

Distance Studies

Department of English and Writing Studies

WRITING 2215F/650
ENCODING PERSUASION: RHETORICAL THEORY
Fall Term, 2024

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>
- You are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If you need assistance with the course OWL site, you can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, you can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVE

Rhetoric (Ρηετορικη) 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.

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>Assignment 1</u> (essay; set topic) | 15% |
| ➤ <u>*Tests</u> (1 x 10%; 1 x 15%; 1 x 20%)* | 45% |
| ➤ <u>Assignment 2: Proposal</u> (for major research essay) | 10% |
| ➤ <u>Assignment 3: major research essay</u> ** | 30% |

***Note: The Tests are designed to take up to one hour to write. The Tests will appear under the ‘Quizzes’ tab. Each will be available to start for a seven-day period (see ‘Schedule’ below). You must start each test and complete it within the time allowed (one attempt): Test 1 – 100 minutes; Test 2 – 100 minutes; Test 3 – 120 minutes.**

**** See ‘Further Details on the Assignments’ immediately following the ‘Schedule’ for more information.**

ATTENDANCE AND 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 onto our Owl site) 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. **At least two separate posts** during each of those weeks (a week is defined *for this purpose* as running from Monday to Sunday) are required. **One must be a reply/response to another student and one must be a ‘new’ post (original contribution) starting a new conversation. Third and further posts each week may be either.**

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 may 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 may result in your earned final grade being reduced by 15%.

ASSIGNMENT FORMAT

Assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and submitted online (see ‘Submitting Assignments’ below) as Word files. All assignments must have your name, course name, section number and instructor’s name on the first page.

When using sources in a paper, you will be expected to follow MLA, CMS, or APA standards for documentation.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments 1, 2, and 3 are due on the dates specified on the syllabus Schedule. In the absence of formal academic consideration, **late papers for Assignments 1 and 2** will be penalized at 2.5% per day *unless I have permitted* an informal short extension of the due date. You must contact me *ahead of the due date*, by email, for an extension and provide a reason for the request acceptable to me. I will either agree to an informal short extension or refer you to the university procedures (see **Academic Consideration and Accommodation** policy below). **Assignment 3** is due on the last day of class. **That date is a university deadline** and will be extended **only** with formal academic consideration (see **Academic Consideration and Accommodation** policy below). Important: you are responsible for keeping an electronic copy of all assignments you submit.

Tests 1, 2, and 3 must be written during the weeks specified on the syllabus Schedule. If you miss a Test you may elect to contact me directly to see if we can agree informally to a short extension of its availability. If not, I will refer you to the university procedures (see **Academic Consideration and Accommodation** policy below).

Procedure for Assignment Submission

You will find Turnitin-enabled submission links for each of Assignments 1 to 3 under the ‘Assignments’ tab. You will upload your final version of each Assignment through its link, as a single Word (.doc or .docx extension) file,* titled to identify you as author.

***Note: Pdf or other ‘read only’ formats, and compressed/zipped files are not acceptable. Please note also that Turnitin will not accept more than a single file submission. In other words, do not try to submit an assignment twice, or in parts as**

two or more files.

PREREQUISITES

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 prerequisites for Writing 2215F/G are:

“At least 65% in one of [Writing 2101F/G](#), [Writing 2125F/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).”

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>.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or

Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

WRITING STUDIES' POLICY ON THE USE OF AI TOOLS

In this course, students are permitted to use AI tools for information gathering and preliminary research purposes only (unless otherwise indicated in the assignment instructions). These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. It is essential, however, that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize, develop, and articulate their own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploration, but students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding plagiarism in any form. Note that for all assignments completed outside of class, the instructor can require you to attend an in-person interview to discuss your work before a mark is finalized. Assignments should always reflect students' own thoughts and constitute independent written work. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and ethical learning environment that promotes critical thinking, supports independent inquiry, and encourages original written contributions.

FURTHER DETAILS ON THE ESSAYS

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 those 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 Essay 3' for further information.

Essay 3: Major Research Paper.

Write a **formal rhetorical analysis of* your 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 30% 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.).

Academic Consideration and Accommodation

General Note: Instructors are **not permitted to request, receive, or review documentation** – including but not limited to medical documentation – directly from you. All such documentation, if required, **must** be submitted **directly** to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration.

University policy on academic considerations is described here:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation.

Please note that any formal academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests through the Student Absence Portal, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar’s webpage:

https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation, which may include a Student Medical Certificate. Recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course.

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:
https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.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. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519-661-3030 (during class hours) or 519-433-2023 after class hours and on weekends.

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 (<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>).

Statement on Gender-based Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, here. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Other Student Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>
Student Support Services

<https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login&languageCd=ENG&>
provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>
Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>