

Enw 2310: Introduction to Rhetoric

Course Objectives, Policies, and Syllabus

Instructor: Joel Overall
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Office: JAAC 3041
Office Hours: MW 10-12 and MWF 1-2
When: MWF 2-2:50
Where: AYRS G104

Books:

Burke, Kenneth. *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purpose*. 3rd ed., U of California P, 1984.

Lanham, Richard A. *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*. 2nd ed., U of California P, 1981.

Course Objectives:

- Students will more fully understand the relationship between thought and expression
- Students will demonstrate mastery of a range of rhetorical theories
- Students will apply principles of rhetorical criticism to analyze discourse
- Students will be sensitive to how context shapes meaning and understanding



Overview:

Rhetoric is the “use of all available means of persuasion,” OR is it “the study of the relationship between thought and expression,” OR is it “the study of misunderstanding and its remedies,” OR is it “the only alternative to war”? Writers and thinkers from antiquity (Aristotle, Quintilian, St. Augustine) to modernity (Kenneth Burke, Wayne Booth, Susan Langer) have explored their society’s communicative practices in an effort to understand the power of language. This class introduces students to the history, theory, and range of rhetorical studies with particular attention to applying a theoretical lens to our own current world. Such current rhetorical artifacts (or objects of study) range from movies, music, music videos, Broadway plays, fashion, to political speeches, novels, dance trends, etc. As a class, we will work to understand how art, language, and media represent thrusts in a socio-political conversation as much as the artifacts we examine are also affected by other texts.

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Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation:

Due to the collaborative nature of this course, it is important that you come to class every day and are involved in class discussions and activities. I will abide by the Belmont University policy:

Belmont University is committed to the idea that regular class attendance is essential to successful scholastic achievement. Absence is excused only in cases of illness or other legitimate cause. Attendance is checked from the first class meeting. Late registrants will have accrued some absences prior to formal registration in the course. In the case of excused absence from class, students have the right and responsibility to make up all class work missed.

Failure for Non-Attendance

Should the number of absences other than Provost's Excused Absences exceed 20% of class meeting time for a given student (9 MWF absences excluding Provost excused absences), the faculty member may assign the grade "FN" (failure for non-attendance) to that student.

Coursework

Praxis Journal:

- You will keep a physical praxis journal this semester, exploring theoretical concepts we'll be reading to understand their practical applications. Praxis is a word that means putting theory into action, and while a good bit of your writing may be focused on summarizing (or attempting to understand) the theoretical concepts we engage, I am also interested in seeing how these ideas might be applicable through analysis or communication techniques.

Mini Projects:

- In the first half of the semester, you will have three short assignments to help you process the readings and put them into action. These will be low stakes, but they will allow you to think through the importance of language and expression for persuasion.

Group Presentation:

- In groups of two or three, you will choose a particular book, rhetorician, or rhetorical term that is not a part of our course readings to present on. Your presentation should cover any pertinent biographical information of the work, rhetorician, or rhetorical term; summarize the theoretical ideas you are engaging; connect this work, rhetorician or idea with our readings and other presentations; and in some way apply the rhetorical principles to analyze the discourse of a group or current event. This project will also involve the creation of an easily designed website to more fully understand the work, rhetorician, or rhetorical term.

Rhetoric in Culture Analysis:

- Your final project will be a rhetorical analysis of some cultural idea or discourse group using one or more of the theories discussed in class or presented through the group presentations. Your aim in this 2000 to 2500 word essay should be to use rhetorical theories we've engaged in class to illuminate the rhetorical impact of an idea or a discourse community. This project will also involve composing a one-page proposal for your final paper.

Viva Voce (Final Exam):

- Your final exam will be an oral exam over the theories we've engaged throughout the entirety of the course. Before the final exam

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week, you will sign up for a time to drop by the classroom and blindly choose three notecards that contain a range of the names of course topics, ideas, or main theorists we've discussed. Following your choice, you will have 30 minutes to prepare for a 10 minute discussion with me about one subject from one of your three notecards. While these discussions will be fairly informal, I plan to push your knowledge on the topic you choose. Be prepared to provide an in-depth answer for any topic we've discussed.

Grading

Grade Breakdown:

- Mini Projects 15% (3 at 5% each)
- Praxis Journal Check 15% (3 @ 5% each)
- Group Presentation 20%
- Rhetoric in Culture Analysis 40%
- Viva Voce (Final Exam) 10%

The grading scale for this course is as follows.

A: 93-100	B-: 80-82	D+: 67-69
A-: 90-92	C+: 77-79	D: 63-66
B+: 87-89	C: 73-76	D-: 60-62
B: 83-86	C-: 70-72	F: 59 and under

Course Policies

Classroom Atmosphere:

I envision our classroom as a place where all of us can share our ideas, thoughts, and questions without fear of being made fun of or embarrassed. Our classroom interaction will be based on respect for all of the writers and readers we encounter this semester.

Late Work:

Late assignments will be assessed a 10% per day late penalty. Please contact me before an assignment is due if you need additional help.

Luddite Mode:

Throughout the semester, there will be moments in class when I will move us into "Luddite Mode." In short, this means that our class discussion or activity will begin without the use of technology (laptops, cellphones, etc.), and I expect you to put away your devices in order to participate fully in class. If you'd like to learn more about the Luddites (19th century workers who resisted industrial technology), you can read more about it at this link:

<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/rethinking-the-luddites-in-the-age-of-ai>

The Writing Center:

The Belmont University Writing Center exists for students, faculty, and staff--all members of the Belmont community. They offer free 30-minute sessions for anyone seeking advice or help with writing. To schedule an appointment: come in, call 460.6241, or email writing.center@belmont.edu

<http://www.belmont.edu/english/writing/index.html>

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Academic Integrity:

"Honor Code: The following is the Student Honor Pledge that guides academic behavior:

"A Bruin does not lie, cheat, or steal, and does not tolerate those acts."

Generative AI and Rhetoric

Generative AI tools like Chat GPT are changing the way we research, write, and think, and you will likely need to know how to use them as you enter the workforce. Relying on AI to think and write for you, however, will not help you develop the fundamental critical thinking skills you'll need to use AI (or your God-given intellect) effectively. For this reason, use of generative AI tools is limited in this course. Each assignment will include specific instructions for how you may use AI. Use of AI outside of those parameters will be considered academic dishonesty. Additionally, if you do choose to use AI in the allowed methods permitted for each assignment, you must disclose such usage in an author's note when you submit the assignment. Honesty and full-disclosure are paramount.

ADA:

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Belmont University will provide reasonable accommodation of all medically documented disabilities. If you have a disability and would like the university to provide reasonable accommodations for the disability during this course, please notify the Office of the Dean of Students located in the Beaman Student Life Center (460-6407) as soon as possible.

Course Evaluations:

At the end of our course, you will be expected to participate in course evaluations.

Final Exam Note:

At the end of our course, you will be expected to attend the final exam period, which is designated on the schedule below. There are no exceptions to this rule.

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Calendar - dates and readings are subject to change

HRT = A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms

P&C = Permanence and Change

		F 2/6	Stasis Theory Praxis Journal Check #1
W 1/7	Intro to the syllabus What is Rhetoric?	M 2/9	Stasis Theory
F 1/9	Read <i>Toye</i> and "Definitions" (pdfs online)	W 2/11	Presentation #1
M 1/12	Orality and Literacy	F 2/13	Topoi and Metaphor Mini-Project #2 Due
W 1/14	Ancient Rhetoric in Contemporary Situations	M 2/16	Nietzsche "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense"
F 1/16	Mini-Project #1 Due	W 2/18	Presentation #2
M 1/19	MLK Day (no class)	F 2/20	Modern Rhetoric - An Introduction
W 1/21	Aristotle "Rhetorica"	M 2/23	Rogerian Rhetoric
F 1/23	Sappho	W 2/25	Presentation #3
M 1/26	Snow Day	F 2/27	Identification/Division
W 1/28	Snow Day	M 3/2	No Class - Spring Break
F 3/0	"The Truth of Fact, The Truth of Feeling"	W 3/4	No Class - Spring Break
M 2/2	Kairos and Rhetorical Situation	F 3/6	No Class - Spring Break
W 2/4	Kairos and Rhetorical Situation	M 3/9	Kenneth Burke Introduction Praxis Journal Check #2

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Calendar continued

W 3/11	Read <i>P&C</i> "Orientation" (5-18)	M 4/13	Kenneth Burke's Bodies That Learn Language
F 3/13	Presentation #4	W 4/15	Kenneth Burke's Equipment for Living Praxis Journal Check #3
M 3/16	Read <i>P&C</i> "Motives" (19-36)	F 4/17	Rough Draft Workshop
W 3/18	Read <i>P&C</i> "Occupational Psychosis" and "Style" (37-58)	M 4/20	In class writing exercises
F 3/20	Presentation #5	W 4/22	SPARK Symposium (no class)
M 3/23	Rhetorical Form and Narrative	F 4/24	In class writing exercises
W 3/25	Read <i>P&C</i> "Perspective by Incongruity", "The Range of Piety", and "New Meanings" (69-88)	M 4/27	Rhetoric in Culture Analysis Assignment Due
F 3/27	Conferences	W 4/29	Prepare for Viva Voce
M /30	Conferences	W 5/6 @ 2	Final Exam: Viva Voce To Be Scheduled
W 4/1	Read <i>P&C</i> "Secular Conversions" (125-147)		
F 4/3	No Classes - Easter Break		
M 4/6	No Classes - Easter Break		
W 4/8	Mini-Project #3 Due		
F 4/10	No Class - Dr. Overall at Peck Symposium @ MTSU		