

**2202F: Winning Your Argument: Rhetorical Strategy in a Visual Age**  
Fall 2017

Section: 650 (Distance Studies)

Email: Please use OWL Message

Professor: Tim Freeborn

Office: Lawson Hall 3270

**Course Description and Objectives**

Argument: n. 1. An exchange of differing or opposing views, typically a heated or angry one; 2. A reason or set of reasons given with the aim of persuading others than an action or idea is right or wrong; 3. A summary of the subject matter of a book.

--from *The Oxford American Dictionary*, 2005, p. 82

Rhetoric: n. 1. The art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, esp. the use of figures of speech or other compositional techniques; 2. Language designed to have a persuasive or impressive effect on its audience, but is often regarded as lacking in sincerity or meaningful content.

--from *The Oxford American Dictionary*, 2005, p. 1452

“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 examine a variety of rhetorical techniques and analyse arguments of all forms. To understand what makes a strong argument, we will consider what an argument is and how rhetoric can be helpful or harmful. What does it mean to develop argument? Readings will include short stories, political speeches, news reports, academic essays, theoretical readings, advertisements, films, and web and visual based rhetoric that attempts to create an argument in some way. By the end of the semester, you will be well versed in identifying, analysing, and creating arguments of all kinds.

### **Communication**

Because this is an online course, we will communicate exclusively via OWL. When you contact me using OWL Message, you can expect a response within twenty-four hours. If you email me using Outlook/Western email, you can expect a response within one week. If you email me using a non-UWO account, you will not receive a response. If I foresee that I cannot respond to emails within times listed above, I will post an announcement

### **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 Owl).

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

### **Course Requirements**

Weekly Discussion	10%
Formal Media Analysis	15%
Position Paper	20%
Rhetorical Analysis	25%
Formal Research Paper with Visuals	30%

### **Assignment Format**

All essays are to be typed, double-spaced, and stapled, using a 12-point serif font (e.g., Times New Roman). You are expected to use either MLA or APA standards for documentation, which will be discussed in class and are detailed in *The Canadian's Writer's Handbook* section 37 and *From Critical Thinking to Argument* Chapter 7. 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 corner; assignments must also be submitted as a .doc, .docx, or .rtf format. Pdf and other "read-only" formats are not acceptable. Do not use a cover page, which is unnecessary for an online submission.

### **Submitting Assignments**

You will submit assignments through the "Assignments" module on our OWL course page. When you submit your assignments, they will be submitted automatically to Turnitin.com, a source-checking program. Turnitin.com will generate a report for you, detailing the percentage of your paper drawn from secondary sources; you will be able to see the report, as will I. I will not grade any essay until I see the report.

All assignments are due on the date stated on the class schedule. You are expected to submit an electronic version to Turnitin.com via OWL (see below). **DO NOT EMAIL ME ASSIGNMENTS.**

*Late assignments will penalized 5% per day, and they will not receive comments.* Should you need an extension for any reason, **please contact me by email at least 24 hours prior to the day an assignment is due to discuss an extension.** Extensions may be granted only for the writing assignments; they will be granted neither for the forum postings nor for the peer-review sessions.

## Peer Review

For three of our assignments (Position Paper, Rhetorical Analysis, and Research Paper with Visuals), you will participate in a peer review, which will be conducted through the "Forum" tab, in an appropriately titled section. For the first two assignments involving a peer-review session, you must upload a draft to the peer-review forum by Monday at midnight. You must respond to at least two of your classmates' drafts by Friday at midnight. For the final assignment, you will upload your draft by Friday, December 1 and return it by Tuesday, December 5. You will have specific items to respond to for each assignment. Failure to upload a with a sufficiently complete draft and/or to participate by reviewing at least two other students' drafts **will result in the earned mark for that assignment being reduced by 10%**. For example, what would have been an earned mark of 78 for the Position Paper assignment will receive a mark of 70.

## Attendance and Participation

In my opinion, the most successful college classrooms involve students and instructors equally in discussions about the readings, assignments, and daily topics. You are expected to complete the assigned readings each week. Because we do not meet formally in this online course, participation in the weekly forums is essential and, indeed, mandatory. While online courses are typically asynchronous, they are not self-paced. You must attend and participate in class, that is, log into our OWL section and interact with your peers and the instructor in the forum by posting questions and responding to your peers' questions.

### 1) Quality of Posts

All posts on the forum must

- contribute something meaningful to the board;
- support your opinion with sufficient reasons and/or evidence;
- demonstrate that you have completed the assigned reading and read your classmates' posts;
- display good grammar and organization.

Posts should not

- employ disrespectful, insulting, or offensive language;
- be unrelated to the weekly topic;
- be too long (more than one screen length) or too short;
- consist merely of statements like "I agree with you" or "Great comment!" Such posts do not contribute any substance to the discussion.

### 2) Frequency and Number of Posts

To earn full marks, you must post **at least three times on three separate days** covering a particular week's forum question, in addition to meeting the standards stated under "Quality of Posts." At least **one post must initiate a new thread** to the discussion, and at least **one must reply to another student**. For the purposes of the participation grade, all weeks run from Monday to Sunday; late posts (i.e., posts that appear after the discussion concludes on Sundays at midnight) will not count toward your participation grade.

## Attendance Policy

The very nature of this course requires that you attend regularly to do well. If you miss more than two weeks of class your final grade will be penalized 10%. If you miss more than three weeks, your final grade will be penalized 15%. Not "attending" class is defined as not posting in the class discussion at all. This policy will only be waived for medical or compassionate reasons as outlined in the "Medical Accommodation Policy" below.

## Email Policy

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using a non-UWO account, you will not receive a response. If I foresee that I cannot respond to emails within times listed above, I will post an announcement on OWL.

### **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 2101F/G, 2125F/G (or the former 2121F/G), 2111F/G, 2130F/G, or 2131F/G; or b) a final grade of 70 or more in one of Writing 1000F/G, 1030F/G, 1031F/G, or c) Special Permission of the department.*

### **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 Writing Studies, and Writing Studies 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/uwocom/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.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Major Assignment Due</b>
Week 1: Sept. 7-17	Introductions. How do we read?	
Week 2: Sept. 18-24	Critical Reading and Arguments	
Week 3: Sept. 25-Oct. 1	Critical Reading (cont’d)	
Week 4: Oct. 2-8  (October 9-15: Reading Week)	Visual Rhetoric	Media Analysis, Due October 8 <sup>th</sup>
Week 5: Oct. 16-22	Using Sources	
Week 6: Oct. 23-29	Developing an Argument	Peer Review: Position Paper
Week 7: Oct. 30-Nov. 5	Developing an Argument (cont’d)	Position Paper, Due November 5 <sup>th</sup>
Week 8: Nov. 6-12	Analyzing an Argument	
Week 9: Nov. 13-19	Toulmin Model	Peer Review: Rhetorical Analysis
Week 10: Nov. 20-26	Deductive and Inductive Arguments	Rhetorical Analysis, Due November 26 <sup>th</sup>

Week 11: Nov. 27- Dec. 3	Fallacies	Peer Review: Research Paper, from December 1 to December 5
Week 12: Dec. 4-8	Research Paper	Research Paper, Due December 8 <sup>th</sup>