

Fall 2013 Syllabus

Course: RHET 1302

Section: 031

Class Location: JO 3.908

Class Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00-2:15

Instructor: J. E. Wolfson

Email: jew062000@utdallas.edu

Office Location: JO 3.602

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:20-3:20

Note: All matters associated with this course are subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Any changes will be communicated in writing, typically on eLearning or via school e-mail.

Course Description: RHET 1302 will prepare you for college-level writing, while helping you to 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. 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 Text

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

Please bring your textbook (whether or not a reading is assigned for the day), notebook paper, writing instruments (dark blue or black pen or pencil), and this syllabus **to every class session**.

Fall 2013 Assignments and Academic Calendar

Tue, Aug 27	Introduction to the Course Course syllabus and class expectations **Diagnostic Essay** Discussion of the basics of writing: organization, development, style, thesis
Thu, Aug 29	Understanding Arguments <i>"The Basics of Argument," Argument!, Chapter 1</i>
Tue, Sep 3	Understanding Arguments (cont'd) <i>"Responding Critically to the Arguments of Others," Argument!, Chapter 2</i> Writing Arguments <i>"Writing Effective Arguments," Argument!, Chapter 3</i> Grammar and Mechanics Review
Thu, Sep 5	Research Skills Meet in the school library by the circulation desk
Tue, Sep 10	Writing Arguments Introduce Essay #1 Assignment <i>"Taking a Position," Argument!, Chapter 6</i> <i>"Refuting an Argument," Argument!, Chapter 5</i>
Thu, Sep 12	Writing Arguments (cont'd) <i>"More about Argument: Induction, Deduction, Analogy, and Logical Fallacies," Chapter 4</i>
Tue, Sep 17	Peer Review – Essay #1
Thu, Sep 19	Peer Review – Essay #1
Tue, Sep 24	Essay #1: Position Paper Due – Hard copy, eLearning, Turnitin.com Writing a Rhetorical Analysis <i>"Writing a Rhetorical Analysis," Chapter 9</i>
Thu, Sep 26	Considering the Arguments of Others <i>"Violent Media or Violent Society?," Argument!, Chapter 17</i> <i>"Arguing about Politics: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," Argument!, Chapter 18</i> Documenting Sources <i>"Documenting Sources (MLA, APA, and More)," Argument!, Chapter 14</i>
Tue, Oct 1	Causal Arguments <i>"Writing a Causal Analysis," Chapter 7</i> Plagiarism Tutorial at: http://www.utdallas.edu/library/help/PlagiarismTutorial/Plagiarism.htm
Thu, Oct 3	Conferences – Bring two hard copies of your essay draft!

Tue, Oct 8	Peer Review – Essay #2
Thu, Oct 10	Peer Review – Essay #2
Tue, Oct 15	Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis Due – Hard copy, eLearning, Turnitin.com 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,” <i>Argument!</i> , Chapter 15
Tue, Oct 22	Considering Visual Arguments “The Challenges of Living in a High-Tech, Multimedia World,” <i>Argument!</i> , Chapter 16
Thu, Oct 24	Conferences – Bring two hard copies of your essay draft!
Tue, Oct 29	Peer Review – Essay #3
Thu, Oct 31	Peer Review – Essay #3 **WL Period Ends**
Tue, Nov 5	Essay #3: Audiovisual Analysis Due – Hard copy, eLearning, Turnitin.com Problem Solution Arguments “Writing the Problem/Solution Essay,” <i>Argument!</i> , Chapter 8
Thu, Nov 7	Considering the Arguments of Others “Students, Teachers, and Schools in the 21 st Century,” <i>Argument!</i> , Chapter 19 “Freedom of Expression in the 21 st Century,” <i>Argument!</i> , Chapter 20 “Enduring Controversies in a New Age: Abortion, Animal Rights, Capital Punishment, and Health Care,” <i>Argument!</i> , Chapter 21
Tue, Nov 12	Writing a Researched Argument “Planning the Researched Argument,” <i>Argument!</i> , Chapter 11
Thu, Nov 14	Using Sources “Evaluating and Utilizing Sources,” <i>Argument!</i> , Chapter 12
Tue, Nov 19	Prospectus Due Conferences – Bring two hard copies of your essay draft!
Thu, Nov 21	Drafting and Revising Research Essays “Drafting and Revising the Research Argument,” <i>Argument!</i> , Chapter 13 Grammar and Mechanics Review Considering the Arguments of Others “Marriage and Gender Roles: Changing Attitudes vs. Traditional Values,” <i>Argument!</i> , 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	Peer Review – Essay #4
Thu, Dec 5	Peer Review – Essay #4
Tue, Dec 10	Essay #4: Academic Essay Due – Hard copy, eLearning, Turnitin.com Reflections

Grading

Essay #1: Position Paper	10%
Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis	15%
Essay #3: Audiovisual Analysis	20%
Essay #4: Academic Essay & Prospectus	Prospectus 5% + <u>Essay 25%</u> 30%
Other Written Assignments	10%
Participation	10%
Process Performance	5%
Total	100%

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

I do not give grades. You earn them.

Essay #1: Position Paper

Due: Tuesday 24 September

Length: 500-750 words, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, black ink

Option 1: In a letter to Dr. Daniel, President of UTD, take a position on an issue facing the campus community (other than parking, meal plans, or being required to take this course!).

Option 2: In a letter to the Texas legislature, take a position on an issue facing the state community.

Regardless of which option you choose, you must convince your audience of your position by providing strong evidence and using effective 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 and present a clear thesis.

Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis

Due Date: Tuesday 15 October

Length: 750-1000 words (not including Works Cited) in MLA format, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, black ink

Source limit: One (1) source minimum (not including the examined text!)

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 an essay. (The instructor will make approved text selections available during the semester.) 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 text you analyze for your audiovisual analysis essay and the research you use in your academic argument essay.

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. Consult MLA for proper format of citations and the Works Cited page. Use formal, academic language, and be careful to proofread. There will be several opportunities for peer review, but you are the one who is responsible for your final product. Remember that your essay should be free of grammatical and mechanical mistakes, and you should, as always, proofread your essay very carefully.

Essay #3: Audiovisual Analysis

Due Date: Tuesday 5 November

Length: 1000-1250 words (not including Works Cited) in MLA format, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, black ink

Source limit: Three (3); one of these is the film or show

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

By attempting to create funny scenarios and characters, artists typically seek to prompt a specific response from their audiences: laughter. In this essay, you will examine how a single audiovisual text uses humor to reach an audience. You are free to choose the text, but please get my approval. Your choice can be one of the following:

Option I: Scenes from one film (20-30 minutes total)

Option II: One episode of a television program (20-30 minutes total)

Once you have chosen a text, you need to think about how it tries to be funny. An audiovisual text operates differently from a written text in several important ways. We will spend class time looking at a few movies and television shows, but you will also need to conduct some research outside of class. Be mindful that several scholars have established analytical categories for various types of humor. (We will discuss these in class.) By explaining where the material fits, you help establish necessary context for your reader. Do not assume that your reader has seen the material. Although there is no

rule or skeleton, providing the summary *before* the analysis will usually be your best option. Refer back to Chapter 10 of *Argument!* for additional guidance. Specifically, the “Good Advice” box on page 157 can help you in analyzing your audiovisual. Consult MLA for proper format of citations and the Works Cited page. Use formal, academic language, and be careful to proofread. There will be several opportunities for peer review, but you are the one who is responsible for your final product. Remember that your essay should be free of grammatical and mechanical mistakes, and you should, as always, proofread your essay very carefully.

Essay #4: Prospectus

Length: 250-500 words, in MLA format, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, black ink

Due: 19 November

This is an important moment in the research process. How well you have 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 (but do not offer numbered responses; the prospectus should be a coherent essay in paragraph form):

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?
6. What sources will you use? Name and describe (author, title, year of publication, how the content is relevant/useful) at least two of them. (The textbook does not count.)

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

Essay #4: Academic Essay

Length: 1500-2000 words (not including Works Cited) in MLA format, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, black ink

Due: Tuesday 10 December

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

(You may also cite the textbook, but it will not count as one of the required five!)

For 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. Consult MLA for proper format of citations and a Works Cited page, which is a required, graded element of this assignment. Use formal, academic language, and be careful to proofread. There will be several opportunities for peer review, but you are the one who is responsible for your final product. Remember that your essay should contain a cogent, well-formed argument, and be free of grammatical and mechanical mistakes.

Attendance and Punctuality

(Note: For some class sessions, we will meet at other locations, such as the library or a computer lab, where the same attendance policies still apply.) Because class periods consist of a mixture of class discussion, group work, and writing, every student's thoughtful, attentive, and active participation is essential and will form a portion of his/her grade. **A student who sleeps, engages in non-class-related activities, or interferes with his/her classmates' ability to learn, 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) absences**, no questions asked. (Save them for when you really need them, but be mindful that they do not excuse you from due dates for major assignments or peer reviews!) Your final grade will suffer a 4% reduction for *each* absence you accumulate over three (e.g., 6 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. Persistent tardiness to class is disrespectful to both your instructor and your peers, and will affect your participation grade in the course. **Three tardies will be counted as one absence; arriving more than 15 minutes late to class will also count as an absence.** Always be on time, and I will make sure to dismiss you on time!

Class Participation

Come prepared for every class, follow appropriate instructions for activities, make a sustained effort to perform well on assignments, listen attentively, speak clearly and thoughtfully, and be respectful of others. Effective participation precludes off-task behavior. Your success in this course is a function of your level of engagement.

Late Work

All drafts, including final, must be submitted when and as required in order to complete this course successfully. **You must submit major assignments in all three (3) formats – in person, on eLearning, and to Turnitin.com – before they will be considered accepted.** Avoid unnecessary stress by paying attention to due dates and taking special care to arrive on time on those days. Problems associated with technology can occur at any time, so always save your work, and never wait until the last moment to print a major assignment. Most major assignments may be turned in up to three (3) days late, but at a high cost: 10 percentage points per day late, with the 10-point penalty beginning at the end of class. **Neither Essay #4 nor the Prospectus will be accepted late.**

Personal Electronic Devices

Turn off and stow away all phones/communication devices and laptops. Do not use them during class unless otherwise instructed, or you may be marked absent and/or instructed to leave.

Academic Integrity

Students in RHET 1302 are expected to maintain a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. **It is critically important that 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.

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

I have read the policies for RHET 1302.031 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 for 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): _____