

## RHET 1302: Rhetoric

### Course Syllabus

Fall 2013

Sections 001 and 004

MWF 9:00a-9:50a; 10a-10:50a

Class location: JO 3.532

Instructor: Renea McKenzie

Email: [rdm101020@utdallas.edu](mailto:rdm101020@utdallas.edu)

Office Number: JO 3.704

Office Hours: 11a-12p MW (or by appt.)

**NOTE:** All matters associated with this course are subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Always bring your syllabus to class.

### 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
- Write effectively using appropriate organization, mechanics, and style
- Construct effective written arguments
- Gather, incorporate, and interpret source material in their writing

### Required Texts

Gooch, John, and Seyler, Dorothy. *Argument!*. 2nd ed. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2013.

### Recommended Texts

*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th edition.

O'Conner, Patricia. *Woe is I: The Grammarphobe's Guide to Better English in Plain English*. 3rd ed.

## Fall 2013 Assignments and Academic Calendar

Mon, Aug 26	Course syllabus and class expectations Diagnostic Essay
Wed, Aug 28	Chapter 1 "The Basics of Argument"
Fri, Aug 30	Chapter 1 "The Basics of Argument" (cont'd)
Mon, Sep 2	<b>No Class</b> – Labor Day
Wed, Sep 4	Chapter 3 "Writing Effective Arguments" ***WC Workshop "From Query to Composition" 5:00pm, MC 2.524
Fri, Sep 6	Chapter 3 "Writing Effective Arguments" (cont'd)
Mon, Sep 9	Chapter 6 "Taking a Position"
Wed, Sep 11	Chapter 2 "Responding Critically to the Arguments of Others"
Fri, Sep 13	Guest Speaker: Laura Smith "Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty" Plagiarism Tutorial: <a href="http://www.utdallas.edu/library/help/PlagiarismTutorial/Plagiarism.htm">http://www.utdallas.edu/library/help/PlagiarismTutorial/Plagiarism.htm</a> Chapter 4—Logical Fallacies (p71-80) — Bring in examples of each logical fallacy (no highlights)
Mon, Sep 16	Essay Revision Workshop—Bring <b>2 hard copies</b> of Essay 1
Wed, Sep 18	Conferences – Essay 1 ***Writing Center Workshop: "Going Deep—Using Research Sources" 5:00pm, MC 2.524***
Fri, Sep 20	Conferences – Essay 1
Mon, Sep 23	In-class Writing & Revision – Essay 1 <b>Essay 1: Position Paper Due 11:59pm</b>

Wed, Sep 25	Chapter 9 “Writing a Rhetorical Analysis”
Fri, Sep 27	Chapter 9 “Writing a Rhetorical Analysis” (cont’d)
Mon, Sep 30	Guest Speaker from the Writing Center: “How the Writing Center Can Help... And How It Can’t” <b>Required Writing Center Workshop Tue, Oct 1</b>
<b>Tue, Oct 1</b>	<b>***Required WC Workshop: “Rhetorical Analysis” 5:00pm, MC 3.612***</b>
Wed, Oct 2	Chapter 4 “More about Argument: Induction, Deduction, Analogy, and Logical Fallacies” (p68-71) <b>***WC Workshop: “Judicious Review” 5:00pm, MC 2.524***</b>
Fri, Oct 4	<b>Turn in a hard copy of Essay 2</b> Chapter 14 “Documenting Sources (MLA, APA, and More)” — Read MLA sections only
Mon, Oct 7	Conferences – Essay 2
Wed, Oct 9	Conferences – Essay 2
Fri, Oct 11	Conferences – Essay 2 <b>Essay 2: Rhetorical Analysis Due 11:59pm</b>
Mon, Oct 14	Chapter 10 “Reading, Analyzing, and Using Visuals and Statistics in Argument”
Wed, Oct 16	Visual Analysis: Ads—In-class workshop/activity <b>***WC Workshop: “Language Rules” 5:00pm, MC 2.524***</b>
Fri, Oct 18	Visual Analysis: Photo Journalism—In-class workshop/activity
Mon, Oct 21	<b>No Class—Required Writing Center Workshop Tue, Oct 23</b>
<b>Tue, Oct 22</b>	<b>***Required WC Workshop: “Visual Analysis” 5:00pm, MC 3.612***</b>
Wed, Oct 23	Visual Analysis: Art—In-class workshop/activity
Fri, Oct 25	<b>Turn in a hard copy of Essay 3 — Visual Analysis Essay Workshop</b>
Mon, Oct 28	Conferences – Essay 3
Wed, Oct 30	Conferences – Essay 3 <b>***WC Workshop: “Solving Punctuation Mysteries” 5:00pm, MC 2.524</b>
<b>Thu, Oct 31</b>	<b>WL Period Ends</b>
Fri, Nov 1	Conferences – Essay 3 <b>Essay 3: Visual Analysis Due 11:59pm</b>
Mon, Nov 4	Chapter 8 “Writing the Problem/Solution Essay”
Tue, Nov 5	<b>***WC Workshop: “The Writing Process” 5:30pm, MC 3.610***</b>
Wed, Nov 6	Chapter 11 “Planning the Researched Argument” <b>***WC Workshop: “The Writing Process” 12:00pm, MC 3.610***</b>
Fri, Nov 8	Chapter 12 “Evaluating and Utilizing Sources”
Mon, Nov 11	Research Workshop— <b>McDermott Library</b>
Wed, Nov 13	In-Class Research Day — <b>Bring your laptop</b> Chapter 7 “Writing a Causal Analysis” <b>***WC Workshop: “Writing a Literary Review” 5:00pm, MC 2.524***</b>
Fri, Nov 15	<b>Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography Due—Hard Copy</b>
Mon, Nov 18	Chapter 13 “Drafting and Revising the Research Argument”
Wed, Nov 20	Chapter 13 “Drafting and Revising the Research Argument” (cont’d) Prospectus and Bibliography Returned
Fri, Nov 22	Writing Day—No Class <b>Essay 4 Draft Due via email Mon, Nov 25 by 11:59pm</b>
No Class – Fall and Thanksgiving Break November 25 – 30	
Mon, Dec 2	Conferences – Essay 4
Wed, Dec 4	Conferences – Essay 4
Fri, Dec 6	Conferences – Essay 4
Mon, Dec 9	Conferences – Essay 4 <b>Essay 4: Academic Essay Due by 11:59pm</b>
Thu, Dec 12	<b>***WC Workshop: “Techniques for Writing Great Short-Answer Essays on Exams” 5:00pm, MC 3.612***</b>

## Grading

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

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
Assignments/Presentations/Quizzes/Homework	10%	100
Participation	10%	100
Required Writing Center Workshops	5%	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1000 pts</b>

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:** All essay drafts—any writing assignment you bring to class in hard copy—should be stapled, double-spaced, 11-point Times New Roman font, and formatted properly according to MLA standards. In order to pass this course, students must submit all major assignments (final drafts of essays 1 through 4) to Turnitin.com through eLearning *before midnight* on the due date. I do not accept late work.

## Chapter Highlights

At the beginning of each class, *be prepared to share and discuss* 5 to 7 highlights from that class day's assigned reading. At least 3 of your highlights should summarize the chapter's most important points and main ideas. Other highlights can include points you find interesting, ideas you had not previously considered, new things you learned, etc. I will either observe or take up your highlights at the start of class. These can be but do not need to be typed. (Some chapters in our

text do not lend themselves toward highlights, other assignments will be given in these cases; students will receive in-class instruction regarding this.)

### **Writing Center Workshops**

You will note that all undergraduate writing workshops are listed in the Assignments and Academic Calendar in this syllabus. You are required to attend 3 out of the 9 workshops available to you throughout the semester. Two of those—the Rhetorical Analysis and the Visual Analysis—we will attend together as a class. You will find me and sign the attendance sheet just as in our normal class sessions. For your third required workshop, you are free to choose any of the topics listed. To receive credit for this requirement, you will email me your notes (typed or scanned)—these can be in paragraph form or in the same form as your chapter highlights; please include the title of the workshop and submit your notes by the Friday following the day of the workshop.

*Any additional UTD Writing Center workshops you attend will count as extra credit*—again, email me your notes by the following Friday of the date of the workshop. Each extra credit workshop is worth 5 points for a possible total of 30 extra points out of the 1000-point scale (3% of your final grade).

### **Extra Credit Responsive Readings**

Anyone who wishes to be a good writer *must* regularly read good writing. The more exposure you can give yourself to well-written discourse, the more you will begin to unconsciously absorb good writing techniques into your own writing. In that vein, and to encourage you to read good writers throughout the semester, you have 4 opportunities to engage with essays and/or short stories for extra credit. I will provide a list of essayists and short story writers on eLearning from which you may choose to read any piece written by that author. If you would like to work with an author that is not on my list, please submit him or her to me in advance for approval.

In your response you may choose to try your hand at emulating certain elements of the author's style such as tone, punctuation, and sentence structure; you may decide to practice rhetorical analysis or write a rebuttal; respond to an element of style; etc. This assignment is rather open-ended; the goal is to engage regularly with good writing.

You may do no more than 1 responsive reading per week; available weeks include: Sept 2-Sept 7, Sept 24-Sept 28, Oct 14-Oct 19, and Nov 4-Nov 9. To receive credit for any responsive reading, you must provide a scanned copy of the original piece along with your own written response by email by Saturday before midnight. Your response need be no longer than 1 page; you will receive credit based upon completion—I will not make formal assessments of these essays except upon request. Each response paper you turn in will earn you 10 points for a total possible 40 extra points out of the 1000-point scale (4% of your final grade—practically a half a letter grade!).

### **Essay #1: Position Paper**

Length: 500-750 words, double-spaced, using 11- or 12-point font.  
Due: Mon, Sept 29

In a letter to your Congress or Senate representative, take a position on an issue you care about. (If you write about something you find boring, your paper will be just as boring to read as to write.) Regardless of what you choose, you must convince your congressperson or senator of your position by providing good evidence and effectively using rhetorical appeals. Be sure to write with an appropriate tone: remember your audience.

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

**Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis**

Due Date: Fri, Oct 11

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

Source Minimum: 1

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: Fri, Nov 1

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

Source Minimum: 2

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.

## Prospectus & Annotated Bibliography

Prospectus Length: 250-500 words;

Annotated Bibliography: Minimum of 5 sources (3 scholarly, 2 popular) and ~50-word paragraph for each source

Due: Mon, Nov 18

A Prospectus should include the specific approach to be employed and a statement regarding how your work fits into the field of previous scholarship on the topic. 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 preparing your prospectus, 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.

The Annotated Bibliography will help you think through and organize your sources and help me gauge your progress in the research process. In the short paragraph below each entry, please provide a sentence or two of summary—what is the thesis of this source—and a sentence or two (at minimum) relating how this source will be helpful to your particular project. In the process of creating your annotated bibliography, you should find some sources will not actually be all that helpful to you—*this is a good thing*. Research is a continual process of gathering, narrowing and defining. You do not have to use all or any of the sources you annotate in your final paper; this bibliography will help you get the ball rolling.

## Essay #4: Academic Essay

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

Due: Mon, Dec 9

Source minimum: 3 scholarly and 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.

## 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.

Each student is allowed three (3) 'free' absences, no questions asked. Save them for when you really need them. Your final grade will suffer a 4% reduction for *each* absence you accumulate over three (e.g., 5 absences = 8% total reduction—this is half a letter grade). **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.** It is in your best interest to email me with as much advance notice as possible when you know you will be absent—you may turn in that day's assignment as an attachment IF you email *prior to the start of class*.

**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 absence for the course; I will consider you absent if you arrive more than 15 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 drafts, must be submitted when and as required in order to successfully complete this course. Late assignments will not be accepted.

**Electronics**

Silence your cell phone and turn off the vibrate function before the start of class. You will not need laptops, tablets, or other personal computer devices for this class, so unless otherwise specified by the instructor, keep all such devices put away 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): \_\_\_\_\_

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): \_\_\_\_\_