English 309A: Rhetoric: Ancient to Enlightenment
Fall 2018: T, Th 2:30–3:50 in HH 150
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Office Hours: T, Th 4:00–5:00 in HH 256

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 pre-modern 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

SEPTEMBER
6  Introduction
11 No class: buy reader and Shakespeare plays (Macbeth, The Tempest)
13 Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Gorgias, Encomium of Helen
18 Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Aristophanes, Clouds 1
20 Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Aristophanes, Clouds 2
25 Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Aristophanes, Lysistrata 1
27 Ancient Greek Rhetoric: Aristophanes, Lysistrata 2

OCTOBER
2  Aristotle, Rhetoric
4  Ancient Roman Rhetoric: Cicero, The Orator
9  No Class
11 No Class
16 Ancient Roman Rhetoric: Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory
18 Ancient Roman Rhetoric: Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*
25 Medieval Rhetoric: Priscian, *Fundamentals Adapted from Hermogenes*; *Macbeth 2, 3*
30 Renaissance Rhetoric: George of Trebizond, *Five Books on Rhetoric*; *Macbeth 4*

**NOVEMBER**

1 Renaissance Rhetoric: Madeleine de Scudery, *On Conversation*; *Macbeth 5*
6 No Class
8 Renaissance Rhetoric: Margaret Cavendish, *The Worlds of Olio*; Shakespeare, *The Tempest 1*
15 Enlightenment Rhetoric: Margaret Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*; *The Tempest 3*
20 Enlightenment Rhetoric: Mariah Edgeworth, *An Essay on Self-Justification*; *The Tempest 4*
27 Conclusions
29 In-Class Quiz

**DECEMBER**

3 Essay 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 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
10% Reading Responses
30% Presentation
40% Essay
10% In-Class 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. In addition, you will be asked to sign up to discuss your reading responses (see below) with the class three times during the semester.
**Reading Responses (150 words) (10%)**

For each class, students are required to write a reading response (150 words) that provides 1) *two reasons* why the text under discussion for the day is important to the study of rhetoric as you understand it, and 2) a *quotation to support each reason*. When there are two texts under discussion, offer *one* insight into the rhetoric text and *one* into 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.

**Due Date and Format**
Responses are to be 1) *submitted* to the LEARN “Reading Responses” Dropbox by 1:00 PM the day they are due, and 2) *pasted*—not uploaded as a file—into the “Reading Responses” discussion section of the LEARN website for colleagues to read and comment on. Students are encouraged to read and comment on their colleagues’ responses.

Responses must be 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. Please also print and bring a copy to each class for discussion purposes.

Late responses will not be accepted (the Dropbox closes at 1:00 pm). 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.

**Presentation (1250 words) (30%)**

Write an essay in which you analyze one of the works on the syllabus (you will sign up for a text). Do not merely summarize the text, though summary and exposition may be part of your essay. Instead, offer an interpretation and supporting argument that demonstrates its significance to the field of rhetorical studies as you understand it. The goal is to teach your colleagues about the text and its importance for the study of rhetoric, as in a conference paper. Be sure to support your argument with brief, relevant citations from the text.

**Due Date and Format**
A hard copy of the presentation is to be submitted in class the day on which it is presented. Format: 1250 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 (2500 words) (40%)**

Write an essay in which you compare and/or contrast any two texts on the syllabus (excluding the text on which you wrote your class presentation). You may write about a Shakespeare play in conjunction with a theoretical text, but not on two Shakespeare plays. Do not merely summarize these works. Instead, isolate a key issue, theme, or problem and offer an interpretation and supporting argument that evaluates the significance of these texts 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: December 3 by 11:59 pm in the LEARN “Essay” Dropbox. Format: 2500 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.

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; and 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.

In-Class 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 Macbeth and The Tempest) are assembled in the Course Reader, available in the UW bookstore in South Campus Hall. Students are required to purchase the reader and bring it to every class. If you do not have your reader, you are not in a position to participate in a responsible way. 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 discourteous 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
Many students suffer from food allergies, sensitivity to smells, etc., so please do not bring food to class (though 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](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)