

Communications Studies (COMS) 469 - Lecture & Lab 01
Rhetorical History and Criticism
Fall 2013
WF 15:00-15:50 Lab: WF 16:00-16:50

Instructor: Tania S. Smith
Office Location: SS 326
Office Phone: 403-220-7774
E-Mail: smit@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: <http://people.ucalgary.ca/~smit>
Office Hours: WF 13:00-14:00, or by appointment.

Course Description

A study of rhetorical thought and action from the classical period to the modern age, with an emphasis on the interaction between rhetoric and philosophical, social, and political change. Theories will be applied to the criticism of historical and contemporary public communication. Prerequisite: COMS 369.

Additional information

Rhetoric is interactive and emphasizes the adaptation of communication to its audiences and contexts. Therefore, the course involves lab activities and unique assignments that apply concepts and exercise written and oral rhetorical skills through frequent peer feedback, class interaction, and critical reflection.

Objectives of the Course

- To understand the history of rhetoric in its social context from the classic to the contemporary period
- To gain competence in rhetorical analysis of texts, media and their contexts
- To apply rhetorical principles to the processes of composition and performance

Internet and electronic communication device information

During student presentations, smart-phones and tablet computers must be put away and laptop screens must be closed. At other times, students should use electronic devices for course-related functions only. Show professional courtesy and attentiveness to the instructor and fellow students by using technology silently and discreetly. Minimize visual distractions from your laptop screen.

The Instructure Canvas online course management system (<http://www.instructure.com/>) will be used instead of Blackboard. Students will be sent an email invitation and will register during the first two weeks of class. For convenient access, the course's area on Blackboard will provide a link to Canvas.

Required Textbooks and Readings

1. Herrick, J. (2012). *The History and Theory of Rhetoric: An Introduction (5th edition)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson. (Print, \$80-90. CourseSmart e-text approx. \$35)
2. Longaker, M. G., & Walker, J. (2010). *Rhetorical Analysis: A Brief Guide for Writers*. Glenview, IL: Pearson Longman. (Print, \$20. CourseSmart e-text approx. \$10)

Assignments and Evaluation

Critical Essay 20% Draft: September 25 / Final: October 04
1500 to 2000-word essay employing concepts from Classical rhetoric to analyze the rhetorical situation and argumentation of a Canadian artifact by a Canadian author published online within the past 5 years.

Presentation 15% As scheduled
10-15 minute rhetorical criticism of a short public online artifact created in Alberta or by Albertans, using one or more concepts discussed in the assigned readings of the week. The presentation outline and/or slides are posted to the peer review forum before class begins. The presenter brings paper copies of a 1-2 page outline for the instructor and designated peer reviewers to take notes during the presentation.

Learning Portfolio 15% Friday, November 15
Instead of exams, students will submit a portfolio of a selection of materials from eligible in-class lab activities, with commentary introducing and reflecting on each item. Lab activities focus on readings and may include quizzes, group and individual writing activities, impromptu presentations, etc. A total of 1000 words of commentary illustrates one's learning processes and deepens understanding of concepts.

Final Essay & Reflection 30% Draft: November 29 / Final: December 06
This is a two-part assignment: A) a 2000-word historical, theoretical or critical essay on a topic not explored in one's other assignments, and B) a 750 to 1000-word reflective essay. The reflective essay uses textbook concepts to explain the final essay's process and illustrate its rhetorical strengths.

Peer Reviews 20% As scheduled below.
Student peer reviews fulfill the course objective "to apply rhetorical principles to the *process* of composition and performance." The two essays and the presentation undergo peer review.

1. **Drafts and Presentation materials, 5 points.**

- a. Draft of the Critical essay September 25
- b. Draft of the Final essay November 29
- c. Presentation materials posted online before the presentation

Drafts are not scored for quality, but for timeliness of submission to peers, and minimal length & format requirements outlined in assignment descriptions. Drafts will be reviewed only by peers.

2. **Essay peer reviews, 8 points.**

- a. Critical essay 250-word review memo; notes & oral review October 04
- b. Final essay 250-word review memo; notes & oral review December 04

For each essay assignment, each student will review **two** designated peers' drafts, reviewing one in a memo, and preparing notes to review the second one orally. Both reviews are then brought to class and delivered orally in small groups during lab time on designated peer review days.

3. **Presentation peer reviews, 7 points.** Students will sign up for peer reviews of **two** student presentations during the term. Reviewers will ask questions or provide responses after the presentation. Each review consists of a 250-word online memo posted within 2 business days.

At the end of the term, Peer Review components will be scored. Memos will be scored for their quality. The following penalties may apply: -0.5 points each late item, -0.5 each incomplete item, -0.5 each item not following instructions, and -2.0 points each draft not submitted by review day.

NOTE: You do not need to complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in the course.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments must be submitted to Canvas by 8:00 PM (20:00) on their deadline date, except for presentation materials and peer review memos, which are due before class begins on the scheduled date.

For all written assignments (except peer review memos), a 28-hour grace period until 11:59 PM the next day is permitted for unanticipated technical difficulties, short-term illness, or scheduling challenges. If the assignment is submitted late but within the grace period, no penalties will apply. If a student's Presentation is scheduled on a day when the Critical essay, Portfolio, or Final essay is due, a 2-day extension of the essay or portfolio is automatically granted in addition to the grace period.

Late written assignments may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g. A- to B+) for each day late, *including the grace period* and weekend days. For each peer review assignment component, unique late penalties apply, as described in the assignment list above.

If for any reason you miss your presentation's scheduled time, you are responsible for notifying the instructor and rescheduling it as soon as possible. Without a valid excuse, a late presentation may be penalized with the loss of a grade (A- to B+) for each *available class day* it has been delayed.

Verifiable documentation may be required to waive or reduce late penalties on any assignment.

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

| | Grading scale | Grade point | U of C Calendar description |
|-----|---------------|-------------|--|
| A+ | 96-100 | 4.0 | Outstanding |
| A | 90-95.99 | 4.0 | Excellent--superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter. |
| A - | 85-89.99 | 3.7 | |
| B+ | 80-84.99 | 3.3 | |
| B | 75-79.99 | 3.0 | Good--clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete. |
| B- | 70-74.99 | 2.7 | |
| C+ | 65-69.99 | 2.3 | |
| C | 60-64.99 | 2.0 | Satisfactory--basic understanding of the subject matter. |
| C- | 55-59.99 | 1.7 | |
| D+ | 53-54.99 | 1.3 | |
| D | 50-52.99 | 1.0 | Minimal pass--marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject. |
| F | 0-49 | 0 | Fail--unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements. |

Assignment grades may be provided as letter grades, percentages, or points.

- Major assignments are given a letter grade (A-, B+), and this will be converted to points using the midpoint of the scale for that letter grade, as shown above. For example, A- will be converted to 87.5, and B- to 72.5. However, F grades will be converted to zero.
- If an assignment is given points on another scale, its equivalent percentage will be used in final grade calculations. A score of 3.5 out of 5 on a Peer Review category is a 70 in calculations.

Assignment submission

All assignments must be submitted electronically to their designated areas in Canvas in .doc, .docx, .ppt, .pptx, or pdf file format. Do NOT email your assignments to the instructor.

It is the student's responsibility to verify online submission and to keep a secure backup copy of each submitted assignment. After submitting a file, download your file from Canvas and open it to verify that it is the correct version and there were no file transfer errors.

Presentation slides should be saved to .ppt, .pptx, or pdf files and brought to class on a memory stick. This makes the slides available without an internet connection, and enables quick uploading to the classroom computer. Ensure your file is compatible with the PowerPoint version on the classroom computer.

If you cannot submit to Canvas, temporarily submit your assignment to the course's digital drop box in Blackboard. If internet access is unavailable, temporarily submit in paper to the department office. SS320 has a stamp and sign-in system for assignment submission and an after-hours drop box in the wall. *Re-submit the assignment electronically via Canvas as soon as possible when access is available.* Provide a comment in the assignment's submission area about the date and method of your prior submission.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, *students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the first page and submitting work online via Canvas.* To protect your own privacy, do not place your ID number on materials to be shared with peers or posted on a class discussion board. All assignments will be graded electronically and returned online to the student's private assignment areas in Canvas. For more information on privacy see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

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.

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. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

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

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with Student Accessibility Services (403-220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs directly with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

- The Faculty of Arts Research Ethics site: <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/research/research-ethics>
- University of Calgary Research Ethics site: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

The schedule of readings, student presentations, deadlines, and exams will be posted online on the course's website.