

Distance Studies

Department of English and Writing Studies

WRITING 2215F/650

ENCODING PERSUASION: RHETORICAL THEORY

Fall Term, 2020

INSTRUCTOR: Brock Eayrs
Room 2430, University College
beayrs@uwo.ca
Office hours: Any time in virtual reality (response within 36
Hours): email as above, or using our Owl/Sakai mail client.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Textbook: Hauser, Gerald A. *Introduction to Rhetorical Theory*. 2nd ed. Waveland Press, 2002.
Available (hard copy) from the Western Bookstore, or as an e-book from Vital Source: <https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/introduction-to-rhetorical-theory-gerard-a-hauser-v9781478600466>
- Access to course Sakai site.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

Rhetoric (Ρητορικ) 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 (set topic)</u> | 15% |
| ➤ <u>*Tests (1 x 10%; 2 x 15%)*</u> | 40% |
| ➤ <u>Essay 2: Proposal (for major research paper)</u> | 10% |
| ➤ <u>Essay 3: major research paper</u> | 35% |

Note: These Tests are designed to take 50 minutes to write, but they are not ‘timed’. You will have a three-day window within which to download, write, and upload your test through a link in ‘Assignments.’

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 for that week. 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** may be accepted late or made up where appropriately covered by the **Accommodation Policy** (see below).
- Informal extensions for **Essays 1, 2, and 3*** are possible but requests must be made *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 3 beyond Tuesday, December 22** is **not possible** unless I receive a formal request for accommodation issued by an academic counsellor in your Dean’s office.

Accommodation Policy:

Note: the official Western Accommodation Policy appears below. This is 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](#).

(Note: if you are registered with Accessible Education, please note [see above under Assignments and Grades] that you will not need extra time for the three tests to be written throughout the term in this course. You will have a three-day window in which to write each test, each of which is designed to take 50 minutes to complete.)

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](#)

and 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:

[\(https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html\)](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 (email), prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

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/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.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 this course is:

At least 65% in one of [Writing 2101F/G](#), [Writing 2125F/G](#) (or the former Writing 2121F/G), [Writing 2111F/G](#), [Writing 2130F/G](#) or [Writing 2131F/G](#); or at least 65% in one of [Writing 1000F/G](#), [Writing 1030F/G](#), or [Writing 1031F/G](#); or at least 65% in each of [MIT 1020E](#) (or both of [MIT 1021F/G](#) and [MIT 1022F/G](#)) and [MIT 1025F/G](#); or permission of the Department (consult the Undergraduate Program Director, Writing).

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

Week One (9 to 20 Sept)	Hauser, Ch. 1 'The Eventfulness of Rhetoric' (<i>Introduction to the course; definitions of 'rhetoric'</i>)
Week Two (21 to 27 Sept)	Hauser, Ch. 1
Week Three (28 Sept to 4 Oct)	Hauser, Ch. 2 'Rhetorical Thinking'
Week Four (5 to 11 Oct)	Hauser, Ch. 3 'Rhetorical Opportunities' Hauser, Ch. 4 'Making Commitments through Rhetoric' ➤ <i>*Test #1 (10%): See 'Assignments: Test 1' (coverage: lecture notes and Hauser Chapters 1 and 2) *Note: This Test is designed to take 50 minutes to write but is not 'timed.' You will have a three-day window within which to download, write, and upload your test through the link in 'Assignments.' The link will open at 9:00 a.m. Monday 5 October and close 11:55 p.m. Wednesday 7 October.</i>
Week Five (13 to 18 Oct)	Hauser, Ch. 5 'Public Judgment' ➤ <i>Essay 1 (15%) due by Sunday 18th October @ 11:55 p.m</i>
Week Six (19 to 25 Oct)	Hauser, Ch. 6 'Finding Ideas' (<i>inventio</i>)
Week Seven (26 Oct to 30 Oct)	Hauser, Ch. 7 'Using Good Reasons to Persuade' (<i>logos</i>) ➤ <i>*Test #2 (15%): See 'Assignments: Test 2' (coverage: lecture notes and Hauser Chapters 3, 4, and 5) *Note: This Test is designed to take 50 minutes to write but is not 'timed.' You will have a three-day window within which to download, write, and upload your test through the link in 'Assignments.'</i>

The link will open at 9:00 a.m. Monday 26 October and close 11:55 p.m. Wednesday 28 October.

Fall Reading Week:
5 p.m. Friday 30 October to Midnight Sunday 8 November

Week Eight
(9 to 15 Nov)

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

- Essay 2: Proposal (10%) due by Sunday 15 November @ 11:55 p.m.

Week Nine
(16 to 22 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)
**Note: This Test is designed to take 50 minutes to write but is not 'timed'. You will have a three-day window within which to download, write, and upload your test through the link in 'Assignments.'*
The link will open at 9:00 a.m. Monday 16 November and close 11:55 p.m. Wednesday 18 November.

Week Ten
(23 to 29 Nov)

Hauser, Ch. 10 'Narrative' (*narratio*)

Week Eleven
(30 Nov to 6 Dec)

Hauser, Ch. 11 'Acting with Language'

Week Twelve
(7 to 9 Dec)

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

- Essay 2 (35%) due no later than Friday 18 December @ 11:55 p.m.
Remember: an extension for Essay 3 beyond Tuesday, December 22 is **not possible** without a formal request for academic accommodation issued by an academic counsellor in your Dean's office.

FURTHER DETAILS ON ASSIGNMENTS

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 will be accessed on our 'Assignments' page in Sakai. Test links will open 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. Again, please note that each is designed to take 50 minutes to complete, but they are not 'timed' and you will have that three-day window in which to write.

Essay 1

This first essay will be on a set topic/materials; on the 'Assignment Prompts' page see assignment 'Essay 1' for complete information. 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.

Essay 2: Proposal for Essay 3 (major research paper).

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 materials (e.g. articles; editorials; op/ed pieces; clips; speeches) 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.

Using your materials, prepare a proposal for your major research paper (Essay 3). 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 'Assignment Prompts' page see assignment 'Essay 2: Proposal' for further information.

Essay 3: Major Research Paper.

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 'Assignment Prompts' page see assignment 'Essay 3.'

*Please note (from the outset!): you are *not*, in Essay 3, 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.).