

**History and Theory of Rhetoric**  
**Focus: Women's Activism in the United States**  
**ENG 515-01W**  
**Course Syllabus: Spring 2014- Flex Term**  
**Dr. Tabettha Adkins**

**Class space:** eCollege

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**Office:** Hall of Languages 229

**Office hours:** Monday 10-12 & 1:30-3; Tuesday 10-12; Thursday 10-12

## Course Information

### Course Description:

*From Catalog:*  
*History and Theory of Rhetoric*

*A study of the major theories and theorists of rhetoric from classical times to the twentieth century. Emphasis varies from semester to semester. Attention is given to such theorists as Aristotle, Sophists, Plato, Cicero, Quintilian, Perelman, Richards, Weaver, and Confetti.*

*Note: May be repeated for credit when the emphasis changes.*

This semester, the course examines the ways in which women have used rhetoric in activist movements throughout U.S. history. This course operates both as (1) a survey of women's activism and the history of rhetoric used by those women and (2) a study in examining women's texts and rhetoric informed by a feminist theoretical perspective. In other words, the course will be of interest to students interested in rhetorical studies, women's history, and critical theory.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to analyze concepts from the assigned reading to explain the rhetorical techniques of a rhetorician of his/her choosing.
2. Students will be able to critique the rhetorical contributions of women activists in the U.S. using the lexicon of and theories commonly used in rhetorical analysis.
3. Students will be able to theorize texts utilizing the work of feminist theorists and critics.

### Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Feinberg, Leslie. *Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to Dennis Rodman.*

Boston: Beacon, 1996. Print.

Mattingly, Carol. *Appropriate[ing] Dress: Women's Rhetorical Style in Nineteenth-Century America*. Carbondale: Southern IL UP, 2002. Print.

----. *Well-Tempered Women: Nineteenth-Century Temperance Rhetoric*. Carbondale: Southern IL UP, 1998. Print.

Morgan, Robin, Ed. *Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings From the Women's Liberation Movement*. New York: Vintage, 1970. Print.

Sanger, Margaret. *The Pivot of Civilization: In Historical Perspective*. Ed. Michael W. Perry. Seattle: Inkling, 2001. Print.

Additional Readings in eCollege

## Course Requirements

### Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

#### Attendance Policy:

This is an online course, so face-to-face attendance is not required. The course is *not* self-paced, and students are expected to participate in the course every week. There is work due almost every week.

#### Assignments and Grade Weights:

Weekly participation on discussion board: (15%) I expect robust, lively discussion on the discussion board each week. I try to stay out of discussion as much as possible because I find that my participation shuts down the participation of others. However, I will ask prompting questions to help get discussion started. You should post throughout the week and treat these posts as a discussion with give and take—that means asked each other follow up questions, commenting on one another's posts, etc.

Midterm proposal and annotated bib: (10%) For the midterm, I want to see that you are working toward a final project topic or question. For the proposal, I want to see (1) what you're arguing or what question you're pursuing (2) what this argument/ question contributes beyond the course content and (3) what sources are you consulting to make this argument or ask this question. You will annotate at least fifteen sources to show how you are utilizing them toward developing your own intellectual work.

Theory presentation: (15%) I have identified enough critical feminist theory articles so that each student in the class will have one. You will read this article, and then during the week you article is listed (see calendar at the end of the syllabus), you will give an online presentation in which you present to your classmates: the main ideas/ summary of the article, an analysis of the article, show how this article could be applied to texts and concepts from the course, and/or show

how the article connections with course texts and concepts. Your purpose in this presentation is essentially to give your classmates the knowledge you gained from reading the article. Your presentation should be appropriate for an online course, so you could use vide, prezi, web text, etc.) Your classmates will discuss the content of your presentation (i.e. the article you present).

Two analysis papers: (20%- 10% each) These 2-4 page papers will cover a text of your choice. In this paper, you will analyze the rhetorical strategies used by the woman/women at the focus and/or who authored the text you chose. In this analysis, you should consider some the following questions:

- Why was this approach effective or ineffective?
- What strategies did the speakers/authors use?
- What was their goal?
- How is context important to this specific rhetorical event?
- How is audience important to this specific rhetorical event?
- How is ethos important to this specific rhetorical event?
- How are politics (local, national, or global) a part of this specific rhetorical event?
- What can we learn about argument and rhetoric from this specific rhetorical event?
- What can we glean about teaching argument and rhetoric from this specific rhetorical event?

You chose the deadlines for these two papers, but you must submit the analysis the Monday after we have finished discussing it by 5:00 PM.

Presentation of final project in progress: (5%) Give your classmates a glimpse of your smart work in progress. I do not want you post your entire paper. Rather, I'd like to see something like:

- Links to some original content you're working with
- A video (5 minutes max) of you explaining your work
- A web-text explaining your work
- Some kind of short summary explaining your work

Even though you're presenting work in progress, I want you to take this assignment seriously. Your classmates can benefit from seeing what you are working on, so present it professionally.

Due Thursday, May 1 by 10:00 AM.

Final Project: (35%) Take on a question or idea that interests you throughout the semester and follow this question or idea. I have an open mind about what the final project looks like, and I will be working with you throughout the semester (through the midterm proposal process) to help you develop a smart project worthy of a graduate course in rhetoric. What I value here is: (1) engaged thinking about the course themes (2) intellectual work digging deeper into the course themes (3) evidence that you have worked through this thinking to develop a project that shows what you have learned beyond the course content.

Due Tuesday, May 6 at noon.

### **Grading Scale:**

90-100

A

89-80	B
79-70	C
69-60	D
59 and below	F

## Technology Requirements

You will need access to the Internet and eCollege.

All assignments must be typed and submitted through eCollege in the designated space.

## Communication and Support

The very best way to contact me is to send me an e-mail at [Tabetha.Adkins@tamuc.edu](mailto:Tabetha.Adkins@tamuc.edu)

I am also available for meeting face-to-face during my office hours (listed at the beginning of the syllabus) and by appointment. My office is located at HL 229. Appointments scheduled through e-mail are appreciated.

I can be reached via telephone during my office hours, as well. The number is 903.886.5269. There are time when I must step out during my office hours for meetings, so it is best to arrange a discussion via e-mail prior to calling.

Since this is an online class, I am also happy to meet you via Skype or Google Hangout. Contact me to arrange a time.

I check my e-mail and the eCollege space regularly Monday through Friday. Ordinarily, I take the weekends off. If you would like to have an online discussion with me and cannot arrange a time during the week, we can arrange to talk during the weekend.

## Course Policies and Procedures

### **Academic dishonesty/ Plagiarism:**

Professors 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]).

Plagiarism isn't simply the use of another source's words without giving credit to that source. In fact, this issue is far more complicated. For example:

1. If you write an entire paragraph based on information from a source and only cite that source at the end of the paragraph, this practice can be considered a form of plagiarism.
2. If you use an author's idea without crediting the author, this practice can be considered a form of plagiarism.
3. If you turn in an essay you have used in another course, you can be accused of plagiarism. Yes, you can plagiarize yourself!
4. If you buy a paper from an online "paper mill," this is definitely plagiarism.
5. If someone writes your paper for you, this is definitely plagiarism.
6. If you "lift" sentences, phrases, or paragraphs from a source (online, a book, a peer's paper, etc.) without giving credit to the source, that is definitely plagiarism.

*My promise to you:*

I promise to *never* use turnitin.com or other proprietary tools like it because these programs make money off your work without compensating you. Here's how it works: A university pays turnitin.com for its services (with your tuition dollars). Teachers place student papers in the program's "bank," and the program compares that paper with other papers existing in the bank. At that point, the student's paper becomes part of the bank. Therefore, turnitin.com and other tools are making money from this bank full of papers written by uncompensated students. For more information on this issue, see this article in the Chronicle of Higher Education: <http://chronicle.com/article/Plagiarism-Detection-Tool/29885>.

I also promise, however, that I take academic dishonesty very seriously. *If I catch a graduate student committing plagiarism, that student should expect to fail my course and be reported to the director of graduate students. You're in graduate school, folks; no excuses.*

### **Grievance Procedure:**

If you have concerns about the class or about me as an instructor, please speak to me about those concerns. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of our conversation, the next person in the chain of command is the Department Head of Literature and Languages, Dr. Hunter Hayes.

### **Classroom Etiquette**

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.)

While online communication lends itself to a feeling of anonymity, you are not anonymous here. I am your professor, your classmates are your colleagues, and you should communicate here as you would in a face-to-face classroom or in a professional setting.

Here are some strategies for respectful, effective, and scholarly online communication:

- I operate under the assumption that everyone in the class is here to learn and will do their best work. You should operate under that assumption, too.
- DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPITAL LETTERS BECAUSE THIS IS HOW WE INDICATE SCREAMING IN ONLINE SPACES. No one wants to be screamed at—face-to-face or online.
- If someone says something to make you angry, step away from the computer for a few minutes and do not respond until you've calmed down.
- If you leave a snarky comment, delete it, or I will. Snark is not appropriate in an academic setting.
- For examples of how NOT to communicate in our classroom space, see any CNN.com story comments section or the comments on youtube videos. We will not be operating like that.

Please don't make me drop your participation grade for bad online behavior. I want this space to be one in which we are free to try out new ideas, think critically, and learn. Snark, hostility, and sarcasm destroy environments where those positive things can happen.

### **Other course policies:**

1. I do not accept late work. If you anticipate running out of time, request an extension; I always try to say yes to extension requests.
2. You must turn in all assignments in order to pass the course.
3. Disappearing from the class for long periods of time without explanation will result in a failing grade. You have work to do each and every week except during Spring Break.
4. If you're having trouble keeping up, please communicate with me about that. Do not allow yourself to get behind and give up.

## **University Procedures**

### *ADA Statement*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination 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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services  
 Texas A&M University-Commerce  
 Gee Library 132  
 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835  
 Fax (903) 468-8148  
 StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu  
[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

*Student Conduct*

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

## Course Calendar

Guide: all links and PDFs available in eCollege. If there is a \* beside a reading, that indicates the article is available via link and is under the eCollege webliography. If there is a ^ beside a reading, that indicates a PDF of that reading is available under the eCollege DocSharing. This schedule may be adjusted to accommodate for student learning needs.

Week & date	Theme	Historical/ rhetorical text	Theory Presentation	To turn in
W 1 Jan 30	Intro to course		-	Introduction on the discussion board, sign up theory presentations
W 2 Feb 6	Context	Connors/ Mountford debates: (read in order: Connors 1^, Mountford*, Connors 2^)  Aspasia Unit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aspasia reading from Bizzell ^</li> <li>• Jarratt &amp; Ong article*</li> </ul> (all available via doc sharing in eCollege)	-	
W 3 Feb 13	Temperance	Mattingly, <i>Well Tempered Women</i> , intro and part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandra Harding, "What is Feminist Epistemology?" ^</li> <li>• Delphy, "Rethinking Sex and Gender" *</li> </ul>	
W 4 Feb 20	Temperance	Mattingly, <i>Well Tempered Women</i> , parts 2 & 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simone de Beauvoir, from <i>Second Sex</i> ^</li> </ul>	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power" *</li> </ul>	
W 5 Feb 27	Dress reform	Mattingly, <i>Appropriating Dress</i> (all)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wittig, "One is Not Born a Woman" *</li> <li>• Sheffield, "Sexual Terrorism: The Social Control of Women" ^</li> </ul>	
W 6 Mar 6	Abolition	Stewart *  Bethune ^  Grimeké *  Truth *  (all available via eCollege)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" *</li> <li>• Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa" *</li> </ul>	
<b>No class- Spring Break</b>				
W 7 March 20	<b>No class- CCCC Work on Midterm</b>			
W 8 Mar 27	Suffrage	Stanton*  Stone *  Anthony *  (all available via eCollege)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bell hooks, "Overcoming White Supremacy" ^</li> <li>• Luce Irigaray, "This Sex Which is Not One" *</li> </ul>	Midterm assignment due Monday, March 24
W9	Birth control	<i>Pivot of Civilization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bell hooks,</li> </ul>	

Apr 3			“Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression” *	
W10 Apr 10	Women’s liberation movement	<i>Sisterhood is Powerful</i> (we will divide this books into assigned parts and share summaries with one another.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audre Lorde, “I Am Your Sister” ^</li> <li>• Gayle Rubin, “The Traffic in Women”*</li> </ul>	
W11 Apr 17	Labor	Mother Jones- Parts 1* & 2*  Steinem- Parts 1* & 2*  (all available via eCollege)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patricia Hill Collins- A New Vision *</li> <li>• Hartmann, “Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation by Sex” ^</li> </ul>	
W12 Apr 24	GLBT	<i>Transgender Warriors</i>  Rea Carey's "State of the Movement" ^(available via eCollege)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality” *</li> </ul>	
W13 May 1	<b>Presentations of final project in progress Due Thursday, May 1 at 10AM</b>			
Finals Week	<b>Final Paper Due Tuesday, May 6 at noon</b>			