

COM 321 Rhetorical Theory and Research Fall 2014,

Instructor:	email:
Office:	Office hrs.:
	Main Office phone (emergencies only): 480.965.5095

Required Texts:

Foss, S. K., Foss, K. A., & Trapp, R. (2014). *Contemporary perspectives on rhetoric*, 30th anniversary edition. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press. (**TEXT**)

Additional chapters and articles available through Blackboard (**BB**) and course reserves (**CR**).

Weblinks available through Blackboard. (**ONL**)

Online APA reference guide – <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Overview of the Course:

I'd like to welcome you to this class and hope that you find it to be challenging and rewarding. This course is designed as an introduction to and overview of the historical development of rhetorical studies in communication, from classical western antiquity to the present. We will engage different conceptualizations of rhetoric spanning a range of theory and theorists, looking to make connections between historical and contemporary approaches.

Rhetorical theory and research examines how symbols are used in a variety of contexts including political speech, social movements, performance, and popular culture. By utilizing an extensive range of critical and interpretive methods, rhetorical scholarship examines how these and other texts come to have meanings for their audiences. This course will introduce you to a selection of methods and texts for rhetorical inquiry and examine the relationships between rhetoric and our political, social, and personal worlds. Such study provides students with skills for effectively preparing and analyzing public messages. This course is both rigorous and fun and will address the following kinds of questions: What is rhetoric? What is rhetorical theory? Can we observe these theories in our world today? How does rhetorical theory apply to my life? In answering these questions, rhetorical theory and research aims, ultimately, to empower different voices and to help citizens to construct interests that are meaningful to them as well as to the larger society.

Course Goals:

- 1) For students and teacher to together create a critical yet respectful forum for learning
- 2) For students to identify the historical roots of rhetoric, and be able to trace the connections between ancient rhetorical theory and contemporary rhetorical theory
- 3) For students to practice rhetorical concepts via classroom discussions, exercises, and assignments
- 4) For students to enhance their knowledge of, and skills for, preparing and analyzing public messages
- 5) For students and teacher to explore and apply rhetorical theory in our everyday lives, including how concepts and theories of rhetoric intersect with our political and civic communication, media and popular culture, and our personal lives and identities

Statement of Teaching Philosophy:

As a teacher, my goal is to help students to become independent thinkers by exploring new ideas and discovering new ways of seeing themselves and the world around them. In doing so, I do not wish to impart my own vision to my students, but rather to provide them with the critical tools to develop their own understanding of course materials.

Instructor Obligations – *Each time we meet, you should expect that I will:*

- 1) Arrive to class prepared and organized
- 2) Convey passion for the material and conduct class in a manner that is engaging
- 3) Respect each student's individuality as a person and as a learner
- 4) Attempt to relate material in this course to your everyday lives

Student Obligations – *Each class period, I will expect you to:*

- 1) Arrive to class prepared, on time, and with readings and assignments completed
- 2) Participate respectfully in class discussion and activities and pose questions for clarification
- 3) Adhere to the guidelines of academic integrity
- 4) Contribute positively to the classroom climate

An Important Reminder:

Please recognize from the outset that this is an upper-division, reading intensive class. You will be expected to keep up with the readings, so please plan accordingly.

general

policies

Classroom Conduct:

I want to build a classroom climate that is comfortable for all. In a communication class, it is *especially* important that we (1) display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and students; (2) pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities; (3) avoid disruptions during class time - including but not limited to having private conversations, reading the newspaper, surfing the internet, doing work for other classes, placing or receiving phone calls, and text messaging; and (4) avoid racist, sexist, homophobic, and other negative, discriminatory or derogative language. This is not an exhaustive list of unacceptable behavior, rather, it is representative of the types of things that may have a dramatic impact on the class environment and the quality of education received by you and your peers. Your final grade may be reduced by up to 5% *each time* you engage in these sorts of behaviors. Students who are physically and/or verbally aggressive toward the instructor, guest lecturers, or other students before, during, or after class will have their final grade lowered by 25% *each time* they engage in this sort of behavior. Students engaging in such behaviors may also be permanently removed from the class and reported to the proper authorities.

Students are required to adhere to the behavior standards listed in the Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual Chapter 5 – Campus and Student Affairs: Code of Conduct, available here – <http://www.azregents.edu/policymanual/default.aspx> and the ACD 125: Computer Internet and Electronic Communications, available here – <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd125.html>.

Students are entitled to receive instruction free from interference by other members of the class. An instructor may withdraw a student from a course when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process under SSM 201-10, available here – <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm201-10.html>. As noted in that document: "An instructor may withdraw a student from a course with a mark of 'W' or 'E' when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process. Disruptive classroom behavior for this purpose is defined by the instructor." At the risk of being repetitive, in cases where disruptive behavior does not warrant removal from class, at the instructor's discretion, a student's final grade may be lowered by 25%.

Electronic Devices:

In order to create the best possible learning environment for you and your peers, cell phones will not be tolerated in the classroom. Turn your cell phone off – not on vibrate – off! If you text message people under your desk, thinking that it is not obvious, you will receive an in-class warning. If it is a repeated behavior, as in more than once, I *will* reduce your final grade at a rate of 5% per instance.

In order to ensure a fair learning environment for all students, laptops will be permitted; however, the first time you are observed using your laptop for non-class related activities such as checking your email, facebook, shopping, or surfing the internet, OR if I receive student complaints about distractions coming from your laptop, your final grade will be reduced by 5%. The second time, you will be asked to not use your laptop in class for the remainder of the semester. *Note: No electronic recordings of class lectures, activities, or presentations are to be permitted without the explicit permission of the instructor.*

Disability Accommodations:

If you have any disabilities that may prevent you from fully demonstrating your abilities, you should contact me privately, as soon as possible, so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure a successful and educational experience. It is your responsibility both to notify me and to make the first contact with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Additionally, you must provide written documentation from the DRC at least one week prior to the date in which you are requesting accommodations. The DRC can be reached at 480-965-1234.

Feedback:

I welcome feedback about the course. If we wait until university evaluations at the end of the semester, I cannot make changes that will help you. Please share your thoughts with me in an open and constructive manner during the semester. You can make suggestions in class, privately during office hours, or via email.

Caveat:

I reserve the right to update or change portions of this syllabus in order to make the class a better experience for everyone. This may be in response to suggestions from students, from my own observations, or as the result of requirements by the Department, College, or University. Changes will be announced in class and posted on the course Blackboard.

Class Material Disclaimer:

On occasion, the material we will be viewing and/or discussing in class may contain adult language, sexual situations, violence, or other material that may be deemed offensive by

some audiences. While I do not anticipate any problems, I am stating this up front so that *your continued enrollment in this course, following the reading of the syllabus, indicates that you are aware of this potential and have chosen to stay in this particular section of the class.* Please talk to me if you have any questions or concerns.

electronic course

components

Online/Blackboard Component:

Aspects of this class will be conducted through the course Blackboard. Assignments must be submitted on Blackboard's SafeAssignment, which checks for plagiarism. To succeed in this course it is essential that you have regular and reliable access to Blackboard. Periodically, I will post announcements and/or send out individual/class emails with information about the class. All email sent via Blackboard is automatically sent to students' asu.edu accounts. Therefore, you must regularly check your ASU email.

Email etiquette:

I will attempt to respond to all course emails within 48 hours. If you do not receive a reply within 48 hours (longer on weekends), assume that your email was not received and try again. Email communication should be treated with the same respect that you would a face-to-face interaction. Emails should include your course number (COM 207) in the subject line, an appropriate greeting, and a concise message without spelling or grammatical errors. Be aware that text-speak e-mails may be deleted without comment. In other words: if u wrt me emlz lk ths, dnt xpct a rspnse. It is best to use your ASU email to contact me. Email from other accounts may not reach me.

Important Note:

If you have computer problems using Blackboard, do NOT contact the instructor for help. If you have computer/internet or Blackboard-related problems, you must immediately contact the Help Desk 24/7 at 480-965-6500 or <http://asu.edu/helpdesk>. Computer and/or system problems do NOT excuse late work! Students who wait until the last minute to submit assignments online are taking a huge risk! Computer, internet, Blackboard, and life-related problems happen every day, and they are almost always unexpected and seemingly beyond one's control. Be prepared by submitting your assignments early.

assignments

Details of all assignments will be provided in ample time to prepare. To give you an overview:

Attendance and Participation (70 points):

Because learning is an interactive process, and we learn from each other as well as the instructor, your attendance is expected and required. Attendance will be taken, and your presence and participation, especially in discussion, will be reflected in your participation grade. Please note that *if you miss **eight** or more classes (for any reason) you will automatically fail the course.*

Excusable absences are •

- Religious holidays
- University sponsored events such as athletics and debate
Please note that these are university *sponsored* events, not university *related* events, intramural sports, Greek events, and other things not *sponsored* by the university are not excusable.
- Documented extreme illness or emergency
Please also note that you will be *required* to provide documentation for these situations. In the event of a death, you must provide either a death certificate or an obituary. Proper documentation for illnesses, injury, and other situations will be defined at my discretion.

The material in this course is complicated and your participation in class discussion and lectures is your best avenue to understanding this material. Throughout our semester together, I will measure your participation. You must be present in class to participate, and absences will count against participation credit, but attendance does NOT generate participation credit by itself. Participation means not only being physically present, but also being an active participant in course interactions. To participate, you need to have read and thought about that day's reading assignment. Be prepared to ask questions, offer examples, and apply concepts to class exercises. Participation also means joining in effectively in class exercises and group work, asking thoughtful questions, and offering insightful comments and feedback. Any behaviors that detract from that kind of climate will reduce your class participation grade. Arriving late, leaving early, or packing up your bag before I dismiss the class is impolite and disruptive and will also reduce your participation points. I encourage you to make an appointment to speak with me about your participation in this course before midterm.

In addition, if you cannot come to class, for whatever reason, you are still responsible for any material covered and for turning in your work on time. Please make arrangements to get notes from a classmate. I will accept emailed assignments time stamped *before class starts*. That means if you email me an assignment any time *after* class starts, it will be considered late. Penalties will apply to *all late work*, excused absence or not.

Journal Responses (70 points, 14 @5 points each):

Each week you will be required to complete one journal entry based on an assigned reading. Each entry must be single-spaced typed and printed, and should not be longer than 1 page in length (approx. 300-500 words). Journal entries are *due the day the reading is due*. Entries may include any combination of the following: your immediate reactions to the readings, thoughts, questions, concerns, personal experiences, discussion points for the class, or critiques. The entries should reflect your understanding of and engagement with the readings and offer something NEW and INSIGHTFUL. *No late responses will be accepted even in the case of an excusable absence*. Not counting our first and last meetings, and the week of your midterm, there are 14 full weeks, thus 14 total responses are due.

Rhetoric in Our Everyday Lives—Media/Rhetorical Artifact Presentation (50 points):

We are surrounded by rhetorical messages, from the public figures who shape our political and cultural landscapes, to social movements and local/global struggles for rights and recognition, to media messages, to the visual arts and theatrical performance, to the ways physical spaces are constructed, to the ways that we dress/walk/perform our identities. Once during the semester you will be asked to present a rhetorical “artifact” to the class. Your oral presentation should engage class concepts to reflect upon the artifact and its implications for our collective study of rhetoric and public life and include three discussion

questions for your classmates to address (you will lead the discussion). Your total presentation/discussion should be between 10-15 minutes. You are encouraged to think widely, and creatively, about the artifact you choose. Further details and a sign-up sheet to select the day of your presentation will be handed out on the second day of class.

Reflection Papers: (180 points, 2@90 points each):

There are three reflection papers that require you to consider different theorists and eras of rhetorical theory. These 5 page papers will consist of your responses to prompts I provide. (You will be offered a selection of prompts to choose from.) Each paper must have at least three academic sources properly cited and employed in the assignment. Only one of those three required sources can be from the course reading. The other two or more sources must be from independent reading and library research. Should the topic intersect with a question/reflection already offered in a journal response, you are invited to expand upon your previous response but to do so in a more formal and academic style.

Exams (180 points, 2@90 points each):

Your midterm will be a take-home exam covering the Classical, Renaissance, and Enlightenment eras as well as some early contemporary rhetorical theory. Your final exam will consist of your applying contemporary rhetorical theory to an artifact provided in class. Both exams are in a short answer essay format.

Late Work:

Assignments are due on or before the scheduled due date. Assignments not turned in at the start of class on the due date will be penalized 10% per day until turned in. Without exception, *all assignments must be turned in within one week of the scheduled due date*, or the assignment will be given an automatic zero.

grading

Grades:

Grades are an assessment of your performance in the class. You have complete and unquestioned access to your grades at all times. That is not to say that if you e-mail me on Friday night I will get back to you before Monday. *Lack of preparation on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part.*

If you are confused about an assignment grade, then I encourage you to initiate a discussion with me about that grade. I ask that you follow a “24/7” principle—please wait until twenty-four hours after the graded assignment has been returned, and please wait no longer than seven days to initiate such a discussion. I reserve the right to ask you to present your grade concerns in writing.

It is important to note that grades, and the points that constitute them, are *earned* not awarded. You do not start with a perfect grade which I then demerit. You start with no grade and earn what you end up with at the end of the class. Your grade is *your* responsibility, not my whim. Also, please keep in mind that I cannot and will not grade you on effort. In other words, just because you show up and complete the work does not mean that you deserve the grade that you think you do. It is impossible for me to assess how hard you tried, only the degree of your success. The degrees of success follow.

Grading Criteria:

A=Superior. Greatly exceeds the basic requirements, by demonstrating high standards of creativity, skill, analysis, initiative and effort.

B=Above average. Exceeds basic requirements by demonstrating above average creativity, skill, analysis, initiative and effort. May have technical weakness in some areas.

C=Average. Meets basic course requirements but does not demonstrate extra initiative regarding the assignment.

D=Below average. Some requirements are deficient. Shows an effort worthy of credit, while not meeting the basic requirements in every respect.

E=Poor work. Deficient in most or all requirements.

Grade Distribution:

This is a 550 point class. That means you can easily determine your performance in the class by maintaining *your own* record of your accumulated points. There is no extra credit.

• Attendance and participation	70 points
• Journal responses	70 points
• Media/rhetorical artifact presentation	50 points
• Reflection papers (2, 90 points each)	180 points
• Exams (2, 90 points each)	180 points

TOTAL *550 points*

Grading Scale:

A+	= 97-100%	= 533-550 points
A	= 93-96.9%	= 511-532 points
A-	= 90-92.9%	= 495-510 points
B+	= 87-89.9%	= 478-494 points
B	= 83-86.9%	= 456-477 points
B-	= 80-82.9%	= 440-455 points
C+	= 77-79.9%	= 423-439 points
C	= 70-76.9%	= 385-422 points
D	= 60-69.9%	= 330-386 points
E	= 0-59.9%	= 0-329 points

Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct:

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication strongly believe in academic integrity; thus, instructors in the College and School do not tolerate cheating and plagiarism. In the “Student Academic Integrity Policy” manual, ASU defines “Plagiarism” [as] using another’s words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another’s work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately.” You can find this definition at:

<http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity/policy>. Note that plagiarism is intentionally or unintentionally using another’s work (including wording, phrases, or original ideas) without giving the person proper credit. This includes representing anyone else’s words as your own. Exact words can be used ONLY in direct quotes, clearly presented as such. Instructors who find compelling evidence of academic dishonesty will actively pursue one or more of the following actions: Assigning a grade of XE (“failure through academic dishonesty”) to the student, advocating the suspension or expulsion of the student from the College, and/or

referring the student to Student Judicial Affairs. If a student who is charged with academic dishonesty is found to be in violation, then one or more of these disciplinary actions will be taken.

This course will adhere to the university policies described above. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's *Student Code of Conduct* is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so it is recommended that you review the *Student Code of Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct at: <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity/policy>. For further information, please read the Student Academic Integrity policy and the code of conduct for the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at <http://humancommunication.clas.asu.edu/undergraduate/major-information>

In short, plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following •

- Use of somebody else's exact wording, whatever the material, without indicating the source and without using quotation marks or other accepted typographical devices. Changing a few words here and there is not sufficient to avoid plagiarism.
- Paraphrasing or otherwise copying without citing a source.
- Borrowing the whole pattern of organization and points of view of a source without giving credit via standard in-text written citation.
- Borrowing facts, figures, or ideas that are the property of a particular source rather than a matter of common information available in many sources.
- Collaborating with other students to the extent that two or more assignments are seemingly or notably identical in pattern of organization, points of view, or wording.

Please be aware that I will not hesitate to exercise the academic honesty policies of the University.