

English 515.001 Classical and Medieval Rhetoric Fall 2012

Bill Bolin

Office & Hours: HL 324, T 2:00p—5:00p, Th 2:00--4:00, and by appt.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Eng515 will focus on classical rhetoric, approaching medieval rhetoric. We'll look at English translations of some standard rhetorical works of the Ancient World, as well as more current work arguing for consideration of classical and medieval contributions beyond those standard rhetorical texts. More specifically, we'll look at what the ancients had to say about living right and about getting their point(s) across, and we'll try to apply those points to contemporary issues in education, politics, peace and justice, communication, and other areas.

The books listed below are required reading and are arranged in the order we will read them. You may use any edition (even electronic) of Aristotle, Cicero, and Boethius, but I've included the ISBN of each of the editions I'll be using in case you want the same ones.

- Kennedy's *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition*, 2nd ed. ISBN: 978-0807847695 (We'll use this book throughout the semester.)
- Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (trans. Crisp) ISBN: 0-521-63546-2
- Cicero's *On Duties* (ed. Griffin and Atkins) ISBN: 0-521-34835-8
- Boethius's *The Consolation of Philosophy* (trans. Watts) ISBN: 0140447806

You'll also read some texts available at this URL: <http://eng515.wikidot.com/>

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- The students will demonstrate the capacity to understand and analyze several important features of classical/medieval rhetoric as evidenced by their capacity to build a critical argument about such features in a paper and a presentation.
- The students will demonstrate the capacity to research, draft , and finalize a research paper that meets the threshold of potential publication in a scholarly journal or presentation at a scholarly conference.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Each student is encouraged and otherwise required to do the following in the next several weeks:

- to fashion a working definition of "classical or medieval rhetorics"
- to use the thoughts of those described as classical rhetoricians as opportunities to question or affirm how we see ourselves in society

- to contribute to the professional discussion concerning classical and medieval rhetoric

ASSIGNMENTS

Critical Response Papers: Ideally, these response papers of 3-4 pages each will not serve as summaries of the reading but will instead provide opportunities for you to ponder *and evaluate* one or two points in the assigned reading, making connections to other reading you've done and otherwise demonstrating inventive thought. These papers should facilitate class discussion.

Presentation: Each of you will explore an issue in classical or medieval rhetoric and then present your findings to the rest of us. A separate assignment sheet is forthcoming, and the various due dates are on the calendar.

Paper Proposal: You will submit a proposal of a paragraph or so explaining the scope of your final paper. The proposal will include a tentative annotated bibliography. A separate assignment sheet is forthcoming.

Final paper: This is to be a rather polished paper of 15-20 pages that might be distilled into a possible conference presentation or expanded into a possible journal publication. You may address one of any number of issues related to classical or medieval rhetoric; more focused and specific issues may suggest themselves as you read in preparation for the course or as you see calls for conference papers or journal submissions. Each of you will have the opportunity to talk about your paper when you submit it. A separate assignment sheet is forthcoming.

Every assignment should be typed and double spaced and should follow MLA or APA guidelines. Also, as a rule I do not accept late assignments.

EVALUATION

Assignment Values	Final Grade Values
Four response papers: 40 pts. at 10 pts. each Presentation: 40 pts. Paper proposal: 40 pts. Final paper: 80 pts.	A= 180-200 pts. B= 160-179 pts. C= 140-159 pts. D= 120-139 pts. F= 0-119 pts.

ATTENDANCE

I don't anticipate any attendance problems. If you are absent the day an assignment is due, you must contact me and make satisfactory arrangements for turning in the assignment. Failure to make prior satisfactory arrangements will result in your forfeiting the right to turn in that assignment. As per university policy, excessive absences (three weeks' worth) will result in your being dropped from the course.

PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC DISHONESTY STATEMENT

Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3])

CALENDAR

Week 1 Aug. 30	Intro to class
Week 2 Sept. 6	Traditional and Technical Rhetoric: Kennedy, chaps. 1-2 Bizzell, "Editing the Rhetorical Tradition." [on the wiki] Presentation: Classical Rhetoric and Contemporary Writing Instruction
Week 3 Sept. 13	Sophists and Their Detractors Kennedy, chaps. 3-4 Glenn, "Refiguring Aspasia in the History of Rhetoric." [on the wiki] Critical Response #1 due Presentation: The Sophists
Week 4 Sept. 20	Plato: <u>Gorgias</u> and <u>Phaedrus</u> Presentation: Plato
Week 5 Sept. 27	Aristotle: <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Introduction and books I-IV Presentation: Aristotle
Week 6 Oct. 4	Aristotle: <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , books V-X Critical Response#2 due
Week 7 Oct. 11	Rome: Kennedy, Chap. 5 Enos, "The Archaeology of Women in Rhetoric." [on the wiki] Kmetz, "Rural Civic Ethos in Ciceronian Rhetoric." [on the wiki] Presentation: Cicero
Week 8 Oct. 18	Cicero: <i>On Duties</i> , Introduction and Book I; Paper Proposal due

Week 9 Oct. 25	Cicero: <i>On Duties</i> , Book II and Book III Presentation: Quintilian
Week 10 Nov. 1	Judeo-Christian Rhetoric: Kennedy, Chap. 7 [supplementary reading, tbd] Critical Response#3 due Presentation: Judaic-Christian Rhetoric
Week 11 Nov. 8	Middle Ages: Kennedy, chaps. 8-9 Glenn, "Rhetorical Technique in the Book of Margery Kempe." [on the wiki] Forbes, "The Radical Rhetoric of Caterina Da Siena." [on the wiki] Presentation: St. Augustine
Week 12 Nov. 15	Middle Ages: Boethius, books I, II, and III Critical Response#4 due Presentation: Boethius
Nov. 22	Thanksgiving
Week 13 Nov. 29	Middle Ages: Boethius, books IV and V
Week 14 Dec. 6	Web Assignment (class will not meet)
Week 15 Dec. 13	Final Paper due , seminar on papers [meet at the Pride Coffee Shop]

Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must go through the Academic Support Committee. For more information, please contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services, Halladay Student Services Bldg., Room 303D, (903) 886-5835.

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)