

## Distance Studies

Department of English and Writing Studies

WRITING 2215F/650

# ***ENCODING PERSUASION: RHETORICAL THEORY***

Fall Term, 2018

**INSTRUCTOR:** Brock Eayrs  
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Office hours: Any time in virtual reality (response within twenty-four Hours); in-office by appointment.

### REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Textbook: Hauser, Gerald A. *Introduction to Rhetorical Theory*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Waveland Press, 2002.
- Access to course Sakai site.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

**Rhetoric (Ρητορικη)** includes both the study and the practice of human communication. In this course, we will focus on written communication. We will study the ways in which people communicate in order to consider theories of rhetorical activity, and we will write texts informed by those theories.

Hauser's *Introduction to Rhetorical Theory* will form the basis for our thinking about how language is used to communicate. The first five chapters outline some general concepts of rhetorical activity, while chapters 6 through 14 explore these concepts in more detail. Our reading of Hauser, together with more extended discussion in class of some recent major theorists such as Chaim Perelman, Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca and Stephen Toulmin will constitute an introduction to the 'New Rhetoric.' In our work on these materials we will aim to understand how these theories work, to test their validity by trying them out and engaging with them in discussion, and consider the question what their usefulness might be to each of us as agents in the world who seek to bring about practical change through the use of language.

### COURSE POLICIES:

#### Assignments and Grades (see also 'Further Details on Assignments' below):

Note that there is no final examination in this course. Your final grade in the course will be derived from your performance in the required work, weighted as shown below.

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| ➤ <u>Essay 1</u> (set topic)                         | 15% |
| ➤ <u>Tests</u> (1 x 10%; 2 x 15%)                    | 40% |
| ➤ <u>Essay 2 Proposal</u> (for final research paper) | 10% |
| ➤ <u>Essay 2</u> (final research paper)              | 35% |

#### Attendance/Participation (Please note posting requirements):

Obviously, we do not meet formally as a 'class' in a Distance Studies course. Therefore, 'attendance' and participation on the Discussion Board are intertwined. While Distance Studies classes are generally asynchronous, they are not correspondence or self-paced. You must attend class (defined as logging into our Sakai section) and participate by introducing yourself, and posting questions and thoughts during the

first week, and by posting (by participating in a given week's set discussion topic) in subsequent weeks where there is a Discussion topic as indicated on this syllabus. This means at least three separate posts during each of those weeks (a week is defined *for this purpose* as running from Monday to Sunday), **at least one of which must be a reply/response to another student and at least one of which must be a 'new' post.** Extended absences, defined as a failure to post into the Sakai classroom for more than five consecutive days, must be coordinated with the instructor.

Postings on the Discussion Board must have the following characteristics:

- Must contribute something meaningful to the Board;
- Must support your opinion with sufficient reasons or evidence;
- Must display good grammar and organization.

Postings should not:

- Contain disrespectful, insulting, or offensive language;
- Be excessively long or excessively short;
- Be unrelated to the week's topic;
- Say things that do not contribute anything, e.g. "I agree with you" or "nice comment".

**Note that 'attendance' as defined in this section is mandatory in this course. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements as defined above for any week where there is Discussion will result in your earned final grade in this course being reduced by 3%. That penalty is cumulative to a maximum of five weeks. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements for five or more weeks where there is Discussion will result in your earned final grade being reduced by 15%.**

#### **Late Work:**

All Tests and assignments must be completed by and submitted on the due dates shown in the course Schedule.

- A late or missed **Test** cannot be submitted late or made up without a formal request for academic accommodation issued by an academic counsellor in your Dean's office.
- Informal extensions for **Essay 1** and the **Essay 2 Proposal** are possible, but must be requested, *in writing* on our site's Sakai mail (NOT Western email), at least two days prior to the due date. Assignments submitted late without an extension will, *if accepted*, receive a grade no higher than 65%.
- An extension for **Essay 2** is not possible without a formal request for academic accommodation issued by an academic counsellor in your Dean's office.

#### **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.”**

#### **Scholastic Offences:**

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

#### **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.

### ***SCHEDULE***

<b>Week One (6 to 14 Sept)</b>	<b>Hauser, Ch. 1 ‘The Eventfulness of Rhetoric’ (Introduction to the course; definitions of ‘rhetoric’)</b>
<b>Week Two (17 to 21 Sept)</b>	<b>Hauser, Ch. 1</b>
<b>Week Three (24 to 28 Sept)</b>	<b>Hauser, Ch. 2 ‘Rhetorical Thinking’</b>
<b>Week Four (1 Oct to 6 Oct)</b>	<b>Hauser, Ch. 3 ‘Rhetorical Opportunities’ Hauser, Ch. 4 ‘Making Commitments through Rhetoric’</b>

- Test #1 (10%): See ‘Assignments: Test 1’ (coverage: lecture notes and Hauser Chapters 1 and 2)  
Link will open at 9:00 a.m. Monday 1 October and close 11:55 p.m. Wednesday 3 October.

October 8 – 12<sup>th</sup>: Fall Reading Week (no class)

Week Five  
(15 to 19 Oct)

Hauser, Ch. 5 ‘Public Judgment’

- Essay 1 (15%) due by Friday 19 October @ 11:55 p.m

Week Six  
(22 to 26 Oct)

Hauser, Ch. 6 ‘Finding Ideas’ (*inventio*)

Week Seven  
(29 Oct to 2 Nov)

Hauser, Ch. 7 ‘Using Good Reasons to Persuade’ (*logos*)

- Test #2 (15%): See ‘Assignments: Test 2’ (coverage: lecture notes and Hauser Chapters 3, 4, and 5)  
Link will open at 9:00 a.m. Monday 29 October and close 11:55 p.m. Wednesday 31 October.

Week Eight  
(5 Nov to 9 Nov)

Hauser, Ch. 14 ‘Strategic Forms of Argument Structures’ (*logos*)

- Essay 2 Proposal (10%) due by Friday November 9<sup>th</sup> @ 11:55 p.m.

Week Nine  
(12 Nov to 16 Nov)

Hauser, Ch. 8 ‘Persuasiveness of Character’ (*ethos*)  
Hauser, Ch. 9 ‘The Passions’ (*pathos*)

- Test #3 (15%): See ‘Assignments: Test 3’ (coverage: lecture notes and Hauser Chapters 6, 7, and 14)  
Link will open at 9:00 a.m. Monday 12 November and close 11:55 p.m. Wednesday 14 November.

Week Ten  
(19 Nov to 23 Nov)

Hauser, Ch. 10 ‘Narrative’ (*narratio*)

Week Eleven  
(26 Nov to 30 Nov)

Hauser, Ch. 11 ‘Acting with Language’

Week Twelve  
(3 Dec to 7 Dec)

Hauser, Ch. 12 ‘Experiencing Meaning in Rhetoric’  
Hauser, Ch. 13 ‘Rhetorical form as Strategy’

- Essay 2 (35%) due no later than Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December @ 11:55 p.m.

#### FURTHER DETAILS ON ASSIGNMENTS

##### Essay 1

This first essay will be on a set topic/materials; on the ‘Assignments’ page see assignment ‘Essay 1’ for complete information. It is due by 11:55 p.m. Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October. The assignment will ask you to apply one or more of the concepts we will have been discussing in the first few weeks of class to a rhetorical analysis of a set of materials. Your essay should follow the usual conventions for formal papers, and your grade on it will constitute 15% of your final grade in the course. The essay should be approximately 3 – 6 pages double spaced.

Three In-Class Tests (1 x 10%; 2 x 15%)

These will be written during the weeks set out in the schedule. Each test will contain a mix of multiple-choice and short answer questions on material covered in Hauser/lecture. The tests are on the 'Assignments' page in Sakai. Tests will be 'unhidden' at 9 a.m. on the Monday of the week in question; you will download the test file (Word), complete it, and upload your file (submission) by 11:55 p.m. on the Wednesday of that week.

**Major Research Paper: Assignments 'Essay 2 Proposal' and Essay 2**

Beginning early on in the term, you should begin looking for and deciding upon a subject/topic that interests you and begin to collect and assemble at least 10 items (documents, articles, clippings, speeches, comics, advertisements, etc.) focused on that topic. Each item you choose must use language and/or imagery to communicate something to an 'audience' about your topic. The possible range of topics is, of course, practically limitless, but ideally you ought to choose something that has engendered considerable 'debate.' You are of course free (and encouraged) to discuss this with me as you go about deciding upon your topic.

**'Essay 2 Proposal' (15% of your final grade):** using your case file, prepare a proposal for your major research paper (Essay 2). In your proposal you will aim to define your general subject and more specific topic, provide a preliminary formulation of your thesis, and give a preliminary indication of the kinds of research you will undertake. Your proposal should be approximately 2 – 3 pages double spaced. On the 'Assignments' page see assignment 'Essay 2 Proposal' for complete information.

**Essay 2 (35%):** write a *\*formal rhetorical analysis of* your case file materials, in which you attempt to explain the various rhetorical strategies used to present and frame the issue or topic you have researched, using the theories we have been studying throughout the course. This essay is your 'major' essay in the course, and should be approximately 10 – 12 pages, double spaced; your grade on this essay constitutes 35% of your final grade in the course. For more information, on the 'Assignments' page see assignment 'Essay 2.'

\*Please note (from the outset!): you are *not*, in Essay 2, writing 'your' contribution to the debate surrounding your topic!! Rather, you are writing *a rhetorical analysis of* that debate (its 'voices', their characteristic rhetorical strategies, etc.).