

**Communications Studies (COMS) 469 – Lecture 01**  
**Rhetorical History and Criticism**  
**Fall 2011**  
**Tuesday/Thursday 11:00-12:50**

**Instructor:** Geoff Cragg  
**Office**  
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### **Course Description**

This course will examine rhetorical theories from ancient to modern times, with particular emphasis on the development of theories to meet the changing social and philosophical requirements of each age. In addition to studying and analyzing this body of rhetorical knowledge, you will also employ rhetorical concepts to analyze public discourse and other types of texts. Assignments will help you to develop your skills in public speaking and academic writing.

### **Objectives of the Course**

The course has the following major objectives:

1. To examine the origins and evolution of rhetoric, with particular attention to classical and contemporary objectives;
2. To provide you with opportunities to develop your performance in academic writing and presentations;
3. To introduce you to rhetoric as a field of scholarship.

### **Internet and electronic communication device information**

Use of cellphones is not permitted during class. You are welcome to use laptops, but only for course-related work or note-taking, and not during presentations. Please show professional courtesy to fellow students at all times.

### **Textbooks and Readings:**

We will use “The Rhetorical Tradition” edited by Bizzell and Hersberg, St Martin’s Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition for our textbook. This text has been used a number of times and used copies should be available.

## Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment	Due Date	Length	Value
First Essay	Oct 4	6-8 pages	15%

The first essay is based on any selection from the Classical or Medieval section of the textbook. This is not an assignment that requires outside research; instead, it is based on a careful close reading of the text you have chosen. In addition to a detailed explanation of the text, you will also present a thesis on the relevance or usefulness of your author's ideas to the present day. You will be evaluated on the accuracy and detail of your analysis, the strength of your argument, and the quality of your organization and editing.

First Presentation (based on essay)	Oct 18-25	8 minutes	15%
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For this assignment, you will adapt the content of your previous essay for a presentation to the class. Feel free to focus on and emphasize the ideas that you feel are the most interesting and relevant to your audience. You may use whatever technology is helpful to your purpose, but be careful that it does not take over. You will be evaluated on the skill with which you adapt your material for the presentation, as well as organization, delivery, and your address to the audience (including their questions). You are welcome to use notes or prompts, but may not rely on a full script.

Proposal for Paper	Nov 1	2-3 pages	5%
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In this assignment you have the freedom to examine any form of rhetorical communication, barring advertising and news presentation. Be careful to explain how your topic relates to rhetoric, specify what primary discourse you will be analyzing, and state your research question(s) explicitly. You will also include an annotated bibliography of at least five sources.

Second Presentation (on paper topic)	Nov 17-24	8 minutes	20%
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For this assignment, you will adapt the topic you outlined in your proposal for a brief presentation to the class. Make sure that you have a definite argument backed by strong examples. You may use whatever technology you wish to assist you. You will be evaluated on your address to the audience, the strength and coherence of your argument, and your delivery.

Paper	Dec 6	10-12 pages	30%
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In this paper, you will have the opportunity to refine and develop the content of your presentation. Feel free to revise your material and to incorporate further research into your analysis and argument. You will be evaluated on the strength and clarity of your



If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: [www.efwr.ucalgary.ca](http://www.efwr.ucalgary.ca)

## Grading System

In this class, you will receive grades in the 4-point scale (2.7, 3.0, 3.3) *rather than* percentages. Sometimes you may receive grade points between letter grades. 3.5 is the mathematical mid-point between a B+ (3.3) and an A- (3.7) and 3.15 is the mid-point between a B (3.0) and a B+ (3.3), etc.

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture: (Revised, effective September 2008)

Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Grade Point Value (see <a href="#">U of C Calendar: Academic Standing</a> )
A+	96-100	4
A	90-95.99	4
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1
F	0-49	0

## Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (MacEwan Student Centre 4<sup>th</sup> floor, [efwr.ucalgary.ca](http://efwr.ucalgary.ca)) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

## **Academic Misconduct**

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

## **Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

## **Students' Union**

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see  
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

## **Student Ombudsman**

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see  
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

## **Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points**

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

## **"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

## **Ethics**

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:  
<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb>

### **Schedule of Lectures and Readings**

This will be handed out in class.