

RHET 1302: Rhetoric

Course Syllabus

Fall 2011

Section 1302.017

TR 8:30-9:45 a.m.

Class location: JO 3.536

Angela Kaiser

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Office Number: JO 3.704

Office Hours: 10:00-11:00 a.m. Tues. or
by appointment

NOTE: All matters associated with this course are subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Any and all changes will be communicated to students in writing.

Course Description

RHET 1302 will prepare you for college-level writing while helping you develop your critical thinking skills. Rhetoric is the study and practice of how people communicate messages, not only in writing and speech, but also through visual and digital mediums. In this class, you will develop skills to analyze the way rhetoric, in its various forms, addresses audiences. By paying attention to the strategies that good writers and speakers use to persuade their particular audiences, you will learn to reason better and to persuade others in your own writing, both through rhetorical appeals and through analysis of audience, purpose, and exigency that is at the heart of the study of rhetoric. For RHET 1302, you will read and reread texts and write multi-draft essays. Practically speaking, you will learn skills that you can use in your future course work regardless of your major.

Student Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to write in different ways for different audiences.
- Students will be able to write effectively using appropriate organization, mechanics, and style.
- Students will be able to construct effective written arguments.
- Students will be able to gather, incorporate, and interpret source material in their writing.

Required Text

Rosenwasser, David and Stephen, Jill. *Writing Analytically with Readings*. Second edition.
Thomson/Wadsworth, 2011.

Fall 2011 Assignments and Academic Calendar

Thu, Aug 25	Introduction to the Course **Diagnostic Essay** (in class, ungraded) Course syllabus and class expectations; introductions; what is rhetoric?
Tue, Aug 30	Writing and the Writing Process <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 1 Discussion of the basics of writing: organization, development (transitional words and phrases, paragraph structure), style issues using "PowerPoint is Evil" by Tufte (handout) Exercise: awareness
Thu, Sep 1	The Process of Critical Analysis <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapters 2-3 Exercise: practice using "the Method" on the poem "Bellocq's Ophelia" by Trethewey (handout)
Tue, Sep 6	The Process of Critical Analysis (cont'd) <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 4 Begin blog project (ongoing throughout the semester) Exercise: written advertisement analysis using "Whistler's Mother" and "X...y" as examples
Thu, Sep 8	Using Evidence <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 8 Exercise: distinguishing evidence from claim using passages from the diagnostic essays (Bring diagnostic essays to class.)
Tue, Sep 13	Finding, Citing, and Integrating Sources <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 14 MLA style citation in class p.690 George Orwell: "Politics and the English Language" (Plagiarism Tutorial at [http://www.utdallas.edu/library/help/PlagiarismTutorial/Plagiarism.htm]) Blog post #1 due on eLearning
Thu, Sep 15	Introduce Essay #1 Assignment Writing About Reading <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 5 Exercise: Paraphrase x 3 using Francis Bacon essay (handout)
Tue, Sep 20	Reading Analytically From chapter 20, "Manners, Communication, and Technology" — p. 457, Christine Rosen: "Our Cell Phones, Our Selves" p. 476, Jeffrey Rosen: "The Naked Crowd" (p. 503, Sam Anderson: "In Defense of Distraction")
Thu, Sep 22	Making Interpretations <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 6 Exercise: analysis of a <i>New Yorker</i> cover

Tue, Sep 27	Thesis Statements <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapters 11-12 Exercise: Diane Ackerman essay excerpt: "On Violets and Neurons"(handout), recognizing clichés Blog post #2 due
Thu, Sep 29	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #1 p.533, Jack Gambino: "Demolition Zones..."
Tue, Oct 4	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #1 p. 577, Mike Davis: "Fortress Los Angeles" Reminder: Turnitin.com
Thu, Oct 6	DUE: Essay #1 Final Draft Introductions and Conclusions <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 16 p. 779, Susan Sontag: "In Plato's Cave" (with particular focus on introduction and conclusion) Exercise: analyzing paired introductions and conclusions
Tue, Oct 11	Introduce Essay #2 Assignment Analyzing Arguments in Your Writing <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapters 7 and 9 Exercise: agree/disagree: arguing a viewpoint contrary to one's own using Supreme Court case summaries provided Blog post #3 due
Thu, Oct 13	Analyzing the Visual <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 24 p. 792, Barry Lopez: "Learning to See" p. 862, X. J. Kennedy: "Who Killed King Kong?" (Potential exercise: photo analysis)
Tue, Oct 18	Analyzing the Visual (cont'd) p. 804, John Berger: "Images of Women In European Art" p. 827, Susan Bordo: "Beauty (Re)discovers the Male Body"
Thu, Oct 20	Organizing the Essay using 10 on 1 <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 10 Exercise: "10 on 1"/ "The Method" applied to a short story
Tue, Oct 25	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #2 Blog post #4 due
Thu, Oct 27	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #2 Reminder: Turnitin.com
Tue, Nov 1	**Last day to drop with a WP/WF** DUE: Essay #2 Final Draft Style and Word Choice <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 17

Thu, Nov 3	Introduce Essay #3 Assignment <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 13 p. 728: "Obama and the Language of Politics: Two Short Articles" p. 681: "Five Editorials" (see sample Abstract on page 310)
Tue, Nov 8	Style and Sentence Structure <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 18 Exercise: comparing and contrasting writing style samples: Bradbury, Fedarko, Hemingway, McCarthy (handouts) Blog post #5 due
Thu, Nov 10	DUE: Proposal/Abstract for Essay #3 More on Organization <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 15 Exercise: transitions
Tue, Nov 15	Grammar and Punctuation <i>Writing Analytically</i> , Chapter 19 Exercise: worksheets
Thu, Nov 17	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #3
Tue, Nov 22	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #3
Nov 24-26	Thanksgiving Holiday (no classes)
Tue, Nov 29	DUE: Essay #3 Final Draft Revising the Portfolio/Reflection for portfolio p. 632, Ishmael Reed: "My Neighborhood" p. 589, Benjamin De Mott: "Put On a Happy Face..."
Thu, Dec 1	Reading Analytically Chapter 22, "Race, Ethnicity, and the 'Melting Pot'" p. 621, Amy Tan: "Mother Tongue" p. 605, Peggy McIntosh: "White Privilege and Male Privilege"
Tue, Dec 6	DUE: Portfolio Course Wrap-Up (student course evaluations, final remarks)

Grading

Blog Project	5%
Essay #1: Community Writing or Rhetorical Analysis	15%
Essay #2: Visual Analysis	20%
Essay #3: Academic Research Essay & Proposal (Proposal = 5% of total 30%)	30%
Portfolio	10%
Homework/Peer Review/Other Assignments	10%
Participation	10%

Total	100%
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(I will make use of the +/- system in grading as stipulated by *The University of Texas at Dallas Undergraduate Catalogue, 2010-2012.*)

Blog Project	5%	50
Essay #1	15%	150
Essay #2	20%	200
Academic Research Essay & Proposal	30%	300
Portfolio	10%	100
Assignments/Presentations/Homework	10%	100
Participation	10%	100
Total	100%	1000 pts

150 point totals for Essay #1:

141-150 = A
 135-140 = A-
 130-134 = B+
 125-129 = B
 120-124 = B-
 115-119 = C+
 110-114 = C
 105-109 = C-
 90-104 = D
 Below 90 = F

250 point total for Academic Essay (25% without Prospectus):

231-250 = A
 225-230 = A-
 218-224 = B+
 208-217 = B
 200-207 = B-
 193-199 = C+
 183-192 = C
 175-182 = C-
 150-174 = D
 Below 150 = F

Assignment Descriptions

(**Note:** You must submit all major assignments to Turnitin.com by the due dates.)

Essay #1: Rhetorical Analysis

Due Date: Thursday, Oct. 6, by the start of class

Length: 750-1000 words (not including Works Cited) in MLA format, 11 or 12-point font

Source limit: One (1) source minimum

You must include a "Works Cited" page and use correct MLA format for in-text (parenthetical) citations.

For this assignment, you will write an analysis of the rhetorical strategies and techniques used by a writer in constructing a short essay. The purpose of this assignment is to think and write critically about a text. The skills you use in this exercise also apply to the image you analyze for your visual analysis essay and the research you use in your Academic Argument essay. In this paper, analyze an essay selected by your instructor from the reader or another essay you select with the approval of your instructor.

To begin your analysis, look at the different rhetorical choices evaluated in the first three chapters of our text, and other writing strategies we have discussed in class, such as the writer's backing of a claim, use of evidence, logic (or logical fallacies), address of counterarguments, organizational strategies, style, humor, and/or tone. Choose an approach and be selective: you cannot cover all of these elements in a single paper. You must have a thesis about the article you choose and elements of its rhetoric. You might, for example, write a thesis that addresses a single important technique of the writer, a few of the central strategies used by the writer to structure the article, or the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the essay in achieving its purpose for a particular audience, using selected criteria. It is fine to have a nuanced thesis that does not conclude the essay is entirely good or entirely bad. Remember that these pieces are composed by published, respected writers who have quality to their writing; at the same time, you may find gaps in the writing, disagree with the logic or approach, or find significant concerns that are not addressed by the piece. While you may include a very brief summary of what the writer says, summary should only be a small portion of your essay, and you should concentrate on developing your argument/thesis about the essay, using evidence and insight to support your claim. The essay should include a Work or Works Cited page. Be sure to proofread your essay for technical errors.

Essay #2: Visual Analysis

Due Date: Tues., Nov. 1, by the start of class

Length: 1000-1250 words (not including Works Cited) in MLA format, 11 or 12-point font

Source limit: Two (2) sources minimum

You must include a "Works Cited" page and use correct MLA format for in-text (parenthetical) citations.

The Visual Analysis assignment asks you to select a photograph, print advertisement, and/or work of art and analyze its features to discover a deeper meaning.

In working with something visual, you will apply the techniques and strategies you have read about in Chapters 2-4 and 6 of *Writing Analytically with Readings*. The visual analysis requires you make the five analytical moves we have previously discussed:

- Suspend judgment (understand before you judge).
- Define significant parts and how they are related.
- Look for patterns of repetition and contrast and for anomalies (aka The Method).
- Make the implicit explicit (convert to direct statement meanings that are only suggested—make details “speak”).
- Keep reformulating questions and explanations (what other details seem significant? what else might they mean?). (Rosenwasser and Stephen 53)

Just like a written text, a visual communicates meaning on a deeper level beyond merely the literal. Your essay will illuminate this meaning helping your audience understand your interpretation of the image.

Essay #3: Academic Research Essay

Length: 1500-2000 words (not including Works Cited) in MLA format, 11- or 12-point font, double-spaced

Due: Tues., Nov. 29, by the start of class

Source limit: Three (3) scholarly and two (2) popular sources (5 sources total)

You must include a “Works Cited” page and use correct MLA format for in-text (parenthetical) citations.

In this assignment, write an essay that examines an issue of importance within your academic discipline. You will be graded on your ability to present an informed, effective argument that demonstrates your understanding of the subject, displays your research into its issues, effectively uses source material (in summary, paraphrase, and cogent quotations), and reaches logical, substantiated conclusions based on well organized and subordinated claims.

At least five sources (three scholarly and two popular) must cited in the final draft of your Academic Essay. Your drafts are expected to contain a cogent, well-formed argument based on that preliminary work and to be presented in the MLA style, which is a required, graded element of this assignment.

Blog Project

Length: at least 250 words

Minimum five (5) due during the semester: Sept. 13, Sept. 27, Oct. 11, Oct. 20, and Nov. 8

At five (5) different times this semester, you will post to a blog designated for your particular RHET 1302 section. Your blog entries should offer a thoughtful response to course readings and/or class discussions.

Use your blog freely within the bounds of good sense. Think of blog entries as something you would be willing to say in class (or have someone read aloud in class). Entries should conform to a good sense of propriety and classroom etiquette.

Keep in mind that these are writing exercises, so avoid “txt msg spk”. Furthermore, abbreviated responses or simply saying, “I agree”, in answering a classmate will not suffice. Although individual entries are not graded, the blog is graded writing as a whole. I will be looking for improvement over time in your ability and willingness to express ideas in controlled, focused blog entries.

Course Portfolio (E-Portfolio)

Due Date: Tues., Dec. 6: Please submit the material as a single Word document on eLearning by the start of class.

The course portfolio is a complete collection of the work you have done during the semester. It is an opportunity for you to assess your progress as a writer, and evaluate those areas in which you still need work.

The complete portfolio will include the following:

1. Reflection Essay: A 750-1,000 word reflection essay examining your work. It should highlight problems you faced, how you feel you improved, and areas in which you are still unclear or feel you need more help. The essay should address these questions for *each* of the essays you submitted during the semester and for the blog project, as well as providing an overview of the work you did during the semester as a whole.
2. Completed Blog Project
3. Copies of both drafts of your:
 - Rhetorical Analysis/Community Writing Essay
 - Visual Analysis Essay
 - Academic Essay

Keep in mind that this essay serves as a guide to help me evaluate your portfolio. It is your chance to direct my attention to what you have done best, as well as explain weaknesses in your pieces, demonstrating an awareness of how you might improve. This is not an argument for me to positively evaluate you. Rather, it is an opportunity to reflect on the individual assignments as well as your work as a whole.

Some things the reflection essay might address include:

- Important revisions you made in the process of writing a paper
- Patterns you seem to have in your writing
- Differences between drafts
- Challenges with specific assignments
- What you learned
- What is still confusing?
- How you look at writing differently than when the semester began
- How has your writing changed?
- How your writing process has changed

Course Policies

Attendance

Because each class period consists of a mixture of class discussion, group work and freewriting, your thoughtful, attentive, and active participation is essential (and will form a portion of your grade). If you sleep, engage in non-class-related activities, or interfere with your classmates' ability to learn you will be counted absent for that day. Be on time - class starts promptly. Leaving early will count as an absence.

Each student is allowed three (3) unexcused absences, no questions asked. Save them for when you really need them. Your final grade will suffer a 2% reduction for *each* unexcused absence you accumulate over three (e.g., 6 unexcused absences = 6% total reduction). **You are responsible for your attendance. You must make sure you sign the roll sheet and/or notify me if you arrive late and after I have taken roll.**

Punctuality

Persistent tardiness to class is disrespectful to both your instructor and your peers. Continually arriving late to class will affect your participation grade in the course. Three tardies will result in one unexcused absence for the course; I will consider you absent if you arrive more than 20 minutes late to class.

Class Participation

Your success in this course is a function of your level of engagement. I am interested in the quality of your remarks rather than the quantity. Please use your analysis of the readings, your blog posts, and prior research and/or study when responding orally in class, and please be prepared to back up any points you make.

Participation in this course does not include doing work unrelated to this course during class, sleeping in class, or using the computers or other personal electronic devices for personal messaging, research, or entertainment.

Late Work

All drafts, including final, must be submitted when and as required in order to successfully complete this course. Late assignments will suffer grade deductions and will not be accepted at all if more than four days late.

Personal Communication Devices

Turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other personal communication devices before the start of class. Do not use such devices during class.

Room and Equipment Use

Tampering with or destroying any of the computers, printers, modems, or wiring in the classroom is strictly prohibited. Violations will result in disciplinary action by the Dean of Students' office.

Hacking a door code and/or entering a classroom without the instructor's permission constitutes criminal trespass. The Director of Rhetoric and Writing will pursue action through the Dean of Students' Office and/or the UTD Police Department against any student who engages in such behavior. The Director of Rhetoric and Writing will also pursue action against students who are caught attempting to enter a room without permission (i.e., entering possible number combinations in an attempt to open a classroom door).

University Policies

Please review the university policies at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.

I have read the policies for RHET 1302. 017 and understood them. I agree to comply with the policies for the Fall 2011 semester. I realize that failure to comply with these policies will result in a reduced grade the course.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____

UTD e-mail address: _____

The use of students' work during Rhetoric class allows instructors to demonstrate writing concepts with examples specifically tailored for this course. Use of a sample paper or an excerpt from a paper benefits students by allowing them to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in others' writing and to apply what's learned to their own work. If you agree to allow your instructor to share your writing samples, your name and other identifying information will be removed from writing samples. Your work will be treated respectfully by instructors, who also expect that students demonstrate such respect. All students are expected to participate in peer review. If you agree to share your work for class demonstration and exercises, please sign the following statement:

I allow my instructor to use samples of my writing for demonstration during this class and for other sections of Rhetoric. I may revoke my permission by letting my instructor know I no longer wish my work to be shared.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____

Note to instructors: Midterm grades are due Friday, October 21st (normally by 10:00 a.m. – exact time may vary). Final grades are due no later than Monday, December 19th. Final grading period extends from Friday, December 9th, until Monday, December 19th. Do **not** make any assignments due or hold students accountable for anything on December 7th and 8th. These two days are designed as reading days for final exams, and university policy prohibits instructors from giving exams or requiring assignments submission on such days.