



4000 Level Course Descriptions

A selection from the following courses will be offered each term. Please check WebAdvisor or the Student Handbook for course availability and schedules.

RHET-4138 (3) Modern Rhetorical Theory (3 hrs Seminar/Discussion)

This course provides an overview of modern rhetorical theory. It covers several major figures and schools of thought from the twentieth century to the present. Contemporary themes addressed include power, politics, democracy, science, religion, art, media, and popular culture. Students learn how to apply the theories learned in class to everyday life. The aim of the course is to help students become more critically aware of the complexities of our social and symbolic universe.

Restrictions: Students may not receive credit for both this course and the former RHET-3138(3).

Prerequisites: Prior completion of 42 credit hours.

RHET-4150 (3) Studies in the Rhetoric of Nonfiction (3 hrs Seminar/Discussion)

This course examines nonfiction as a creative, constructive art that draws on a wide range of literary and rhetorical resources to entertain, inform, and persuade readers. Nonfiction encompasses a variety of genres--travel and adventure literature, memoir and biography, nature writing, the personal essay, the polemical essay, and New Journalism. The focus in any given year depends on the instructor's interests and selection of readings. Whatever the focus, the course considers each text as both rhetorical and literary, taking into account the context of its writing and intended audience, its author's purposes, its central ideas, its structure, and its style. The course involves intensive close reading and examination of assigned texts using literary and rhetorical approaches. The class consists of short lecture presentations and a great deal of class discussion.

Restrictions: Students may not receive credit for this course and the former RHET-3150(3).

Prerequisites: Prior completion of 42 credit hours.

RHET-4151 (3) Critical Theories of Discourse and Ideology (3 hrs Seminar/Discussion)

Critical theories of discourse and ideology enable us to identify the ways that culturally prominent systems of value-laden language produce the forms and limits of probable (and even possible) thoughts and values. This course engages students in an intensive study of theories of discourse and ideology, and the rhetorical strategies used for writing about and critiquing ideological texts in the media. Using examples from contemporary media, it focuses on theories of rhetoric, discourse, and ideology 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.

Restrictions: Students may not receive credit for this course and the former RHET-3151(3).



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Prerequisites: Prior completion of 42 credit hours.

RHET-4152 (3) Digital Rhetorics (3 hrs Seminar/Discussion)

This course introduces students to the basic themes, issues, and intellectual debates in the study of digital rhetorics. It provides a critical perspective on what it means to live in a digitally mediated world. To this end, the course seeks to answer the following questions: How should we define media? What separates new media from old? What is the relationship of media to culture and society? What role does digital rhetoric play in a modern democracy? Students explore a variety of perspectives for considering digital rhetorics, including language, ethics, power, and identity.

Restrictions: Students may not receive credit for both this course and the former RHET-3152(3).

Prerequisites: Prior completion of 42 credit hours.

RHET-4401 (3) Rhetoric of the Public Sphere (3 hrs Seminar/Discussion)

This course adopts a rhetoric and communications framework for the purpose of conducting an intensive study of the concept of the public sphere, everyday processes of communal discourse and negotiation. It examines written, spoken, visual, gestural, and other texts that mediate relations among people in civic spaces. It may include such topics as the definition of the term "public sphere," the history of public discourse, the relationship between state and civil society, the ethics of public texts and power, the impact of the media in narrating public events, and the textual "handling" of social tensions.

Restrictions: Students may not hold credit for both this course and the former RHET-3401(3).

Prerequisites: Prior completion of 42 credit hours.

RHET-4420 (3) Rhetorics of Identity (3 hrs Seminar/Discussion)

This course undertakes an intensive study into the symbolic mediation of identity. It examines how symbolic systems reflect, produce, and challenge such concepts as gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, ability, age, nationality, and humanness. Drawing connections between discourses and privilege, the course also explores power and identity politics, examining the reciprocal relationship between symbols and ideology. Its topics may include the performance and circulation of digitally mediated identities, constitutive rhetoric, rhetoric of the body, civic identity, and the post-human.

Restrictions: Students may not receive credit for both this course and the former RHET-3420(3).

Prerequisites: Prior completion of 42 credit hours.



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RHET-4900 (3) Honours Thesis in Rhetoric and Communications (3 hrs Project/Thesis)

The Honours Thesis in Rhetoric and Communications is taught on an individual basis through an arrangement between the professor and student. The student completes an Honours thesis under the mentorship of a supervising faculty member in the Department of Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications. The thesis may develop out of the student's prior work in Rhetoric and Communications. The Honours thesis is optional and may be taken in partial fulfillment of credit hours required for the Honours BA in Rhetoric and Communications. Students enrolling in the Honours Thesis must be registered in the Honours BA program in Rhetoric and Communications.

Restrictions: [Honours Form](#) and [Honours Thesis Form](#) required.

Prerequisites: Students enrolling in RHET-4900(3) must be registered in the Honours BA Rhetoric and Communications program and have completed at least 6 credit hours in RHET at the 4000-level and at least 42 credit hours by the start of the semester