

## 2202 F: Your Argument: Rhetorical Strategy in a Visual Age

Fall 2013

**Section: 001**

**Time/Room: Tuesday 10:30-12:30 and**

**Thursday 10:30-11:30, UCC-58**

**Instructor: Dr. Miranda Green-Bartee**

**Email: mgreenb6@uwo.ca**

**Office: Lawson Hall 3245**

**Office hours: Wednesday 12:30-2:00, Thursday  
11:45-1:00**

**Phone: 519-661-2111, ext. 84661**

\*Email is the best way to contact me. Please allow at least 48 hours for me to respond to you; be sure to put the course number into the subject line and to use your UWO email to contact me. Emails not identified correctly may be screened as spam.

### Course Description and Objectives

<p><b>TERROR:</b> The state of being terrified or greatly frightened; intense fear, fright, or dread <b>2. transf. a.</b> The action or quality of causing dread; terrific quality, terribleness; <i>spec.</i> this action or quality in fiction, esp. in <i>novel (or tale) of terror</i>; also <i>concr. a thing or person that excites terror; something terrifying.</i></p>
---

“An intensive and practical study of exposition in discursive prose,” this course, as its calendar description states, “reviews the foundations of grammar, introduces students to the rhetoric of presentation and persuasion, and considers diverse types of prose across multiple disciplines, focusing on an analysis of visual rhetoric and argumentation, including websites, advertisements, and other visual media.” In other words, this course will ask you to read, write, analyze, engage with, construct, deconstruct, and revise various types of arguments, considering the concerns of audience expectation, purpose, and rhetorical situation.

More generally, Writing 2202 will build upon what you learned in Writing 2101 F/G, continuing to help you expand on your “ability to communicate information, arguments, analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences” (Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents’ statement on “university Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations,” Oct. 2005).

Throughout the semester, in addition to gaining and sharing knowledge about argumentation, you will

- use electronic resources to communicate with others, while adapting your ideas to appropriate writing technologies;
- write essays that involve rhetorical and cultural analysis and papers that involve creative nonfiction;
- critically assess both your own and your peers’ writing through group and electronic forums with consideration to both local and global issues;
- revise papers through multiple drafts; and
- analyze language and purpose as it appears in a variety of cultural contexts and rhetorical situations.

In our attempt to accomplish these objectives and to better understand how arguments of all kinds are constructed, we will focus on the theme “The Rhetoric of Terror.” To that end, we will consider how things are made or become terrifying. What does it mean to develop terror? How does terror become an argument, both in writing and visually? How can one analyze something that is so clearly meant to play

on our emotions? We will try to understand the “Rhetoric of Terror” both through reading various things that focus on terror as well as through writing. Readings will include Gothic literature, political speeches, news reports, academic essays, theoretical readings, and web and visual based rhetoric that address or invoke human fear. We will also examine the ways fear is rhetorically constructed by considering the various types of argumentations and how each can be employed to invoke terror. Students will be asked to “face their fears” in creative nonfiction, and distance themselves from such fears in formal writing and research. Despite the seriousness of the subject material, students need not fear a depressing course; we will also study the combination of humor and horror in textual and visual works.

### **Required Texts**

Sylvia Barnet and Hugo Bedau, *From Critical Thinking to Argument: A Portable Guide*, 2011

Weekly readings from various sources (all readings will be posted on Sakai.).

*The Canadian Writer’s Handbook: Essentials Edition*. Oxford UP, 2012.

### **Course Requirements**

In-Class Activities/Homework/Quizzes	10%
Movie Review	10%
Formal Media Analysis	15%
Rhetorical Analysis	20%
Forum Posts (10 total)	10%
Final Project (35%)	
Multi-Media Component	10%
Formal Research Paper	25%

### **Assignments/Assignment Format**

All essays are to be typed, double-spaced, and stapled, using a standard font (Times New Roman, Arial 10-12 point). You are expected to use either MLA or APA standards for documentation. All assignments must have your name, the course name, the instructor’s name, and the due date on the first page, preferably in the upper left hand corner.

Participation: In my opinion, the most successful college classrooms have students and instructors equally engaged in a discussion about the readings, assignments, and daily topics. You are expected to complete the assigned readings each week. In addition, you will be asked to complete various in-class and homework assignments.

Forum Posts: Forum assignment details will be posted in the Forum section of Sakai. Please check this regularly and follow the guidelines listed below.

- Writing on our course website should be treated as all other formal writing assignments; please use an appropriate tone for each post, keep in mind that your audience is diverse, and edit all entries for clarity, grammar, and mechanics.
- Prepare for each blog assignment by completing all assigned readings. Posts specifically related to reading assignments should be supported with examples from course readings and/or your own research.
- Sakai is, unfortunately, temperamental about entries copied from word processing programs; thus, you will need to proofread and edit each entry carefully before posting it to the class website. Avoid “stream-of-consciousness” writing.” Also, keep in mind that blogs are not chat rooms; maintain a professional tone throughout your responses. Please follow the prompts to determine how formal each post should be.

- Use first person (“I think,” “I feel,” “I believe,” etc.) carefully. Credibility is often achieved through succinct, clear writing, with answers supported by authoritative sources. For example, “I think the grey is a depressing color” is a weaker statement than “Scientists argue that grey elicits a sad response from individuals because . . .”
- As this assignment is completed online, it affords you some flexibility to work at your own speed; however, all deadlines are strict. If you’ve finished a blog post early, by all means post it early.
- All posts should be no less than 250 words and no more than 350 words. As a visual guideline, this section on “Blog Posts” is 274 words.

**Peer Review:** Every major writing assignment includes a preliminary peer-reviewed draft stage. For class days that peer review is scheduled, you must bring 2 copies (paper) of a completed, preliminary draft of the assignment in question. This draft should be sufficiently complete (in my assessment) to allow you to obtain meaningful comments on it from two or more of your peers. I will also ask you to show me your draft during the peer review session. Failure to attend class with a sufficiently complete draft, and/or to participate by reviewing at least one other student’s draft **will result in the earned marked for that assignment being reduced by 10%**. For example, what would have been an earned mark of 78 for the Movie Review assignment will receive a mark of 70.

**Movie Review:** For this assignment, you will select a movie that incorporates some element of fear in its plotline and you will review it.

**Formal Media Analysis:** To complete this assignment, you will explore the topic of fear in the news media by creating your own analysis of the rhetoric (visual and textual) used to communicate the topic.

**Rhetorical Analysis:** With this assignment, you will select an editorial, an op-ed piece, or an essay that expresses a specific argument or point of view. You will then analyze the effectiveness of the author’s rhetorical stance.

**Final Project:** Your final project will contain two parts: a research paper in which you will present an argument as well as a multi-media presentation of your argument.

\*You will receive detailed prompts for each of these assignments at least three weeks before the assignments are due.

### **Submitting Assignments**

All assignments are due in-class on the date stated on the class schedule. You are expected to turn in both a hard copy of the assignment as well as to submit an electronic version to Turnitin.com (see below).

*Late assignments will not be accepted under any circumstances.* It is your responsibility to turn assignments in on time. Should you need an extension for any reason, please contact me by email at least 48 hours prior to the day an assignment is due to discuss an extension. Extensions may be granted for the writing assignments, but not for the Forum Posts. If you have a medical or personal emergency, notify me as soon as possible to request an extension (see above). In-class assignments cannot be made up unless the absence is excused.

### **Attendance policies**

The very nature of this course requires that you attend regularly to do well. You are, therefore, expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. If you do have legitimate reasons for missing the occasional class (to a maximum of **six class hours**), notify me in writing either before or as soon as possible after the missed class. If I find your reasons acceptable, that absence will not be recorded. If you end the term with recorded absences totaling **seven to nine class hours**, your final course grade **will** be penalized 10% (e.g.

an earned grade of 83 will be reported as a 73); if you end the term with recorded absences totaling **more than nine class hours**, you **will** receive a failing grade for the course unless (in either case) you are able to secure appropriate documentation through the Dean's office of your home faculty.

**Note:** a class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of 'make-up class' in another course **will** count as non-attendance, and **will** attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario **shall not require** a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student's other scheduled class times. If you are asked or 'required' to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is **your** choice; your absence will not be excused.

See also: '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below.

### **Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism**

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."

### **Prerequisites**

The University Senate requires the following statement to appear on course outlines:

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

*The prerequisite for registration in this course is a) a final grade of 65 or more in one of Writing 2101, 2121, 2111, or 2131, or b) a final grade of 70 or more in Writing 1000F/G, or c) Special Permission of the Program.*

### **Medical Accommodation Policy**

For UWO Policy on Accommodation For Medical Illness, see:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>

(downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading)

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical or other grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth 10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds cannot be granted by the instructor or the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, and Professional Communication, and the Program requires students in these circumstances to follow the same procedure when seeking academic accommodation on non-medical (i.e. non-medical compassionate or other) grounds.

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth less than 10% of their final grade** must also apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Where in these circumstances the accommodation is being sought on **non-medical grounds**, students should consult in the first instance with their instructor, who may elect to make a decision on the request directly, or refer the student to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive medical documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an 'Attendance' policy in the course). **All** medical documentation **must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwo.com/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing**

Please refer to the "Information for All Students in a Writing Course" for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that your instructor does not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean's office of your home faculty.

**Writing 2202F: Your Argument: Rhetorical Strategy in a Visual Age**  
**The Rhetoric of Terror**  
Reading and Assignment Schedule  
Green-Barteet  
2013

Week 1: Introductions

Tues., Sept. 10 First Day of Class

Thurs., Sept. 12 Read: *From Critical Thinking to Argument* (FCTA) Ch. 1, p. 3-29

Read: "H1N1 Creeps Onto Campus" Sakai

Review: Media Analysis

Week 2: What are we afraid of?

Tues., Sept. 17

Read: FCTA Ch. 2, p. 30-50

Explore: [www.phobialist.com](http://www.phobialist.com), <http://urbanlegendsonline.com>

Homework: Complete Introductory Forum Post #1(see Sakai for specific instructions). Be sure to complete this post by 5 pm today.

Thurs., Sept. 19 Read: FCTA Ch. 3, p. 51-95

Due: Forum Post #2, Media Analysis Status Report

For your first post, you will write a combination of a topic proposal and a status report. In 3-5 well-developed paragraphs, state the topic that you are following for the Media Analysis assignment and the approach you are using. Clearly identify what media outlets you are following and what you have found thus far.

If you have not found significant change in the rhetoric of the headlines or the topic itself, consider broadening your search to less reputable media sources (Wikipedia, YouTube, etc.) How does the argument about your topic change as you examine other venues? Be sure to reread your post carefully for clarity, grammar, and mechanics. Be sure to complete the post by 5 pm today.

Week 3: Who are we afraid of?

Tues., Sept. 24

Read: "Give the Devil His Due: Fear in Its Place" Sakai

Read: "Media Fear Tactics"

[http://gavindebecker.com/resources/article/media\\_fear\\_tactics/](http://gavindebecker.com/resources/article/media_fear_tactics/)

Homework: Respond to at least 2 of your classmates' Media Analysis Status Reports by the start of class.

Thurs., Sept. 26 Peer Review: Bring at least 2 copies of a complete draft of your Media Analysis to class.

Week 4: Fear and Entertainment

Tues., Oct. 1

Read: FCTA CH. 4, p. 96-126

Review: Movie Review

Due: Forum Post #3, Response to completing your first paper

For your second post, respond to completing your first formal writing assignment for this class. In 3 paragraphs (or so), discuss your expectations for the assignment, whether you feel you met your own expectations, and how you think you did. Be sure to complete this post by 5 pm today.

Thurs., Oct. 3

Discuss: Why do we like to be scared?

Due: Media Analysis, Bring Hard Copy to Class AND Submit to Turnitin.com by the start of class

## Week 5: Reviewing Fear

Tues., Oct. 8                      Guest Speaker: Prof. Kathryn Mockler  
Read: "How to Write a Movie Review" Sakai  
"How to Write a Movie Review for Aspiring Movie Critics" Sakai  
"How to Review a Movie" Sakai  
Various Movie Reviews Sakai  
Watch: "The Horror, The Horror" Sakai  
Due: Forum Post #4

Post an MLA or APA style entry in the forum that identifies the film you have chosen to review. Following the entry, write a brief paragraph (6-8 sentences) in which you rate your film (two thumbs up, one thumb down, etc.) and explain your rating ("because I like Johnny Depp" is not a valid explanation.) Help: Go to <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/mla> to learn how to cite a film using MLA. Go to <http://www.landmark.edu/library/citation-guides/landmark-college-citation-guides/apa-citation-style-guide/#Videos> to learn how to cite a film using APA guidelines. Be sure to complete this post by 5 pm today.

Thurs., Oct. 10                      Read FCTA Ch. 5, p. 127-44, Ch. 6 p. 146-70

## Week 6: Reviewing Fear Cont.

Tues., Oct. 15                      Read FCTA Ch. 6, p. 171-87  
"Hollywood 9/11: Time of Crisis" Sakai  
Review: Final Project

Homework: Respond to at least two of your classmates' forum posts rating their chosen films. As you respond, think about how your classmates' have structured their rating. Do they support their rating with convincing evidence and logic?

Thurs., Oct. 17                      Peer Review: Bring at least 2 copies of a complete draft of your Movie Review to class.

## Week 7: Fear and War

Tues. Oct. 22                      Review: FCTA Ch. 7, p. 188-271 (NOTE: I have asked you to REVIEW this chapter, not to read it. You should be familiar with the content, but I do not expect you to have read it word for word.)  
Read: FCTA Ch. 8, p. 275-88 (NOTE: I have asked you to READ this chapter.)  
Review: Rhetorical Analysis  
Due: Movie Review, Bring Hard Copy to Class AND Submit to Turnitin.com by the start of class

Thurs., Oct. 24                      Read: "Testing Speech Codes" Sakai  
Read: "Canada Bomb-plot arrests Raise questions about RCMP's war on terror tactics" Sakai  
Due: Forum Post #5

Post a link to the article you have decided to analyze for the Rhetorical Analysis. Write a Status Report for your Rhetorical Analysis. In 3 paragraphs or so, explain why you chose to article you did, and then briefly summarize the article presented in the article. Finally, assess the argument. Does the author present a strong argument? Is it easy to follow? Does the evidence presented make sense? What approach will you take in your formal analysis of the article? Be sure to complete this post by 5 pm today.

## Week 8 Fear and War Cont.

Tues., Oct. 29                      Read: FCTA Ch. 9, p. 289-339  
Homework: Respond to at least two of your classmates' Status

## Reports for the Rhetorical Analysis Assignment.

Thurs., Oct. 31 Fall Study Break, No Class

Week 9: Fear and War Cont.

Tues., Nov. 5 Read: "Canada and the 'War on Terror'" Sakai  
Read: Articles on Fear and War, To be announced, Sakai  
Due: Forum Post #6

Respond to Wark's article "Canada and the 'War on Terror.'" In 3 or so paragraphs, consider how he defines (or redefines) the war on terror and its impact on Canada, and then assess his argument. Is his argument effective? Are his points valid? You may also want to include a personal response. How has the "War on Terror" affected you as a Canadian? Be sure to complete this post by 5 pm today.

Thurs., Nov. 7 Peer Review: Bring at least 2 copies of a complete draft of your Rhetorical Analysis to class.

Week 10: The Media and Inciting Fear

Tues., Nov. 12 Read: "Fear in the News: A Discourse of Control" Sakai  
Due: Rhetorical Analysis, Bring Hard Copy to Class AND Submit to Turnitin.com by the start of class

Thurs., Nov. 14 Read: FCTA Ch. 10, p. 340-54  
Read: "Is Fear the Root of all Evil?" Sakai  
Due: Forum Post #7

For your forum post, consider the ways the media can incite fear. In 3 or so paragraphs, consider how fear can be used to get a response out of people. Are there times when it is appropriate to incite fear in people, i.e., under warning of a terror threat, a potentially life-threatening storm, or a potential outbreak of illness? Can the media take things too far? Is the purpose to protect the public or to garner ratings? Be sure to complete this post by 5 pm today.

Week 11: Fear and Language

Tues., Nov. 19 Sign-up for Multi-Media Presentations for Final Project  
Read: "The Cask of the Amontillado" by Edgar Allan Poe on Sakai  
Due: Forum Post #8

For your forum post, consider how Poe creates feelings of fear in the reader. In 3 or so paragraphs, analyze two ways he instills terror in the reader. You may also describe how the story did or did not evoke fear in your. Given that Poe wrote the story in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, you might consider if his techniques are still effective for evoking fear in a 21<sup>st</sup> century audience. Does his language invoke fear? Be sure to complete this post by 5 pm today.

Thurs., Nov. 21 Paper Workshop

Week 12 Fear as Control

Tues., Nov. 26 Read: Foucault, excerpts from *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* Sakai  
Due: Forum Post #9

Keeping Foucault's analysis of the Panopticon in mind, think about the ways in which we are watched every day. How does being watched (or our assumption that we're being watched) change our behavior? Consider: are you more or less likely to sing along with your iPhone if you're in a public place, like a park or gym? Do you monitor your language/behavior based on whom you're around? In 3 or so paragraphs, respond to the idea of being watched, whether by stranger, by friends or family, or by closed circuit cameras. Be sure to complete this post by 5 pm today.

Peer Review: Bring at least 2 copies of a complete draft of your

Research Paper to class.

Thurs., Nov. 28 Multi-Media Presentations

Week 13:Presentations

Tues., Dec. 3 Multi-Media Presentations

Due: Forum Post #10

Consider how your perception of fear/terror has changed since the start of term. In 3 or so paragraphs, write a post in which you discuss how your view of the media, television, news articles, news casts, the web, etc. has changed now that you're more aware of the rhetorical strategies authors/designers/directors use to invoke fear in their readers/viewers. Be sure to complete this post by 5 pm today.

Thurs., Dec. 5

Last Day of Class

Multi-Media Presentations

Due: Research Paper