

English 379/579
Fall 2021
MW 2-3:15
CCC 226

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Office hrs: 11-12 MW, 2-3 TR

Syllabus

- Required Texts:
- Herrick. *The History and Theory of Rhetoric*. 6th ed.
 - Plato. *Phaedrus*. Trans. by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff.
 - Shakespeare. *Julius Caesar*.

Rhetoric is concerned with the strategic use of language and knowledge as well as the contexts in which our words and ideas are put to use. This course will explore some of the major theories about what rhetoric is and how it should be used, emphasizing classic texts and theories by Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian and their influence on modern thought. Rhetoric is relevant to both spoken as well as written forms of communication, but in this course we will primarily concentrate on how it applies to written communication.

Because of its concern with the art of communication, Rhetoric has been the cornerstone of a liberal arts education for at least 2000 years. Rhetorical theory, by classical Greek and Roman authorities as well as by contemporary scholars continues to provide useful strategies for teachers, literature scholars, philosophers, and anyone engaged in writing or public speaking.

Requirements: You will be expected to complete all reading assignments by the day they are due and be prepared to participate in class discussions. Readings, including specific titles and page numbers, will be posted in Canvas prior to the day they are due. Handouts and other materials will be available on Canvas.

Participation: (100 points total, 4 points per day)

Attendance. You will receive 2 points per day for attendance. See Requirements above for participation expectations. If you are unable to attend class due to a legitimate excuse, let me know as soon as possible.

Reading Responses: Each day we have an assigned reading you will post a brief response to the reading (2 points each). These responses could be a question or comment you have about something you read or a real-life illustration of something in the text.

Quizzes: (300 points total, 25 each)

There will be 12 quizzes spread out over the semester. By the end of the day assigned for each quiz, you will need to complete an online quiz that tests your familiarity with the assigned readings, lectures, and concepts brought up in class discussions since the last quiz. The questions will focus on content from lectures and reading assignments.

Annotated Bibliography. (200 points total). You will turn in an annotated bibliography (3-5 sources) on a specific concept/theorist brought up in the course.

Rhetorical Analysis. (400 points total). This will be a 5-page (min.) rhetorical analysis of a text of your choice.

Your final grade average will be computed in the following manner:

Participation	100
Weekly Quizzes	300
Annotated Bibliography	200
Rhetorical Analysis	<u>400</u>
Total	1000 points

Covid-19 stuff. Masks are required in all classrooms for now. We are not allowed to hold class unless everyone is wearing a mask. If you are feeling any flu-like symptoms, please stay home. Please be patient with everyone because we're all trying to make the best of a bad situation. For more information on this, please refer to the UWSP Covid-19 website: [Guidance-FaceCoverings.pdf \(uwsp.edu\)](#)

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand the basic conceptual framework of classical rhetorical theory, including the foundational elements of persuasive discourse and the contributions of major theorists.

Course elements: reading assignments/quizzes, class discussion, exams, annotated bibliography

2. Apply your understanding of rhetorical theory in insightful rhetorical analyses of a variety of literary and/or non-literary texts.

Course elements: rhetorical analysis paper, annotated bibliography, group presentation

Semester Calendar
(readings in brackets)

Part 1	<i>Sophists vs. Plato: The Philosophy of Rhetoric</i>	
Sept. 8—Course Introduction		
Sept. 13—Greek Rhetoric: The Sophists & <i>dissoi logoi</i>	[ch. 2, Gorgias]	
Sept. 15—Philosophy vs. Sophistry: Plato	[ch. 3, Fish]	Quiz 1
Sept. 20—Plato	[<i>Phaedrus</i> , part 1]	
Sept. 22—Plato	[<i>Phaedrus</i> , part 2]	Quiz 2
Part 2	<i>Aristotle and contemporary Aristotelians: The Theory of Rhetoric</i>	
Sept. 27—Aristotle: Rhetoric and Dialectic	[ch. 4]	
Sept. 29—Aristotle: <i>pathos</i> , evoking emotion	[Perelman]	Quiz 3
Oct. 4—Aristotle: <i>ethos</i> , persuading through character	[Haidt]	
Oct. 6—Aristotle: <i>logos</i> , persuading through reason	[<i>topoi</i> vs. fallacies, ch. 4]	Quiz 4
Oct. 11—Aristotle: structuring arguments	[enthymemes & syllogisms, ch. 4]	
Oct. 13—Burke: Resources of ambiguity	[ch. 10, Burke]	Quiz 5
Part 3	<i>Cicero and the Romans: The Art of Rhetoric</i>	
Oct. 18—The Canons of Rhetoric: Invention, Arrangement	[ch. 5; <i>Rhetorica ad Herennium</i>]	
Oct. 20—Style: Decorum	[<i>Rhet. ad Her.</i> , Cicero, Longinus]	Quiz 6
Oct. 25—Style: Figures of Speech	[<i>Rhet. ad Her.</i>]	
Oct. 27—Memory and Delivery		Quiz 7
Nov. 1—Shakespeare	[<i>Julius Caesar</i> , I-II]	
Nov. 3—Shakespeare	[<i>Julius Caesar</i> , III-V]	Quiz 8
Nov. 8— Annotated Bibliography due ; intro Rhetorical Analysis project		
Nov. 10—Burke’s Pentad and rhetorical analysis	[ch. 10, Burke]	
Nov. 15—The Rhetorical Situation and rhetorical analysis	[ch. 10, 247-49; Bitzer]	
Nov. 17—Preliminary Rhetorical analyses		Quiz 9
Part 4	<i>Communication Media and Education: The Contexts of Rhetoric</i>	
Dec. 22—Ed. and manuscript culture in medieval Europe	[ch. 6]	
Dec. 24—Renaissance education and print culture	[ch. 7]	Quiz 10
Nov. 29—Early modern education and Print culture: elocution	[ch. 8; Sheridan]	
Dec. 1—Early modern education and Print culture: literature	[ch. 8; Blair]	Quiz 11
Dec. 6—Contemporary education and digital culture	[Baron, Welch, Porter]	
Dec. 8—Contemporary education and visual rhetoric	[Kress, Hill]	Quiz 12
Dec. 15— Rhetorical Analysis due (Final): 10:15-12:15		