

Communications Studies (COMS) 369 – Lecture/Lab 04
Rhetorical Communication
Fall 2012

Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:30 – 8:20 pm

Instructor: Christine Shellska
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Course Description

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. Tutorial sections will apply rhetorical theory to the criticism of samples of public communication. Students will exercise their rhetorical skills through in-class activities and assigned writing and oral presentations.

Prerequisite or Corequisite: COMS 201.

Antirequisite(s): Credit will not normally be allowed for both Communications Studies 369 and 361.

Notes: Preference in enrolment is given to Majors and Minors in Communications Studies, the Bachelor of Communications Studies, the Haskayne School of Business and Schulich School of Engineering.

Objectives of the Course

1. To introduce students to basic modern rhetorical concepts.
2. To enable students to apply rhetorical concepts to assess the validity of arguments.
3. To enable students to apply rhetorical concepts to create persuasive, well-crafted arguments.
4. To introduce students to the Socratic Method and the Modes of the Ancient Skeptics.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Please refrain from using cell phones and other hand-held communication devices and ensure they are set to silent or turned off during classes and labs. Please refrain from using social media during classes and labs unless instructed to do so. The use of electronic devices such as laptops and tablets to take notes or to advance your understanding of the course material is acceptable.

Textbooks and Readings:

DiCarlo, C. (2011). *How to Become a Really Good Pain in the Ass*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus.

Assignments and Evaluation

	Assignment	Due	Weight
1	Biography (500 words)	Wednesday, September 19	10%
2	Essay (1500 words)	Wednesday, October 17	15%
3	Mid-term	Wednesday, November 7	20%
4	Presentations (2 at 10% each during labs)	Sign up	20%
5	Rhetorical Analysis (2000 words)	Wednesday, November 21	25%
	Participation	Ongoing	10%

NOTE: All assignments are to be submitted via e-mail, by midnight on the assigned deadline, to cmshells@ucalgary.ca.

Assignment 1: Biography

Ethos is a term used to describe the character of the rhetorician. In ancient times, the skill of rhetoric was tied to civic practice; rhetoricians were statesmen, politicians, lawyers, and professors of knowledge. The purpose of this assignment is to highlight your personal *ethos*, to illustrate that you are a respectable, responsible citizen capable of informed participation in the democratic realm. Draw upon your academic and personal interests, community involvement, volunteer activities, accomplishments, values and beliefs to develop a written biographical narrative focusing on your personal *ethos*.

Assignment 2: Essay

Pathos is a term used in rhetoric to describe persuasive approaches that engage the emotions. The purpose of this written exposition is to persuade your reader to behave in a particular manner using appeals to the emotions only – no logical or rational explanations. Examples of moderate topics might include persuading your reader to perform community service, donate time or money to charity, or give blood. More controversial topics might include persuading your reader to accept a position on abortion, euthanasia, or anti-blasphemy laws.

Assignment 3: Mid-term

This short-answer format examination will require you to synthesize the materials covered to date in both the textbook and classroom discussions.

Assignment 4: Presentations (two, based on Assignments 2 and 5)

The purpose of presenting the arguments you developed in Assignments 2 and 5 is to exercise the persuasive approaches of *pathos* and *logos* using multimedia technology and audience interactivity as rhetorical modes of engagement. You are required to sign up for two presentations, one of which will be based on Assignment 2 and rely primarily on *pathos* as a means of persuasion. The other will be based on Assignment 5 and rely primarily on *logos* as a means of persuasion. Each presentation is worth 10%. Each presentation should not exceed 15 minutes (including Q&A), and must conclude with a 3-5 minute question-and-answer period.

Assignment 5: Rhetorical Analysis

Logos is a term used in rhetoric to describe persuasive approaches that appeal to logic or reason. The purpose of this assignment is to identify an argument that relies on *logos* to advance its claims. Critically evaluate the argument in terms of its reasoning, bias, context, argumentative structure, and supporting evidence, and identify at least three logical fallacies. Scientific “manufactories” are controversies that are manufactured and rhetorically positioned as scientific to promote political, corporate or ideological interests, and they are well-suited to this assignment. Topic examples include homeopathy, vaccinations, stem cell research, climate change, and evolution.

Participation

Students are expected to attend class regularly, to read the assigned reading in advance of class, and to collaborate and participate in classroom and on-line discussions.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Please note: If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will make every attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is NO guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

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>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. 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 System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

(Revised, effective September 2008)

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

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 (3rd Floor Taylor Digital Family Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) 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

Day	6:30-8:20 pm	Topic	Reading	Assignment
M	Sept 10	Introductions and Discussion: Why Argue?		
W	Sept 12	Lab		
M	Sept 17	Deductive and Inductive Reasoning	Chapter 1	
W	Sept 19	Lab		Biography
M	Sept 24	Biases	Chapter 2	
W	Sept 26	Lab		
M	Oct 1	Context	Chapter 3	
W	Oct 3	Lab (presentations)		
M	Oct 8	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASSES		
W	Oct 10	Lab (presentations)		
M	Oct 15	Structure of Arguments	Chapter 4	
W	Oct 17	Lab (presentations)		Essay
M	Oct 22	Evidence	Chapter 5	
W	Oct 24	Lab (presentations)		
M	Oct 29	Logical Fallacies Part 1	Chapter 6, pp. 125-150	
W	Oct 31	Lab (presentations)		
M	Nov 5	Logical Fallacies Part 2	Chapter 6, pp. 150-174	
W	Nov 7			Mid-term
M	Nov 12	REMEMBRANCE DAY – NO CLASSES		
W	Nov 14	Lab (presentations)		
M	Nov 19	Socrates	Chapter 7, pp. 177-189	
W	Nov 21	Lab (presentations)		Rhetorical Analysis
M	Nov 26	The Ancient Skeptics	Chapter 7, pp. 189-216	
W	Nov 28	Lab (presentations)		
M	Dec 3	Discussion: Course wrap-up		
W	Dec 5	Lab (presentations)		