

FALL (2017) TERM

Digital Rhetorics

RHET-3152-760, Fall Term

Online

Jaqueline McLeod Rogers

Offered 100% online, this course invites you to explore the rhetorical and discursive practices that make interactive online communities lively and generative, as well as to consider some of the emerging arguments that have begun to outline the limits of online engagement. You will examine discussions around building online communities from the early days of the “World Wide Web,” many of them predicting hopeful futures. You will move into critical analysis of how social and rhetorical practices shape or constrain online communities today. The course offers a variety of opportunities for online interaction, so that you experience first-hand the advantages and frustrations of this form of community building: this occurs most intensively in the final weeks of the course, when you turn to completing a small-group project in which you either build an online community modeled on what you consider best practices or analyze one that is extant.

Writing for Scholarly Audiences

RHET-3329-001, Fall Term

TuTh 10:00-11:15 am

Jennifer Clary-Lemon

Students in Writing for Scholarly Audiences should expect to advance their knowledge of the reasons that academics—that is, those prepared for a life of writing scholarship—write. This course will demystify academic rhetoric—to help you see how it “works,” how and why it differs from popular writing on similar topics, and how it varies from discipline to discipline. You will hone both knowledge and practice of specific academic genres: critical introductions, literature reviews, conference proposals, and conference posters. The main objectives of the course are to heighten your awareness of academic practices, and to increase your rhetorical flexibility.

Strategies Techniques and Professional Communications

RHET-3340-001, Fall Term

TuTh 11:30-12:45 pm

Sheila Page

Writing in an organisational setting requires a careful understanding of the individual writer’s role in relation to the organisation, as well as to its mandate and its internal and external audiences. In this course, we will use several theories from the fields of rhetoric, communications, and management to understand the purposes and constraints that shape organisational communications. We will also analyse and practise many of the standard formats used in organisational communications, in both traditional and digital forms.

We will then build on this foundation of theory and practice by analysing a range of occasions for organisational communications and the choices available for responding to those occasions.

Throughout the course, you will have opportunities to work individually and in groups to produce organisational documents, to examine issues in organisational communications through oral presentations and analytical essays, and to engage in the type of peer response and revision that is fundamental to good communications practices within organisations.

Topics: Social Media, Culture & Society

RHET-3900-001, Fall Term

MW 2:30-3:45 pm

Matthew Flisfeder

Social media websites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn have become a significant component of our everyday lives. Whether we use these sites to connect with friends and family, share pictures and images, read and (re-)distribute interesting news items and current events, play games, or share cat photos, it appears as though social media now structures many of our experiences of the world, ourselves, and the culture that surrounds us. For some, there is even a sense of stigmatization when social media is not being used. How can we make sense of this new media environment?

This course takes a critical and cultural approach to studying social media and society. We will focus on questions such as: how does social media help to shape and construct our identities and sense of self? What is the meaning of “friendship” online? How do we deal with issues of online surveillance on social media websites? What is the relationship between social media and work/labour? What role does social media play in shaping the world of meaning, today? Is social media an ally or an enemy in contemporary democracy, activism, and social movements? To simplify: the central goal of this course is to look at these four overlapping aspects of social media: pleasure, work, surveillance/control, and community/democracy. By studying these aspects of social media we will explore and examine what it can teach us about how we live and experience twenty-first century culture and society.

WINTER (2018) TERM

Advanced Editing

RHET-3131-001, Winter Term

TuTh 8:30-9:45 am

Helen Lepp Friesen

This course is designed to help students develop sound editorial decisions with the intent of strengthening a text’s argument and style. It addresses issues such as the editorial process, the rhetorical approach to editing, the meaning and attitude towards stylistic errors, usage of readability formulae, revision, and a renegotiation of grammar rules and composition. Students will edit texts to strengthen style and readability as well as to ensure accuracy and correctness.

We will look at topics such as the role of copyeditors, editorial styles, language conventions, readability research, and avoiding bias. Stylistic editing will address matters such as reducing wordiness, adjusting language level to audience, improving sentence variety for interest and emphasis, and ensuring coherence and cohesiveness.

Readings, discussions, class exercises, group workshops, and regular short assignments will give students an opportunity to develop sound editorial judgment and effective strategies for strengthening texts.

Modern Rhetorical Theory

RHET-3138-001, Winter Term

MW 4:00-5:15 pm

Jason Hannan

This course provides an overview of modern rhetorical theory. We will begin with the single greatest figure of rhetoric in the modern era: Kenneth Burke. From there, we will cover several major

figures and schools of thought in the twentieth century and beyond. The contemporary themes we will address include power, politics, democracy, science, religion, art, media, and popular culture. Students will learn how to apply the theories learned in class to everyday life. The aim of the course to help students become more critically aware of the complexities of our social and symbolic universe.

Rhetorics of Visual Representation

RHET-3139-001, Winter Term

MW 2:30-3:45 pm

Tracy Whalen

One might note a major shift in the field of rhetoric: an increasing amount of the discipline's attention has become focused on the image. Scholars from Psychology, Art History, Women's and Gender Studies, Sociology, Philosophy, Film Studies, Geography, and Communication departments have contributed to a rich conversation about visual objects. In this course, we synthesize these various disciplinary approaches and define (even with a faint dotted line) a field of Visual Rhetoric, examining how symbol users prompt identification in other symbol users through the visual. We look at a range of visual artifacts including, but not limited to, scientific illustrations, religious paintings, editorial cartoons, art, photographs, maps, typography, and page layout. Each week we study how images might address (entice, repulse, trouble, baffle, bore, pleasure, or anger) viewers or go without comment, so transparent and commonsensical they seem to be.

Writing on the Environment

RHET-3155-001, Winter Term

TuTh 10:00-11:15 am

Jennifer Clary-Lemon

The focus of this course will be writing on the environment. To that end, we will be looking at both the genre of what is often called "nature writing" as well as works that rely more heavily on explicit argument, particularly about the impact of humans on nature. A central theme in this class is the separation of "human" from "nature" or "the wild"—as well as an examination of that divide and a reflection on its purpose. We will also be looking into the relationship between writing and ecology, particularly in Western thought. In approaching texts, we situate ourselves both as writers and as eco-critics—that is, as rhetorical critics whose primary concern is the "nature dimension" of texts under scrutiny. With each text we read, we will ask ourselves, for instance, what is its purpose, and how is it likely to influence environmental attitudes and actions? What are the values inherent in the piece, and how do they reflect thinking about the environment over time? As we approach writing on the environment ourselves, we will also be prepared to reflect on our own rhetorical choices, where they come from, and how they are shaped by the world in which we live.

Intercultural Communications

RHET-3156, Section 050, Winter Term

Wed 6:00-9:00 pm

Instructor: Andrew McGillivray

This course looks at the origins and development of language from a historical perspective and moves into specific case studies of unilingual, bilingual, and multilingual groups, their languages, how they communicate, and representational media used by the groups. Students will focus closely on how groups communicate with one another, often by using common languages and the practice of translation, and how groups use languages to represent their culture to other groups and within the

group. Central to such transnational and intercultural communication is the representation of identity and heritage, and therefore as languages change, identity changes also occur.

This course offers students the opportunity to investigate a language or dialect group of their choice and to study the group in depth, sharing their research findings with the instructor and the class. This course promises to be an intensive study of language in the modern world, and aims to be a timely journey into communication within and across cultures.

Orality and Literacy

RHET-3236-001, Winter Term

TuTh 4:00-5:15 pm

Robert Byrnes

About 2700 years ago, Greeks invented, and then began internalizing, the first real alphabet. Did human consciousness change when they and other previously “oral” peoples became literate? Did a new sense of independent selfhood emerge because of writing? Did the invention of literacy provoke a great transformation in human thought? Did literacy make abstract cognition far more convenient, and far more common? Did Western culture evolve in a tension between oral and literate styles of personality, and did Western literature evolve in a creative tension between oral and literate modes? Are movies and electronic media renewing orality in Western cultures, and can we blame much of our literacy crisis on movies, television, the personal computer and the internet? These are tantalizing questions suggested by the study of orality, and we will take them up intermittently throughout the course, but more systematically near the end of it.

We’ll begin with Neil Postman’s *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, and consider the larger theoretical questions mentioned above. We’ll continue with Homer’s *Odyssey*, the greatest oral artefact in the Western tradition, and essentially a piece of Greek popular culture. Then we’ll look at *Guardians of the Galaxy* as an example of modern popular culture, before going on to read F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, to illustrate the psychological complexity of a great print novel. The class will include brief readings from a slender course pack.

Required Texts and a Movie

Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*

Homer, *The Odyssey*

Guardians of the Galaxy (self-acquired)

The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald

Course Pack for Orality and Literacy

Forms of Inquiry

RHET-3320, Section 001, Winter Term

TuTh 11:30-12:45 pm

Instructor: Andrew McGillivray

The disciplinary fields of rhetoric, writing, and communications are still growing and forming, and people conducting research within these fields use a variety of methods to explore research questions and uncover answers to those questions. Areas for interpretation include language, culture, and group identity, among else. This course encourages an ethnographic approach to studying how

groups communicate, form and express identities, and use technologies, providing students with the unique opportunity to work directly with people.

The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to reading and writing ethnography. The major assignment is a project, for which students conduct initial research on a group of their choice, both in the library and through keyword searches; then students will have the opportunity to propose their project and complete research ethics training; after the proposal is approved, students then undertake fieldwork through observation, participation, and interviews, and they may collect artifacts, both physical or textual; the final stage of the project is to write out the data collected during research, and write up a final ethnographic interpretation of the group under study.

Composing Winnipeg
RHET-3321-001, Winter Term
TuTh 2:30-3:45 pm
Jaqueline McLeod Rogers

How does Winnipeg influence our sense of identity and our writing? How do we understand our city through a filter of language and images? If our city been built, written and revised, can we in turn influence the production of our city and its cultures? To respond to questions like these, we will consider how paying attention to place—walking, listening, looking, mapping—can bring to light a level of detail we may have overlooked. We will consider how for each of us the city is both real and imagined, material and mobile. Finally, we will also consider how [well] we live together in the city as strangers and what discourse practices promote a sense of shared community.

We will work with theories about how language and cultural discourse influence identity and possibilities of creativity and social action. We also theorize place and mobilities: thinking locally balances interdisciplinary and extracurricular emphasis on globalization, and thinking about place balances our explorations of virtual space. Research methods in this course are both traditional and non-traditional. We will conduct some archival research and literary analysis, as well as ethnographic observations. We will also adapt the concept of researcher as « flaneur », one who observes by being in place—walking, drawing maps, recording sounds, all to create an alternate up-close version/vision of place.

Investigative Journalism
RHET-3330-050, Winter Term
Mon 6:00-9:00 pm
Cecil Rosner

This course provides an overview of the history, theory and practice of investigative journalism in Canada. It will place this form of journalism into its historical context and survey its major practitioners, including both print and broadcast journalists. The theoretical framework of investigative journalism will be analyzed, and parallels will be drawn to the other social sciences. You will also learn some of the practical tools of the investigative journalist, including search strategies, chronologies, computer-assisted reporting, online research methods, study and analysis of public records, and access-to-information methods. The ethics and legalities of investigative journalism will be surveyed, along with analysis of case studies. As well, you will learn practical lessons about structuring and writing projects for both print and broadcast.

Seminar discussions will be as interactive as possible. Examples of investigative print projects, as well as videos will be used. Two required texts will prepare you for many of the course's components. Assignments and tests will gauge your understanding of both the theoretical concepts involved, and the

practical tools of the investigative journalist.

Communication, Ideology & Power

RHET-3350-001, Winter Term

TuTh 10:00-11:15 am

Matthew Flisfeder

This course focuses on theories of ideology and discourse, and the rhetorical strategies used for writing about and critiquing ideological texts in the media. Using examples from contemporary media, we will focus on methods of rhetorical criticism that may be used for critiquing ideological texts and the ways that modern mass media use rhetoric, language, and images to reproduce forms of power. Other areas of focus will include the industry structure of the media, theories of propaganda and censorship, media democracy, and activist/alternative new media as practices of resisting ideology and power.