

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communications Studies COMS 369 L01
Rhetorical Communication

Winter 2016

January 13 – April 13 (no classes on February 17 and March 16)
W 12:00-14:45

Instructor: Christine Mains
Office: SS305
Office Phone: n/a
E-Mail: cmains@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: W/F 10:30-11:30

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the basic principles of rhetorical theory, criticism, and practice. Students will learn rhetorical perspectives on elements of communication such as argumentation, persuasion, audience, situation, genre, and ethics. Students will apply rhetorical theory to the criticism of samples of public communication and will practice their rhetorical skills through in-class activities and assigned writing and oral presentations.

Objectives of the Course

- To become familiar with the principles and terms of classical and modern rhetorical theory
- To apply rhetorical principles in critical analysis of a wide variety of arguments and texts
- To become skilled at presenting persuasive arguments in both speech and writing

Textbooks and Readings

The following textbook is required; links to additional readings will be made available on D2L:

Heinrichs, J. (2013). *Thank You for Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us about the Art of Persuasion*. Rev. Ed. (Three Rivers Press, Random House).

Schedule of Readings

A list of assigned readings will be posted on D2L at the start of term. Please get into the habit of checking the website regularly for News announcements and updates.

Assignments and Evaluation (See assignment grading rubrics on D2L.)

Informative Speech, individual (3-4 min.)	10%	Feb. 3 & 10
Research Essay, individual (1000-1250 words)	15%	Feb. 24
Midterm Exam (multiple choice, short answer, brief essay)	20%	March 2
Persuasive Speech, individual (4-6 min.)	15%	March 23 & 30
Small Group Rhetorical Analysis, group (10-12 min. per group)	10%	April 6 & 13
Persuasive Essay, individual (1500-1800 words)	20%	April 13
Participation (in-class writing & discussion activities)	10%	Throughout term

Informative Speech: Each student will present on some term or principle relating to rhetoric, using PowerPoint to accompany the speech.

Research Essay: Each student will research and write an informative essay in response to a list of topics provided by the instructor on the history of rhetoric.

Midterm Exam: This closed-book exam will test the student's mastery of course material. The exam will include multiple choice and short answer questioned based on the readings, and brief essay-style responses demonstrating the ability to apply course concepts in analysis.

Persuasive Speech: Each student will present on the topic of their Persuasive Essay, using PowerPoint to accompany the speech. As speeches and essays are different forms of communication requiring different strategies, the speech cannot simply be the essay read aloud.

Small Group Rhetorical Analysis: Each group of 3-4 students will present on a rhetorical analysis of a controversial ad or PSA poster, using PowerPoint or some other form of visual illustration to accompany the speech. All group members will share the same grade (unless there is compelling evidence from instructor observation or group report to consider otherwise).

Persuasive Essay: Each student will research and write a persuasive essay on a controversial topic selected by the student. Essays will be evaluated on content (relating to rhetorical analysis), structure & organization, grammar & expression, and citation.

Participation: Each student will be required to participate in various in-class activities involving writing (both group and individual) and discussion of the assigned readings. Preparation for this work requires both regular attendance and completion of assigned readings in advance. See the reading schedule on D2L.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

POLICIES

Internet and electronic communication device information

Students may use laptops to take notes during lecture portions of the class, but at other times full engagement with the instructor and other students will be required. Laptops and tablets should never be used for personal work (such as Facebook or checking email), and should never distract other students. Cellphones must be set to silent and should not be used during class time.

Submission of Assignments

All written assignments will be submitted and returned through Dropbox on D2L. No assignments will be submitted in hardcopy, whether handed to the instructor, dropped at the main office, or slid under office doors, nor will assignments be accepted through email attachment. It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment, and to check email regularly for notices of missing assignments, and to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in the file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of written assignments.)

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments are due through Dropbox on the stated due date. Assignments may be submitted after the deadline only with the emailed permission of the instructor, and may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>.

Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading & Grade Scale of the Department of Communication, Media and Film

Work in this course will be graded using letter grades rather than percentages. Letter grades are converted to weighted GPA equivalents and those equivalents totaled to calculate the final grade. Percentages are provided for informational purposes only.

The following Grade Table is used in the Department:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department grade scale equivalents	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good--clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	00 - 49.99%	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. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within

quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436>. If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Academic Misconduct

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

Research 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 <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>

Student Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/ <<http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>>.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf.

Please note:

1. Students seeking accommodations for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors directly. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
2. When accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.
3. For information on Deferrals of Final Exams and Term Work, see sections G.6 and G.7 of the University Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html> and <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/ http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health 403-266-HELP (4357) http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.