

HU 3151 The Rhetoric of Everyday Texts

TR 12:35 to 1:50pm, Walker 120A

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SYLLABUS

Course Description

In this course, you will use the ancient art of rhetoric for the interpretation and production of everyday texts. Using our developing knowledge of rhetoric, we will learn how to interpret and produce texts in the everyday context of digital social media. We will explore rhetoric multimodally (working with speech, writing, images, and sound), and we will see how rhetoric can be used to build and sustain communities, to make meaning, and to create social change.

Course Objectives¹

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify, critique, and adopt classical and contemporary rhetorical strategies in everyday communication contexts;
- Understand how to adapt your writing and/or design choices to reflect the particular context, audience, and purpose of your everyday communication goals;
- Develop strategies for designing, arranging, and structuring multimodal texts that reflect the conventions of an everyday genre;
- Develop strategies for creating engaging texts for everyday purposes
- Have a basic understanding of how emerging technologies reflect and change the use of persuasive discourse

¹ This course is designed to meet Michigan Technological University's Student Learning Goal 5: Communication. To learn more about this learning goal, please see the rubric posted at <http://www.mtu.edu/assessment/program/university-learning-goals/5013_Goal%20-%20Written%20Communication.pdf>

Required Texts

Heinrichs, Jay. *Thank You For Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us about the Art of Persuasion* (Revised and Updated Edition), 2013.

Other readings in Canvas: <<https://mtu.instructure.com/courses/980776>>

Assignment Descriptions

CLASS PARTICIPATION & CITIZENSHIP

- *Regular, active attendance*
Each student begins the semester with 40 attendance points in the bank. Attendance will be taken at each class. For each absence, 5 points will be deducted from your attendance points. **More than 4 unexcused absences will automatically result in 0 points in the CLASS PARTICIPATION & CITIZENSHIP category (15% of your final grade),** regardless of the other work completed.
 - I understand that, for some students, missing some class time is necessary. If you have a significant reason for missing more than a couple of classes, such as a university-sponsored event schedule, a chronic illness, or a disability, please let me know by email. I will work with you (and, if necessary, with the Dean of Students) to determine a fair attendance grade, given your particular circumstances. (Please note that emailing me about an absence is not a guarantee that you won't lose points.)
- *Citizenship*
Our class will heavily involve group work, critical discussion, peer review, and other interactions that require a spirit of collaboration, openness to the ideas of others, and respectful discourse. I do not ask that you like or agree with everything and everyone in our class. I do, however, ask that you demonstrate respect for your colleagues; you should expect the same from them. I reserve the right to reduce your participation grade should you be unable to do so.
- *Reading Questions*
For nearly all readings, you must post 1 question about the assigned reading at least one hour before class. Questions must be open-ended

(avoid simple questions of fact, especially questions answered by the reading), and they must not duplicate previously posted questions—early birds have an advantage! Each question is worth 4 points; after the first 2 questions, late, repeat, or inappropriate questions will not receive credit. All reading question due dates are listed in the course calendar (readings marked as “Q1,” “Q2,” etc.).

- *Canvas Assignments*

Throughout the semester, you will complete written homework in Canvas, which includes extended responses to readings, drafts of a work-in-progress, peer review of a classmate’s work, and other assignments as listed in the course calendar. To receive credit (5 points each), you must complete the activity fully and accurately by the assigned due date and time. I will not accept late Canvas homework unless we have made prior arrangements. All Canvas assignments are listed in the course calendar (marked as “CA1,” “CA2,” etc.). *A note on drafts:* Although drafts and other in-progress assignments are only “worth” 5 points each, they are the best way to receive early feedback from me and from classmates on major assignments. The better your draft is, the better the feedback can be, and (very likely) the better your final assignment will be.

Podcast: Teach a Rhetorical Device—due Week 4

Through an audio essay (or “podcast”), you and a partner will present a short-but-polished (2-minute) explanation of one of the rhetorical terms from BYU’s “Forest of Rhetoric” website. (See assignment sheet.)

Mid-Term Exam—scheduled for Week 6

To ensure that you retain the rhetorical concepts that will be of great importance to your work this semester, you will complete an exam that covers material from readings, in-class lectures, and discussions. You will be allowed to bring one page of notes to use during the exam.

Rhetorical Analysis Essay—due Week 9

You will choose a specific social media genre (e.g., meme, infographics, tweets, status updates, hashtags, etc.) and conduct a rigorous rhetorical analysis of sample texts and social media contexts of the genre you have chosen. After gathering and analyzing copious amounts of data, you will write about your findings in a formal, 6- to 8-page essay.

Social Change through Social Media Project—due Week 14 & finals week

In this final project, you and a small team of your colleagues will create and analyze your own social media campaign. The goal of the project will be to use the rhetorical strategies you have learned to have an impact on your intended audience in order to promote positive social change. Your team will present your project to the class in week 14, and you will write a short rhetorical analysis of your work.

Grading

Please see details in Canvas for individual assignment grading criteria. Assignment grades will be weighted accordingly:

Assignment / Category	Points Possible	% of Total Grade
Class Participation & Citizenship <i>(Attendance = 40)</i> <i>(15 Reading Questions X 4 pts. each = 60)</i> <i>(10 Canvas Assignments X 5 pts. each = 50)</i>	150	15%
Mid-Term Exam	150	15%
Podcast <i>(see rubric for grading criteria)</i>	150	15%
Rhetorical Analysis Essay <i>(see rubric for grading criteria)</i>	250	25%
Social Change Project <i>(see rubric for grading criteria)</i>	300	30%
Total:		1000

Final letter grades for the course will be calculated using the following total point ranges, which should help you keep track of your progress throughout the semester.

920 to 1000 points:	A	880 to 919 points:	AB
800 to 879 points:	B	780 to 799 points:	BC
700 to 779 points:	C	680 to 699 points:	CD
600 to 679 points:	D	0 to 599 points:	F

University Policies

Academic Integrity: <<http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/academic-integrity>>
Academic regulations and procedures are governed by University policy. Plagiarism, or knowingly copying another's work or ideas and calling them one's own or not giving proper credit or citation, is a violation of MTU's academic integrity policy. If you have any questions about source use, I will be happy to help you document your sources correctly. Academic misconduct cases will be handled in accordance the University's policies.

Assessment Policy: <<http://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/policies/p312-1.htm>>
Student work may be used for the purposes of university, program, or course assessment. All work used for assessment purposes will not include any individual student identification.

Disability Services <<http://www.mtu.edu/deanofstudents/students/disability/>>
If you have a disability that could affect your performance in any class or that requires an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact your instructor or Disability Services at 487-1494 as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

The Office of Institutional Equity: <<http://www.mtu.edu/equity>>
Michigan Technological University complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Michigan Tech has a policy of affording equal opportunity to all of its employees, students, applicants for employment, and applicants for admission without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, height, weight, genetic information, or marital status, disabled veteran status, veteran status, or disability.

Veterans / Military: <<http://www.mtu.edu/registrar/students/veterans/>>
Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcomed and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to their instructor(s).

Equal Opportunity, Discrimination, or Harassment:
<<http://www.admin.mtu.edu/admin/boc/policy/ch5/>>

COURSE SCHEDULE

(subject to change)

Week 1	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 1/13	Introductions	
Thurs 1/15	Purposes and Genres of Rhetoric	Heinrichs, chapters 1, 3, and 28; before class, find the word "rhetoric" as used in social media; post a link or screen grab in Canvas before class (CA1)
Week 2	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 1/20	Kairos and the rhetorical situation	Heinrichs, chapter 23; Bitzer (pdf) (Q1)
Thurs 1/22	Pathos <i>Class will "meet" online in Canvas (Lauren out of town); see details in Canvas for completing online activities and discussion to receive attendance credit for the day.</i>	Heinrichs, chapters 9 and 10 (Q2); post your top 2 or 3 choices of rhetorical figures for your podcast project—select from list at BYU's <i>Forest of Rhetoric</i> website (CA2)
Week 3	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 1/27	Sonic rhetoric; editing sound with Audacity	Podcast scripts due in Canvas—group assignment (CA3) ; bring headphones to class
Thurs 1/29	Ethos	Heinrichs, chapters 4, 5, 6, and 8 (Q3)
Week 4	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 2/3	Podcast Review Activity <i>No face-to-face class meeting; complete podcast review in Canvas to receive attendance credit for the day.</i>	Podcasts + transcripts due Monday (2/2) by 11:59pm—group assignment
Thurs 2/5	<i>No class: Winter Carnival</i>	

Week 5	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 2/10	The canons: invention and arrangement; group proposal workshop	Heinrichs, chapters 11, 12, 25 (Q4)
Thurs 2/12	The canons: style, memory, and delivery	Heinrichs, chapters 18, 19, 24 (Q5); Social Change Project proposals due Sunday by 11:59pm—group project (CA4)
Week 6	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 2/17	Mid-Term Exam (Location TBA)	Prepare for exam (you may bring one page of notes to the exam with you)
Thurs 2/19	Identity rhetoric and identification	Heinrichs, chapters 20 and 21 (Q6); Burke (pdf) (Q7)
Week 7	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 2/24	Rhetorical analysis of written texts	Selzer (pdf) (Q8)
Thurs 2/25	Analyzing multimodal texts	Wysocki (pdf) (Q9); data corpus summary for Rhetorical Analysis Essay due (CA5)
Week 8	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 3/3	Rhetorical analysis review and discussion	Rhetorical analysis essay draft due before class (CA6); peer review responses due in Canvas by 1:50pm (CA7)
Thurs 3/5	<i>No class—sign up for individual essay conferences</i>	
<i>Spring Break Week</i>		
Week 9	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 3/18	Rhetorical ecologies	Edbauer (pdf) (Q10)

Thurs 3/20	Rhetorical velocity	Ridolfo and DeVoss (web) (Q15); Rhetorical Analysis Essays due Friday (3/21) by 11:59pm
Week 10	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 3/25	Social media and social change; group proposal review	Murthy (pdf); Gladwell (web) (Q12—post a question about Murthy or Gladwell or both)
Thurs 3/27	Designing spreadable media	Jenkins, Ford, and Green (pdf) (Q11)
Week 11	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 4/1	Identity, identification, and social media	Warnick & Heineman (pdf) (Q13)
Thurs 4/3	<i>Group conferences: social media campaign progress reports</i>	Continue working on social media campaign; prepare as a group to give an update on your progress during the conference
Week 12	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 4/8	Visual ideographs	Edwards and Winkler (pdf) (Q14); post an example of a visual ideograph in Canvas and give a brief explanation of how it fits the definition of a visual ideograph (CA8)
Thurs 4/10	Apologia and jeremiad	Continue working on your social media campaign
Week 13	Topic	Your preparation for class
Tues 4/15	Rhetoric of the selfie	Baron (web); Simmons (web); Ryan (web); Berlatsky (web); post a selfie and write a short post about how it may (or may not) serve a rhetorical purpose (CA9)
Thurs 4/17	Final project workshop: analyzing your everyday texts	Final project campaign summary due (everyday text complete)—group assignment (CA10)

Week 14	Topic	Your preparation for class
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Tues 4/22	Final presentations (schedule TBD)	
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Thurs 4/24	Final presentations (schedule TBD)	
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Final Exam Week

Final project portfolios due Monday (4/28) by 11:59pm