

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 369 (L02): Rhetorical Communication

FALL 2021: September 7 to December 9 (excluding Oct. 11 and Nov. 7-13)

Lecture: MW 15:30 to 16:45

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR IN-PERSON COURSE DELIVERY

Note: This course will be delivered in-person. If you are unable to participate in-class owing to time differences or geographical location, please arrange to take this course in a future term. Masks are mandatory in the classroom and must be worn at all times during class (i.e., covering mouth and nose). Failure to comply with this policy will result in dismissal from the classroom and possible disciplinary action under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Instructor:	Dr. Arti Modgill
Email:	arti.modgill2@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 9:30am to 11:30am (via Zoom)

Course Description

Rhetorical Communication. An introduction to the basic principles of rhetorical theory, criticism and practice. Examines rhetorical perspectives on elements of communication such as argumentation, persuasion, audience, situation, genre and ethics. Students will apply rhetorical theory to the criticism of samples of public communication and will practice their rhetorical skills through in-class activities and assigned writing and oral presentations.

Additional Information

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found on D2L.

Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

Objectives of the Course

By the end of the course, students should have developed:

- A familiarity with the historical roots of rhetorical theory and an understanding of the importance of rhetoric to Western culture.
- An understanding of the principles and terminology of classical (and potentially some contemporary) rhetorical theory.
- Skill in using rhetorical principles to craft persuasive and informative texts for various audiences; these may include visual genres such as brochures, memes, and posters.
- Ability to locate relevant sources using U of C library digital search tools in order to marshal evidence useful in crafting persuasive texts.
- Competence and confidence in crafting and delivering persuasive and informative presentations, including skill in designing and using presentation slides or other visual aids.

- Ability to use rhetorical concepts to analyze and critique persuasive texts and speeches.
- Competence in editing written work for style, correctness, and citation of sources appropriate for particular rhetorical contexts.

Textbooks and Readings

Required Textbook: Beeson, L. (2014). *Persuasion: Theory and Applications*. Oxford University Press.

Mark Allocation

Class participation	ongoing	10%
Rhetorical Analysis Paper	Oct. 6	25%
Speech to Persuade	Oct. 25 & 27	15%
Midterm Exam	Nov. 17	20%
Persuasive Article	Dec. 1	20%
Rhetorical Analysis of Article	Dec. 1	10%

Assessment

Rhetorical Analysis Paper (25%, 900-1200 words).

In this paper, you will analyze a persuasive oral or written speech using the rhetorical concepts covered in class. See the detailed assignment guidelines and list of speeches to choose from on D2L. Details will be discussed in class and assignment instructions will be posted to D2L.

Midterm Exam (25%) The exam will assess your knowledge of both the readings and class lectures. Students will have 70 minutes to write a closed book in-class exam consisting of approximately 20-30 multiple choice questions, and approximately 3-7 short answer questions.

Speech to Persuade

In class on assigned dates of either Oct. 25 or Oct. 27. Students will deliver a 5-7- minute persuasive speech on a topic of their choice applying/demonstrating course concepts provided. Speeches will be delivered synchronously in real time in a Zoom session. Students must also submit their written script to the D2L dropbox. Students should submit a 125 word description of their topic to the instructor for approval by Oct. 18.

Peer Speech Reviews

Students will be assigned to watch the speeches of two other students and complete a peer review for each. This is part of the participation component of the course.

Persuasive Article and Self-Reflective Rhetorical Analysis

This is a two-part writing assignment which students will submit on the same day in two separate files on D2L.

1) Persuasive Article

Written on a topic of your choice, your article of 1000 to 1200 words may include

ethically sourced & properly cited visuals. Details will be discussed in class and assignment instructions will be posted to D2L.

2) Self Reflective Rhetorical Analysis of Your Article

In this self-reflective rhetorical analysis of 600 to 750 words, students will identify your intended audience, explain your assumptions about your audience, and discuss several key rhetorical strategies with the appropriate terminology from the course applied in writing your article.

Class Participation and Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes, arriving on time and staying for the duration of the class. This portion of your mark takes into account the **quality of your contribution** to the experience of the class through your preparation, attendance, participation during in-class activities, peer-speech reviews, and discussions over the course of the term.

To foster a creative and supportive learning environment, students are reminded that listening to others' ideas on topics being discussed is not only a common courtesy, but also a useful tool in furthering one's own understanding of a subject; anyone behaving disrespectfully towards others in the class will be asked to leave and may be subject to further action under the non-academic student misconduct policy.

Attendance and participation are both worth 5% of your grade. Attendance will be monitored regularly and participation will be evaluated according to engagement in interactive, small-group activities and class discussions. Any unexcused absences in excess of two class periods will reduce the final class participation and attendance grade by 20% per absence.

Sample grading rubric for participation component:

A = Student engages in all small-group activities, and frequently contributes thoughtful comments and questions to class discussions that enhance understanding of the texts being studied

B = Student engages in most of the small-group activities, and occasionally offers a comment or question in class

C = Student shows little to no evidence of engagement in small-group or class discussions

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Note: All major assignments (worth 10 percent or more) must be completed, or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. Failing grades on individual assignments may be averaged out to a final passing grade by other assessment components.

Submission of Assignments

Please submit all assignments by uploading them to the designated D2L *dropbox before the start of each class in which they are due*. Include your name, course, and instructor's name on all assignments. Be sure to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to submit the proper version.

Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recording for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of 5% or a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted without prior approval of the instructor. In the event of a serious illness, please contact me immediately about an extension.

Policy on the use of Electronic Communication Devices

Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones may be used in class and tutorials only for course-related purposes and only if their use is not distracting others or negatively impacting the learning environment. **No audio or video recording is allowed in any class without the instructor's explicit permission.**

Taking notes

Research studies have shown that handwritten class notes are markedly superior in terms of acquiring a more thorough understanding of course material and for retention of material in one's memory. Keep in mind that it is the student's responsibility to take notes. (In other words, notes are not given but taken.) Sometimes students assume that notes should be taken only when there is a PowerPoint Presentation on the screen, but this is not true.

Email

Email is most useful for short, specific inquiries. If you have detailed questions on the course material, assignments, or grades, visit the instructor during office hours. The instructor will respond to emails during the week, usually on a first-come, first-served basis. Emails sent in the evening or on weekends will not be read (or replied to) until the next working day.

When corresponding with the instructor via email, students should include the course name (ex. COMS 369) in the subject line. If you do not include the course name in your email's subject line, your message may get overlooked in the instructor's inbox and go unread. Please maintain a respectful tone in your correspondence with the instructor.

NOTE: Email submissions of work will not be accepted unless otherwise specified.

Student Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. For the full policy on Student Accommodations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide

supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require a medical note. For information on the use of a statutory declaration, see the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

Expectations for Writing

Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, letter grades will be used for written and oral assignments, and the participation grades, while percentage or numerical grades will be used for the exam.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

- * Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. **In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin.** Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support> or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

Course materials created by the instructor (including lectures, course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed, or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

To ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes & electronic versions of textbooks), all students are required to read the *University of Calgary Policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright* at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy> and the requirements of the *Copyright Act* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the *University of Calgary Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics>

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal

For university regulations and procedures related to deferral of term work, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

For information about deferrals of final examinations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

For information about requesting a reappraisal of course work or of a final grade, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk. For resources on D2L, Zoom, Yuja, etc., see <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students>. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

See the course website on D2L for the scheduled of topics and readings.