

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
ENG 310: INTRODUCTION TO RHETORICAL THEORY
THINKING & LIVING RHETORICALLY

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Leack
Class Times: MW 1:00—2:15pm
Class Location: Building 9-281
Email: rleack@gmail.com

Office: Building 24-112
And Outside Classroom
Office Hours: MW 12:00—1:00
And by Appointment

A HISTORY IN QUOTES

Sophistic Rhetoric

“I don’t know, Socrates. I don’t know if I can give you an answer that’s as simple as the way you frame the question. . . . so complex, so variable a thing is what’s good.”
— Protagoras, Socrates’ *Meno* and *Protagoras* (5th Century BC)

Classical Rhetoric

“But since the objective of rhetoric is judgment (for men *give* judgment on political issues and a court case *is* a judgment), we must have regard not only to the speech’s being demonstrative and persuasive, but also to *establishing the speaker himself as of a certain type* and *bringing the giver of judgment into a certain condition.*”
— Aristotle, *Rhetoric* (4th Century BC)

Modern Rhetoric

“Even if any given terminology is a *reflection* of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a *deflection* of reality.”
— Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1945)

“Of course there is in a case like that just considered no question of a mechanical disturbance of the system under investigation during the last critical state of the measurement procedure. But even at this stage there is essentially the question of *an influence on the very conditions which define the possible types of predictions regarding the future behaviour of the system.*”
— Niels Bohr, *Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge* (1958)

Contemporary Rhetoric

“[Rhetoricity] is bound to no specific set of institutions. It manifests the groundless, infinitely ramifying character of discourse in the modern world. For this reason, it allows for no explanatory metadiscourse that is not already itself rhetorical. Rhetoric is no longer the title of a doctrine and a practice, nor a form of cultural memory; it becomes instead something like the condition of our existence.”
— Steven Bender and David Wellbery, *The Ends of Rhetoric* (1990)

“The *kairos* of a situation is a moment placed not as something between a subject and exterior situation but as mutually involved and evolving vectors of material and discursive force. . . . *kairos* in this way [can] reinvigorate our understanding of rhetoric as something emplaced.”
— Thomas Rickert, *Ambient Rhetoric* (2013)

MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Define rhetoric as theory and as practice
- Organize rhetoric around its essential (and essentially contested) terms, concepts, and values (e.g., audience, ethics, efficacy, materiality, rhetoricity, etc.)
- Explain the “rhetorical situation” and analyze its components (such as audience, stasis, kinds of appeals and proofs, etc.).
- Understand the tension between rhetoric and philosophy and their approaches to knowing, truth, reality, action, and social responsibility
- Understand the material embeddedness of rhetoric and its entanglement with materiality, sociocultural contexts, and our ways of seeing
- Understand the self not as a strictly independent agent, but as a response to our communities, environments, and lifeworlds, from which and to which we respond
- Begin to apply rhetorical theory to our daily actions, choices, and communication

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (Turquoise Color Edition)
- *Blackboard Materials* assigned throughout the course

COURSE ACTIVITIES

Participation & Attendance: We are here to *discuss* rhetorical theory and practice. Interactivity depends on you! So speak up! And don’t hesitate to ask questions of any kind at any time.

Reading Assignments: Let’s face it: reading requires motivation, and these short, in-classes quizzes and take-home reading questions will test you on core ideas and prepare you for assignments.

Essays & Final: This class requires you to write various essays of increasing sophistication and length, including a **midterm** and **final exam**, to be discussed. All essays will be graded on the basis of how well they meet the requirements of the assignment. Papers will need to meet the standards of written English and be free of significant grammatical and structural errors. More importantly, they must demonstrate a critical capacity to interact with and contribute to the course material.

Peer Workshops: You will be responding to students’ papers anonymously or in peer groups. Any written responses and self-evaluations will be turned in with the final draft of the paper. Not attending a workshop will lower your essay’s grade by **5%**. Missing 1 document will result in a **5% drop** in your essay’s grade, 2 or more documents in a **10% drop**. Stay organized and be prepared!

Portfolio & Artifacts: The portfolio will be a collection mainly of four **cultural artifacts** (see handout online) and the **rhetorical autoethnography**, as well as a **cover page** and **dear reader letter**, which will illustrate the evolution of your rhetoric reading, writing, and thinking abilities throughout the course.

Formatting: Follow the MLA System of Documentation found easily on the *Purdue Owl MLA* website or most first-year composition books. Failure to meet these requirements will result in grade penalties.

BASIC EXPECTATIONS

- **Participation** – All students, not a mere few, must regularly participate during class discussions for full credit so that our environment remains interactive and elucidating.
- **Attendance** – Your **4th** and subsequent absences will result in eternal damnation, or 10% off your entire grade *per absence*—your choice. All *emergencies* are included as absences!
- **Late Arrivals** – Two late arrivals count as *one* absence; being that you only have *three* absences total, be sure to be on time! Lateness also affects performance and participation.
- **Peer Feedback** – As your professor I will offer every insight, suggestion, and accolade I can muster on your writing. I expect the same from you as a *reader* of others' works.
- **Materials** – This class requires textbooks as well as other materials you will print out and bring to class. Most importantly, bring a *well-developed draft* to the peer workshop.
- **Late Work** – Assignments are due at the *beginning* of class. There are *no exceptions* besides documented reasons, like the spontaneous combustion of your house or loved ones.
- **Academic Honesty** – Plagiarism will result in a *failing grade* on your work or in the course. Plagiarism is quoting or stating someone else's ideas or work without proper citation.
- **Courtesy** – No gadgets, side-conversations, doing homework, sleeping, drumming, eating or drinking except for water, or planning trips to the Caribbean or other exotic destinations.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Main Assignments:

Participation and in Class Work	10%
Reading Assignments & Quizzes	20%
Midterm Exam	15%
Rhetorical Analysis	15%
Rhetorical Autoethnography	20%
Final Portfolio	10%
Final (Rhetorical Practice) Exam	10%

Grading Scale:

94 - 100%	A	70 - 73%	C-
90 - 93%	A-	67 - 69%	D+
87 - 89%	B+	64 - 66%	D
84 - 86%	B	60 - 63%	D-
80 - 83%	B-	< 60%	F
77 - 79%	C+		
74 - 76%	C		

TIPS & RESOURCES

- **Office Hours:** If you struggle at any point or have *particular needs*, contact or visit me during office hours. I am here to help and am more than willing to answer questions and review your writing.
- **E-mail & Blackboard:** It is a college-wide policy *to check your school e-mail at least once a day* as you will be notified of changes and messages via e-mail. I will post documents, links, PowerPoints, and readings on Blackboard, so check the site for updates and assignments.
- **Special Needs:** If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a physical, psychiatric/emotional, medical, or learning disability, please contact me about resources.
- **Academic Resources:** If you feel you need *additional help* outside of class, please speak with me immediately, make regular use of office hours, and consult with the Learning Resource Center and Writing & Rhetoric Center. Tutoring on campus is available.
- **Just Start Writing:** If you are stuck on an assignment and do not know what to say, just start writing. Write anything. Sometimes just *freewriting* helps the mind generate ideas.
- **Prewrite First:** Before you begin a paper, *think* about it a lot! Think about it while driving, walking, or doing *anything*. Then draft an outline to ease the writing process and the blinking cursor!

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Please **check your CPP email every day** to remain current.

This schedule may change based on the needs of the class.

Introductions to Rhetoric

Week 1:	8/27	M	Introduction; Syllabus Review
	8/29	W	Reading Due: <i>Jennifer Richards</i> In Class: Discussion & Response
Week 2:	9/3	M	No Class: Labor Day
	9/5	W	Reading Due: <i>Gerard Hauser</i> In Class: Discussion & Response In Class: Discuss Artifacts
Week 3:	9/10	M	Reading Due: <i>Stanley Fish</i> In Class: Discussion & Response
	9/12	W	Reading Due: <i>Zen Part I</i> In Class: Discussion & Response

Sophistic Rhetoric

Week 4:	9/17	M	Reading Due: <i>Patricia O'Grady</i> Writing Due: Artifact One In Class: Discussion & Response
	9/19	W	Reading Due: <i>W.K.C. Guthrie</i> In Class: Discussion & Response
Week 5:	9/24	M	Reading Due: <i>Edward Hussey</i> In Class: Response & Discussion
	9/26	W	Reading Due: <i>Zen Part II</i> In Class: Response & Discussion
Week 6:	10/1	M	Reading Due: <i>Susan Jarratt</i> In Class: Discussion & Response
	10/3	W	Reading Due: <i>Rosamond Kent Sprague</i> In Class: Discussion & Response In Class: Discuss Autoethnography

Classical Rhetoric

Week 7:	10/8	M	Reading Due: <i>Isocrates</i> Writing Due: Artifact Two
	10/10	W	Reading Due: <i>Plato</i> In Class: Discussion & Response
Week 8:	10/15	M	Reading Due: <i>Zen Part III</i> In Class: Discussion & Response
	10/17	W	Reading Due: <i>Aristotle</i> In Class: Discussion & Response In Class: Discuss Midterm
Week 9:	10/22	M	Reading Due: <i>Cicero & Quintilian</i> In Class: Discussion & Response
	10/24	W	In Class: Midterm Review In Class: Your Time for Questions

Modern Rhetoric

Week 10:	10/29	M	In Class Midterm Essay
	10/31	W	Reading Due: <i>Burke "Terministic Screens"</i> In Class: Discussion & Response In Class: Discuss Rhetorical Analysis
Week 11:	11/5	M	Reading Due: <i>Burke "Range of Rhetoric"</i> In Class: Discussion & Response
	11/7	W	Reading Due: <i>I.A. Richards</i> Writing Due: Artifact Three In Class: Discussion & Response
Week 12:	11/12	M	No Class: Veterans Day
	11/14	W	Reading Due: <i>Paul de Man</i> In Class: Discussion & Response

Contemporary Rhetoric

Week 13:	11/19	M	Reading Due: <i>Diane Davis</i> Writing Due: Rhetorical Analysis
	11/21	W	Reading Due: <i>Zen Part IV</i> In Class: Discussion & Response In Class: Discuss Final Exam
Week 14:	11/26	M	Reading Due: <i>Thomas Rickert</i> In Class: Discussion & Response
	11/28	W	Reading Due: <i>Laurie Gries</i> In Class: Peer Review Autoethnography
Week 15:	12/3	M	Reading Due: <i>James Crosswhite</i> In Class: Final Exam Review
	12/5	W	In Class Final Exam Writing Due: Portfolio & Autoethnography
Finals Week:	12/10	M	Final Evaluation Consultation