

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**

**COMS 369 L04**  
**Rhetorical Communication**

**Fall 2015**

Sept. 9 – Dec. 7 (no classes on Oct. 12 and Nov. 11)  
M/W 18:30-19:45

**Instructor:** Christine Mains  
**Office:** SS305  
**Office Phone:** n/a  
**E-Mail:** cmains@ucalgary.ca  
**Web Page:** D2L available through MyUofC portal  
**Office Hours:** M/W 17:15–18:15

### **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. (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.

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

Informative Speech, individual (3-4 min.)	10%	Sept. 28–Oct. 7
Small Group Rhetorical Analysis (~10 min. per group)	15%	Oct. 19–21
Research Essay (Persuasive) ~1500-1800 words	25%	Nov. 9
Midterm Exam (multiple choice, short answer, brief essay)	25%	Nov. 16–18
Persuasive Speech, individual (4-6 min.)	15%	Nov. 23–Dec. 2
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.

**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 ~1500-1800 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.

**Midterm Exam:** This closed-book exam will test the student's mastery of course material. The exam will be held in two parts: a reading quiz requiring multiple choice and short answer responses in one class and an essay demonstrating the ability to apply course concepts in a second class.

**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.

**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.

### **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.

### **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

Final grades are reported as letter grades. Work in this course will be graded using letter grades.

The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department. The percentage equivalent in the final column is used by D2L to calculate final grades:

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 (3<sup>rd</sup> 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>

### Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
<b>ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)</b>	SS 102 403-220-3580 <a href="mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca">artsads@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>CAMPUS SECURITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calgary Police Service</li> <li>• Emergency Text Messaging</li> <li>• Emergency Evacuation &amp; Assembly</li> <li>• Safewalk Program</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> <b>403-220-5333</b> <b>403-266-1234</b> <b>Emergency: call 911</b> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</a> If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort ( <b>220-5333</b> ). For more information, see <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk</a>
<b>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT help line</li> </ul>	<a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</a> 403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Support Services</li> </ul>	<a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Student Services Mobile App</b></li> </ul>	
<p><b>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Faculty of Arts Reps</b></li> <li>• <b>Student Ombudsman</b></li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/">https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/</a>  <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds">http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</a></p>
<p><b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Counselling Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Health Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</b></li> <li>• <b>Online resources and tips</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>403-210-9355</b> (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a>  <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a></p> <p><b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b></p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a></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>