

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media
and Film
Communications Studies COMS 369 L01
Rhetorical Communication

Winter 2015
January 14 through April 15 (excluding Feb. 18 & March 18)
W 15:00 – 17:45

Instructor: Christine Mains
Office Location: SS305
Office Phone: n/a
E-Mail: cmains@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L through myUofC portal
Office Hours: Wednesday's 1:30-2:45

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 online:

Heinrichs, J. (2007). *Thank You for Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us about the Art of Persuasion*. (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.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Assignments and Evaluation

Informative Speech, individual (3-4 min.)	10%	Feb. 4 or 11
Midterm Exam (multiple choice, short answer, brief essay)	20%	Feb. 25
Small Group Rhetorical Analysis (~10 min. per group)	10%	March 4 or 11
Research Essay (Persuasive) (~1500 words)	25%	March 25
Persuasive Speech, individual (4-6 min.)	15%	April 8 or 15
Portfolio (4 pieces, chosen by the student, written or multimedia arguments based on in-class work)	20%	April 15

All assignments must be completed or a grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. More details about each assignment will be available in handouts on D2L.

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

Midterm Exam: This closed-book exam will require some multiple choice and short answer responses testing the student's mastery of course material; there will also be a brief essay component requiring a rhetorical analysis of a provided text.

Small Group Rhetorical Analysis: Each group of 3-4 students will present (within 10 minutes max.) 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).

Research Essay: Each student will research and write a persuasive essay of ~1500 words on a controversial topic selected by the student. Essays will be evaluated on content (relating to rhetorical analysis), structure & organization, grammar & expression, and MLA citation.

Persuasive Speech: Each student will present on the topic of their Research Essay, using PowerPoint or some other form of visual illustration 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.

Portfolio: Throughout the term, students will work both in class and outside of class on short pieces, both written and multimedia (such as YouTube videos, blog posts, images, comic strips, etc. that explore the principles of rhetorical communication in a variety of forms and contexts. At the end of term, each student will select what they believe to be their best four pieces to be submitted for grading.

All speeches will be graded on the clarity of visual and verbal elements as well as on content.

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.)

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.

Grading System and Grading Scale for Department of Communication, Media and Film

Work in this course will be graded using letter grades representing GPA values.

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%

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. At no time may students use cell phones for any reason.

Writing Skills Statement

All written assignments (including 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. Essays and research papers must be properly documented, using MLA style correctly and consistently.

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>

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. 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. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/node/208> . 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 the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

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/ethics/cfreb>

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (PIC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 picarts@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	http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds

<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>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</p> <p>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.</p>
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Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of the course.