

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 369 (L01): Rhetorical Communication

WINTER 2023: January 9 to April 12 (excluding Feb. 19-25 and April 10)

Lecture: MW 14:00 to 15:15

(In-person, with online synchronous exams)

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ONLINE COURSE DELIVERY

Timed Online Quizzes/Tests: You will be allowed a minimum window of 24 hours to access and to complete online quizzes and exams. The estimated time to complete the exam is found in the description. Read the description carefully.

Timed Online Final Exams: You will be allowed a minimum window of 24 hours to access online final exams, but there may be a time limit for completing the final exam once you open it. Read the description carefully. Timed final exams allow for an additional 50% extra time.

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| Instructor: | Tania S. Smith |
| Office: | SS 302 |
| Email: | smit@ucalgary.ca |
| Web Page: | D2L (access via MyUofC portal) |
| Office Hours: | Tuesdays 15:30-16:30 pm, Wednesdays 15:30-16:30 pm (In-person) |

Course Description

An introduction to the basic principles of rhetorical theory, criticism and practice. Examines 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.

Additional Information

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline or on D2L.

We will meet in person for classes, but online synchronous exams will be delivered via D2L > Assessments > Quizzes.

Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

Objectives of the Course

By the end of the course, students should have developed:

- A familiarity with the historical roots of rhetorical theory and an understanding of the importance of rhetoric to Western culture

- An understanding of the principles and terminology of Classical (and some contemporary) rhetorical theory
- Skill in using rhetorical concepts to analyze and evaluate arguments in texts and speeches drawn from contemporary public media
- Competence and confidence in crafting and delivering persuasive and informative presentations and using presentation slides
- Skill in using rhetorical principles to craft informative and persuasive texts for specific audiences.
- Research skills, locating relevant sources using Google and U of C library online search tools
- Skill in designing informative and persuasive visuals such as infographics using Canva.com or similar easy online drag & drop apps.
- Competence in editing written work for style, correctness, and ethical citation of sources (APA citation style) or other styles appropriate for particular rhetorical contexts

Textbooks and Readings

Rothwell, J. D. (2022). *Practically speaking* (4th ed.). Oxford.

NOTE: NEW 4rd edition is necessary for new content in exams. Dark blue cover. Online version available at Redshelf: <https://redshelf.com/app/ecom/book/2186775/practically-speaking-2186775-9780197648445-j-dan-rothwell>

Information is Beautiful. (n.d.). Rhetological Fallacies.

<https://informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/rhetological-fallacies/>

Free instructor handouts & instructions files on rhetoric and other topics, posted to D2L.

Free online samples of rhetoric, i.e. YouTube videos, online news or magazine articles.

Recommended online resources:

- Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Slides for presentation slides
- Canva.com (Free graphics program, recommended for the blog post infographic, slide icons)

Learning Technologies and Requirements

In order to complete courses, University of Calgary students are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates, with current antivirus software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection, and a current and updated web browser;
- A webcam (built-in or external), and a microphone and speaker (built-in or external) or headset with microphone (for online synchronous courses only).

If you need access to other software programs to complete assignments, your instructor will provide relevant information and links.

If you have technical difficulties, contact IT support services. See

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html>

Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

During student presentations, no devices may be displayed or in use. Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones may be used in class and tutorials only for course-related purposes and only if their use is not distracting others or negatively impacting the learning environment.

Please familiarize yourself with the University's policy on the recording of lectures, which is outlined at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>, and carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

Media recording for lesson capture

The instructor may use media recordings to capture the delivery of a lecture. These recordings are intended to be used for lecture capture only and will not be used for any other purpose. Recordings will be posted on D2L for student use and will be deleted at the end of term. If recordings occur during online lectures, students are responsible for turning off their camera and/or microphone if they do not wish to be recorded.

Media recording for assessment of student learning

The instructor may use media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions and presentations that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose. The recording will be destroyed as specified by [retention rule 2000.01](#) "Examinations and Student Assignments."

Assignments and Evaluation

| Weight | Assessed Components | Due |
|--------|---|--|
| 15% | Participation. Quantity and quality of engagement. Attendance, punctuality, and accountability. In-class activities, responding to presentations, peer review of drafts,. Instructor may collect in-class activity write-ups and/or attendance sheets, and review D2L activity. | Graded at end of term. |
| 5% | Presentation proposal memo. 500-word memo to the instructor proposing topic-specific research plans and communication strategies for the informative presentation. Include draft of 1 intro slide and 1 body slide, and at least 3 references you may use to develop content | Jan. 25 |
| 20% | Informative presentation with slides. 10 minutes long, well researched, uses both images and text on slides, and is addressed to the class as the target audience. DRAFT (required): of presentation slides with notes for each: Minimum: Title, Intro, Agenda, 2 body slides, plus scheduled in-class review activity. A separate penalty applies to the final assignment score for a draft's lateness or incompleteness (max -10%). The draft is not graded for quality. PEER REVIEW: Prepare notes in advance for the activity in class. Preparedness counts for participation in addition to in-person reviews. FINAL: Submit to your D2L Dropbox & Discussion before class begins on the day you present. | Req.Draft: Feb 06 Peer Review: Feb 08 Sign up to present: Feb 13- Mar 29 |

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| 10% | <p>Exam 1, online, open book. Rothwell Ch. 1-11 plus Appendix A, Rhetorical concepts: until end of "The three appeals." Study your texts in advance and prepare to analyze and/or apply its content.</p> <p>It will be an online, open-book exam delivered asynchronously on D2L. It has an estimated time of 1 hour and 10 minutes plus 50% additional time for technical difficulties. However, it is an open book online exam, so you will have >24 hours to work on answers after it is made available. During the >24 hours, you may leave the D2L Quiz and return later to work on the exam. D2L will autosave as you make progress. Submit it on D2L before the end of our usual class time on the due date.</p> <p>The exam consists of multi-select and short-answer critical thinking questions designed to fit the open-book exam situation. Your set of questions will be randomly generated from a confidential question library so that each student will have a unique set of questions estimated to be at the same level of difficulty.</p> <p>No late submissions permitted. However, contingency plans for technology problems and other issues may include (but are not limited to) additional time for completion of the assessment, or an alternative time to complete the assessment for students that experienced issues. Contact the instructor in advance if you know you will encounter a problem. Contact the instructor immediately if you have a problem during the exam period, emailing relevant verifiable documentation when possible.</p> | <p>Available online: Jan 31 12pm</p> <p>Due: Feb 01 15:15p</p> |
| 20% | <p>Rhetorical analysis of a speech. 1400 w. Find an online video of a person delivering a speech for the general public, lasting less than 15 minutes. Write a rhetorical analysis essay that characterizes the rhetorical situation and evaluates selected rhetorical strategies in the speech, illustrating its likely effects on specific audiences. Include quotations, paraphrases, vivid descriptions, and/or screenshots to incorporate selected data within your analysis. Append an edited transcript of the text of the speech (often available on YouTube). DRAFT (required): Link to video, transcript + 700w of intro & body, plus scheduled in-class review activity. A penalty may be applied to the final assignment score for lateness, or incompleteness (max -10%). FINAL: Submit as a .docx file to your private dropbox in D2L by 11:59pm on the scheduled date.</p> | <p>Req.Draft: Mar 01</p> <p>Review: Mar 06</p> <p>Final: Mar 08</p> |
| 10% | <p>Exam 2, online, open book. Rothwell Ch. 12 to end; Rhetological Fallacies; Rhetorical concepts from "Evaluating Rhetoric" to end; 1 paragraph focused rhetorical analysis. Study your texts in advance and prepare to analyze and/or apply its content.</p> | <p>Available online: Mar 21</p> <p>Due: Mar 22</p> |

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| | See additional information for the midterm exam, above. The same guidelines apply to the final exam. | 15:15pm |
| 20% | <p>Persuasive blog post(s). Final: 1200 w. plus infographic and title images. Persuade and inform your selected forum's audience and the broader public on a contemporary topic of broad public interest, based on carefully cited research and complete arguments. Select a real online blog or magazine where it might be published, and adapt your post to that forum.</p> <p>DRAFT (Required): 500w of intro & body. A penalty may be applied to the final assignment score for lateness or incompleteness (max -10%). The draft is not graded for quality.</p> <p>Peer review: Prepare notes in advance for the activity in class. Preparedness counts for participation in addition to attendance.</p> <p>FINAL: Submit as a .docx file to your private dropbox in D2L by 11:59pm on the scheduled date.</p> | <p>Req.Draft: Apr 03</p> <p>Review: Apr 5</p> <p>Final: Apr 12</p> |

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Note: You must complete the presentation and persuasive blog post assignment in order to pass the course.

Submission of Assignments

Please submit all assignments in class or by uploading them to the designated D2L Dropbox and/or discussion forum. Include your name and ID number on all assignments (except omit ID number on materials to be shared with peers). Be sure to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to submit the proper version.

Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recording for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Assignment Length

Time length of presentations and word length of essays are given as hard minimums. An assignment may be up to 10% longer without penalty. In writing assignments, official word length only includes your own original sentences within paragraphs in the main body. It excludes 40+ word quotations, title pages, reference lists, text within images, tables, and image captions. Drafts may be as long as the final version.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of 5% or a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. If you must reschedule your presentation or a presentation-review date without a valid excuse, -10% per reschedule. Late open-book online exams will receive -5% for every hour late.

Final versions of major written graded assignments (memo, rhetorical analysis, final persuasive blog post) will be due by 11:59pm on the scheduled date and will have a 24-hour grace period for late online submission without penalty. This is not a deadline extension. If it is submitted after the 24-hour grace period, the assignment is 2 days late.

Student Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. For the full policy on Student Accommodations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors.

Expectations for Writing

Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, letter grades will be used for all written assignments and presentations, while percentages will be used for exams and participation grades. However, letter grades on assignments will be entered and calculated as precise percentages (i.e. 88.5%, 90%) rather than as midpoints of letter grade equivalents.

| Grade Point Value | Description | Grade | Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents* | Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 4.00 | Outstanding performance | A+ | 96 - 100% | 98.0% |
| 4.00 | Excellent performance | A | 90 - 95.99% | 93.0% |
| 3.70 | Approaching excellent performance | A - | 85 - 89.99% | 87.5% |
| 3.30 | Exceeding good performance | B+ | 80 - 84.99% | 82.5% |
| 3.00 | Good performance | B | 75 - 79.99% | 77.5% |
| 2.70 | Approaching good performance | B- | 70 - 74.99% | 72.5% |

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| 2.30 | Exceeding satisfactory performance | C+ | 65 - 69.99% | 67.5% |
| 2.00 | Satisfactory performance | C | 60 - 64.99% | 62.5% |
| 1.70 | Approaching satisfactory performance | C- | 55 - 59.99% | 57.5% |
| 1.30 | Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject | D+ | 53 - 54.99% | 54.0% |
| 1.00 | Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject | D | 50 - 52.99% | 51.5% |
| 0.00 | Failure. Did not meet course requirements. | F | 0 - 49.99% | 0% |

* Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

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. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

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.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support> or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

Course materials created by the instructor (including lectures, course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed, or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

To ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes & electronic versions of textbooks), all students are required to read the *University of Calgary Policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright* at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material->

[protected-copyright-policy](#) and the requirements of the *Copyright Act* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>). Students who use material protected by copy-right in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

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, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see

<https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics>

This course does not require, *and does not permit*, research involving human participants (no polls, interviews, surveys).

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal

For university regulations and procedures related to deferral of term work, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

For information about deferrals of final examinations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

For information about requesting a reappraisal of course work or of a final grade, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk. For resources on D2L, Zoom, Yuja, etc., see <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/resources-for-students/>. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

This is a draft of the schedule. The official schedule will be kept up to date online on Google Sheets linked to D2L > Content > 369 Online Schedule

| Date | Day | Deadlines | % | Readings, lecture topics |
|------------|-----|---|---|---|
| 2023-01-09 | Mon | Participation expected only if enrolled | | Intro to course, Participation expectations, Rhetorical Concepts |
| 2023-01-11 | Wed | Participation expected only if enrolled | | Rothwell Ch.1 and Rhetorical Concepts overview |
| 2023-01-16 | Mon | Participation expected only if enrolled | | Rothwell Ch.2 Speech anxiety, Ch. 3 Audience analysis. Memo writing |

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| 2023-01-18 | Wed | Participation expected only if enrolled | | Rothwell Ch. 4 Gathering material, research. Ch. 6 Attention, Ch 14 Informative speaking. Choosing topics for presentations |
| 2023-01-23 | Mon | | | Rothwell Ch. 7 Introductions & Conclusions; Ch 8 Outlining and organizing, |
| 2023-01-25 | Wed | Proposal Memo Due | 5% | Rothwell Ch 9 Speaking Style. Ch. 10 Delivering your speech; Exam format and instructions |
| 2023-01-30 | Mon | | | Rothwell Ch. 11 Visual aids, |
| 2023-01-31 | (Tues) | (Exam available 12pm) | | >24h to write exam |
| 2023-02-01 | Wed | Exam 1. Class time is replaced with exam time, due 13:45pm | 10% | Exam available to begin by 12pm Monday, >24 hours to complete it |
| 2023-02-06 | Mon | Draft of slides due | req. | Sample video links in column M & N >> |
| 2023-02-08 | Wed | In-class peer review | | Rothwell Ch 12 Skepticism, Critical thinking, |
| 2023-02-13 | Mon | Presentations begin. | 20% | Ch. 13 Argument, Reasoning, Evidence. |
| 2023-02-15 | Wed | | | Assignment overview: Rhet Analysis. |
| 2023-02-20 | Mon | | | Reading Week |
| 2023-02-22 | Wed | | | Reading Week |
| 2023-02-27 | Mon | | | Ch. 15 Persuasive Speaking |
| 2023-03-01 | Wed | Draft of Rhet analysis due | req. | Ch. 16 Persuasive Strategies |
| 2023-03-06 | Mon | In-class peer review | req. | Peer review in class after presentations. |
| 2023-03-08 | Wed | Rhet Analysis due | 20% | Rhet Fallacies part 1 |
| 2023-03-13 | Mon | | | Rhet Fallacies part 2 |
| 2023-03-15 | Wed | | | Rhet Fallacies part 3 |
| 2023-03-20 | Mon | | | Blog post assignment overview |
| 2023-03-21 | (Tues) | (Exam available 12pm) | | >24h to write exam |
| 2023-03-22 | Wed | Final online exam due 3:15pm | 10% | Exam due at end of final class period. No class, in lieu of examination time. |
| 2023-03-27 | Mon | | | Samples, guidance and tips on blog posts |
| 2023-03-29 | Wed | | | Samples, guidance and tips on blog posts |
| 2023-04-03 | Mon | Draft of Persuasive blog post(s) due | | Samples, guidance and tips on blog posts |
| 2023-04-05 | Wed | Online peer review | req. | Samples, guidance and tips on blog posts. Time for class evaluations. |
| 2023-04-10 | Mon | No class: Easter | | |
| 2023-04-12 | Wed | Blog post due | 20% | Final Q&A, in class workshop |