

**Communication Studies 232:
The Rhetorical Tradition**

Fall 2015

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 Office Hours: Fridays, 12:00 to 3:00; *or by appointment*

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 am to 12:15 pm

Place: Smith Hall 206

Dates: August 24, 2015 – December 18, 2015

Course Goals

COMS 232 is a survey course in the history of rhetoric. The course begins in ancient Greece, where the art of rhetoric was first theorized in 5 BCE. From here, we follow the art of rhetoric through both space and time, tracing its development within the western intellectual tradition.

The course has three primary goals, or learning outcomes. At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Track the changes in the art of rhetoric. Rhetoric may be ancient—the first of the liberal arts by some accounts—but it has hardly been stable. Indeed, the art of rhetoric has changed so dramatically that is often times difficult to recognize the continuities in the tradition.
2. Have a facility with primary texts. You will be reading excerpts of various philosophers from ancient times through the present. The readings are not easy, but they will get easier as you grow more comfortable with the tradition.
3. Appreciate the contemporary relevance of a very old tradition. We will consistently try to draw connections between the rhetorical tradition and the worlds we live in on a daily basis.

These three learning outcomes drive every single lecture and every single assignment. Every quiz, test, paper, exercise, and presentation is geared to push you towards these goals (and evaluate your progress towards these goals!).

Course Description

COMS 232 is divided into four major sections, which are demarcated both historically and thematically (see chart below). The course begins in ancient Greece, with the rise of the art of public speaking (known as *rhetoric*). In this section of the course we will interrogate the assumption that rhetoric is “persuasion.” We will do so, primarily, by studying the now famous debates between the Sophists and Plato.

The second section of the course focuses on the Renaissance, an era in which the scope of rhetoric was radically abridged. In the Renaissance, the key term of rhetorical investigation was education.

The third section of the course focuses on the Enlightenment. In the course of the Enlightenment, rhetoric itself was redefined. It was no longer primarily a “means of persuasion” as it was for

Aristotle (and for the classical tradition more generally); it became a “means of communication.” This distinction might seem like splitting hairs, but, for the thinkers of the Enlightenment, it was of immense importance. It led them to completely rethink the art of rhetoric and reject much of the legacy of Athens.

Finally, the fourth section of the course focuses on Contemporary Rhetorical Theory. Contemporary thinkers have challenged the one assumption common to classical antiquity, the renaissance, and the Enlightenment: that rhetoric is, at its root, a tool or instrument to be used when needed. In challenging this notion of instrumentality (that rhetoric is something to be used), contemporary thinkers focus us on the intersections of rhetoric and power.

Thus, in a nut-shell, our class is organized as follows:

- Section One: Classical Antiquity: Rhetoric as Persuasion
- Section Two: The Renaissance: Rhetoric as Education
- Section Three: The Enlightenment: Rhetoric as Communication
- Section Four: Contemporary Theory: Rhetoric and Power

This course is an *introduction*. At the start, I don’t expect you to have an idea of what rhetoric is, let alone be familiar with its history and theory. By the end of the course, I hope you have a very good idea of what rhetoric is and has been. But be warned: very smart people have been arguing over the definition of rhetoric for 2,500 years and the verdict is still out. Over the course of the semester I will provide you with lots of different definitions of rhetoric. The point is not to choose the correct (or best) one; the point is to understand why, and for what reasons, different people argued so vigorously for different definitions of rhetoric.

This course is not simply a *thinking* course; it is also a *talking* course. Nearly every class period will be grounded in discussion. I expect you to not just to think about ideas, but to talk about them with each other. Raise your hand a lot. Ask each other questions. One of the best parts about COMS 232, historically speaking, is the opportunity to see (and HEAR) each other think. We will be engaging lots of important, complex, and controversial ideas, and the only way to wrap our heads around these sorts of ideas is to talk about them with each other. So be kind, cordial, open to different opinions, and, above all, be verbal; your success in the course depends on it.

Required Texts:

- Bizzell and Herzberg, *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings From Classical Times to the Present*, Second Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001.
- Readings on Blackboard

Policies and Procedures:

Grading: Your final grade for the course will be based on the following components:

| Assignment | Percentage | Points |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Position Papers | 5% | 50 |
| Reading Logs | 20% | 200 |
| Formal Essay | 15% | 150 |
| Exam One | 10% | 100 |
| Exam Two | 15% | 150 |
| Exam Three | 20% | 200 |
| Participation | 10% | 100 |
| Slideshow | 5% | 50 |
| TOTALS | 100% | 1000 |

Grades will be converted as follows:

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|----|---------|----------|
| A | 93-100% | 930-1000 |
| A- | 90-92% | 900-929 |
| B+ | 87-89% | 870-899 |
| B | 83-86% | 830-869 |
| B- | 80-82% | 800-829 |
| C+ | 77-79% | 770-799 |
| C | 73-76% | 730-769 |
| C- | 70-72% | 700-729 |
| D+ | 67-69% | 670-699 |
| D | 63-66% | 630-669 |
| D- | 60-62% | 600-629 |
| F | 0-59% | 0-599 |

“It is possible to get all A’s and still fail life.”

--Walker Percy

Consultation: Please come see me during office hours. I can be very helpful to you. If office hours are not convenient, we can set up an appointment. Please don’t let a conflict in scheduling prevent you from seeing me. I check email most days; this is the best way to contact me and to set up an appointment.

Attendance and participation are absolutely essential. This is a *talking* course. Nearly every class period will be grounded in discussion. I expect you not just to think about ideas, but to talk about them with each other. Raise your hand a lot. (I know I said this on page 2 also; it’s important).

Participation involves more than your physical presence. I know that some of you are ‘internal processors,’ that you learn by thinking quietly rather than through verbalization. Unfortunately, I can’t grade your thoughts. I need you to verbalize your thoughts, interact with the class, pose and answer questions, and be visibly and tangibly involved with the course. The 10% of the grade

dedicated to *participation* is not automatic; you will need to work for it. The participation portion of your grade is graded roughly—very roughly—on a curve.

Technically speaking: You will be given two absences before your grade will be negatively affected. With the exception of University-Sanctioned absences, no absences will be considered “excused.” After two absences, you will lose 15 points per absence off your final grade. If you know you are going to miss a class, all work must be arranged and turned in ahead of time. If you miss 1/3 of teaching periods or more, you will automatically fail the class.

I often take attendance. Even when I don’t formally call roll, I am still “taking attendance” in my mind.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. “Dishonesty” includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or source citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting another person’s work as your own, or tampering with the academic work of other students.

I take academic integrity quite seriously. I have prosecuted (and failed) students in recent semesters for issues of plagiarism. In my one year at the University of Maryland I kept three seniors from graduating. If you have questions about this, ask me ahead of time; I won’t punish you for asking questions about what is and is not plagiarism.

Plagiarism of any severity—even just one sentence stolen or improperly documented—constitutes a major breach of academic integrity and will result in, at a minimum, zero points for the assignment. If the plagiarism is more substantial than one sentence, I will recommend that the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences give you an “F” for the entire course.

Access for Students with Disabilities: The University of Kansas encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible.

MySuccess: This course participates in MySuccess, an early warning initiative at the University of Kansas to increase student retention. Throughout the academic term, you will receive a message from MySuccess through your official KU email address. MySuccess operates through Blackboard. Your instructor may communicate about your course performance by triggering a flag to indicate a low test or assignment score or a “kudos” for above average or improved performance. You may set up additional preferences and features by going to your profile tab. MySuccess has additional features to help you be a successful student at KU. There is a Success Network that lists a directory of KU resources as well as an online appointment scheduler system that allows you to make appointments with your instructor or assigned academic advisor that have activated their calendars to work with MySuccess. For more information about MySuccess, please visit www.mysuccess.ku.edu and click on the Students tab.

Cell Phones: Please make sure they are turned off *and* hidden during class.

Laptops: You may use one to take notes. You may not do non-class things on a laptop during class time. If you use a laptop, please expect that I will call on you more often.

Assignments:

Exams: I will not allow anyone to take them early or late for any reason other than those stipulated by The University of Kansas. Already purchased plane tickets or the availability of rides home are not a sufficient reason to take an exam early. If scheduling does not permit you to take an exam, you should drop the class now.

Every exam is comprehensive: that means that every exam will test you on the material covered from August 24, 2015 forward.

Students who require special testing arrangements should speak to me about such arrangements at least two weeks prior to the examination.

Pop Quizzes. There will occasionally be pop (unannounced) quizzes over the readings. The points for these pop-quizzes will come from the final exam.

Reading Logs: Readings are assigned below and they are vital to this class. The readings will often be challenging, requiring concentration and discipline. Because this is a “big ideas” course, it may feel more like a “philosophy” course than other courses you may have had in Communication Studies.

To help you read carefully, I am using an adaptation of Harvey Daniels’s “Literature Circles.” Literature Circles are a form of “team reading” in which the various cognitive tasks involved in reading a text are shared among a group of people. The great advantage of such “team reading” is that it allows any given individual to focus exclusively on one cognitive task at a time—it makes careful reading easier and more systematic.

Daniels suggests that there are four basic cognitive tasks involved in reading a text carefully: finding key passages, making connections between the text and other texts, watching for key words, and summarizing the text. He assigns each team member one task. The “Illuminator” looks for key passages, the “Connector” makes connections, the “Word Watcher focuses on key words, and the “Summarizer” summarizes the passage. He provides the following chart:

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Illuminator:</p> <p>Your role is to find important passages that the team should hear read aloud. These passages should be memorable, interesting, puzzling, funny, or important. Your notes should include the quotations but also why you chose them. You will read these passages aloud as part of your team’s discussion.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Sample Questions:</p> <p>What are the key passages? What did the key passage(s) make you think about? What do you think the reading was about? How might other people (of different backgrounds) think about this passage/reading? What one question would you ask the author if you go the chance? Why? What are the most important ideas in this reading?</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Connector:</p> <p>Your role is to connect what you are reading with what you are studying in other classes, or with the world outside of school. You can connect the reading to events in your own life, other classes you’ve taken, news events, political events,</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Sample Questions:</p> <p>What connections can you make to your own life? What other places or people could you compare this reading to? What other books or articles might you compare this to?</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| or popular trends. You can also connect the reading to other things you have read. The connections should be meaningful to you and your team. | What is the most interesting or important connection that comes to mind? How does this essay relate to the other essays in the book? |
| Word Watcher: Your role is to watch out for words worth knowing while you are reading. These words might be interesting, new, important, or used in unusual ways. It is important to indicate the specific location of the words so that your team can discuss the words in context. You may need to look up these words in a dictionary to include the definition in your notes. | Sample Questions: Which words are used frequently? Which words are used in unusual ways? What words seem to have special meaning to the author? What new words do you find in this section? What does this word mean? |
| Summarizer: Your role is to prepare a brief summary of the day's reading. Use the questions to the right to help you decide what to include. If it helps you to organize the information, consider making a numbered list or an outline. | Sample Questions: What are the most important ideas or events in this reading? What makes them so important? What effect do they have on the reader? What might be a good essay topic for this reading? |

There are four roles and four sections in our course. You will assume one role per section of the course. For example, you might be an “Illuminator” for our section on Classical Greek rhetoric, a “Connector” for our section on the Renaissance, a “Word Watcher” for the Enlightenment, and a “Summarizer” for Contemporary Rhetorical Theory.

You are required to turn in at least 8 Reading Logs over the course of the semester, with no less than two from any single section of the course. To make this simpler, I have posted Templates for each role on Blackboard. You will need to use each Template at least twice.

For example, if you are assigned to be an “Illuminator” for the first section of our course, you will use the Illuminator Template twice in the first four weeks of the course.

Reading Logs must be typed on the Template. They must be turned in to me in class in hard copy on the day we discuss the reading in question. If your reading Log is on Aristotle, it must be turned in on September 10.

I will tell you which roles you have for which sections in the first week of the course.

Each Reading Log is worth 20 points. Each Log will be graded on the completeness with which you address the questions and the carefulness and thoughtfulness of your answers. If you turn in more than 8, I will use the 8 highest grades (keeping at least two logs for each section). If you turn in at least 8 Reading Logs (with at least two from each section), then I will give you an additional 40 points for free! If you miss a Log, you will also miss these additional points, so it is well worth it to turn in at least 8!

Slideshows: At the end of the first three sections of the course, we will dedicate a day to reflecting on the connections between the theory we’ve just read and the conditions of contemporary life. I call these “Slideshow Days.” My assumption is that such connections exist, but that they are not obvious. To facilitate these conversations, you will make two short slideshows that aim to convince a street-smart (but not necessarily book-smart) high-school senior to major in COMS and study Rhetoric.

Each slideshow must:

1. Be made on PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezzi, or some other technology that I can watch on my computer and project in the classroom.
2. Contain 3 “content” slides (i.e., not an introduction slide/title slide, etc.). Each content slide must offer a specific reason to major in COMS. Each reason must draw on the one of the texts we’ve studied in that unit.
3. Contain at least two quotations from the assigned readings.

On the slideshow days, I may (or may not) display your slideshow for the class and ask you to informally talk through each slide with the class.

You must prepare a slideshow for two of the three “Slideshow Days.” You may choose which day you wish to skip. **THEY ARE DUE AT 5AM**, via email, on the day of the Slideshow. This will give me time to preview them before class.

Each slideshow is worth 25 points. It will be graded according to the following criteria.

1. The quality of your slideshow. Did you take it seriously, talk about it intelligently, make it sharp & polished, etc.
2. The quality of your representation of the rhetorical tradition. How careful were you with your quotations? Did you get the text right?
3. The ingenuity of your connection between the rhetorical tradition and contemporary concerns. Here I am looking for the quality, creativity, and thoughtfulness of the connections you draw between the rhetorical tradition and contemporary life.

Due Dates: September 15, October 20, and November 11. Remember, you will choose **TWO** of these dates to turn in a slideshow.

A grading rubric will be available on Blackboard.

Position Papers: Five times over the course of the semester you will be responsible to bring to class a short response paper addressing a specific question that will be posed in class ahead of time (during the previous class meeting). These papers ask you to connect historical readings with contemporary issues. Position Papers should be as close to exactly one page as possible. You are expected to engage the question seriously, not to arrive at a definitively “right” answer. Your response papers are worth 10 points each. They will be given one of four grades: 10, 7, 5, or 3. If the response paper is thoughtful, substantive, grammatically clean, and on track, you will receive a 10. Various deficiencies in these same categories will result in lesser marks. Late papers, i.e. those not turned in by the time I collect them, will receive a 3.

At times I may ask you to read your response papers aloud for the class as a conversation starter. If you are not ready to do so, you will get no credit for that paper. Please be prepared.

Papers must be typed (same font requirements as formal papers; see below) and turned in in hard copy. No electronic submissions.

Formal Research Paper: You will turn in one formal research paper for this course. As you can see in the grade distribution, these essays are weighted heavily and are very important. The details:

- Length: 4-6 full pages, excluding title page and documentation. Note margin/font requirements below.
- The paper is due **November 19, 2015, 4pm**. There is no class on this day, so turn the paper in to the administrative assistant in Bailey 102.
- Each paper should include a works cited list. Please conform to the MLA, APA, or Chicago style manuals—and do so consistently: I am a stickler for such things. When citing Bizzell & Herzberg please provide page number and column (e.g.: 1345L = the left hand column of page 1345).

Prompt: Pick a person from the Bizzell & Herzberg reader. It may be a person we have covered in class, although it does not need to be. Research this person; figure out their meaningful biographical details, what is important to them, what else they wrote, topics dear to them, etc. Write a paper in which you explain how we might understand the Bizzell & Herzberg excerpt differently because of the contextual details you have learned. This will involve frequent quotation from *both* the Bizzell & Herzberg excerpt *and* the research you have done.

You must cite the opinion of at least three scholarly resources (books published by a university press, peer-reviewed journal articles, etc.) that we have not used in class. You may use non-scholarly sources like Wikipedia (indeed these types of sources can be quite helpful), but they do not count as scholarly sources, because they aren't. Ideally, this research will help you as you summarize the argument or make connections to other material. There should not be a third section of the paper in which you attend to scholarly sources. All sources, no matter how good or bad they are, must be cited.

The quality of your paper will hinge on the quality of your research. Find some good sources and dig into them. Ingest their central arguments; don't just find a quotation to prove what you already know. I am very interested in how research changes your mind about the excerpt you are focused on.

Preparatory Writing Assignments:

1. Literature Circles Brainstorm writing assignment. This is a four-page writing assignment focused exclusively on your BH excerpt. Using the Literature Circle roles/questions described above, write one page that addresses the questions proper to each role. In other words, Page 1 of your paper addresses the questions of the Illuminator; Page 2 addresses the questions of the Connector, etc.

This “paper” does not need an introduction, conclusion, or transitions between pages. It will be graded primarily on its engagement with the excerpt and the thoughtfulness with which the questions are addressed.

2. Annotated Bibliography. Please create a bibliography of 4 secondary, peer-reviewed sources. Be sure it is properly formatted and *annotated*. After each entry, please include three sentences on why this source is helpful for this assignment.
3. Literature Review Paper. This is a review of a single, secondary source. Please write a one-page summary of one of the sources listed in your bibliography. Explain the central argument of the source and its relevance to the BH excerpt about which you are writing.

Grading: The papers will be graded according to the writing rubric posted on Blackboard. Most attention will be given to the first two “Body” sections of the rubric: “Command of Subject” and “Evidence/Supporting Material.” Some attention will be given to all the Components in the rubric. Roughly: the “outstanding” measure on the rubric = an “A;” the “Good” = a “B;” and so forth.

The Details

- Formal papers should have a title page that contains the title of your paper, your name, and the date. The text of your paper should start at the very top of the next page. No names, dates, or other information need appear at the top of this page.
- Please use a legible font—Times New Roman or Garamond preferred—and keep the font size to 12 points.
- The margins should be no more than 1.25 inches, and the text should be double spaced.
- Every paper must be stapled: no paper clips, origami holds, etc. No fancy plastic folders, please.
- Please proofread and *spell check* all work before turning it in. Grammar always counts.
- Be sure to keep a copy of everything you hand in, and everything I turn back to you.
- NO ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS.
- I won’t read drafts of papers ahead of time for feedback. I would, however, love to talk with you about your paper many times before it is due. Come see me. I suggest that you find a writing partner in the class and trade papers for feedback on rough drafts.
- Late work:
 - Formal Papers will be accepted late, up to 7 days. Late papers will be reduced 10% per day, including weekends. Each “day” is a 24-hour period starting at 4:01pm on the due date.
 - Computer problems are your problems. Things such as lost files, broken printers, problems with email attachments, crashed hard drives, closed computer labs, internet interruptions at KU, empty ink cartridges, what the insurance industry calls “acts of god,” or any other possible adverse circumstance are part of life and do not constitute valid excuses for late papers.
 - If you miss class for any reason on the day a paper is due—including KU sanctioned reasons—the paper must be turned in ahead of time.
 - Papers are late if you turn them in any time after I collect them.

Safe Assign

You will turn in an exact copy of all position papers and your formal paper to SafeAssign on Blackboard before class starts on the date each paper is due. You will not be able submit papers to SafeAssign after the deadline. Papers not submitted to SafeAssign will not be graded.

COURSE SCHEDULE

- “BH” is shorthand for our text, Bizzell and Herzberg
- (E) designates that the reading can be found electronically via KU’s Blackboard. Login, select this course, and see “Course Documents.”

| Date | Topic | Readings and Assignments Due |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Week One | | |
| August 25, 2015 | Introduction | |
| August 27 | <u>Classical (Greek) Rhetorical Theory</u> Sophists: Pericles and Gorgias | Pericles: “Funeral Oration” (E) Gorgias: BH, 44-46 Recommended Background: BH: 19-28. |
| Week Two | | |
| September 1 | Sophists: Protagoras and Isocrates | BH: 48-55, 72-79 Position Paper #1 |
| September 3 | Plato 1 | BH: 87-99 |
| Week Three | | |
| September 8 | Plato 2 | BH: 155-168 |
| September 10 | Aristotle | BH: 179-188 Position Paper #2 |
| Week Four | | |
| September 15 | <u>Slideshow Day #1</u> Bruno Latour | Latour, “The Invention of the Science Wars” (E) Slideshow #1: DUE 5am. |
| September 17 | <u>EXAM 1</u> | |
| Week Five | | |
| September 22 | <u>Renaissance (Latin) Rhetorical Theory</u> Cicero | BH: 289-301, 339-343 |
| September 24 | Quintilian | BH: 359-363 (skim), 412-428 |
| Week Six | | |
| September 29 | Desiderius Erasmus | BH: 597-613; 621-627 |
| October 1 | NO CLASS – Rhetorical Theory Conference in South Carolina | Literature Circles Brainstorm Assignment Due. Turn in to Dave’s Mailbox in 102 Bailey Hall. 4pm. |
| Week Seven | | |
| October 6 | Baldesar Castiglione | BH: 661-673 |
| October 8 | Peter Ramus | BH: 681-697 Position Paper #3 |

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| Week Eight | | |
| October 13 | NO CLASS – FALL BREAK | |
| October 15 | Madeleine de Scudery | BH: 767-772 Annotated Bibliography Due |
| Week Nine | | |
| October 20 | <u>Slideshow Day #2</u> William Deresiewicz Dorothy Sayers | Deresiewicz: “The Neoliberal Arts” (E) Sayers, “The Lost Tools of Learning” (E) Slideshow #2: DUE 5am. |
| October 22 | <u>Enlightenment Rhetorical Theory</u> John Locke | Enlightenment Intro: BH: 791-813 (skim) Locke: BH: 814-827 |
| Week Ten | | |
| October 27 | David Hume | BH: 828-840 |
| October 29 | Giambattista Vico | BH: 865-878 Position Paper #4 |
| Week Eleven | | |
| November 3 | Thomas Sheridan Gilbert Austin | Sheridan: BH: 879-888 Austin: BH: 889-897 Literature Review Paper Due |
| November 5 | Jean-Jacque Rousseau | Excerpt from <i>Reveries of the Solitary Walker</i> (E) |
| Week Twelve | | |
| November 10 | <u>Slideshow Day #3</u> John Dewey | Dewey, <i>The Public and Its Problems</i> (E) Slideshow #3: DUE 5am. |
| November 12 | EXAM 2 | |
| Week Thirteen | | |
| November 17 | <u>Contemporary Rhetorical Theory</u> Kenneth Burke | BH: 1340-1347 |
| November 19 | NO CLASS – Rhetoric conference in Vegas | Formal Paper Due! 4pm. Turn in to Dave’s mailbox: 102 Bailey Hall |
| Week Fourteen | | |
| November 24 | Friedrich Nietzsche | BH: 1168-1179 |
| November 26 | NO CLASS -- Thanksgiving | |
| Week Fifteen | | |
| December 1 | Frederick Douglass | BH: 1070-1084 |
| December 3 | Virginia Woolf | BH: 1246-1269 |
| Week Sixteen | | |
| December 8 | Michel Foucault 1 | Panopticism” (E) Position Paper #5 |
| December 10 | Michel Foucault 2 | “We Other Victorians” (E) “The Repressive Hypothesis” (E) |

| Wednesday, Dec. 16. 10:30 am – 1:00 pm. | FINAL EXAM | Same room as always. |
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