

Studies in Rhetoric: Computers and Writing

Engl 611-001, Fall 2005

- Room: Innovation Hall 317
- Day/Time: R 4:30-7:10
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Course Description

This course investigates the ways the internet has extended classical and modern rhetorical principles into a postmodern culture. On the one hand, rhetorical principles based on oral and literate traditions still operate in a variety of new media. On the other, computer technology has created new literacies, new forms of writing, and new ways of thinking. After briefly examining oral and literate rhetorics, we will review the work of computers and writing scholars who are coming to terms with these new literacies and then attempt to put these principles into practice. Coursework will consist of weekly one-page responses to the readings, an extensive hypertext project that applies emerging electronic rhetorics, and a final essay that connects the students' interests/fields to the issues discussed in class. (** For extended descriptions see the online syllabus.)

Texts:

Required Books:

- Covino, William and David Jolliffe. *Rhetoric: Concepts, Definitions, Boundaries*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1995.
- Hawisher, Gail, and Cynthia Selfe, eds. *Passions, Pedagogies, and Twenty-first Century Technologies*. Logan, UT: Utah State U P, 1999.
- Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida*. New York, Hill and Wang, 1981.
- Ulmer, Gregory. *Internet Invention: From Literacy to Electracy*. New York, NY: Pearson, 2003.

Suggested Web/HTML Guides:

- Castro, Elizabeth. *HTML for the WWW*. 5th ed. Peachpit Press, 2003.

(The 5th edition you can find on Amazon used for 10 bucks, the 4th edition, which is all you really need, you can find for 2 bucks used.)

- Lynch, Patrick J. and Sarah Horton. *Web Style Guide: Basic Design Principles for Creating Web Sites*. 2nd ed. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2001.

(You can find a used copy of the 2nd ed. at Amazon for under 10 bucks. The book is also available online for free if you don't mind reading off of the web:
<http://www.webstyleguide.com/>)

- Betsy Bruce. *Sams Teach Yourself Macromedia Dreamweaver MX 2004 in 24 hours*. Indianapolis, IN: Sams Publishing, 2004.

(There are used copies of this at Amazon and a version for MX.)

- Towers, J. Tarin. *Macromedia Dreamweaver MX 2004 for Windows and Macintosh: Visual QuickStart Guide*. Peachpit Press, 2004.

(There is also a version for MX, which is also inexpensive used from Amazon.)

- Weinmann, Elaine and Peter Lourekas. *Photoshop 7 for Windows and Macintosh: Visual QuickStart Guide*. Peachpit Press, 2002.

(This one you can find used on Amazon for about 10 bucks. There are also older versions on Amazon for as little as two bucks.)

Technology Responsibilities:

Since this course primarily focuses on rhetoric, only a limited amount of time will be spent in class on technical skills. We will do brief introductions to help you establish your web space and get an initial web page up. Depending on your level of technical knowledge entering the class, you may need to spend time each week outside of class learning technologies on your own in addition to reading and doing writing assignments. In order to develop new skills or enhance the ones you have, you should take advantage of the workshops and labs available on campus. Mason provides a number of workshops and labs for additional help with technology projects. Students need to sign up for the workshops but are able to get individual, walk-in peer tutoring in the Star labs. Topics, dates, and times for workshops can be found from the workshop schedules below. (For links see online syllabus)

- Star Workshop Schedule
- IT Training Workshops (list of all IT workshops, including Star)
- IRC Workshops
- Star Lab JC 229 (student mentors help walk-in students)
- Star*T Lab JC 344 (open lab if no workshops are being held)
- Web Star Lab JC 311 (also has peer mentors who will help with web development)

Attendance:

Each week we will read response papers, discuss the readings, do short assignments, give presentations, and have lab time to work on projects or technologies. Consequently, attendance is extremely important and will count towards participation grades. It is also vital that lab time in class be utilized. Others around you can help with your efforts. If you stop coming to class, it will be your responsibility to drop. Failure to do so will result in an 'F'.

Office Hours:

I will have office hours in RobA 405D from 4:30 to 7:10 on Tuesdays. If you need to speak to me and cannot make this time, then ask me to schedule a time that is convenient for both of us. I often spend time in the JC reading or grading. If desperate, check the bay windows on the second floor. I check my e-mail several times daily, so this will be the best way to contact me in a hurry if you have a question or problem, especially about what is due that week. The only other option is to call and leave a phone message, but I will not receive it immediately.

Grades:

Students in English 611 receive a final grade of A+ (4.0), A (4.0), A- (3.67), B+ (3.33), B (3.0), B- (2.67), C+ (2.33), C (2.0), C- (1.67), D (1.0), or F (0.0). Since both A+ and A have the same GP, I make little or no distinction between them. Although a B- is a satisfactory grade for a course, students must maintain a 3.0 average in their degree program and present a 3.0 GPA on the courses listed on the graduation application.

Rewrite and Late Policy:

Responses to readings will need to be brought to each class. Students will read them out loud each day. I will give feedback on these papers and they may be rewritten. We will have one day in class for giving feedback on the final hypertext projects. These should be revised accordingly. The final paper will have no opportunity for revision. I don't accept work past the due dates.

Assignments

Your grade for the class will be based on 1) weekly response papers [one page singled-spaced], 2) a hypertext project, 3) a final paper [8-10 pages double-spaced] and 4) class participation. The breakdown of percentages is:

Weekly Responses	20 %
Hypertext Project	40 %
Final Paper	30 %
Participation	10 %

	100 %

Weekly Responses:

In the first half of each class period we will focus on discussing the readings for that week. Each person will be expected to respond to the readings in writing—no more than one-page, single-spaced (450-650 words). These responses will need to be posted to your web pages before class and you will need to bring a print copy with you to class. At the beginning of each class half of the students will read their responses and once everyone is done we will begin to discuss the readings. Possible ways to respond to the readings:

- summary - of the key points/arguments
- response - an argumentative critique of certain elements of the readings
- intra-connections - make connections among the texts/readings from that day and/or the entire class
- inter-connections - make connections between the readings and other texts you have read outside of class
- personal connections - make connections between you and the texts (specific interests, experiences, or jobs/careers)
- autobio/autoethnography - discuss how what the articles are about effects you and the people around you
- questions - pose initial questions of the texts and give tentative answers
- fiction - write a poem or short story that encompasses ideas from the readings or directly/explicitly relates to the texts
- implications - discuss the implications of the readings (and their contents) for culture or education or writing
- examples - give further examples from our culture at large, from educational settings, from personal settings, or from other texts that exemplify/amplify what is being discussed in the readings
- project(s) - speculate about the connections between the readings and your particular "project" (your primary interests in school right now, or a projected thesis topic, or the topic you might want to write about in the final paper).

The print responses will be graded on a 1-5 scale based on the thoughtfulness of your connections to the texts/ideas. I'd prefer that you experiment with a number of the above options. I don't want you to write a poem every week. I like to see good summaries, but variety will serve you best. Posting an electronic version will count as a participation grade. Make sure that all responses get posted and are easy for me to find from your main page.

Hypertext Project:

At the beginning of the course each student will learn how to put up a basic homepage and to post weekly response papers. As the semester progresses we will talk more about basic design and you will revise the sites over the course of the semester. As we move into the last third of the semester, we will focus more specifically on the genre "mystory" as a form of hypertext and you will begin to transform your homepage into a mystory. We will talk more later in the semester about mystory when we get to Ulmer's book, but in the meantime you can take a look at my

mystory as both an example and an explanation: Bystory, <http://mason.gmu.edu/~bhawk/bystory>. In short, the mystory uses the material you generate throughout the semester and links it to your own experience—personal, cultural, academic, and professional—with the goal of finding a research project for the final paper or for more long-term study.

In the second half of each class I will give a few basic how-to presentations, discuss conventions of online writing, show some examples of online writing, and you will have the opportunity to work on your projects. Obviously most of you will not be experts in creating texts and images for the web prior to taking this class. And, this class will not make you an expert. Consequently, your projects will be graded accordingly. I'm not interested in you producing corporate quality web sites. After learning the basics, I'm most interested in seeing that you've thought rhetorically about the production of your site with an eye toward new models of electronic writing and literacy.

Final Paper:

The Final paper will be a 8-10 page paper, double-spaced, on a topic that is relevant to your goals and needs, but framed in the context of the issues/texts we are discussing in class. Some options might be:

- a argument paper on issues in rhetorical theory, history of rhetoric, rhetoric and technology, or rhetoric and pedagogy,
- an application of rhetorical theory to a particular technology, to popular culture, to your workplace, or to your particular discipline,
- a full research proposal for a project that is developed in or develops out of your mystory.

No matter what you pick you should use some of the texts we cover in class as well as gather further research—approximately 10-12 sources for an essay, a fuller bibliography for a proposal. Use the resources I provide in the class web site as a jumping off point for research. Final papers will receive a letter grade based on how well you integrate sources and make a clear argument. There may be class time to peer review drafts. **Be sure get get an MLA book and follow it closely.

Participation:

Participation includes posting responses to the web, class discussion, listserv and MOO participation, participation in workshops during the second half of each class, and attendance. Aspects of your participation grade such as attendance and posting responses will have numerical values. Others will be P/F.

Syllabus

This is a tentative schedule by week and day, for assignments, readings, and activities. Tentative means I can vary it as much as seems appropriate. However, plan on sticking fairly close to this outline. I will post all revisions of and additions to the syllabus on this web page. The updated web version will always override the printable PDF version.

Syllabus Key:

- Readings are either from one of the class texts or available online. They should be read completely before coming to class that week. (**See online syllabus for all links.)
- Key terms and figures are typically found in the encyclopedia section of Jolliffe's *Rhetoric*, though some will simply be terms or concepts we might want to discuss that day. Skim the terms/figures in *Rhetoric* for background info when needed.
- Suggested readings are provided in the event you'd like to do further reading on the topic or if you decide to write about that particular topic. Most are online but you can get the print texts through the library or interlibrary loan. (**See online syllabus for all readings and links.)
- CC indicates what we will do in the second half of class in the computer classroom. Sometimes it will focus on technology skills. Sometimes it will involve analyzing texts or argument. And sometimes I will provide students with the option of doing one or the other. (**See online syllabus for all links.)
- Note: There are three areas of emphasis that will emerge during the semester: philosophical, pedagogical, and technical (in both senses of working with technology and looking technically at the ways arguments or texts work). In any given week one may be in the forefront and the others in the background, but they are always there and intimately related.

Week 1 (Sept 1): Introductions

- go over syllabus, sign up for [list](#) (set up GMU email if necessary), get [mason space](#) set up, go over [basic html](#) and get a basic page up

Backgrounds in Rhetoric

Week 2 (Sept 8): TOPIC: Ancient Rhetoric

Readings:

- RHETORIC ___ Part I (preface, 3-25), Havelock (690-98), Murphy (617-20), Carruthers (199-212), Clark (620-31)
- Carolyn Miller, [Aristotle's 'Special Topics' in Rhetorical Practice and Pedagogy](#)

Key Terms:

- Classical Rhetoric, Commonplaces, Dialectic, Enthymeme, Medieval Rhetoric, Pisteis, Renaissance Rhetoric, Stasis Theory, Topoi, Tropes and Schemes

Key Figures:

- Aristotle, Christine de Pizan, Cicero, Diotima, Erasmus, Hypatia, Isocrates, Ong, Plato, Quintillian, Ramus, Sophists, Vives, Wilson

CC: 1) work on web sites (clear up basic code and set up questions); 2) skim [Aristotle's topoi](#) and write a short paragraph to the list speculating on how a topos could be used in a contemporary argument (special topics - book I chapters 4-15; common topics - book II chapter 23)

Week 3 (Sept 15): TOPIC: Modern Rhetoric

Readings:

- RHETORIC ___ Crowley (265-81), Connors (282-93), Perelman (436-40), Nye (441-51), Bordwell (478-83)
- Lakoff, The Worldview Problem for American Politics
- One of these Toulmin sites: Toulmin Project Homepage, The Toulmin Method, or What is the Toulmin Model?

Key Terms:

- Dramatism, Enlightenment Rhetoric, Ethos, Good Reasons, Logos, Modern Rhetoric, Pathos, Truth

Key Figures:

- Bacon, Blair, Booth, Burke, Campbell, Corbett, Kinneavy, Perelman, Richards, Vico, Weaver, Whately

CC: 1) look at composer tutorial; 2) Analyze traditional argument: a) Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People (Bush); b) Letter from a Birmingham Jail (MLK)

Week 4 (Sept 22): TOPIC: Postmodern Rhetorics

Readings:

- RHETORIC ___ Covino (311-18), Cherwitz (452-59), Berlin (734-52), Nelson (323-28), Covino (699-711)
- Baudrillard, The Spirit of Terrorism

Key Terms:

- Epistemic Rhetoric, Postmodernism, Social Construction

Key Figures:

- Daly, Freire

CC: 1) Examine and discuss images of 911:

- Attack on the US (911 photoessay)
- Terror Hits Home (911 photoessay)
- Shattered (911 photoessay)
- It Didn't Seem Real (911 photoessay)
- The Rescue Continues
- Day of Terror (CNN)
- Designing for a Tragedy
- 911 screen shots
- Newseum (911 front covers)
- 911 Satellite photos
- TV journalism under attack (for turning 911 into entertainment)

- [911 infographics](#) (links)
- [Flash Comparison of WTC and Buenos Aries](#)
- [Guardian](#) (UK coverage)
- [911 mapsAfter 911](#) (video collection)

2) Look at [photoshop tutorial](#) and surf the web for images to incorporate into your web site.

Computers and Writing

Week 5 (Sept 29): TOPIC: Rhetoric and Technology

Readings:

- RHETORIC ___ Welch (763-78), Jamieson (801-18)
- PP21 ___ Ch. 1 Baron (15-33), Ch. 7 Faigley (129-39), Ch. 3 Sloane (49-65)
- Lanham, [Intro](#) and [Democracy, Technology, Theory, and the University Curriculum](#)
- Janice Walker, [Reinventing Rhetoric](#)

Key Terms:

- Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory, Delivery

CC: check out: 1) advertising - PBS, [Cyber Ads](#), [Dissect an Ad](#), [CNN Ad Archive](#), [Bush in 30 seconds](#), [SwiftVets](#), and [The History of Televised Debate](#); 2) flash-based political rhetoric - [Chenney on Howard](#), [This Land](#), [Face to Face](#), [Flash 911 Satire](#), [The Bush Conspiracy Theory Generator](#); 3) cartoons as rhetoric - [Daryl Cagle's Professional Cartoonist index](#), [Portrait Illustration Maker](#) (create a cartoon character or strip for your homepage).

Week 6 (Oct 6): TOPIC: Rhetoric and Hypertext

Readings:

- PP21 ___ Ch. 9 Sosnoski (161-77), Ch. 10 Sirc (178-204), Ch. 5 Vielstimmig (89-114)
- Vannevar Bush, [As We May Think](#)
- David Kolb, [Socrates in the Labyrinth](#)
- Gideon Burton, [The Rhetoric of a Rhetoric Website](#)
- [Web Style Guide](#) (Chs. 2-4), design [principles](#) and [strategies](#), and Monticello, [What is Hypertext?](#) (skim these if you have not had a basic design class or need a quick introduction)

Key Term/s:

- Arrangement, Thinking, Linking

CC: Check out examples: Michael Cripps, [Between Linear and Nonlinear](#); Collin Brooke, [Perspective: Notes Toward the Remediation of Style](#); Michael Kapper, [Mixing Media: Textual, Oral, and Visual Literacies](#) (and then some) in [Teaching PowerPoint](#); David Kolb, [Twin Media : Hypertext Structure Under Pressure](#)

Week 7 (Oct 13): TOPIC: Hypertext and the Visual

Readings:

- PP21 ___ Ch. 4 Kress (66-88), Ch. 15 Selfe/Sullivan (268-91), Ch. 6 George and Shoos (115-126)
- Jeff Rice, Writing about cool: Teaching hypertext as juxtaposition
- Barthes, *Camera Lucida*

Key Terms:

- Association, Juxtaposition, Poetics

CC: check out Halflives, Bystory, Austin photoblog, Flickr (use the search engine or explore)

Week 8 (Oct 20): TOPIC: Social Software I (MOOs/Lists)

Readings:

- RHETORIC ___ Bitzer (300-10), Vatz (461-67)
- PP21 ___ Ch. 8 Cooper (140-60)
- Dibbell, Rape in Cyberspace
- Carolyn Miller, Writing in a Culture of Simulation: Ethos Online
- Elias/Brown, Critical Discourse in a Student Listserv
- Yena & Waggoner One Size Fits All?: Student Perspectives on Face-to-Face and Online Writing Pedagogies (skim)

Key Terms:

- Community, Kairos, Rhetorical Situation

CC: Lingua MOO, MOO commands

Week 9 (Oct 27): TOPIC: Social Software II (Blogs/Wikis)

Readings:

- RHETORIC ___ Gage (715-33), Emig (752-59)
- Walker and Mortensen, Blogging Thoughts: Personal Publication as an Online Research Tool
- Carolyn Miller, Blogging as Social Action
- Carroll, Culture Clash: Journalism and the Communal Ethos of the Blogosphere
- Johnson, Use the Blog, Luke (short)
- Hourihan What We're Doing When We Blog (short)
- Barros, The Year of the Blog: Weblogs in the Writing Classroom (skim)
- Wendy Bishop, Use the Discussion Board to mimic a 'commonplace book' (short)
- Jason Pontin, Commonplace Thoughts (short)
- George Pullman, Creativity and the Commonplace (short)

Key Term/s:

- Networks, Process

CC: 1) Blogs on Commonplaces: [Blogs/Definitions](#), [Blogging as Commonplacing](#), [Commonplace Ignorance](#) (image), [Commonplace Books](#) (links to images), [Commonplace category](#) (quotes), [Answers.com](#), [Wikipedia](#), [Commonplace Books](#). 2) Political blogs: [CIA asks Bush to discontinue blog](#), [Mock W Blog](#), [Blogs of War](#), [GOP Flog](#), [Wonkette](#), [Blog for Democracy](#), [Rhetorica](#), [Doc in the Box](#), and [Dagger Jag](#) (soldier blogs). 3) MP3 blogs: [Music for Robots](#), [Fluxblog](#), [MP3blogs.org](#), [Christopher Porter](#), [Scenestars](#), [Said the Gramophone](#), [Tofu Hut](#), [Soul Sides](#).

Application/Pedagogy

NOTE: For the remaining weekly responses, focus on the main Assignment in each part of *Internet Invention* (see p. 21 for example). Use the following Exercises throughout the chapters to support the main assignment (see p. 35 for example).

Week 10 (Nov 3): TOPIC: Career

Readings:

- Introduction, Ulmer part I

Key Term/s:

- Invention, Faculty Psychology, Imagination

CC: do brainstorming lists on the popcycle—begin thinking about connections and possible project/research trajectory; begin converting portfolio to mystory (can convert or make separate)

Week 11 (Nov 10): TOPIC: Family

Readings:

- Ulmer part II

Key Terms:

- Memory, Narrative, History

CC: work on hypertexts/mystories

Week 12 (Nov 17): TOPIC: Entertainment

Readings:

- Ulmer part III

Key Terms:

- Arrangement, Creole, Ethos/character, Dialogue

CC: work on hypertexts/mystories

Week 13 (Nov 24): No Class -- Thanksgiving

- work on mystories and research papers -- read section of *Rhetoric* most closely related to your field/discipline and work it into "career" section

Week 14 (Dec 1): TOPIC: Community

Readings:

- Ulmer part IV

Key Terms:

- Style, Identification, Street/mix

CC: present hypertexts/mystories, discuss grading criteria for mystories

Week 15 (Dec 8): TOPIC: Emblem

Readings:

- Ulmer part V, Conclusion

Key Terms:

- Delivery, Value

CC: draft day for final papers?

Final Projects

Week 16 (Dec 13-20): TOPIC: Finals Week

- mystory web project due Monday ____
- final paper due Friday ____