

English 827, History of Rhetoric

(3 hours, graduate; CRN 15848)

Fall 2015

Thursday 6–8:45, Wallace 230

Dr. Dominic Ashby

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Case Annex 348

Office hours: T/Th 1:00–3:00; Wednesday 9:30–12:00

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Course Description

This course will provide a survey of foundational texts in the Euro-American rhetorical tradition as well as study some examples of less familiar but equally important rhetorical traditions, such as traditions from the Middle East and East Asia. As a survey, the course will introduce students to a wide range of concepts and writers crucial to the development of the rhetorical tradition today, taking a historical approach to identify trends and movements through the history of rhetoric that continue to affect how rhetoric is understood and taught.

This course will strive to balance between breadth and depth, providing an overview of major ideas and themes that have threaded their way through the histories of rhetoric and how those ideas have both changed and remained the same, challenged and held onto historical roots. I hope you will leave the course with a clearer idea of why we teach writing, reading, and communication in the ways we do. I hope you will also leave with a firmer sense of your goals for your own work and where you fit in the discipline as scholars and teachers.

Required Texts

Lipson, Carol and Roberta Binkley, eds. *Ancient Non-Greek Rhetorics*. West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2009.

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

Policies

Absence Policy: I expect you to attend every class session unless an emergency situation arises. If you are absent for more than one week of class, I reserve the right assign you a failing grade (FA) for the course. Since the class only meets once a week, that means failing if you miss more than one class period without documentation of an emergency. If you anticipate missing more than one class due to existing obligations, talk with me ASAP so we can discuss alternatives.

Academic Integrity: Students are advised that EKU's Academic Integrity policy will strictly be enforced in this course. The [Academic Integrity policy](#) is available at the [policy website](#). Questions regarding the policy may be directed to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: A student with a "disability" may be an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as learning, seeing or hearing. Additionally, pregnancy or a related medical condition that causes a similar substantial limitation may also be considered a disability under the ADA.

If you are registered with the [Office of Services for Individuals with Disabilities](#), please obtain your accommodation letters from the [OSID](#) and present them to the course instructor to discuss any academic accommodations you need. If you believe you need accommodation and are not registered with the [OSID](#), please contact the office in the Whitlock Building Room 361 by email at disserv@eku.edu or by telephone at (859) 622-2933. Upon individual request, this syllabus can be made available in an alternative format.

Email: I will post class updates and reminders to our class email list, so please check it regularly. I make a great effort to respond to emails in a timely manner and generally will get back to you within 24 hours during the week (usually much sooner—I check several times a day, but not every minute), 48 hours on weekends. If you have emailed me and not heard back within that timeframe, do not hesitate to email again—my not replying may mean the message was caught in a spam folder or otherwise misdirected.

Cell Phones, Text Messaging, and Other Distracting Stuff: We're living in a very connected world and it's hard to disconnect. While teaching and in meetings, I make it a habit to turn the ringer on my phone off and to exit out of any social and messaging apps on my computer. In general, my course policy is this: Do not interrupt the class in any way, or distract your classmates, or show disrespect for the instructor or other students in the class. Turn cell phone ringers to Off. If you must (say, you are waiting on an update on a close relative's condition), quietly step out and take calls and do text messaging outside the classroom.

Assignments and Grade Distribution

Commonplace Book (weekly reading responses, notes, and questions): I am looking for revised, condensed reading notes, no more than one page typed *per reading* (half a page is better); note that on most weeks we have multiple readings. Each entry might include an author's definition of rhetoric, key terms, important/memorable quotes, observations about connections to other course readings, as well as questions you have. I'll take up print copies of your new entries each week and return them at our following meeting. Make these entries useful to your work and as preparation for your comprehensive exams.

Practicing *Facilitas* (inventing and finding arguments): Rather than assigning a different person to lead weekly discussions, I'd like for us all to actively engage in weekly rhetorical practice and play. This means verbally practicing debate, argument, definition, questions, elaboration, restatement, and style. To prompt this kind of rhetorical work, expect that at any moment (*kairos*) I might ask you to summarize the main argument of a reading, state its opposite case, share an author's definition of rhetoric, give three competing definitions of a term, engage in debate with another classmate, identify an audience (implied, actual, possible), invent five ways of making a point, and so forth. I'll expect you to always be ready for this challenge and will keep track, but you can take a few passes.

Seminar Project: Here is your chance to go into greater depth on a rhetor, theory, historical moment, rhetorical tradition, or trend. I am open to your ideas about a topic and will ask you to write a formal

topic proposal, which I'll meet with you individually to talk about before you fully commit to a topic. My goal for the project is that you connect it to your own ongoing research, exam preparation, and career plans. To help guide your thinking about a possible topic, here are some kinds of projects that fit well with this course and the kind of research scholars of rhetoric often engage with: (1) A study of a particular rhetorical strategy used over particular historical periods or across this history; (2) A paper that demonstrates how your study of rhetoric connects to your teaching of writing; (3) A study of a rhetor who has not been recovered to your satisfaction; (4) A comparative reading of different cultures' approaches to a particular rhetorical situation; (5) An exploration of the historical/cultural context of your ongoing research; (6) An exploration of the uses of rhetorical history for literary research; (7) A rhetorical analysis of your major research subject. We will talk about possible topics and methods as a class, and I also want you to be talking with me throughout the semester about your topic and how you might develop it—take advantage of my office hours if you can or email me with ideas and questions if your schedule means you can't.

The topic proposal, due October 8, should be no more than 1000 words. The final paper should be about 15 pages in length. I will work in time near the end of the semester for editing and revision. Consider the paper as the core of a possible conference presentation or the basis of an article manuscript.

Grade Distribution:

Commonplace Book: 20%

Practicing *Facilitas*: 20%

Proposal: 10%

Seminar Paper: 50%

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

(Schedule is subject to change, with notice)

August 27: Introduction to the class; overview of rhetoric; discussion of goals, hopes, and assumptions

September 3: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*
"General Introduction," 1–17
"Introduction" to Classical Rhetoric, 19–43
Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*, 42–46
Anonymous, *Dissoi Logoi*, 47–55
Plato, *Phaedrus*, 138–169

September 10: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*:
Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 169–241
Read scanned pdf from *Rhetoric Before and Beyond the Greeks*:
Richard Enos, "The Art of Rhetoric at Rhodes: An Eastern Rival to the Athenian Representation of Classical Rhetoric."

September 17: Read in *Ancient Non-Greek Rhetorics*:

Roberta Binkley, “The Gendering of Prophetic Discourse: Women and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East” 67–93
Mari Lee Mifsud, “Storytelling as Soul-Tuning: The Ancient Rhetoric of Valmiki’s *Ramayana*” 197–220
Scott Stroud, “Argument in Classical Indian Philosophy: The Case of Sankara’s Advaita Vedanta” 240–264
Yichun Liu and Xiaoye You, “Reading the Heavenly Mandate: Dong Zhongshu’s Rhetoric of the Way (*Dao*)” 153–175
Arabella Lyon, “Why Do the Rulers Listen to the Wild Theories of Speech Makers?” 176–196.

September 24: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*:

Rhetorica ad Herrenium, 243–282
Cicero—just the section intro, 283–288
Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*, 359–428

October 1: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*:

Introduction to Medieval Rhetoric, 429–449
Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 450–485
The Principles of Letter Writing, 492–502
Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, 540–551

Read in *Ancient Non-Greek Rhetorics*:

Steven Katz, “The Hebrew Bible as Another, Jewish Sophistic: A Genesis of Absence and Desire in Ancient Rhetoric” 125–150

October 8: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*:

Introduction to Renaissance rhetoric, 553–580
Erasmus, *On Copia*, 581–596
Margaret Fell, “Women’s Speaking Justified” 748–760
Madeleine de Scudery, “Of Conversation” 761–772

FIRST PROPOSALS FOR FINAL PROJECT DUE

October 15: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*:

Introduction to Enlightenment rhetoric, 789–813
Campbell, *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 898–946

Read, scanned from *Available Means*:

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*

October 22: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*:
Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres*, 947–979
Introduction to 19th century rhetoric, 981–999
Maria Stewart, *Lecture Delivered at the Franklin Hall* 1031–1038
Sarah Grimke, *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Women*, 1045–1060
Bain and Hill, 1141–1151 (samples)

October 29: [Class activities this day will be held online, asynchronously; more details as we get closer to the date]
Read in *Ancient Non-Greek Rhetorics*:
Kathy Wolfe, “The Right Use of True Words” 197
Richard Johnson-Sheehan, “Orality, Magic, and Myth in Ancient Irish Rhetoric” 265
Carol Lipson, “Introduction” 3–26

November 5: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*:
Introduction to Modern and Postmodernist Rhetoric,
1181–1206
Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 1281–1294
Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* and *A Rhetoric of Motives*, 1295–1339
Woolf, *Professions for Women* 1246–1255

November 12: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*:
Bahktin, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, 928–944
Toulmin, *Uses of Argument*, 1410–1428
Booth, *Modern Dogma*, 1491–1519
Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, From *The New Rhetoric* 1375–1378

November 19: Read in *Rhetorical Tradition*:
Fish “Rhetoric,” 1605–1628
Helene Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa” 1520–1536

Read scanned from *Available Means*:
Toni Morrison, “Nobel Lecture”

DRAFTS OF FINAL PROJECTS DUE

November 26: No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday

December 3: Catch up; review, summarize; discussion of drafts

December 10: PROJECTS DUE