



COMM-640, Rhetorical Theory & Criticism II, Spring, 2022

Instructor: Dr. Christopher M. Duerringer
Phone: (562) 985-1647
Office Hours: Mon/Wed, 4:00-5:15pm
Course: COMM-640
Class Days/Times: Mon 7:00-9:45pm

Office: AS-363
Email: Christopher.Duerringer@csulb.edu
Prerequisites: COMM-541
Term: Spring, 2022
Class Location: PSY-230

Having Class During the COVID-19 Pandemic

This class was initially scheduled to meet in person. Due to the Omicron COVID-19 variant, the university has decided, at the last moment, to temporarily move this class online. The university claims that we will be back on campus for face-to-face classes on February 7. So long as the university requires it, we will meet via Zoom at our regularly scheduled dates and times. If and when circumstances allow, we will return to our scheduled face-to-face format. If you remain enrolled in this class after our first meeting, that will signal your agreement to attend at the scheduled dates and times and in the modalities described here.

Course Description

In the Greek tradition, rhetorical training aided members of the *polis*, or the constituents of a city-state, in their various democratic endeavors. Rhetoric continues to be an object of study (i.e., public speeches and films) and a provocative method of inquiry (i.e., rhetorical concepts influence the manner in which we “unpack” the significance of communicative phenomena). In this course, we examine some of the philosophies that inform common understandings of contemporary rhetorical thought.

Rhetorical methods help people understand and interpret the significance and implications of rhetorical situations. This course is designed to familiarize you with the content and application of these methods. By the end of the semester, you will be able to identify key rhetorical methods and apply them to a wide array of texts.

Course Goals/Student Learning Objectives

- To comprehend the epistemological assumptions that shape rhetorical theories and methods.
 - Demonstrated by in-class dialogue, activities, final exam, and end-of-year paper presentation.
- To distinguish between and utilize various rhetorical methods, including metaphor analysis, narrative criticism, dramatism, ideographic critique, Foucaultian critique, queer criticism, feminist critique, and critical race theory.
 - Measured by application of research methods in writing assignments and semester-long project.
- To produce a conference-ready piece of rhetorical criticism.
 - Measured by the quality and coherence of the final paper and its presentation.

Required Texts/Readings

All readings will be posted to BeachBoard. You are responsible for printing and reading these essays in advance of each class.

Computer Access

Two open access computer labs are available for current CSULB students. Both the Horn Center (located in lower campus) and the Spidell Technology Center (located in Library) are a great resource for students needing to use a computer. Visit the [Open Access Computing Facilities - http://www.csulb.edu/library/guide/computing.html](http://www.csulb.edu/library/guide/computing.html) website for an extensive list of all available software installed in both computer labs.



BeachBoard Access

There is an online component to this course. It is your responsibility to know how to access and interact with the BeachBoard site. Check the BeachBoard site often! This is where course material, weekly readings, and course updates will be posted. You will also submit your essays through the TurnItIn system on BeachBoard. I will not accept any assignments via email. To access this course on [BeachBoard - https://bbcsulb.desire2learn.com/](https://bbcsulb.desire2learn.com/) you will need access to the Internet and a supported Web browser (Firefox is the recommended browser). You log in to [BeachBoard - https://bbcsulb.desire2learn.com/](https://bbcsulb.desire2learn.com/) with your CSULB Campus ID and BeachID password. Bookmark this link for future use, or you can always access it by going to [CSULB - http://www.csulb.edu/](http://www.csulb.edu/)'s homepage and clicking on the BeachBoard link at the top of the page.

Once logged in to BeachBoard, you will see the course listed in the My Courses widget on the right; click on the title to enter the course.

Course Schedule

1/24 Week 1: Welcome & Rhetorical Criticism, Broadly

- Wichelns, H. A. (1972). The literary criticism of oratory. In R. L. Scott & B. L. Brock (Eds.), *Methods of rhetorical criticism: A twentieth-century perspective* (pp. 27-60). New York: Harper & Row.
- Brockriede, W. (1974). Rhetorical criticism as argument. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60(2), 165-174. doi:10.1080/00335637409383222
- Zarefsky, D. (2006). Reflections on rhetorical criticism. *Rhetoric Review*, 25(4), 383-387.

1/31 Week 2: Close Textual Analysis

- Leff, M. (1986). Textual criticism: The legacy of G. P. Mohrmann. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 72(4), 377-389. doi:10.1080/00335638609383783
- Leff, M. (1992). Things made by words. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 78(2), 223-231. doi:10.1080/00335639209383991
- Browne, S. H. (2009). Close textual analysis: Approaches and applications. In J. Kuypers (Ed.), *Rhetorical criticism: Perspectives in action* (63-76). New York: Lexington Books.

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

- Lucas, S. (1990). The rhetorical artistry of the Declaration of Independence. *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives*, 22, 25-43.
- Slagell, A. R. (1991). Anatomy of a masterpiece: A close textual analysis of Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address. *Communication Studies*, 42(2), 155-171. doi:10.1080/10510979109368330

2/7 Week 3: Modern Argumentation Studies

- Brockriede, W. & Ehninger, D. (1960). Toulmin on argument: An interpretation and application. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 46(1), 44-53. doi:10.1080/00335636009382390
- Van Eemeren, F. H. & Houtlosser, P. (2003). The development of the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation. *Argumentation*, 17, 387-403. doi:10.1023/A:1026338402751
- Goodnight, G. T. (2012). The personal, technical, and public spheres of argument: A speculative inquiry into the art of public deliberation. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, 48(4), 198-210.

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

- Duerringer, C. M. & Justus, Z. S. (2016). Tropes in the rhetoric of gun rights: A pragma-dialectic analysis. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, 52(3), 181-198.
- Eckstein, J. (2018). Designing soundscapes for argumentation. *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 51(3), 269-292. doi:10.5325/philrhet.51.3.0269

2/14 Week 4: Structuralism & Genre

- Bitzer, L. (1968) The rhetorical situation. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 1(1), 1-14.
- Saussure, F. (2004) Course in general linguistics. In J. Rivkin & M. Ryan (Eds.), *Literary theory: An anthology* (2nd ed.) (pp. 59-71). Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Campbell, K. K. & Jamieson, K. H. (1978). Form and genre in rhetorical criticism: An introduction. In *Form and genre:*



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Shaping rhetorical action (pp. 9-32). Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association.

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

Neville-Shepard, R. (2016). Unconventional: The variant of third-party nomination acceptance addresses. *Western Journal of Communication*, 80(2), 121-139. doi:10.1080/10570314.2015.1128560

Wetherbee, B. (2019). Redemption follows allocution": Dan Harmon and the #MeToo apology. *Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric*, 9(3/4), 112-125.

DUE: Critical Essay Proposal

2/21 Week 5: Narrative & Mythic Criticism

Fisher, W. R. (1984). Narration as human communication paradigm: The case of moral public argument. *Communication Monographs*, 51(1), 1-22. doi:10.1080/03637758409390180

Rowland, R. C. (1990). On mythic criticism. *Communication Studies*, 41(2), 101-116. doi:10.1080/10510979009368293

Hocker Rushing, J. (1990). On saving mythic criticism—A reply to Rowland. *Communication Studies*, 41(2), 136-149. doi:10.1080/10510979009368297

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

Rowland, R. C. & Jones, J. M. (2007). Recasting the American dream and American politics: Barack Obama's keynote address to the 2004 Democratic National Convention. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 93(4), 425-448. doi:10.1080/00335630701593675

Lavasseur, D., & Gring-Pemble, L. M. (2015). Not all capitalist stories are created equal: Mitt Romney's Bain Capital narrative and the deep divide in American economic rhetoric. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 18(1), 1-38. doi:10.14321/rhetpublaffa.18.1.0001

2/28 Week 6: Burkean Dramatism

Burke, K. (1969). *A grammar of motives*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Overington, M. A. (1977). Kenneth Burke and the method of dramatism. *Theory and Society*, 4, 131-156. doi:10.1007/BF00209747

Rountree III, J. C. (1998). Coming to terms with Burke's pentad. *American Communication Journal*, 1(3). Retrieved from <http://ac-journal.org/journal/vol1/iss3/burke/rountree.html>

Exemplars (presented by classmates)

Smith, F. M., & Hollihan, T. A. (2014). "Out of chaos breathes creation": Human agency, mental illness, and conservative arguments locating responsibility for the Tucson massacre. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 17(4), 585-618. doi:10.14321/rhetpublaffa.17.4.0585

Duerringer, C. M. (2016). Dis-Honoring the dead: Negotiating decorum in the shadow of Sandy Hook. *Western Journal of Communication*, 80(1), 79-99. doi:10.1080/10570314.2015.1116712

3/7 Week 7: Ideological Criticism (Part 1)

Black, E. (1970). The second persona. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56(2), 109-119. doi:10.1080/00335637009382992

Wander, P. (1983). The ideological turn in modern criticism. *Central States Speech Journal*, 34, 1-18. doi:10.1080/10510978309368110

Crowley, S. (1992). Reflections on an argument that won't go away: Or, a turn of the ideological screw. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 78(4), 450-465. doi:10.1080/00335639209384010

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

Winslow, L. (2015). The undeserving professor: Neoliberalism and the reinvention of higher education. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 18(2), 201-246. doi:10.14321/rhetpublaffa.18.2.0201

Putman, A. L., & Cole, K. L. (2020). All hail DNA: The constitutive rhetoric of AncestryDNA advertising. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 37(3), 207-220. doi:10.1080/15295036.2020.1767796



3/14 Week 8: Feminist Criticism

- Sutton, J. (1992). The taming of the polos/polis: Rhetoric as an achievement without women. *Southern Communication Journal*, 57(2), 97-119. doi:10.1080/10417949209372857
- Foss, S. K. & Griffin, C. L. (1995). Beyond persuasion: A proposal for an invitational rhetoric. *Communication Monographs*, 62(1), 2-18. doi:10.1080/03637759509376345
- Dow, B. J. (1995). Feminism, difference(s), and rhetorical studies. *Communication Studies*, 46(1-2), 106-117. doi:10.1080/10510979509368442

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

- Neville-Shepard, R., & Nolan, J. (2019). "She doesn't have the stamina": Hillary Clinton and the hysteria diagnosis in the 2016 Presidential election. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 42(1), 60-79. doi:10.1080/07491409.2019.1575301
- Hoerl, K. (2021). The impossible woman and sexist realism on NBC's Parks and Recreation. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 107(4), 373-397. doi:10.1080/00335630.2021.1984552

3/21 Week 9: Postmodernism/Poststructuralism

- Harvey, D. (1989). *The condition of postmodernity: An enquiry into the origins of cultural change*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Agger, B. (1991). Critical theory, poststructuralism, and postmodernism: Their sociological relevance. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 17, 105-131.
- Haskins, E. V. (2003) Embracing the superficial: Michael Calvin McGee, rhetoric, and the postmodern condition. *American Communication Journal*, 6(4). Retrieved from <http://acjournal.org/journal/vol6/iss4/iss4/mcmcgee/haskins.pdf>

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

- Vivian, B. (2021). The incitement: An account of language, power, and fascism. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 51(5), 361-376. doi: 10.1080/02773945.2021.1972134
- Graves, C. G., & Spencer, L. G. (2021). Rethinking the rhetorical epistemics of gaslighting. *Communication Theory*. doi:10.1093/ct/qtab013

3/26 - 4/1 SPRING BREAK

4/4 Week 10: Post-Marxists and Marxians

- McKerrow, R. E. (1989). Critical rhetoric: Theory and praxis. *Communication Monographs*, 56(2), 91-111. doi:10.1080/03637758909390253
- Slack, J. D. (1996). The theory and method of articulation in cultural studies. In D. Morley & K. H. Chen (Eds.), *Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies* (pp. 113-130). London: Routledge.
- Greene, R. W. (1998). Another materialist rhetoric. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 15(1), 21-40. doi:10.1080/15295039809367031

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

- Duerringer, C.M. (2019). As American as capitalist exploitation: Neoliberalism in The Men Who Built America. In M. Meyers (ed.), *Neoliberalism and the media* (pp. 108-127). New York: Routledge.
- Cloud, D. L. (2020). The critique of domination and the critique of freedom: A Gramscian perspective. *International Journal of Communication*, 14, 831-849. doi:1932-8036/20200005



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4/11 Week 11: Post-Savvy Feminisms

Scott, J. W. (1988). Deconstructing equality-versus-difference: Or, the uses of poststructuralist theory for feminism. *Feminist Studies*, 14(1), 35-50.

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. London: Routledge.

Hill Collins, P. (1990) *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. London: HarperCollins.

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

Gibson, K. (2021). A rupture in the courtroom: Collective rhetoric, survivor speech, and the subversive limits of the victim impact statement. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 44(4), 518-541.

doi:10.1080/07491409.2020.1839991

Mikkelsen, S., & Kornfield, S. (2021). Girls gone fundamentalist: Feminine appeals of White Christian nationalism. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 44(4), 563-585. doi:10.1080/07491409.2021.1911895

4/18 Week 12: DUE: Richly Detailed Outline

Writing and Publishing in Rhetoric

4/25 Week 13: Queer Theory

Foucault, M. (1990). *The history of sexuality, Vol. 1* (Reissue ed.). New York: Vintage.

Warner, M. (1991). Introduction: Fear of a queer planet. *Social Text*, 29, 3-17.

Halperin, D. M. (2003). The normalization of queer theory. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 45(2-4), 339-343. doi:10.1300/J082v45n02_17

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

Morris III, C. E. & Sloop, J. M. (2006). "What lips these lips have kissed": Refiguring the politics of queer public kissing. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 3(1), 1-26. doi:10.1080/14791420500505585

Clark, J. (2021). "Daddy Pence come dance": Queer(ing) space in the suburbs. *Western Journal of Communication*, 85(2), 168-187. doi:10.1080/10570314.2020.1762915

5/2 Week 14: Critical Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity

Nakayama, T. K., & Krizek, R. L. (1995). Whiteness: A strategic rhetoric. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 81(3), 291-309. doi:10.1080/00335639509384117

Hasian, M. (2001). Rhetorical studies and the future of postcolonial theories and practices. *Rhetoric Review*, 20(1-2), 22-28.

Shome, R., & Hegde, R. S. (2002). Postcolonial approaches to communication. *Communication Theory*, 12(3), 249-270. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2885.2002.tb00269.x

DUE: Peer Critique

Exemplars (presented by classmates):

Guitar, J., & Griffith, S. (2021). Constructing police as first responders: A critical rhetorical archetype analysis. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 38(4), 321-335. doi:10.1080/15295036.2021.1934504

Kelly, C. R. (2021). White pain. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 107(2), 209-233. doi:10.1080/00335630.2021.1903537

5/9 Week 15: Radiations (Affect, Rhetorical Field Methods, The Rhetoric of Economics, Critical Interpersonal, & Algorithms):

Edbauer Rice, J. (2008). The new "new": Making a case for critical affect studies. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 94(2), 200-212. doi:10.1080/00335630801975434

Hess, A. (2011). Critical-rhetorical ethnography: Rethinking the place and process of rhetoric. *Communication Studies*, 62(2), 127-152. doi:10.1080/10510974.2011.529750

Chaput, C. & Hanan, J. S. (2015). Economic rhetoric as taxis: Neoliberal governmentality and the dispositif of Freakonomics. *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 8(1), 42-61. doi:10.1080/17530350.2014.942349

Thompson, C. M., & Duerringer, C. M. (2020). Crying wolf: A thematic and critical analysis of why individuals contest family members' health claims. *Communication Monographs*, 87(3), 291-311. doi:10.1080/03637751.2019.1709127

Gibbons, M. G. (2021). Persona 4.0. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 107, 49-72. doi:10.1080/00335630.2020.1863454

DUE: Critical Essay



Course Policies and Requirements

Reading Policy

Almost every professor will tell you that reading is strongly correlated with success in the classroom. This is especially the case in rhetoric. If you are to pass this class, you **must** devote yourself to carefully reading all the assigned material before each class; arrive prepared to actively discuss all readings and examples in class; and be able to write academically about your analysis of readings, discussions, and ongoing controversies. You can expect that I will come to each class prepared and ready to engage you in discussion, that I will encourage you express your ideas, and that I will provide a fun, safe, and positive learning environment.

Writing Policy

All written work for this course must be typed, using 12 pt font, Times New Roman, properly cited (APA). If submitted in physical form, papers must be printed on white paper and stapled (binder clips are fine, but please no paper clips). All written assignments must be turned in on time: NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED without a University approved excuse (religious observance, illness, University-sponsored activity, or compelling circumstances beyond the student's control).

Evaluation Method

Assignment	Points	Weight
Reading Responses (12 @ 5)	60	14.63%
Discussion Leading (2 @ 25)	50	12.2%
Peer Critique	25	6.1%
Report on a Star	15	3.66%
Critical Essay Proposal	25	6.1%
Critical Essay Advanced Draft	50	12.19%
Critical Essay	125	30.49%
Take-Home Final Exam	60	14.63%

Course Grading Scale

Percent Range	Letter Grade
90 - 100%	A
89 - 80%	B
79 - 70%	C
69 - 65%	D
Below 64%	F



Grade Descriptions

- A: Highest Level of Performance! Exceptional work with superior organizational and presentational abilities. Clear understanding and application of complex concepts, audience adaptation, and consistent quality of work.
- B: High Level of Performance! Student clearly understands the material and has met all and often exceeded some of the requirements.
- C: Adequate Performance. All assigned work completed. This is the bare minimum required. It has everything required and little else. If it were a job, you would not be disciplined, but not promoted either.
- D: Less Than Adequate Performance. Came up short. Did not complete all work. Clearly made some attempt, but failed to satisfy some of the requirements.
- F: Failure. Did a minimal amount of work. Final work product is ineffective.

If you would like above-average grades, you must do more than the bare minimum requirements.

Communication Policy

The fastest way to reach me is via email (Christopher.Duerringer@csulb.edu). Of course, you are always welcome to come to office hours or to make an appointment if those hours don't work for you.

Late work/Make-up Policy

Generally speaking, I will not accept late work. However, the university recognizes religious holidays, government obligation (jury duty), or university sponsored events as excused absences. If you will be absent due to one of these reasons, you must inform me in writing prior to your absence in order to make up any missed work.

Plagiarism/Academic Integrity Policy

Academic dishonesty includes plagiarizing (using someone else's words or ideas without citation), cheating, and inappropriate collaboration on coursework. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students who plagiarize or cheat may receive an F on an assignment, an F in the entire course, or face further penalty at the instructor's discretion. If you have any doubt about this policy, please ask. Additionally, the instructor will report each and every case to the Academic Integrity Committee. The Committee may, in turn, choose to enforce its own sanctions, such as expulsion from the University.

Work that you submit is assumed to be original unless your source material is documented appropriately, such as a Works Cited page in correct APA format. Using the ideas or words of another person, even a peer, or a web site, as if it were your own, is plagiarism. Students should read the section on [cheating and plagiarism in the CSULB catalog](#) - http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/catalog/current/academic_information/cheating_plagiarism.html.

University Withdrawal Policy

Class withdrawals during the final 3 weeks of instruction are not permitted except for a very serious and compelling reason such as accident or serious injury that is clearly beyond the student's control and the assignment of an Incomplete grade is inappropriate (see [Grades](#) - http://www.csulb.edu/depts/enrollment/student_academic_records/grading.html). Application for withdrawal from CSULB or from a class must be officially filed by the student with Enrollment Services whether the student has ever attended the class or not; otherwise, the student will receive a grade of "WU" (unauthorized withdrawal) in the course. Please refer to the [CSULB Course Catalog](#) -



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http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/catalog/current/academic_regulations/withdrawal_policy.html to get familiar with the policy.

Attendance Policy

At the graduate level, unswerving attendance and passionate participation is simply expected. If you wish to succeed in this course, you must attend class diligently. I understand that circumstances may require that you miss a class meeting. If this is the case, it is your responsibility to arrange for a classmate to take notes for you. Please refer to and get familiar with the [CSULB Attendance Policy - http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/catalog/current/academic_information/class_attendance.html](http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/catalog/current/academic_information/class_attendance.html).

Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or need to report a problem with BeachBoard, please contact the Technology Help Desk using their [online form - http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/academic_technology/thd/contact/](http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/academic_technology/thd/contact/) or by phone at (562) 985-4959 or visit them on campus in the Academic Service (AS) building, room 120.

Inform Me of Any Accommodations Needed

Students with a disability or medical restriction who are requesting a classroom accommodation should contact the Disabled Student Services at 562-985-5401 or visit Brotman Hall, Suite 270 during 8AM-5PM weekday hours. Disabled Student Services will work with the student to identify a reasonable accommodation in partnership with appropriate academic offices and medical providers. We encourage students to reach out to DSS as soon as possible.

Classroom Respect

I request that you maintain respect for instructors, guests, and one another in the class regardless of different opinions, values or other group differences. While studying rhetoric that circulates in our popular culture and politics, it is not uncommon for very different opinions and beliefs to emerge. Our goal is to create a supportive and cooperative learning environment in which these differences can be expressed and explored. Students should give one another equal opportunity for discussion, and practice good speaking and listening skills.

Laptops & Personal Electronic Devices

A growing body of research shows that focus, comprehension, and information processing are all harmed by the use of electronic devices in classroom settings. If I see you using a cell phone in any way, I will ask that you turn the offending appliance off and stow it. If a second offense occurs, you will be asked to leave the room. You will be considered absent for any activity you miss after leaving the room. For each offense beyond the second, your final grade will be lowered by ten percent (10%). This policy applies equally to all other forms of electronic communication and entertainment with the exception of note-taking.

Worth a read:

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/reading-paper-screens/>
<http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/the-case-for-banning-laptops-in-the-classroom>
<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/03/science/whats-lost-as-handwriting-fades.html? r=0>

Class Material Disclaimer

Because this is a discussion-oriented course that involves discussion of culture, identity, and inherently political issues, it is possible that we may cover contentious and potentially inflammatory material. I am stating this up front so that you are aware of the possibility, and so that your continued enrollment in this course, following the reading of the syllabus, indicates that you are aware of this material and you have chosen to stay in this particular section of the class. I do not anticipate any problems, but it is important



you are aware of this disclaimer from the beginning. Please talk to me if you have any questions or concerns.

Assignment Descriptions

Response Papers

Each Monday, beginning on January 31 and continuing through May 2, our class will read essays that exemplify significant areas of rhetorical theory and criticism. On these days, you will be expected to come to class with a response paper, which summarizes your thoughts about the assigned readings for that day. What did you find thought-provoking or useful about them? What did you find most confusing, challenging, or disagreeable? Include direct quotes where appropriate. These brief 2-3 page responses are due on BeachBoard by 12:00pm each Sunday before our class.

Discussion Leading

Twice this semester, you will serve as discussion leader. On these days, you will be expected to read and outline one of our scheduled readings. You will arrive to class with copies of your typed outline (please provide one for each member of the class) that delineates the main points of the reading, and 3-5 discussion questions that draw our attention to the most significant innovations, implications, or issues that arise from the reading. During the course of the conversation, you will be expected to offer smart responses and help foster thoughtful discussion.

The Critical Essay

Nearly every graduate class, including this one, includes a serious writing assignment. Learning to write for academic audiences is a process. As such, you will move towards your end-goal of a conference-ready paper in steps.

Your task in this term paper is to summarize, apply, extend, and/or critique concepts and issues related to our engagement with rhetorical theory and criticism this semester.

Essay Proposal

In this brief (2-3 pages, not including references) paper, you will describe the critical essay you intend to write. Summarize the central claim you hope to make, articulate a rationale for the worthiness of such a project, and furnish a list of at least 15 scholarly sources you expect to employ.

Richly Detailed Outline

Good writers are organized writers. This richly detailed outline should provide good progress towards your final goal. While it need not contain all the pieces of your intended essay, this planning document should contain several of the components of your eventual finished draft. Outlines should include major body elements, major sections, major arguments, and supporting evidence/examples. Outline should be constituted almost exclusively of complete sentences. Provide 8-12 pages, not including references. Minimum of 20 scholarly sources.

Peer Critique

To facilitate the process of writing the critical essay, each class member will offer a written critique of a peer's richly detailed outline. This constructive critique should demonstrate your careful reading of your peer's work, and comments should be directed toward improving both content and expression.



Critical Essay

One complete draft of your essay. 12-20 pages, not including references; minimum of 25 sources, 20 scholarly.

Basic Components of a Typical Critical Essay in Rhetorical Studies

1. Introduction
 - a. Intriguing hook or set-up
 - b. Specification of topic/research questions
 - c. Justification for study (why is this worth doing?)
 - d. Preview of theses/claims
 - e. Preview of subsequent essay sections
2. Body
 - a. Literature Review(s)
 - i. Informed selection of scholarly sources
 - ii. Description of key concepts and disputes
 - iii. Clear statement of your position with regards to such issues
 - b. Elaboration of “method” or approach—how will you do your analysis? What procedures will you follow?
 - c. “Thick Description” (rich, detailed explanation) of context(s)
 - i. Socio-economic and cultural factors and influences
 - ii. Historical factors or influences
 - iii. Political factors or influences
 - d. “Thick Description” of text(s)
 - e. Analysis of text(s)
3. Conclusion
 - a. Review of theses/claims
 - b. Clarification of your contributions—what did your project show us about this artifact, about theory, about rhetoric generally?
 - c. Acknowledgements of specific limitations of your study
 - d. Suggestions for future research

Final Exam

Our final exam has two parts: a brief take-home short-answer test, and a biographical/networking portion. Both parts will be due on the day of our final meeting.

Short Answer:

Prior to the final exam period, you will be provided three short-answer question prompts. These comp-like questions are intended to guide you to synthesize and critically reflect upon the material we have covered this semester. As this is a take-home test, you are expected to take advantage of your access to scholarship, and cite sources accordingly.

Report on a Star

One goal of any good graduate program is training students to become contributors in their chosen field. In this assignment, students will investigate how others have built their careers in the academy. Each



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student will choose a scholar who is well-known for their scholarship in rhetorical studies and develop a 1-2 page hand-out that summarizes the scholar's training, career trajectory, and research.

While you *can* complete this assignment entirely from home, by looking at the scholar's CV and online publications and emailing them, this assignment is an excellent excuse to approach this person at WSCA, introduce yourself, and begin building your professional network. I suggest you seek them out, chat them up, invite them for a beverage, and ask them about their research. They may offer you invaluable advice.

Do not put this assignment off to the last minute. These are extraordinarily productive scholars. If you want their time, you'll need to plan in advance.

Potential choices include:

Rob Asen (University of Wisconsin, Madison)
Caitlin Bruce (University of Pittsburgh)
Greg Dickinson (Colorado State University)
Justin Ecksstein (Pacific Lutheran University)
Danielle Endres (University of Utah)
Cara Finnegan (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign)
Sonja Foss (University of New Mexico)
Katie Gibson (Colorado State University)
Charles Goehring (San Diego State University)
Ronald Walter Greene (University of Minnesota)
Lawrence Grossberg (University of North Carolina)
Joshua Gunn (University of Texas)
E. Johanna Hartelius (University of Texas)
Joshua Hanan (Denver University)
Aaron Hess (Arizona State University)
Kristin Hoerl (University of Nebraska, Lincoln)
Michelle Holling (Cal State San Marcos)
Paul Elliot Johnson (University of Pittsburgh)
Casey Kelly (University of Nebraska, Lincoln)
Eric King Watts (University of North Carolina)
Lore/ta LeMaster (Arizona State University)
Kate Lockwood Harris (University of Minnesota)
Christian Lundberg (University of North Carolina)
Charles Morris III (Syracuse University)
Brian Ott (Missouri State University)
Jennifer Peeples (Utah State University)
Phaedra Pezzullo (University of Colorado, Boulder)
Kendal Phillips (Syracuse University)
Jenny Edbauer Rice (University of Kentucky)
Aimee Carrillo Rowe (California State University, Northridge)
Helene Shugart (University of Utah)
Leland G. Spencer (Miami University of Ohio)
Ted Striphas (University of Colorado, Boulder)
Luke Winslow (Baylor University)



Useful Sources of Information for Rhetorical Studies

- COMMNotes – This is a free email listserv that distributes, on a daily basis, information about upcoming conferences and presentations, scholarships, graduate programs, academic job positions, and wide-ranging theoretical and pedagogical discussions among communication scholars. If you hope to have a job in academia one day, you ought to subscribe.
<https://www.natcom.org/academic-professional-resources/commnotes>
- Academia.edu – A social media platform designed to help make scholars and their research more accessible. In some sense, it is like Facebook for researchers—you can build a profile, post links to your scholarly work, and follow others whose research you value; and they probably do questionable things with your data. It is an excellent place to locate CVs and publications that are hard to find elsewhere.
- Google Scholar – Once you tell Google Scholar to search within CSULB's library, it becomes the most useful search engine for scholarly research, spanning multiple databases.
- Selective Lists of Published Resources:
 - Scholarly Journals Publishing Excellent Work in Rhetorical Theory & Criticism:
 - The Quarterly Journal of Speech (QJS)
 - Communication & Critical/Cultural Studies (CCCS)
 - Critical Studies in Media Communication (CSMC)
 - The Journal of Communication Inquiry
 - Argumentation & Advocacy
 - Philosophy & Rhetoric
 - Rhetoric & Public Affairs (RPA)
 - The Western Journal of Communication
 - Communication Theory
 - Communication Monographs
 - The Southern Communication Journal
 - Excellent Readers/Anthologies in Rhetoric, Critical Theory, and Cultural Studies
 - Bizzell, P. & Herzberg, B. (Eds.) (2001). *The rhetorical tradition: Readings from classical times to present* (2nd ed.). New York: Bedford.
 - Burgchardt, C. (Ed.) (2010). *Readings in rhetorical criticism* (4th ed.). State College, PA: Strata Publishing.
 - During, S. (2007). *The cultural studies reader* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.
 - Lucaites, J. L., Condit, C. M., & Caudill, S. (Eds.) (1993). *Contemporary rhetorical theory: A reader*. New York: Guilford Press.
 - Olson, L. C., Finnegan, C. A., & Hope, D. S. (Eds.) (2008). *Visual rhetoric: A reader in communication and American culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
 - Richter, D. H. (2006). *The critical tradition: Classic texts and contemporary trends* (3rd ed.). Boston: Bedford/St.Martins.
 - Storey, J. (2013). *Cultural theory and popular culture: A reader* (4th ed.) New York: Routledge.
 - Useful Textbooks for Those Just Getting Their Feet Wet (**NB: These are excellent places to begin or augment your education in rhetoric, but—because they oversimplify for the purpose of teaching novices—they are not the sort of thing you should cite in a serious paper for a graduate seminar, conference, or publication.**)
 - Borchers, T. (2006). *Rhetorical theory: An introduction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Waveland Press.
 - Foss, S. K. (2008). *Rhetorical criticism: Exploration and practice* (4th ed.). Thousand



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Oaks, CA: Waveland Press.

- Kuypers, J. A. (2009). *Rhetorical criticism: Perspectives in action*. Lanham, MA: Lexington Books.
- Stoner, M. & Perkins, S. J. (2004). *Making sense of messages: A critical apprenticeship in rhetorical criticism*. London: Routledge.
- Tyson, L. (2014). *Critical theory today: A user-friendly guide* (4th ed.). New York: Routledge.