

English 283: Rhetorical Theory and Its Applications

Course Syllabus

Fall 2012 Section 02: MW 11:30-12:45 STV 346

Kristi McDuffie, STV 201A, kmeduff@ilstu.edu

Office hours: Mondays 1:30-2:30pm, Wednesdays 10-11am, and by appointment

Course Description: Rhetoric is all around us. It's a part of our words, our actions, our values, and our beliefs. In this course, we will explore rhetorical concepts and apply them to contemporary texts, explore how rhetoric shapes and is shaped by language, and explore how rhetoric reveals commonplaces, ideologies, beliefs, and emotions. We will have a particular focus on color-blind racial ideology and the 2012 Presidential Campaign.

Learning Outcomes: In this course, you will:

- Learn foundational rhetorical concepts and their historical roots.
- Learn how rhetoric shapes and is shaped by language, beliefs, values, ideologies, and emotion.
- Learn how rhetorical concepts, ideologies and beliefs inform discussions of race in contemporary U.S. society.
- Demonstrate knowledge of rhetorical concepts by applying them to contemporary discourses.

Course Materials:

- Sharon Crowley and Debra Hawhee's *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*, 5th edition
- Eduardo Bonilla-Silva's *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*, 3rd edition
- Additional readings that you will need to access from our course ReggieNet site

Attendance: Attending class is important for your success in this course. Beginning with the third absence, your final letter grade will be lowered by 1/2 letter grade per absence and you may not be able to make up work missed during class. Students should notify the instructor about their absence as far in advance as possible, and it is always the student's responsibility to inquire about making up work. Since it is disruptive for students to come into class late, three tardies add up to one absence.

Participation: This classroom is a learning community, and all students must participate in order for it to function as one. Participation includes speaking during class discussion and being actively involved in all class activities. Keep cell phones off and put away and avoid side conversations during class time.

Overview of Semester: Here is an overview of the assignments, with descriptions below.

Project	Points	%
Reading Responses	190	30%
Test 1	100	16%
Essay 1	100	16%
Test 2	100	16%
Essay 2	150	23%
TOTAL	640	100%

The grading scale for the final course grade is as follows:

90-100 = A 80-89 = B 70-79 = C 60-69 = D Below 60 = F

Reading responses, reading quizzes, in-class work, participation, and other homework: This category includes daily homework such as written reading responses (submit a copy to ReggieNet and bring a hard copy to class), in-class work (group and individual), occasional reading quizzes, participation during large and small group discussion, and other homework as assigned.

Tests: There will be two tests during this semester that will ask you to demonstrate your knowledge and application of rhetorical concepts. You will be provided with more details about the tests as they approach.

Essays: There will be two rhetorical analysis essays during the course; the first essay will be a targeted application of rhetorical concepts to a particular piece of contemporary rhetoric; the second will be a more in-depth application of rhetorical concepts to a set of pieces of contemporary rhetoric. You will be provided with assignment sheets on these essays ahead of time.

Late work: Late work is not accepted. Contact me immediately with any problems or requests for extensions, as failing to turn in large assignments on time could result in failing the course.

Plagiarism: Work you submit for this course must have been written by you for this course. You may not submit work in this course and in another, and you may not submit under your name work written entirely or in part by someone else. Provide sufficient citations for any ideas or quotations used from another source. ISU requires that all cases of plagiarism be reported to the office of Community Rights and Responsibilities.

Technology: We will use ReggieNet, ISU's current course management system, for this course; all course materials, including assignments and supplementary readings, will be uploaded there and you will upload homework and essays there. Be careful to save all of your work often (in .doc or .docx format – I cannot open .pages documents!) and in multiple locations (personal computer, email, USB drive, etc.). Technological problems that occur at the last minute will not excuse you from an assignment that is due (so contact me immediately about any problems). Submit work ahead of the due date as much as possible. Being out of town and not having access to your computer or the internet is not an excuse for missing or late assignments. *Please also use ReggieNet to email me with questions or about absences so that all of our communication is kept in one place, although my personal email can be used for emergencies.*

Accommodations: Students who need consideration because of any sort of disability or situation should come see me as soon as possible. Any student needing to arrange an accommodation for a documented disability should also contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 309-438-5853 (voice) or 309-438-8620 (TTY) as soon as possible.

Julia N. Visor Academic Center: Free outside writing assistance can be found at the Visor center, which offers consulting in almost all subjects. Call 309-438-7100 to make an appointment or visit <http://ucollege.illinoisstate.edu/about/visor/> for more information.

Student Counseling Services: College students sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience anxiety or depression and struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. SCS is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are **FREE** and completely confidential. Find out more at Counseling.IllinoisState.edu or by calling (309) 438-3655.

Schedule:

*AR = *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*

RWR = *Racism without Racists*

On ReggieNet = Access on ReggieNet

Schedule

Week 1

Aug 20 Intro to the course and definitions of rhetoric

Aug 22 Read Ch. 1 p. 1-25 (Intro) in AR
Informed Consent forms

Week 2

Aug 27 Read Ch. 4 p. 88-112 (Commonplaces) in AR

Aug 29 Read Ch. 1 of RWR

Week 3

Sept 3 No class - Labor Day

Sept 5 Read Ch. 2 p. 37-51 (Kairos) in AR

Week 4

Sept 10 Read Ch. 2 of RWR

Sept 12 Read Ch. 3 p. 56-79 (Stasis) in AR

Week 5

Sept 17 Review for Test 1

Sept 19 **Test 1**

Week 6

Sept 24 Read Ch. 3 of RWR
Discuss Essay 1

Sept 26 Read sample rhetorical analysis
Course feedback (in-class)

Week 7

Oct 1 Writing Group Day for Essay 1

Oct 3	Essay 1 Due Be prepared to share a segment of your paper aloud in class
Week 8	
Oct 8	Read Ch. 5 p. 118-141 (Logic) in AR
Oct 10	Read Ch. 4 of RWR
Week 9	
Oct 15	Read Ch. 6 p. 146-164 (Ethics) in AR
Oct 17	Read Wildman (handout)
Week 10	
Oct 22	Read Ch. 7 p. 170-188 (Passions) in AR
Oct 24	Skim Obama chapter in RWR; discuss presidential debates in class
Week 11	
Oct 29	Read Ch. 8 p. 200-216 (Proofs) in AR
Oct 31	Read Wardi article (handout)
Week 12	
Nov 5	Review for Test 2
Nov 7	Test 2
Week 13	
Nov 12	Read pieces on Latinos and Race (handout) Discuss Essay 2
Nov 14	Read pieces on teaching and race (handout)
Week 14	
	No class - Thanksgiving break
Week 15	
Nov 26	Watch Crash and discuss
Nov 28	Watch Crash and discuss
Week 16	
Dec 3	Writing Group Day for Essay 2

Dec 5 Essay 2 Due
Be prepared to share a segment of your paper with the class

Week 17 - Finals Week

Have a great break!

Essay 1

Kristi McDuffie

English 283 – Fall 2012

Due: Oct 3, 2012

The purpose of this essay is to perform a rhetorical analysis on a current event using one or more of the concepts we have discussed in class. This will resemble the reading responses you have done so far; in fact, you may be able to take a successful reading response and expand it into an essay for this assignment.

Please be sure to do the following in this essay (and these guidelines will make up the evaluation criteria):

- Utilize at least one rhetorical concept you have learned during this class in your analysis (kairos, stasis, ideology, commonplaces, color-blind racism, etc.). Be sure to explain the concept(s) in your paper and cite the textbook(s) accordingly.
- Apply this concept(s) to one or more contemporary texts (a piece of rhetoric), which could be presidential speeches/debates, newspaper articles, blog posts, non-fiction essays, talk show segments, opinion/editorial pieces, and more. Unless written approval is obtained beforehand, the text(s) must be something related to politics and/or race so that it ties to the course content.
 - For example, you can analyze the color-blind rhetoric in a political speech, in defenses of a shooting, in discourse about events like Arizona's ethnic studies ban or anti-immigration laws, in voter ID debates, and so forth.
 - Alternately, you can analyze liberal (conservative) ideologies in a particular speech from the Democratic (Republican) national convention, in talk show hosts' rhetoric, by contrasting liberal and conservative news sites, and so forth.
 - Comparing different sources about the same event could lead to a fruitful discussion of a rhetorical concept and let you make conclusions about which was more effective and why.
- Give the rhetorical situation of that text(s).
- Give adequate support for your analysis by citing and quoting from the text(s).
- Although you do not need to have a thesis statement in the traditional "I argue that xyz..." sense, you should have a clear stated purpose for the paper (i.e. "I will describe the ideologies and commonplaces that inform xyz debate") with detailed, insightful findings (i.e. "The rhetor appeals to a Christian ideology by using the commonplaces of xyz in an attempt to appeal to xyz audience"). Conclusions might center on how effective the piece was in reaching a particular audience, speculation on why this particular approach was taken, whether the approach was common or innovative, and so forth.
- Use MLA or APA formatting and citation style consistently throughout the text.
- Paper length should be 4-6 pages.

Test 1

Kristi McDuffie

English 283 – Fall 2012

Name: _____

Definitions

Choose six of the ten terms below. Give a definition and an example. Be specific by engaging in course materials as much as possible, such as discussing where your definitions come from. Draw examples from the readings, class discussion, and your own reading responses.

(10 points each, 60 points total)

Rhetoric	Policy (stasis)
Rhetorician	Quality (stasis)
Rhetor	Definition (stasis)
Liberal ideology	Color-blind racial ideology
Conservative ideology	Abstract liberalism (color-blind racial ideology)
Commonplaces	Naturalization (color-blind racial ideology)
Rhetorical situation	Cultural racism (color-blind racial ideology)
Kairos	Minimization of racism (color-blind racial ideology)
Stasis	
Conjecture (stasis)	

Application

Answer the following three questions about the given example, “**School district asks: Are Hispanics “white”?**”. Select comments responding to the article are included to give you more material for analysis. Be detailed by giving support from the article in your answers.

(40 points total)

1. What is the kairos of this issue? How does the author establish it as important? (10 pts)
2. Is stasis achieved in this debate or not, and if not, at what point? Discuss at least two points of stasis (conjecture, definition, quality, policy) in your response. (15 pts)
3. Discuss which frames of color-blind racial ideology (abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism, minimization of racism) are evident in the comments to this article. Discuss at least two of the frames and be specific. (20 pts)

Essay 2
Kristi McDuffie
English 283 – Fall 2012

Points: 100

Length: 5-7 pages (MLA format, doubled-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1 inch margins, stapled, with page numbers)

Due: **Wed, Nov. 28.** Turn in on ReggieNet AND bring a hard copy to class. Note that we will have individual conferences on Wed, Dec. 5, rather than having class that last week.

As we wrap up the semester, I would like to use the last essay to do some reflective writing. Part of this reflection is considering what you have learned in the class and another part is thinking about how you can take this information with you into other spaces. Although there are different ways you can achieve those goals, here are some potential options:

- Discuss your progression of thought over this semester, utilizing your reading responses, tests, and essay 1. Some particular questions to guide you are: How has your understanding of rhetoric changed? How has your understanding of rhetorical analysis changed? How has your understanding of how race functions in our society and/or how race is rhetorically constructed developed over the semester? How have you come to understand race as a rhetorical concern?
- How has the course content affected you personally? It's a big question, so you will need to pick something specific to discuss. How have certain rhetorical concepts helped you to understand your own rhetoric or the rhetoric around you? One way to explore this could be to analyze your own ideologies, beliefs, and commonplaces, put into the context of one of your discourse communities.
- Using detailed content from the course, investigate how you can use what you have learned in the class in your next endeavor. For example, if you are going to teach high school English, conduct an exploration of how your teaching will be informed or take up the rhetorical concepts and/or racial ideology concepts we have discussed in class. You could conduct a similar exploration of a professional writing job, a legal career, and so forth.

Please note that the purpose of this essay is not to tell me what you think I want to hear, which is why I'm trying to avoid a simple "what I learned" narrative. I want it to be useful to you by making real connections between this course and other aspects of your life. I promise, if you put thought (and time) into it (and attend to the items below), I'll be pleased!

Regardless of the option that you choose, please do the following:

- Demonstrate an understanding of rhetoric and rhetorical criticism by using detailed examples from the course.
- Demonstrate that you have reflected on what we are trying to accomplish in this course and what you have learned in this course.
- Demonstrate critical thinking. The reflection should not be a casual rumination or a list of your work in the course. An essay can be personal and still critical.
- Demonstrate solid writing skills, including organization, paragraph unity, varied sentence structure, and meta-language that provides some kind of overview of the paper and guideposts as to where the paper is going throughout. Writing should be concise and not overly repetitive.

Publication Venues

I strongly encourage you all to seek external venues to share your work and I will help as much as I can. Below I have listed some potential venues. Please let me know if you have any questions.

At ISU:

Grassroots Writing Research Journal (genre and writing research through the writing program)

<http://isuwriting.com/grassroots/>

Polyglossia (Sigma Tau Delta)

<http://english.illinoisstate.edu/affiliates/journals/polyglossia.shtml>

Euphemism (creative writing) <http://english.illinoisstate.edu/euphemism/>

In the academic community at large (but focused on English):

Young Scholars in Writing: Undergraduate Research in Writing and Rhetoric

<http://cas.umkc.edu/english/publications/youngscholarsinwriting/default.asp>

Journal of Undergraduate Multimedia Projects <http://jump.cwrl.utexas.edu/>

Oswald Review <http://web.usca.edu/english/oswald-review/>

Sigma Tau Delta Journals <http://www.english.org/sigmatd/publications/index.shtml#rectangle>

Xchanges <http://infohost.nmt.edu/~xchanges/>



Call for Papers: “The novel” in English

Studies

New or novel ideas have influenced all facets of English Studies. Over time, these ideas have sparked movements, changed the direction of research in the field, and—sometimes—simply been forgotten. From the genre of the novel and its developments in literary studies to the process movement in composition and from the development of cultural studies to the coining of new words, the areas of English Studies—literature and culture, rhetoric and composition, and language and linguistics—have all been influenced by novel ideas over time.

The third annual English Studies at Large (ESAL) Conference invites undergraduate students to submit proposals for 15-minute presentations in individual or panel form. Individual proposals should include a first page with your name, school affiliation, title of your presentation, technology needs, a brief (100 word) biography, and a contact e-mail address and a second page with a 250-word abstract of your proposed presentation with no identifying information. Panel proposals should include a title for the panel and presenter information for three presenters on the first page and abstracts for each presenter without identifying information on successive pages.

Proposals should be electronically submitted via e-mail to EnglishStudiesAtLarge@gmail.com. The deadline for proposal submission is **December 17, 2012**. The 2013 ESAL Conference will be held on Saturday, February 9, 2013 in Stevenson Hall at Illinois State University in Normal, IL.

If you have questions or would like further information, please contact Megan Gregory at magreg@ilstu.edu or Gretchen Frank at gmsfrank@ilstu.edu or visit the conference website at <http://englishstudiesatlarge.wordpress.com/>.

Test 2
 Kristi McDuffie
 English 283 – Fall 2012

Name: _____

Definitions

Choose six of the ten terms below. Give a definition and an example. All definitions come from *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*. Draw examples from the readings, class discussion, and your own reading responses.

(10 points each, 60 points total)

Premise
 Inductive reasoning
 Enthymeme
 Maxim
 Sign

Situated ethos
 Goodwill (ethos)
 Honorific language
 Extrinsic proofs
 Testimony

Application

Answer the following three questions about the given example, “Obama Bares His Teeth.” Be detailed by giving support from the article in your answers.

(40 points total)

4. How does Bruni establish an ethos in this article? Specifically, how does he show that he is well-informed, has done his research, and has established goodwill? Ultimately, does he establish a “good” character? (15 pts)
5. What kind of intrinsic and extrinsic proofs does Bruni use and how does he use them? Be specific. (10 pts)
6. What logical reasoning strategies (enthymeme, maxims, signs, examples (historical, fictional, fables, and analogies (simile or contrary))) does Bruni use in this article? Be specific. (15 pts)

Hint: The most complete, convincing answers use terminology and specifics from the textbook and quote from the article in your answers. Explain everything – leave nothing assumed (no unstated enthymemes here 😊).