

**COMM 302: Rhetoric and Criticism****Spring 2016****Dr. Angela M. McGowan****SUNY Fredonia****TEXTBOOKS:**

Bizzell, P., & Herzberg, B. (1990). *The rhetorical tradition: Readings from classical times to the present*. Boston, MA: Bedford Books.

Ramage, J. D., Bean, J. C., & Johnson, J. (2015). *Writing arguments: A rhetoric with readings* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Pearson.

**COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Communication Studies addresses critical thinking, communicative concepts and skills, and relational and participatory effectiveness in personal, public, and professional spheres. This is a Communication Studies course and as such, this course will give you the tools needed to dissect your experiences in our rhetorical world. Specifically, this course introduces you to major issues and perspectives in rhetorical criticism, including foundational concepts from the history of rhetorical theory, elements of rhetorical studies, and methods of rhetorical analysis. By surveying traditional and contemporary approaches to studying rhetoric, readings will encourage you reflect upon the power of language and human symbolic activity and explore how these processes work and why they affect us.

First, rhetoric is an art form with its own set of principles and a diverse theoretical landscape. This class will introduce you to rhetorical theory and discuss evolving definitions of rhetoric. Skills obtained in this class will help you question the communicative acts going on around you, and the course content will encourage you to ask questions about the nature and functions of communication. Second, the study of rhetorical criticism begins with the understanding that human beings use language and symbols to shape our world. You will learn how to write a piece of rhetorical criticism that does not “criticize” but instead uses tools available to construct and justify reasonable arguments about how rhetoric works. Therefore, this course will introduce you to major issues and perspectives in rhetorical criticism.

The course provides an advanced introduction to the study of rhetoric--“advanced” because the readings are difficult and “introduction” because the content is probably new. This is a reading and writing intensive course. You will encounter difficult readings; therefore, you may need to take more time to complete the assigned reading. I have high expectations for my students and expect that you will respect your classmates and me by following the policies outlined in this syllabus.

This course part of the College Core Curriculum; therefore, humanities students will demonstrate knowledge of the conventions and methods of at least one of the humanities in addition to those encompassed by other knowledge areas required by the General Education program. By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and methods used to analyze arguments rhetorically;
2. analyze rhetorical acts by reading rhetorical criticism, assessing others' critical analyses, and engaging in class discussion;
3. demonstrate an understanding of proper APA formatting both in-text and in a reference page;
4. identify and explain rhetorical theory, the debates within it, and its critical application; and
5. construct oral and written communication arguments that include a claim with reasons, logical structure, use evidence effectively, move the audience, and respond to objections and alternative views.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**1. Discussion Questions (25 points each/200 total points):** You will be asked to complete 8 sets of discussion questions and bring your answers to class. You can respond to the questions using bullets or paragraphs but make sure that you (1) reference the assigned reading and (2) paraphrase what the author wrote. Some questions will ask you to find a rhetorical act that demonstrates a concept or idea discussed in the assigned reading. You should be prepared to walk the reader through what you see going on in the rhetorical act with specific references to concepts from the readings for that day.

**2. Elevator Pitch (150 total points):** This assignment asks you to craft a pitch selling yourself, your vision, or your business in a short 1:30-2:00 minute oral presentation. You will use the Toulmin Model to write/organize a pitch that should be written in present day. Your target audience is pretend in the sense that it is someone that runs a company, nonprofit, hospital, etc., the pitch should move the audience, and use evidence effectively. Everything you say in the pitch applies to what you have accomplished thus far in your collegiate career (e.g., job and volunteer experiences, leadership positions you have held, courses you have taken that are relevant to the job you want, etc.). You will be graded on how you frame the argument (see "Writing Arguments," pp. 52-65), the logical structure of your argument (see "Writing Arguments," pp. 67-97), and your ability to move the audience (see "Writing Arguments," pp. 104-119).

**3. Reading Augmentation (150 total points)** You will be assigned one day to augment the textbook reading with contemporary examples that fall under a genre of argument (for examples see "Writing Arguments," pp. 25-31). Your task is not so much to facilitate the discussion of that reading as it is to supplement the class discussion with your own examples or found images. During your oral presentation, you share a responsibility with the professor to make the class time interesting and productive for those who have already read the text. Therefore, you should adapt the example(s) and explanation to classmates' interests and levels of knowledge and be prepared to respond to questions from your classmates. The example(s) and document should be uploaded to the online dropbox. To successfully complete the assignment, you should:

- (1) locate at least one example that demonstrates a concept or idea discussed in the assigned readings and bring the example(s) to class.

(2) construct a 250-500 word document that explores the connection between the reading and your example(s). This document should follow either the free writing or idea mapping techniques discussed in Ch. 2 Sec. 2.1. The written document will be graded on how well you read a text rhetorically (see Ch. 2 Sec. 2.2) and your ability to clearly and sufficiently explain how your example(s) demonstrates the course concepts discussed that day.

(3) deliver a 3-4 minute presentation that walks the audience through what you see happening in the example(s). Your presentation should reference/explain specific concepts from that day's readings. Feel free to use the projection equipment but make sure you have worked with it ahead of your discussion. Your oral presentation will be evaluated based on clarity and accuracy of ideas presented, adaptation to classmates' interest and level of knowledge, and presentational qualities.

**4. Critical Perspective (200 total points):** Before writing your final paper, you will write 750-1250 word essay that examines the rhetorical theory you plan to use to analyze your visual argument. Your critical perspective essay should (1) synthesize scholarly research from peer-reviewed journals to explain the main characteristics of the theory, (2) clarify how you can use the theory to examine the artifact, and (3) argue for the value of the theory in assessing the rhetorical strength of the rhetorical act. Effective papers will support their discussion by using examples from the rhetorical act.

**5. Visual Rhetoric Analysis (300 total points):** This final assignment asks you to analyze a visual argument rhetorically (see "Writing Arguments," Ch. 9). In a 1250-2000 word essay, you will analyze a visual argument rhetorically (e.g., photograph/drawing, poster, flier, public affairs advocacy advertisement, cartoon, or a web page) using tools and assumptions we have discussed with regards to both rhetorical theory and rhetorical criticism. Broadly, the essay will include a synthesis of research done on the rhetorical theory used to analyze the rhetorical act, offer historical contextualization of the visual, and develop a critical argument using relevant conceptual resources. Specifically, the essay should (1) advance a claim supported by reasons ("Writing Arguments," Ch. 3), follow the Toulmin Model ("Writing Arguments," Ch. 4), use evidence effectively ("Writing Arguments," Ch. 5), employ persuasive techniques that move the audience ("Writing Arguments," Ch. 6), and thoroughly examine the rhetor's argument rhetorically ("Writing Arguments," Ch. 8).

#### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Due</u>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Introduction</li> <li>• Argument: An Introduction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 1</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argument: An Introduction cont'd</li> <li>• Argument as Inquiry (pp. 17-32)</li> <li>• Argument as Inquiry cont'd (pp. 32-44)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 1</li> <li>• Chapter 2 (Sec. 2.1-2.2)</li> <li>• Chapter 2 (Sec. 2.3-2.5)</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the Classical Period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both readings accessed through ANGEL</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plato, "Introduction" (pp. 55-58)</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plato, "Gorgias" (pp. 61-83)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading accessed through ANGEL</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plato, "Gorgias" cont'd (pp. 83-103)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading accessed through ANGEL</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plato, "Gorgias" cont'd (pp. 103-115)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading accessed through ANGEL</li> <li><u>DQ 1</u>: Plato's theory</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Core of an Argument (pp. 52-60)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 3</li> <li><u>Ch. 3</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 3.1-3.3)</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Core of an Argument cont'd (pp. 60-66)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 3</li> <li><u>Ch. 3</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 3.4)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logical Structure of Arguments: The enthymeme (pp. 67-71)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 4</li> <li><u>Ch. 4</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 4.1)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logical Structure of Arguments: The Toulmin System (pp. 71-87)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 4</li> <li><u>Ch. 4</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 4.2-4.3)</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logical Structure of Arguments: The Toulmin System activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 4</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding and Evaluating Sources</li> <li>Using Summary, Paraphrase, and Quotation</li> <li>Citing and Documenting Sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 15: pp. 340-358</li> <li>Chapter 16: pp. 362-374</li> <li>Chapter 17: pp. 390-396</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aristotle, "Introduction" (pp. 144-150)</li> <li>Aristotle, "Rhetoric, Book I" (pp. 151-153)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readings accessed through ANGEL</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aristotle, "Rhetoric, Book I" cont'd (pp. 153-155)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading accessed through ANGEL</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aristotle, "Rhetoric, Book I" cont'd (pp. 155-160)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading accessed through ANGEL</li> <li><u>DQ 2</u>: Aristotle's theory</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using Evidence Effectively (entire chapter)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 5</li> <li><u>Ch. 5</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 5.1-5.3)</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moving your audience (entire chapter)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 6</li> <li><u>Ch. 6</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 6.1-6.6)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to the Contemporary Rhetoric</li> <li>Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readings accessed through ANGEL</li> <li><u>DQ 3</u>: Bitzer's theory</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reagan, “Challenger Explosion” speech</li> <li>• Eidenmuller, “Situation”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings accessed through ANGEL</li> </ul>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevator Pitch Workday</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft of elevator pitch</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day I: Deliver Elevator Pitch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevator Pitches</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day II: Deliver Elevator Pitch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevator Pitches</li> <li>• Mid-semester grades available</li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to Objections and Alternative Views (pp. 121-131)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 7</li> <li>• <u>Ch. 7</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 7.1-7.4)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to Objections and Alternative Views cont’d (pp. 131-145)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 7</li> <li>• <u>Ch. 7</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 7.5-7.6)</li> </ul>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burke, “Introduction” (pp. 989-991)</li> <li>• Burke, “A Grammar of Motives” (pp. 992-996)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings accessed through ANGEL</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burke, “A Grammar of Motives” (pp. 996-1018)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burke reading – ANGEL</li> <li>• <u>DQ 4:</u> Burke’s theory</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tonn, Endress, &amp; Diamond, “Hunting and Heritage on Trial”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tonn – ANGEL</li> <li>• <u>DQ 5:</u> Tonn et al.’s article</li> </ul>
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing Arguments Rhetorically (pp. 154-159)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 8</li> <li>• <u>Ch. 8</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 8.1)</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical perspective essay workday</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Materials to work on CP paper</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fisher, “Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm”</li> <li>• Fisher, “The Narrative Paradigm: An Elaboration”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings accessed through ANGEL</li> <li>• <u>DQ 6:</u> Fisher’s theory</li> </ul>
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popp, “History in Discursive Limbo”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popp article – ANGEL</li> <li>• Critical Perspective Essay</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing visual arguments (pp. 176-191)</li> <li>• Olson, Finnegan, &amp; Hope, “Visual Rhetoric in Communication”</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing visual arguments cont’d (pp. 191-206)</li> <li>• Atkins-Sayre, “Snapshots of the South”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 9</li> <li>• <u>Ch. 9</u> Reading Augmentation (Sec. 9.3-9.5)</li> <li>• Atkins-Sayre article – ANGEL</li> </ul>

15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campbell, “Feminine Style”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading accessed through ANGEL</li> <li>• <u>DQ 7</u>: Campbell’s theory</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foss &amp; Griffin, “Beyond Persuasion” (Invitational Rhetoric)</li> <li>• Bone, Griffin, Scholz, “Beyond Traditional Conceptualizations of Rhetoric”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings accessed through ANGEL</li> <li>• <u>DQ 8</u>: Foss &amp; Griffin’s theory &amp; Bone et al.’s article</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carey, “The Parallel Rhetorics of Ella Baker”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carey article – ANGEL</li> <li>• <u>DQ Make-up</u>: Carey’s article</li> </ul>
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of class workday on final paper</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual Rhetorical Analysis Workday</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual Rhetorical Analysis Peer Review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft: Visual Rhetorical Analysis Essay</li> </ul>
Finals Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit Visual Rhetoric Analysis essay during final exam time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay: Visual Rhetorical Analysis</li> </ul>