

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

Fall 2020

Section 650

Instructor: Dr. J. Johnston**Email: jjohns6@uwo.ca****Office: UC 2429****Office hours: via email only (Due to our current situation, no in-person office hours will be held this term. You may email me with questions or concerns at any time, however.)****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 that 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 term, you will be well versed in identifying, analysing, and creating arguments of various kinds.

Required Texts

Barnet, Sylvan, and Hugo Bedau. *From Critical Thinking to Argument: A Portable Guide*. Sixth Edition. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2020.

Messenger, William E., Jan de Bruyn, Judy Brown, and Ramona Montagnes. *The Canadian Writer's Handbook*. Essentials Edition. Don Mills: Oxford UP, 2012.

Supplementary/discussion readings from various sources (to be posted on OWL).

Note: The two required textbooks are available through the Western Bookstore. You can purchase physical copies there, or you can order copies to be shipped to your address (in Canada). Shipping rates and information can be found at this link: <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/shipping-information>

Both texts are also available in ebook form for purchase or rental through VitalSource at the following links:

<https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/from-critical-thinking-to-argument-sylvan-barnet-hugo-bedau-v9781319216924>

<https://www.vitalsource.com/products/the-canadian-writers-handbook-kobo-william-e-messenger-jan-de-v9780199025596?term=9780199025596>

Course Requirements

Weekly Class Discussion	15%
Formal Media Analysis	20%
Rhetorical Analysis	30%
Formal Research Paper with Visuals	35%

Assignments/Assignment Format

All essays are to be typed, double-spaced, using a standard font (ie: Times New Roman, 12 point). 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 submission date on the first page. **Important: assignments must also be submitted in .doc or .docx (or equivalent) format always; PDF and other "read-only" formats are not acceptable.**

Note that when you submit your assignments, you will be automatically submitting them to Turnitin for plagiarism checking. Turnitin will generate a report for you, detailing the percentage of your paper that

has been 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 uploading your file to the appropriate "Assignments" link. **DO NOT EMAIL ME ASSIGNMENTS.**

Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day and will not receive comments of any sort. 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 24 hours prior to the day an assignment is due (barring emergencies, of course) to discuss an extension.** Note that extensions may be granted for the written assignments, but not for class discussion or peer review.

Attendance and Participation

The most successful 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. As this is a Distance Studies course, we do not meet formally; thus, attendance and participation on the class discussion board are connected. While online courses are typically asynchronous (and this one is no different), they are not self-paced. **You must attend and participate in class** (defined as logging into our OWL section and interacting with your peers and instructor by posting questions and responding to your peers' questions and your instructor's prompts in the relevant topic sections under the "Forums" link).

Your class discussion grade will be based on whether you have fulfilled the posting requirements, listed in more detail below. In general, the grade will be based on 1) the quality of your posts each week, 2) the frequency and number of posts made, and 3) the number of posts you read and to which you respond.

1) Quality of Posting

All posts on the Class Discussion forum must

- Contribute something meaningful to the board.
- Support your opinion with sufficient reasons and/or evidence.
- Demonstrate that you have either completed the relevant assigned reading and/or read your classmates' posts.
- Display good grammar and organization.

Posts should not

- Employ disrespectful, insulting, or offensive language. **Note in particular that the use of racist language or any language that works against the values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will not be tolerated.**
- Be unrelated to the weekly topic.
- Be too long (more than one screen length) or too short (a sentence or two).
- Consist only 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 on at least **three separate days** covering that particular week's forum question (in addition to meeting the standards defined under "Quality of Posting"). At least **one post must initiate a new thread** to the discussion, and at least **one post must be a reply to either the course instructor or another student**. This means at least **three posts per week**. **For the purposes of the**

Class Discussion component, all weeks run from Monday to Sunday; late posts (i.e., posts that appear after the discussion concludes on Sunday at midnight) will not count toward your participation grade.

3) Number of Posts Read

I will also look at the number of posts you've read. For instance, if during Week 3, the class has posted 100 times in total and you only read 10 of those posts, that fact does not at all reflect positively on you when I am assigning your class discussion grade.

Peer Review

For each written assignment, you will participate in a peer review, which will be conducted through the Forum tab on our OWL site, in an appropriately titled section. You must upload a draft to the peer review forum by Monday (before midnight) of the weeks noted on the class schedule. You must then respond to at least two of your classmates' drafts by that Friday at midnight. You will have specific items to respond to for each assignment. **Failure to upload 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, an earned mark of 78 will receive a mark of 70.**

Note that in the three weeks when there is an assigned peer review forum, your posting a draft and responding to the drafts of others will take the place of regular class discussion.

Attendance policies

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%. As explained above, not "attending" class is defined as not posting to the class discussion at all. This attendance policy will only be waived for medical or compassionate reasons as outlined in the updated "Accommodation Policy" section below.

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

All essays and assignments must be written **in your own words**. Whenever you take an idea or a passage of text from another author, you must acknowledge this debt by using quotation marks where appropriate and by properly referencing all quotation, paraphrase, and summary via in-text citations. **Please note that plagiarism also includes double submission: submitting work from one course for credit in another without written permission from both instructors.** Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Scholastic offences such as plagiarism are taken very seriously and attended by academic penalties that may include expulsion from the program. You may read the appropriate policy on what constitutes a scholastic offence by following this link:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

As noted, in this course you will be required to submit an electronic copy of the final version of each of your written assignments to turnitin.com through your tutorial section's OWL homepage.

Prerequisites

Ensuring you have the correct prerequisite(s) for this course is your responsibility. The following notation articulates the Senate regulation with respect to the student needing to be responsible for

ensuring that course prerequisites have been completed successfully or special permission from the Dean obtained:

“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 1030, 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.

Accommodation Policy

Note: the official Western Accommodation Policy appears below. This is currently in effect, but may be modified temporarily by the university during the academic year as conditions change.

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student’s final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors by email within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student’s final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see:

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#). For the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays and should give reasonable notice in writing (by email), prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and to an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing

Please refer to the posted “Information for All Students in a Writing Course” document 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.

Lecture and Assignment Schedule

Week and Dates	Lecture Topic (and Discussion Focus)	Assignment Due
Week 1: Sept. 9-18	Introductions; How do we read?	
Week 2: Sept. 21-25	Critical Reading and Arguments	
Week 3: Sept. 28-Oct. 2	Critical Reading (cont.)	Peer Review: Media Analysis (draft due Sept. 28 by 11:55 pm)
Week 4: Oct. 5-9	Visual Rhetoric: Images and Arguments	Media Analysis Due (Oct. 2 by 11:55 pm)
Week 5: Oct. 12-16	Using Sources	
Week 6: Oct. 19-23	Developing an Argument	
Week 7: Oct. 26-30	Developing an Argument (cont.)	Peer Review: Rhetorical Analysis (draft due Oct. 26 by 11:55pm)
Fall Reading Week		
Week 8: Nov. 9-13	Analyzing an Argument	Rhetorical Analysis Due (Nov. 13 by 11:55 pm)
Week 9: Nov. 16-20	The Toulmin Model	
Week 10: Nov. 23-27	Deduction and Induction	
Week 11: Nov. 30-Dec. 4	Fallacies	Peer Review: Research Paper (draft due Nov. 30 by 11:55 pm)
Week 12: Dec. 7-9	Research Paper	Research Paper Due (Dec. 9 by 11:55 pm)