

English 353: History of Rhetoric
Writing Intensive
Texas A&M University, Fall 2006
MW 4:10-5:25 p.m., BLOC 124

Dr. Stephanie Kerschbaum

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Office hours: Mondays 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Wednesdays 2-4 p.m., and very cheerfully by appointment.

The best way to get ahold of me is via email or in-person during office hours.

About this Course

Prerequisite: ENGL 104

Rhetoric as a course of study has had a profound impact on the landscape of literacy teaching and learning, from the Greek Sophists, who saw rhetoric as a way of shaping social reality, to Aristotle's systematization of rhetorical theory, to Roman educators' emphasis on rhetoric and the development of moral character, to the delicate linkage between rhetoric and Christian theology after St. Augustine, and to the more recent growth of rhetoric's relationship with composition during the last two centuries. This class will investigate the rich and varied traditions of rhetorical study over the last three thousand years, focusing on the following questions:

- How was rhetoric conceived as a course of study, at different times, by different thinkers?
- What does a rhetorical curriculum look like?
- What methods were used to teach and study rhetoric?
- What was the importance of rhetorical study as it was defined by particular speakers?

and finally:

- Why study rhetoric?

To investigate these questions, our semester will be divided into three units. In each unit, we will engage sets of rhetorical thinkers from the classical period up through the late nineteenth century, as well as our own experiences learning rhetoric and writing. The first two units both culminate in a writing assignment that leads up to the research project you will conduct in the final unit. The third unit builds on the first two by asking you to use the writing tools we are developing to conduct your own investigation on the practices of teaching and learning writing and rhetoric during a particular time period.

Course Objectives

Through your involvement in this course, you will:

- discuss key developments in the history of rhetoric
- locate rhetorical texts in their historical and social context(s)
- situate diverging—even conflicting—rhetorical theories alongside one another
- recognize strengths and limitations of any single approach to studying or teaching rhetoric
- use rhetorical theory to engage issues around writing, teaching, and learning to write

Required Text

Patricia Bizzell & Bruce Herzberg, eds. *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001.

Course Requirements & Grading

Daily work (includes attendance, participation, homework assignments & quizzes) = 100 points

Critical Summaries of each reading (300-500 words each) = 60 points

Unit 1: Comparative Analysis (750-1000 words) = 100 points
Unit 2: Analysis of *Saved!* (750-1000 words) = 100 points
Unit 3: Research Project on Teaching and Learning Rhetoric (2000 words) = 200 points
Final: "Why (or Why Not To) Study Rhetoric" Poster = 40 points

TOTAL POINTS: 600

A = 540-600
B = 480-549
C = 420-479
D = 360-419
F = 0-359

Absence Policy

More than two unexcused absences will affect your final participation grade by one point (out of 25) for each absence. That is, on your third absence, your participation grade will drop by 1 point; on your fourth, it will drop by 2 points, etc. See Student Rule 7 (student-rules.tamu.edu/rule7.htm) for information on what counts as an excused absence. I will expect your written absence excuse (doctor's note, etc.) within a week of your return to class.

Student Learning

Your success in this class is important to me. If there are circumstances which may affect your performance in this class, let me know as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

Students With Disabilities

"The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities, in B-118 Cain Hall, or call 845-1637." (Student Rules publication).

Honor Code

This course, like all courses at A&M, is bound by the Aggie Code of Honor: "*An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do.*" (For more, see the Honor Council Rules and Procedures on the web at www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor.)

Course Calendar

Unit 1: What is "Rhetoric"?

M 28 August	Introduction to course; definitions of rhetoric
W 30 August	Plato, <i>Phaedrus</i> , speeches 1 and 2.
M 04 September	Plato, <i>Phaedrus</i> , speech 3-conclusion (Summary due)
W 06 September	Aristotle (from book I) (Summary due) <i>Mini-lesson: Thesis Statements</i>
M 11 September	Cicero, <i>De Oratore</i> (Summary due)
W 13 September	Making Comparisons <i>Mini-lesson: Using Evidence</i>

M 18 September **Comparative Analysis DRAFTS to group members**
Bring 3 copies of your draft to distribute to your group members.

W 20 September **Comparative Analysis Peer Review Workshop**
Bring completed comment sheets for peers' papers

Unit 2: *Vir Bonus Dicendi Peritus*: Rhetoric and Character

M 25 September On Rhetoric and Character

W 27 September Quintilian

****Final drafts of Comparative Analysis due to my mailbox no later than 5 p.m. on Friday 29 Sep.**

M 02 October Astell (**Quintilian Summary due**)

W 04 October Douglass (**Astell Summary due**)

M 09 October Making comparisons; analyzing films (**Douglass Summary due**)

W 11 October Film—*Saved!*; generating questions and hypotheses

M 16 October Film—*Saved!*; observations and discussion

What connections can you draw between the rhetorical theories we have been reading and the characters in the film?

DUE: 500-750 word rhetorical theory comparison

W 18 October Making connections between the film and rhetorical theory

Focus on articulating scenes from the film that take up, connect with, challenge, or otherwise engage the rhetorical theories and themes we have been studying.

DUE: 500-word response to the film in the context of the rhetorical theories we've read.

M 23 October ***Saved!* Analysis Drafts to Group Members**

Bring 3 copies of your draft to distribute to your group members.

W 25 October ***Saved!* Analysis Peer Review Workshop**

Bring completed comment sheets for peers' papers

Unit 3: On Teaching and Learning Rhetoric Throughout History

M 30 October On Teaching and Learning Rhetoric

Assign Groups for Presentations

DUE: Final drafts of *Saved!* Analysis

W 01 November Preparing for presentations, in-class group-work

Remember to meet AT LEAST TWICE out of class with your group, and that at least one of those meetings needs to be with me during my office hours or another mutually convenient time.

M 06 November Group Presentations: **Rhetoric and Culture**

Assigned Reading: Dissoi Logoi; Gorgias, "Encomium of Helen"; Aspasia

W 08 November Group Presentations: **Civic Education**

*Assigned Reading: Isocrates, from *Against the Sophists**

M 13 November Group Presentations: **Rhetoric and Christianity**

W 15 November *Assigned Reading:* Augustine
Group Presentations: **Medieval “Arts” of Rhetoric**
Assigned Reading: Anonymous, *Art of Letter Writing*; Perelman
(handout)

M 20 November Group Presentations: **Reforming Rhetoric**
Assigned Reading: Fell

W 22 November Group Presentations: **Rhetoric and Style**
Assigned Reading: Vinsauf; Blair

M 27 November Class cancelled for individual paper conferences
W 29 November Evaluations; work in groups to prepare for poster presentations.

Poster presentations and final papers due during exam window, M 11 December, 3:30-5:30 p.m.