that interests you. They may include analysis of any kind of rhetorical artefact in any medium: videos, texts, events, images, advertisements, speeches, musical compositions, websites, trends, social practices, etc. Please provide links to the relevant websites, artefacts, etc.

**Grades**

10% Participation
20% Reading Responses
30% Essay 1
30% Essay 2
10% Quiz

**Participation (10%)**

Students are expected to contribute to class discussion on a regular basis. This involves discussing reading responses, raising ideas for discussion, responding to others, asking questions, etc.

**Reading Responses (125 words) (20%)**

For each class, students are required to write a reading response that provides three reasons why the text under discussion for the day is important to the study of rhetoric as you understand it. It need not be a unified paragraph. When there are two texts under discussion, offer two insights into the rhetoric text and one on the Shakespeare play. In addition to demonstrating that you have read and reflected on these works, responses serve as the basis for informed class discussion. Responses are to be 1) submitted to the LEARN Responses dropbox by 1:00 PM the day they are due and 2) pasted—not uploaded as a file—into the “Reading Responses” section of the LEARN website. Students are encouraged to read and comment upon their colleagues’ responses. Please also print and bring a copy to each class for discussion purposes. Late responses will not be accepted (the dropbox will time out). Responses are read but not graded; credit is earned for completing the assignment. Responses will be tallied at the end of the semester, not weekly.
Due Date and Format
Responses are to be 1) submitted to the LEARN Responses dropbox by 1:00 PM the day they are due and 2) pasted—not uploaded as a file—into the “Reading Responses” section of the LEARN website for colleagues to read and comment upon. Responses must be a minimum of 125 words (approx. half a page); 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 [approx. 7 pp.]) (30%)
Write an essay in which you compare and/or contrast any two texts on the first half of the syllabus (Greek and Roman rhetoric). Do not merely summarize these works. Instead, isolate a key issue, theme, or problem and offer an interpretation and supporting 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. Please state the word count at the top of your essay.

Due Date and Format
Due Date: June 7 by 12:00 AM in the LEARN Essay 1 dropbox. Format: 1750 words; double-spaced; 12 point; Times New Roman; 1” margins; MS Word doc. or docx. Please state the word count of your essay at the top of the first page.

Essay 2 (1750 words [approx. 7 pp.]) (30%)
Write an essay in which you compare and/or contrast any two texts on the second half of the syllabus (medieval, Renaissance, and Enlightenment). You may write about a Shakespeare play in conjunction with a theoretical text. Do not merely summarize these works. Instead, isolate a key issue, theme, or problem and offer an interpretation and supporting 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.

Due Date and Format
Due Date: July 26 by 12:00 AM in the LEARN Essay 2 dropbox. Format: 1750 words; double-spaced; 12 point; Times New Roman; 1” margins; MS Word doc or docx. Please state the word count of your essay at the top of the first page. Please state the word count at the top of your essay.

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.

Quiz (10%)
The quiz (in-class) will ask you to define key rhetorical terms and answer general questions concerning course content and lectures.

Policies
Reader
All required texts (except Shakespeare’s The Tempest) 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 several classes without providing adequate documentation from a physician may, at the discretion of the professor, be penalized 2% of their final grade for each subsequent absence.

Electronic Device Policy
Please turn off and put away laptop computers, PDAs, cellular phones, and other electronic devices in class. If you require these devices for a medical reason, please consult the professor.

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. For the sake of the class as a whole, the professor reserves the right to ask disruptive students to leave the classroom.

Food
Some students may suffer from food allergies, sensitivity to smells, etc., so please do not bring food to class (beverages 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

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

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

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