

**RHE 321: Principles of Rhetoric**  
#87555 Summer 2010

Ferreira-Buckley

*Meeting Times:* Weekdays 8:30 - 10:00 (MEZ 1.202)

*Office:* Parlin 16

*Office Hours:* MWF 10:00-11:00, TTH 7:30-8:30, & by appt.

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471-7843 (o); 301-2721 (h)

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The study of rhetoric, one of the original seven Liberal Arts (along with logic, grammar, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music) has a long and proud history, stretching back to the 5th century BCE and forward to the present day. Both a productive and interpretive art, it is decidedly cross-disciplinary: the principles of rhetoric (audience, context, *kairos*, exigency, *ethos*, *pathos*, *logos*, and so forth) are consistently employed in and consistently draw from literary analyses, law, politics, education, science, and religion, for example.

This course will introduce you to common rhetorical principles and to the disciplinary history of rhetoric and writing studies. Assignments in this class will offer you the chance to identify and apply these rhetorical principles while composing, interpreting, and presenting “texts”—oral, print, and/or electronic. Throughout the course, you’ll work on revision and do peer reviews. Graded assignments will include three papers, a collaborative presentation, two exams, and several unannounced reading quizzes.

You’ll read and discuss excerpts from significant works from two major historical periods in the West—ancient and modern/contemporary—and consider the development of rhetorical practices specific to oral, print, and electronic technologies of interaction. You’ll also do rhetorical analyses of different kinds of texts (e.g., political speeches, advertisements, editorials, songs, videos) and engage with both mainstream and culturally specific rhetorics (e.g., African American, Native American, feminist, queer).

In so doing, we’ll practice close critical reading as we try to determine as precisely as possible what the writer or speaker intends to convey. We’ll study both effective and ineffective texts to determine their meaning and how the argument works (i.e., how particular words, sentences, organizational patterns, etc., create an overall argument and shape readers’ interpretations). Although the course does not include a formal research project, it is indeed a course about researching, understanding, taking stock of many and diverse sources. You will need to do research throughout the course in order to understand what you’re reading, hearing, seeing, presenting, representing, and arguing.

You will be expected to adopt a professional attitude toward revising, editing, and proofreading your work. Please come to my office hours as often as you like so that we can focus on your particular strengths and weaknesses. In any case, you should schedule a paper conference with me during the first three weeks of our summer session. Additionally, visit the Undergraduate Writing Center to work one-on-one with experienced consultants trained in writing. My hope is that you will leave RHE 321 more skilled at constructing effective, imaginative, ethical arguments. Given our short time together—a mere 5 weeks—you will need to be proactive, vigilant, and industrious.

RHE 321 requires your intense participation in class activities. To state the obvious: you need to read (and

reread) assignments carefully and critically and to contribute enthusiastically to discussion. *The success of this course — what you learn and whether you are engaged or bored — depends on you and your colleagues.* This is not a lecture course. For this course to be worth your time and that of your colleagues, you must be an engaged participant in discussion. Much of your success in and after this course requires you to be organized and anticipatory, which is why I'm not using Blackboard.

If you miss more than 3 class meetings, you will fail the class. Of course, you will not be penalized for missing class on religious holidays, jury duty, or National Guard duty. Please note that the University designates no other excused absences. Plan ahead and save your absences for an unexpected illness or emergency. Be on time for class (3 lates = 1 absence).

Take note: students sometimes present lifeless summaries of conventional wisdom or common prejudices; they write what they believe the teacher wants to read. More than anything, I want to read papers that show you genuinely working through complex issues.

Students with disabilities should request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

**The course grade will be calculated based on the following percentages:**

Paper 1 (position argument): 20%

Paper 2 (rhetorical analysis): 20%

Paper 3 (collaborative): 10%

Collaborative presentation: 10%

Surprise quizzes: 10%

Exam 1: 15%

Exam 2: 15%

Exercises, peer reviews, self-assessments, class attendance, & participation: **MANDATORY TO PASS THE COURSE!** To count, all written work must be done with care and thought.

**TEXTS**

Crowley & Hawhee, *Ancient Rhetoric for Contemporary Students*

Bizzell & Herzberg, *The Rhetorical Tradition* (optional)

Any writing handbook

Other readings as assigned (some will be handed out in class; some sent electronically; some on reserve)

**SUMMER 2010** *SUBJECT to slight modification based on UWC revision workshop*

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Readings not in Crowley and Hawhee: most will be sent to you electronically, a few will be handed out in class.

**Week One**

- M 7/12 Course overview and policies. Introductions. Exchange email addresses and other contact information with three other students. Why classical rhetoric?
- T 7/13 What is rhetoric? Why “rhetorics” rather than “rhetoric”? The communication triangle. Classical rhetorics. Read Crowley & Hawhee, Ch 1. Asking questions. Deep, critical reading.
- W 7/14 Kairos and other key principles. Progymnasmata. Read Crowley & Hawhee, Ch 2. Bring in print copies of 2 emails.
- TH 7/15 Paper 1 assigned.
- F 7/16 Group Project Assignment. Collaborative groups form and meet.

**Week Two**

- M 7/19 Stasis Theory. Read Crowley & Hawhee, Ch 3.
- T 7/20 Commonplaces. Read Crowley & Hawhee, Ch 4.
- W 7/21 Logical Reasoning. Read Crowley & Hawhee, Ch 5.
- TH 7/22 Ethical Proof. Read Crowley & Hawhee, Ch 6.
- F 7/23 Collaborative groups. Evaluating oral presentations. Bring collaborative assignment sheet handout to class. Critique of analyses.

**Week Three**

- M 7/26 **EXAM 1.**
- T 7/27 Rough draft session.
- W 7/28 Read Kenneth Burke excerpts from *A Grammar of Motives*, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, and *Language as Symbolic Action*.
- TH 7/29
- F 7/30 **Final version of Paper 1 and self assessment\* due.** Do self-assessment at home: What was successful in your paper? What was less than successful? What aspects of your writing did you pay particular attention to when working on this assignment?

How did your colleague's comments about your draft affect your revision? What aspects of your writing do you want to work on in paper 2?

Paper 2 assigned.

Collaborative groups. Critique of analyses.

#### Week Four

- M 8/2 Read Foss, Foss, and Trapp excerpt from *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*.
- T 8/3 Read contemporary rhetorical theory handout.
- W 8/4 Rough draft session.
- TH 8/5 Read contemporary rhetorical theory handout.
- F 8/6 **Final version of Paper 2 and self assessment\* due** (include graded copy of paper 1 and first self assessment in your folder). Remember to do self-assessment at home: What was successful in your paper? What was less than successful? What aspects of your writing did you pay particular attention to when working on this assignment? How did your colleague's comments about your draft affect your revision? How did my comments on your first paper and your subsequent "handbook" reading shape this paper? What aspects of your writing do you want to work on in paper 3?
- Collaborative groups. Critique of analyses.

#### Week Five

- M 8/9 Read Herrick, excerpt from *History and Theory of Rhetoric*.
- T 8/10 Presentations, Paper 3 project due: Groups 1 & 2.
- W 8/11 Presentations, Paper 3 project due: Groups 3 & 4.
- TH 8/12 Presentations, Paper 3 project due: Groups 5 & 6.
- F 8/13 **EXAM 2.**