English 309A (Principles and Practices 1): Rhetorical Theory in Classical Antiquity
Professor Michael MacDonald
Office Hours: W 2:00-4:00 and F 5:00-6:00 in HH 256
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“A study of rhetorical theories from the Classical Period (Pre-Socratic to Augustine) with an emphasis on how these theories reflect changing attitudes towards language, reality, and the self” (UG Calendar).

According to Ernest Renan, the French historian of religion, the ancient Greeks made only one “mistake”: they invented the art of rhetoric. One of the central aims of this introductory survey of ancient Greek and Roman rhetorical theory is to reveal the injustice of Renan’s charge. We will begin by exploring the complex relationship between rhetoric and society - law, politics, theatre, and philosophy - in the Classical age of Greece (the Fifth century BCE). We will then examine the appropriation of Greek rhetorical theory by the Romans, who viewed the pursuit of oratory as the loftiest ideal of human existence (and the means to a “world-empire” (omnia imperium)) (Cicero). By the end of the course it will become apparent that the invention of rhetoric – far from being a mistake – represents one of the Promethean achievements of Western intellectual history.

September
15 Administration
17 Gorgias, “Encomium of Helen” (download and print out)
22 Gorgias, “Encomium of Helen”
24 Anonymous, Dissoi Logoi
29 Aristophanes, Clouds

October
1 Aristophanes, Clouds
6 Sophocles, Antigone
8 Aristophanes, Lysistrata
13 Plato, Gorgias
15 Plato, Phaedrus
20 Plato, Phaedrus
22 Aristotle, Rhetoric
27 Quiz 1; Essay 1 due in class
29 No Class

November
3 Cicero, The Orator
5 Cicero, The Orator
10 Tacitus, Dialogue of Orators
12 Aelius Aristide, “To Plato: On Oratory”
17 Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory
19 Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*
24 Saint Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*
26 Quiz 2

**December**
2 Conclusions; *Essay 2 due in class*

**Requirements**

10% Reading Responses
In preparation for each class, students are required to write a 250 word (1 page) response to the readings. Responses should 1) offer three reasons why the text under discussion is important to the study of rhetorical theory and 2) three citations from the text to support your claim. You will be expected to discuss your responses in class on a regular, if not daily, basis.

These responses demonstrate that you have read the text and are prepared to discuss it in class. Please submit responses at the end of each class. (NB: you may be asked to write more than one response to texts studied over two classes). Responses will be read but not graded or returned; credit is awarded for completing the assignments. Handwritten, late or e-mailed responses will NOT be accepted. Format: double-spaced; 1” margins; 12 point Times New Roman font.

10% Participation in Group Work and Class Discussion
As is the case with most classes in the humanities (especially those in rhetoric), students are required to contribute to class discussion on a regular basis by 1) discussing their responses and 2) participating in group work at the beginning of each class (10-15 minutes).

10% 2 Quizzes (5% + 5%)
The quizzes will require you to define key rhetorical terms and answer basic questions about material covered in class.

25% Mid-term essay (8pp.)
Write an essay in which you compare and/or contrast any two texts on the first half of the syllabus (up to and including Aristotle). Do not merely summarize these works. Instead, offer an interpretation that assesses their significance to the field of rhetorical studies. Be sure to support your argument with relevant citations from the text. Format: 12 point; Times New Roman; 1” margins. Essays must be submitted as hard copies (no email attachments).

45% Final essay (12 pp.)
Write an essay in which you compare and/or contrast any two texts on the second half of the syllabus (after Aristotle). Do not merely summarize these works. Instead, offer an interpretation that assesses their contribution to the field of rhetorical studies. Be sure to
support your argument with relevant citations from the text. Format: 12 point; Times New Roman; 1” margins. Essays must be submitted as hard copies (no email attachments).

Essays will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria: 1) grammar 2) style 3) structure 4) content 5) argument 6) originality. An “A” essay will be excellent in most of these areas; a “B” essay will be good in most of them; a “C” essay will be adequate in most of them; and a “D” essay will be inadequate in most of them.

Policies

Attendance

In keeping with the University of Waterloo’s undergraduate 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). Please note that students “removed from a class in accordance with this policy will be notified by the Registrar’s office” (UG Calendar). NB: students who miss more than two classes without providing adequate documentation will be penalized 1% (per subsequent absence) on their final grade.

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.

Reader

Rhetoric involves the close scrutiny of texts, images and other artifacts. Students are therefore required to purchase and bring the reader to every class.

Civility

Students are expected to be informed, attentive and courteous in class. Gossiping, note-passing and other types of discourteous behaviour will be discouraged. For the sake of the class, the professor reserves the right to ask disruptive students to leave the classroom.

Food
Please do not bring food to class (beverages are acceptable)

Laptops
Please turn off PDAs, cellular phones, and laptops in class.

Late Enrollment
Students enrolling via Quest after the two week “free enrollment” period will not be admitted, even if they are accepted (late) by the system.

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