RHET 1302: Rhetoric

Course Syllabus
Fall 2013
Section 13F
TR (10:00-11:15)
Class location: JO 3.908

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Office Number: JO 3.702
Office Hours: (Tues: 11:20-12:20)

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 with audiences, not only in writing and speech, but also through visual and digital media. 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 use to address their readers, you will learn to reason better and to persuade others in your own writing, both through rhetorical appeals and through analysis of audience and purpose that is at the heart of the study of rhetoric. Practically speaking, you will also 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 Texts

Gooch, John, and Seyler, Dorothy. *Argument!*. Second edition. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2013.

Fall 2013 Assignments and Academic Calendar

Tue, Aug 27	**Introduction to the Course** **Diagnostic Essay** Course syllabus and class expectations Discussion of the basics of writing: organization, development, style, thesis
Thu, Aug 29	**Understanding Arguments** "The Basics of Argument," *Argument!*, Chapter 1
Tue, Sep 3	**Understanding Arguments (cont'd)** "Responding Critically to the Arguments of Others," *Argument!*, Chapter 2
Thu, Sep 5	**Writing Arguments** "Writing Effective Arguments," *Argument!*, Chapter 3 Grammar and Mechanics Review
Tue, Sep 10	**Writing Arguments** **Introduce Essay #1 Assignment** "Taking a Position," *Argument!*, Chapter 6 "Refuting an Argument," *Argument!*, Chapter 5
Thu, Sep 12	**Writing Arguments (cont'd)** **"**More about Argument: Induction, Deduction, Analogy, and Logical Fallacies," Chapter 4
Tue, Sep 17	**In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #1**
Thu, Sep 19	**In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #1**
Tue, Sep 24	***Essay #1: Position Paper Due*** **Writing a Rhetorical Analysis** "Writing a Rhetorical Analysis," Chapter 9
Thu, Sep 26	**Considering the Arguments of Others** "Violent Media or Violent Society?," *Argument!*, Chapter 17 "Arguing about Politics: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," *Argument!*, Chapter 18
Tue, Oct 1	**Documenting Sources** "Documenting Sources (MLA, APA, and More)," *Argument!*, Chapter 14
Thu, Oct 3	**Causal Arguments** **"**Writing a Causal Analysis," Chapter 7 **Plagiarism Tutorial at:** http://www.utdallas.edu/library/help/PlagiarismTutorial/Plagiarism.htm
Tue, Oct 8	**In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #2**
Thu, Oct 10	**In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #2**
Tue, Oct 15	***Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis Due*** **Visual Arguments** "Reading, Analyzing, and Using Visuals and Statistics in Argument," Chapter 10
Thu, Oct 17	**Considering Visual Arguments** "The Myth and Reality of the Image in American Consumer Culture," *Argument!*, Chapter 15
Tue, Oct 22	**Considering Visual Arguments** "The Challenges of Living in a High-Tech, Multimedia World," *Argument!*, Chapter 16
Thu, Oct 24	**Considering Visual Arguments**
Tue, Oct 29	**In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #3**

Thu, Oct 31	**In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #3** ****WL Period Ends****
Tue, Nov 5	***Essay #3: Visual Analysis Due*** **Problem Solution Arguments** "Writing the Problem/Solution Essay," *Argument!*, Chapter 8
Thu, Nov 7	**Considering the Arguments of Others** "Students, Teachers, and Schools in the 21st Century," *Argument!*, Chapter 19 "Freedom of Expression in the 21st Century," *Argument!*, Chapter 20 "Enduring Controversies in a New Age: Abortion, Animal Rights, Capital Punishment, and Health Care," *Argument!*, Chapter 21
Tue, Nov 12	**Writing a Researched Argument** "Planning the Researched Argument," *Argument!*, Chapter 11
Thu, Nov 14	**Using Sources** "Evaluating and Utilizing Sources," *Argument!*, Chapter 12
Tue, Nov 19	***Prospectus Due*** **Drafting and Revising Research Essays** "Drafting and Revising the Research Argument," *Argument!*, Chapter 13 Grammar and Mechanics Review
Thu, Nov 21	**Considering the Arguments of Others** "Marriage and Gender Roles: Changing Attitudes vs. Traditional Values," *Argument!*, Chapter 22 "Arguing about Science and Religion: Policy, Politics, and Culture," *Argument!*, Chapter 23 "Competing Perspectives on the American Economic and Financial Crisis," *Argument!*, Chapter 24
No Class – Fall and Thanksgiving Break **November 25-30**	
Tue, Dec 3	**In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #4**
Thu, Dec 5	**In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #4**
Tue, Dec 10	***Essay #4: Academic Essay Due*** Course Wrap-up

Grading

Essay #1: Position Paper	10%
Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis	15%
Essay #3: Visual Analysis	20%
Essay #4: Academic Essay & Proposal (Proposal = 5%, Essay = 25%)	30%
Process Performance	5%
Homework/Peer Review/Quizzes/Other Assignments	10%
Participation	10%
Total	**100%**

(I will make use of the +/- system in grading as stipulated by *The University of Texas at Dallas Undergraduate Catalog, 2013-14*.)

Points will be deducted for lack of class participation and homework preparation

Essay #1: Position Paper	10%	100
Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis	15%	150
Essay #3: Visual Analysis	20%	200
Essay #4: Academic Essay & Proposal	30%	300
Process Performance	5%	50
Assignments/Presentations/Quizzes/Homework	10%	100
Participation	10%	100
Total	**100%**	**1000 pts**

150 point totals for Essay #2, Rhetorical Analysis:

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 Essay #4, 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 date.)

Essay #1: Position Paper

Length: 500-750 words, double-spaced, using 11- or 12-point font.
Due: **9/24/13**

In a letter to Dr. Daniel, President of UTD, take a position on an issue facing the campus. Your letter, for example, could express your point of view on the campus parking situation or whether or not the university should offer students a wider-range of dining options in the Student Union. Regardless of what you choose, though, you must convince President Daniel of your position by providing good evidence and effectively using rhetorical appeals.

Remember to consult Chapter 6 of *Argument!* for additional guidance on taking a position. Your essay should also be free of grammatical and mechanical errors as well as present a clear thesis.

Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis

Due Date: **10/15/13**
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 information and guidelines provided in the chapters of the first two sections (Understanding Arguments and Writing Arguments) of our text that we have covered 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 #3: Visual Analysis
Due Date: **11/05/13**
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. 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.

Refer back to Chapter 10 of *Argument!* for additional guidance. Specifically, the "Good Advice" box on page 157 can help you in analyzing your visual. If you are analyzing an advertisement, for example, then you should consider these questions:

- What produce or service is being advertised?
- Who seems to be the targeted audience?
- What is the ad's primary strategy?
- Does the ad use specific rhetorical strategies such as humor, understatement, or irony?

- What is the relation between the visual part of the ad (photo, drawing, typeface, etc.) and the print part (the text or copy)?
- What is the ad's overall visual impression?

Remember that your essay should be free of grammatical and mechanical mistakes, and you should, as always, proofread your essay very carefully.

Essay #4: Academic Essay
Length: 1500-2000 words (not including Works Cited) in MLA format, 11- or 12-point font, double-spaced
Due: **12/10/13**
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 be 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.

Prospectus
Length: 250-500 words, MLA format, 11 or 12-point font, double-spaced
Due: **11/19/13**
This is an important moment in the research process. How well you've crafted your research questions will significantly influence the success of your project. You can change your mind later, but for now, write a brief proposal that outlines your research plan. In writing this plan, please consider the following questions:

1. What is your tentative thesis/claim (overall argument, or position)?
2. What are additional questions that most interest you and might help you develop your claim?
3. What might be some additional ideas that back up/support your claim (reasons)?
4. What prior beliefs, assumptions, preconceptions, ideas, or prejudices might be brought to this project (warrants)?
5. What personal experiences may have shaped the way you feel?

Source: Ballenger, Bruce. *The Curious Researcher.* New York: Longman, 2007.

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 4% reduction for *each* unexcused absence you accumulate over three (e.g., 6 unexcused absences = 12% 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. (Class participation will significantly affect your grade)

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 or may not be accepted.

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.

Academic Integrity
Students in RHET 1302 are expected to maintain a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. It is critically important you produce original written work and document all sources accurately using MLA format.

Please consult the following web sites addressing academic integrity as well as what constitutes cheating at UTD:

http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-AcademicIntegrity.html

http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-Basicexamples.html

Ask your instructor should you become concerned that you are possibly committing an act of scholastic dishonesty. UTD will hold you accountable regardless of whether or not you intended to plagiarize your paper.

RHET 1302 students suspected of plagiarism or any other act of scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings. Should the Judicial Affairs Officer find a student responsible, then he or she will typically receive a **"0"** on the assignment in question.

University Policies

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

I have read the policies for RHET 1302 and understood them. I agree to comply with the policies for the Fall 2013 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): _____