
“Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion.”

—Aristotle

**CST 305-01: Persuasion in Western Culture
(SPEAKING INTENSIVE)
Spring 2007
Curry 303
MW 3:30-4:45 p.m.**

Professor

Dr. Chris Poulos

Office: Ferguson Building # 107

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Department of Communication Studies Mission

We research, teach, and practice communication to cultivate the ethical voices of people that speak in critical, constructive, and transformative ways to identities, relationships, and communities.

Philosophy of Scholarship: We believe that communication is formative and foundational to human identities, relationships, and communities—and that ethical and strategically effective communication can be the means of critiquing, constructing, and transforming identities, relationships, and communities.

We engage in communication scholarship in the form of research, teaching, and service that:

- Integrates dialogue and other approaches to communication as the foundation for scholarly inquiry and application to the world
 - Cultivates diversity and respect for differences
 - Promotes change that leads to more democratic, just, and peaceful relationships and communities
 - Engages creative partnerships of faculty, students, and other stakeholders in addressing contemporary challenges and opportunities for improving communication
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Course Description

From the Undergraduate Bulletin: "Significant theories in persuasive communication from classical times to the present. Types of societies in which oratory flourishes. Critical analysis of selected speakers. Contemporary issues, including the ethics of persuasion" (2007-08 UNCG *Undergraduate Bulletin*).

This is a course in the history of rhetoric (persuasion) and in the application of rhetorical theory to various communicative events. In this course, we will examine the historical evolution of rhetoric (persuasion) in Western

culture, from ancient Greece until our current age, by taking an integrated thematic approach.

This upper-level course serves as a building block for other communication courses at the 300-500 level that depend on the knowledge and skills that you will develop in this course. An understanding of the history, principles, and applications of rhetoric and rhetorical theory will allow you to develop a working knowledge of some of the foundational thinking in our field. Further, the course emphasizes how rhetorical theory may assist us in building, understanding, and transforming relationships and communities in strategic and ethical ways.

During our semester together, you will have the opportunity to discover the Western worldview from a communication perspective. My goal is to assist you in this discovery so that you can use this knowledge and your communication skills to function in a more critical and adaptive manner in the real world. We will discuss the relationships between: communication and meaning; signs, symbols, and speech; communication and the development of community; self, talk, and world; knowing and speaking; various forms, techniques, and methods of persuasion; rhetoric, ethics, and justice; persuasive strategies and the good of the community; gender and communication; and so on. Analysis and construction of rhetorical texts of various types and from various contexts— e.g., speeches, advertisements, jokes, films, television shows, musical performances, etc.—will help us to apply our knowledge and to expand our understanding of how and why persuasion works (or doesn't).

In addition, this **speaking intensive** version of this course will be designed to engage your critical/rhetorical voice as a speaker, and to give you ample opportunity to practice and hone your public speaking skills.

Course Purpose

The purpose of this 300-level course is to develop your core knowledge and to help you to evaluate and apply that knowledge. CST 305 is particularly aimed at demonstrating how persuasive communication over the centuries is a reflection of the ethical positions held by communities of people. We will critically analyze how oratory (public discourse) and other forms of persuasion (e.g., in private conversation) flourish in particular types of societies and how rhetoric in general has influenced our discursive practices today.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes

You will:

- Learn and explain key rhetorical theories from classical times to the present;
- Use critical thinking skills to analyze the strategies, contexts, and ethics of public discourse;
- Engage in comparative analysis of different traditions of Western rhetorical thought to discover how those traditions influence your own rhetorical strategies;
- Develop and use a vocabulary of terms related to the study of persuasion;

- Develop a richer understanding of the theoretical and practical dimensions of both direct engagement in and careful study of rhetoric;
- Build a stronger awareness of your own and others' persuasive styles, approaches, aptitudes, and skills;
- Develop/expand your repertoire of rhetorical skills;
- Explore the importance of rhetoric in everyday life;
- Develop a clearer understanding of the relationships between communication and communities, especially the ways in which communication serves to both shape and reflect the ideologies of communities and cultures;
- Explore and develop the relationships between persuasion, ethics, and justice;
- Conduct library-based independent scholarly research in the field of rhetoric; and
- **Speak** and **write** intelligently about rhetoric, including topics such as:
 - the "magic" of words;
 - the coordinated management of meaning;
 - the search for "truth" through speaking;
 - invention, arrangement, expression, memory, and delivery in oratory;
 - persuasion vs. dialogue;
 - the idea and uses of "presence;"
 - the nature and structure of argument;
 - the uses and detection of fallacies, lies, and "dirty tricks;"
 - the functions and uses of character, emotion, and logic in persuasion;
 - the social construction of the self;
 - the importance of strong understanding of/respondiveness to the Other ("audience");
 - the dramatic dimensions of human life and communication;
 - the narrative structure of human life and communication;
 - the persuasive power of story;
 - the rhetorics of war, hatred, spirit, love, politics, etc.;
 - the techniques, functioning and development of persuasive appeals of various kinds;
 - the development of communicative competence;
 - the social construction of communities; and
 - the ethical dimensions of persuasion.

Course Requirements

- **READING:** Reading is an **essential** component of this course. **YOU MUST READ IN ORDER TO SUCCEED!** The readings will form the springboard for our class dialogues. All reading **MUST** be completed prior to the day for which it is assigned on the syllabus. For example, before coming to class on Wednesday, August 22, please read pages 1-25 (Chapter 1) in James A. Herrick's book, *The History and Theory of*

Rhetoric: An Introduction. Your reading comprehension will be tested in class via a variety of techniques, including discussion, questioning, quizzes, in-class writing assignments, etc. Stay on top of the reading! The course's success depends upon it, and so does yours! A series of quizzes, designed to test your reading comprehension, will be administered during the semester. You will also have various opportunities in class to orally demonstrate your reading comprehension and retention.

Participation:

- We must all participate actively in class discussions in order to have a genuine and persuasive conversation about persuasion. **This is a speaking-intensive course.** So: speak up! Offer your insights, ideas, conjectures, critical evaluations, responses to questions, and so on, as we engage in discussion. Offer relevant examples from daily life, the media, the arts, etc., to spur discussion; think and respond actively and creatively. By attending class regularly and actively participating, you will not only be better prepared for your writing assignments and for successful completion of this course, you will also help make this course a more valuable and enriching experience for us all!

Attendance:

- **Since classroom learning is an integral component of this course, ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. You may miss no more than TWO class sessions before penalties accrue (your "free skip" days). Each missed class session beyond these two will earn you a penalty of 50 points.** If you do the math, you will realize that this penalty, when combined with missed participation points and missed quizzes, will result in a substantial "ding" to your grade. Do the math before you ditch. The only exceptions to this policy are University-sanctioned "excused absences" (death in the family, fire, flood, famine, pestilence, enrollment in the witness protection program, illness, etc.). You should contact me in advance—or as soon as you know—if you will miss class due to one of these reasons.
- **IN-CLASS BEHAVIOR:** Please, no cell phones, side conversations, newspapers, lunches or dinners in class. Water bottles with lids are acceptable. **Please arrive on time**, and do not leave the classroom except during our regular breaks. On the first day of class, we will have a discussion about further parameters of in-class conduct.

Assignments/Course Requirements

- **Speaking**—This is a *speaking intensive* course. Therefore, you will have many opportunities to speak, in a variety of formats, including:
 - **Informal class discussions** on various course themes and topics (impromptu; constitute part of your overall participation grade);
 - **Story circles;**
 - **Reading roundtables** related to specific course readings (with summary and comment);

- **Small group exercises**, including debriefing/feedback presentations (requiring participation by all group members; impromptu/to be assigned in class; constitute part of your overall participation grade);
 - **Team panel discussions;**
 - **A persuasive speech; and**
 - **A presentation of your research project.**
- **Writing**—You will complete **one** major writing project for this course, which will be crafted in two stages: a) A research prospectus/annotated bibliography, which will serve as the proposal and groundwork for your b) Final research paper.
 - **Quizzes**—There will be a series of written and oral quizzes testing your comprehension of the reading.

NOTE: FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON ALL ASSIGNMENTS, SEE COURSE SUCCESS GUIDE ON BLACKBOARD (UNDER COURSE DOCUMENTS).

Makeups: On any class missed, you will receive a "zero" (0) for that day's in-class assignments, quizzes, and participation. No make-ups will be scheduled for missed writing assignments, speaking assignments, or quizzes, unless previously arranged with me (excused absences).

Academic Integrity First responsibility for academic integrity lies with individual students and faculty members of the UNCG community. A violation of academic integrity is an act harmful to all other students, faculty and, ultimately, the entire community. Specific information on the Academic Integrity Policy and obligations of faculty and students may be found on-line, on the UNCG website at the address: <http://deanofstudents.uncg.edu/>. Be sure to acquaint yourself with the student code of conduct and the academic integrity policy. It is your responsibility to know the rules and abide by them!

Meanwhile, know this: **Cheaters never prosper! And read this:**

http://www.buddhanet.net/bt_51.htm

Disability If you have a disability or special need that requires accommodation, please see me privately during office hours, or make an appointment.

Grading

Active participation in class dialogues	200 points
Quizzes	100 points
Reading Roundtable Facilitation	100 points
Team panel discussion	125 points
Research prospectus/Annotated Bib.	100 points
Research paper	250 points
Project presentation	125 points
TOTALS	1000 points

930-1000 points (93%+) = A

900-929 (90-92%) = A-

870-899 (87-89%) = B+

830-869 (83-86%) = B

800-829 (80-82%) = B-

770-799 (77-79%) = C+

730-769 (73-76%) = C

700-729 (70-72%) = C-

670-699 (67-69%) = D+

630-669 (63-66%) = D

600-639 (60-62%) = D-

Course Materials/Reading

Herrick, J. A. (2005). *The history and theory of rhetoric: An introduction* (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Paul, R. & Elder, L. (2004). *The thinker's guide to fallacies: The art of mental trickery and manipulation*. Dillon Beach, CA: The foundation for critical thinking.

Various Web (see links on syllabus) and **E-Reserves** Readings (links on Blackboard)

NOTE: ALWAYS BRING THE ASSIGNED TEXT TO CLASS!

COURSE SCHEDULE

ACT ONE: RHETORIC AND TRUTH

August 20

Communication: Strategies, Ethics, Relationships, and Communities

Activities:

- Introductions and course overview
- Definitions: Communication, rhetoric, symbols, *ethos/logos/pathos/mythos*
- The communication diamond
- Paradigms of communication study
- Persuasion exercises
- Team panel formation and brainstorming/Group meeting #1

Example: *A Time to Kill*

Assignment: Buy course texts; download/print syllabus and course success guide

Activity: Group meeting

August 22

The history and theory of rhetoric: An introduction

Read: Herrick, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-25)

Activity: Group meeting

August 27

A Brief History of Rhetoric (the search for the relationship between knowledge, words, and truth)

Read: Herrick, Chapter 2, pp. 31-49 + Plato's *Allegory of the cave*:

<http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/allegory.html>

Look at image: <http://home.earthlink.net/~johnrpenner/Images/PlatosCave.gif>

August 29

Rhetoric and Trickery

Read: Herrick, Chapter 3, pp. 54-69 + excerpt from Plato's *Gorgias*

Reading Roundtable #1: Plato's *Gorgias* (demo)

September 3

Labor Day: No class!

September 5

Rhetoric and Trickery

Read: Paul & Elder, *The Thinker's Guide to Fallacies*, pp. 3-37

Reading roundtable #2: Dirty tricks

September 10

Rhetoric and Trickery and Propaganda, Oh My!
Rhetoric and Argument (Toulmin)

Read: Bernays, *Propaganda (E-Reserves)* + Herrick, Chapter 9, p.p. 198-207

Exercise: Various tricks and examples...

Film: *Thank you for smoking*

Quiz 1

ACT TWO: RHETORIC AND STORY

September 12

The rhetoric of story; the story of rhetoric...

Read: Taylor, Introduction and Chapter 1, *The Sound of Story* pp. 1-22 (**E-Reserves**) + Poulos, *Spirited Teaching: A Pedagogy of Courage (E-Reserves)*

Reading roundtable #3: Story

September 17

Story and knowing

Read: Taylor, Chapter 2, *What do you know when you know a story?* pp. 23-40 (**E-Reserves**)

Critical tool: Narrative analysis (Examples: *Star Wars, Big Fish, Truman Show*)

Dialogue: What do you know when you know a story?

Activity: Story circles

September 19

Story and (the search for) Truth

Read: Paul & Elder, pp. 39-55

Exercise: Fallacy detection

Examples: *Gekko, Springer, Bush, TV psychics, etc....*

Activity: Group meeting

September 24

The rhetoric of dreams...Metaphor, vision, story...

Read: Martin Luther King, Jr's "*I Have a Dream!*" speech:

<http://www.uncg.edu/~cnpoulos/cnpmlkspch.html> + "Letter from a Birmingham Jail": http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

Examples: Great speeches (MLK)

Critical tool: Metaphorical analysis

Quiz 2

ACT THREE: RHETORIC AND METHOD

September 26

Rhetoric as technique (Aristotle)

Read: Herrick, Chapter 4, pp. 85-90

Exercise: Critiques of speeches using Aristotle's proofs (*Patton, Do the Right Thing, Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, etc.)

Activity: Group meeting

October 1

Rhetoric and Research

Read: Herrick, Chapter 4, pp. 73-85

Research Skills Workshop—Meet in the lobby of Jackson library (across from the circulation desk). **Be early/on time!**

October 3

Rhetoric, memory, epideixis...

Read: Ronald Reagan's *Challenger* speech:

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ronaldreaganchallenger.htm>

and

Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*:

<http://www.uncg.edu/~cnpoulos/cnpgettysburg.html>

Examples: Great speeches (Reagan and RFK)

Critical tool: Epideictic analysis

Due: By Friday, October 5 at 4:00 p.m. You must send me an email telling me what text you will examine for your research project, and why you chose it...cnpoulos@uncg.edu

October 8

Roman method (Cicero)

Read: Herrick, Chapter 5, pp. 93-116 + Cicero's *De Oratore* (**E-Reserves**) pp. 216-220 + John F. Kennedy's inaugural address:

<http://www.uncg.edu/~cnpoulos/cnpjfk.html>

Examples: Great speeches (JFK)

Critical tool: Cicero's canons

Activity: Group meeting

Quiz 3

ACT FOUR: RHETORIC, SPIRIT, COMMUNITY

October 10

Christian voices and the power of the Word...

Read: Herrick, Chapter 6, pp. 122-142 + *The Sermon on the Mount*:

<http://www.uncg.edu/~cnpoulos/cnp305sermononmount.html> + Bible excerpts:

<http://www.uncg.edu/~cnpoulos/cnp305bibleexcerpts.html>

Reading Roundtable #4: Christian rhetoric

Dialogue: Belief and the Word...

October 15

Fall Break: No Class!

October 17

Ideology

Read: Herrick, Chapter 7, pp. 147-170

Examples: *KOYAANISQATSI: LIFE OUT OF BALANCE* + Malcolm X, etc.

Critical tool: Ideological analysis

Activity: Group meeting #8

October 22

The foundations of community: Ideology and communication

Queries: What is knowledge? What is a human? What is a community?

Read: Herrick, Chapter 8, pp. 174-193 + The Declaration of Independence:

<http://www.law.indiana.edu/uslawdocs/declaration.html> + The U.S. Constitution

(read Preamble and amendments 1, 2, 13, and 14):

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/constitution.overview.html>

October 24

The foundations of community: Ideology and communication

Read: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, **Book 1 only** at

<http://www.constitution.org/jjr/socon.htm>

Reading Roundtable #5 (Rousseau)

Quiz 4

ACT FIVE: RHETORIC AND THE DRAMA OF LIFE

October 29

The drama of rhetoric...

Read: Herrick, Chapter 10, pp. 222-240 + Kenneth Burke's *A Grammar of Motives/A Rhetoric of Motives* (**E-Reserves**)

Reading roundtable # 6 (Burke)

Critical tool: Burke's dramatisitic (pentadic) analysis

October 31

Rhetoric and War

Read: Mark Twain's *War Prayer*: <http://www.ntua.gr/lurk/making/warprayer.html> + Roosevelt's *Pearl Harbor* speech:

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm>

Dialogue: War and Rhetoric

Examples: Great speeches (FDR)

Critical tool: Thematic Analysis

Due: Research Prospectus/Annotated Bibliography!

November 5

Rhetoric and hate

Film clips: *American History X* + *A Shadow of Hate* + *The Laramie Project*

Web sites: Klan, Nazis, Aryans, et.al.

Quiz 5

November 7

TEAM PANEL DISCUSSION #1: RHETORIC AND CINEMA

November 12

TEAM PANEL DISCUSSION #2: RHETORIC AND PRINT MEDIA

November 14

No Class: Research day!

November 19

TEAM PANEL DISCUSSION #3: RHETORIC AND THE WORLD WIDE WEB

November 21

No Class—Thanksgiving Holiday!

November 26

TEAM PANEL DISCUSSION # 4: RHETORIC AND TELEVISION

November 28

TEAM PANEL DISCUSSION # 5: RHETORIC AND MUSIC

ACT SIX: RHETORIC AND *ETHOS*

December 3

The special case of presidential rhetoric

Read: Zarefsky*, *Presidential rhetoric and the power of definition*

and Bush, *Address to a Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks*:

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911jointsessionspeech.htm>

*— Note: This author will be visiting the UNCG campus in the spring semester of 2008, as part of UNCG's Harriet Elliott lecture series, sponsored this year by the Department of Communication Studies (see: http://www.uncg.edu/aas/Lecture_Series/Current_Lecture_Series.html)

December 5

Rhetorical ethics, voice, and invitation

Read: Herrick, Chapter 11, pp. 261-270 + The National Communication Association's Credo for Ethical Communication:

<http://www.natcom.org/nca/Template2.asp?bid=374>

Examples: Great speeches (Naomi Wolf)

Dialogue: Toward an invitational rhetorical ethic

December 10 Last day of class: Final presentations

Due: Final Paper!

December 17 Final exam period (3:30-6:30 p.m.): Final presentations

VITAL LINKS

- **OUR DEPARTMENT'S PAGE AT JACKSON LIBRARY:**
<http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/bibs/cst.asp>
- **THIS COURSE'S PAGE AT JACKSON LIBRARY:**
<http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/bibs/cst/cst305.asp>
- **THE FOREST OF RHETORIC PAGE:**
<http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/silva.htm>
- **RHETORIC PAGE:** <http://eserver.org/rhetoric/>
- **American Rhetoric Page:** <http://www.AmericanRhetoric.com/>
- **Criteria for evaluating the World Wide Web:**
<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlpubs/crlnews/backissues1998/julyaugust6/teachingundergrads.htm>
- **Presidential Rhetoric:** <http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/>
- **MLK, Jr. Papers Project:** <http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/>
- **The Kenneth Burke Society:**
<http://www.home.duq.edu/~thames/kennethburke/Default.htm>
- **Lessons in the History of Rhetoric:**
<http://www.delmar.edu/engl/instruct/stomlin/1301int/lessons/language/rhet/hist.htm>
- **A Glossary of Rhetoric:** <http://www.uky.edu/AS/Classics/rhetoric.html>
- **Aristotle's rhetoric:** <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~honeyl/Rhetoric/>
- **A definition:** http://rhetoric.byu.edu/Encompassing_Terms/rhetoric.htm
- **A handbook of rhetorical devices:**
<http://www.virtualsalt.com/rhetoric.htm>

“Out of our quarrels with others we make rhetoric. Out of our quarrels with ourselves we make poetry.”

—William Butler Yeats
