What is rhetoric?
What has been rhetoric’s role in communication throughout human history?
What makes a communicator effective?

By examining original texts and discussions/critiques of those originals, we will seek answers to the above questions as we move from antiquity to the 21st century. This course skims rhetoric’s 2500-year history; therefore, rather than achieving an in-depth understanding of any one period, person, or theory, our goal is to understand how rhetoric is situated within human history’s communicative practices and observe how rhetoric morphed from a predominantly oral performance to its current multimedia, multimodal forms. Although our primary function is to examine the traditional canon of Western rhetoric, we will also observe how female rhetors functioned within a predominately male practice.

**CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course, students will explore communication through the writings of ancient, renaissance, modern, and contemporary thinkers including Plato, Isocrates, Aristotle, St. Augustine, Campbell, Adam Smith, and Kenneth Burke. These diverse perspectives are unified by one question: What makes a communicator effective? The course will concentrate on the traditional canon of Western rhetorical thought but will explore the thinking of non-Western and oppressed groups as well. Students will gain a clear understanding of what rhetoric is and its central role in society throughout human history. Prerequisite: Completion of EN301 or instructor permission.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:

- Trace major works and figures in the field of rhetoric in terms of their historical moment.
- Illustrate how key rhetoricians talk to, around, and across each other.
- Compose a personal definition of rhetoric that is supported by one or more rhetorician’s theories.
- Begin to extrapolate theories of rhetoric to conduct rhetorical analysis.
- Articulate how female rhetors are situated within a predominately male history of rhetoric.

**Required Materials**

- Other readings accessed through eSwede. It is your responsibility to download/print them for class.
  - If you prefer not to print, consider using the app iAnnotate to highlight, bookmark, search, and add notes to the pdf.
- One inch or larger 3-ring binder for Response & Dialogue Entries.
Inexpensive two-pocket folder for Definition of Rhetoric Essay.
Reliable access to eSwede/ePortfolio, a computer, and the internet.
Regular access to your Bethany email account—I will contact you frequently using your campus email address and less often at your campus extension. Check both of these often!

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

The methods and activities engaged to meet our objectives are as follows: reading, class discussion, group work, oral presentation, examinations, written papers, and research.

**Grading**

**PARTICIPATION** You are expected to come to class with the readings completed and to actively participate in our class activities. Failure to be a full participant in the class will adversely affect your grade, while consistent, high-quality participation may enhance your grade.

**GRADE BREAKDOWN**

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Rhetorician Poster &amp; Presentation</td>
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<td>20%</td>
<td>Response &amp; Dialogue Entries</td>
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<td>Definition of Rhetoric Essay</td>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>Comprehensive Exam (2 @ 20%)</td>
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I will use the eSwede Gradebook function to record your grades; this enables you to instantly check your current standing in the course. I determine letter grades in the following way:

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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
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**ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS**

**Rhetorician Poster & Presentation** (20%) Rhetoricians’ theories typically build on previous theories and point to future ones. Using scissors and glue, construct a poster that illustrates how a rhetorician’s ideas develop out of, connect to, and/or point to other rhetoricians we have read. On the day the posters are due, you will also present your poster to the class explaining your rhetorician’s past and future influences (or rather “read” your poster for us). More directions are on the assignment sheet.

**Response & Dialogue Entries** (20%) Your Dialogue & Response Entries will record your informal responses to the texts we explore in class as well as help you share your ideas with the class. You should think of each entry as an opportunity to investigate your thoughts on the texts in a low-stakes setting. I want to see you really grappling with complex ideas—it’s more important that you really dig into the text than have a neatly tied-up idea. Your Response & Dialogue Entries will also be a way to exchange ideas with your peers and help generate class discussion. I will drop your two lowest entries. More directions are on the assignment sheet.

**Definition of Rhetoric Essay** (20%) This semester, you will observe how pliable the definition of rhetoric has been throughout its long history. For this essay, you will compose your own definition of rhetoric that is supported by one or more rhetorician we’ve read this semester. In other words, much like the rhetoricians’ theories we’ve studied whose ideas developed out of and connected to others, your definition must grow out of or form as an amalgam of others’ theories. More directions are on the assignment sheet.

**Comprehensive Exams** (40%) You will take two comprehensive exams. Exam #1 will focus on the Greek, Roman, and Medieval periods of rhetoric. Exam #2 will focus on Renaissance, Enlightenment, and Contemporary periods of rhetoric.
**Course Policies**

**Course Materials** Please bring the assigned readings to class every day.

**ePortfolio Artifact** When your Definition of Rhetoric Essay is due on December 2nd, you must upload a copy of your essay to both eSwede and ePortfolio. Failure to submit to both places will result in a 10% penalty (one letter grade) of your final grade.

**Conference** You are required to schedule at least one conference with me this semester before Thanksgiving break (November 24th-28th). This is a way for me to check in with you and answer any specific questions you may have. To make it as useful to you as possible, I want you to direct what we discuss in this meeting. Possible discussion topics include: methods for reading complex texts, ways to improve your course grade, how to research/construct your poster and presentation, and/or ideas for writing your essay.

**Attendance** Students who attend consistently, come prepared, and participate meaningfully and regularly tend to do better in the course. You are **allowed three excused absences** in this class with no questions asked. Absences beyond three (except in the case of official college absences) will result in lowering of your overall grade; 6 or more absences (at least 3 full weeks of class) will result in failure of the course. I highly recommend that you reserve your allowed absences for sickness or unavoidable emergencies because nearly every semester contains one or both at some point. If you are absent, I appreciate hearing from you, and in return, I’ll explain the work you missed. Work that is due during absences must still be submitted by the due date and time. Students representing Bethany College in an official activity that requires missing class should provide official documentation and submit work *in advance* of an absence in order to be considered excused. Final decisions are at the discretion of the instructor.

**Tardies/Leaving Early** Please be on time for class. Students who are tardy are a distraction to the whole class. Three tardies will equal one absence. **Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class.** If you are tardy, it is your responsibility to see me after class to ensure your absence is changed to a tardy. Additionally, every third time you leave class early will also be considered an absence.

**Late Work** All work will be due on the day specified in the schedule and will be considered late thereafter. I **will accept the Definition of Rhetoric Essay and Response & Dialogue Entries one class period beyond the due date, after which time, I will no longer accept your late work.** Keep in mind, however, late work will be penalized 10%. Rhetorician Poster & Presentation and Exams will not be accepted late. The only exception to this policy are unavoidable, emergency absences. If you believe your absence meets this exception, I will request some form of documentation before accepting late work. For all absences except emergencies, you must submit accepted assignments ahead of time. You are responsible for keeping track of due dates and times.

**24-Hour Reflection Period** I am always happy to discuss grades with you, but when addressing specific assignment grades, I ask that you wait 24 hours after I return your grade before contacting me. This waiting period gives you time to read my comments and reflect on them rather than just react to the grade. I prefer to discuss grades in person, so after 24 hours, please contact me to schedule a conference. Before meeting, be sure to read through my comments and reread the assignment sheet and rubric. Then, take time to craft 2-3 *specific questions* so that our meeting is as productive as possible. I want you to leave our meeting with your questions and concerns satisfactorily answered.

**Electronic Technologies** Throughout the semester, we will be in a computer lab and/or using electronics in class, and while this allows us additional opportunities, it also can bring great distraction. Texting, checking Facebook, etc. from your phone or computer means: you are distracting yourself and your neighbors, you and anyone else distracted are not engaged in the daily activities of our course, and you are showing whomever is speaking profound disrespect. Before class begins and after it ends, you’re free to check texts, email, and other class-appropriate websites; however, when class begins, you must put your devise out of sight (so you aren’t tempted). If you are using your electronics during class when not instructed to do so or conducting activities unrelated to class work, I will ask you to put the device away or logout and I will note it as one violation. Two violations will equal an absence for the course; thus, failure to adhere to the technology policy can impact your final grade.
**Revision** There is no official revision policy for graded work in this course. However, if you are unhappy with a grade you received on the Rhetorician Poster & Presentation or the Definition of Rhetoric Essay and believe you can do better through revision, you must first set up an appointment to visit with me. Together, we will create a revision plan that meets your individual needs and goals for revision. If you are interested in revision, you must contact me no later than one week after I return the essay. After a week, you may no longer choose to revise the assignment.

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**Bethany Information & Resources**

**Writing Center** Students from all areas of study are welcome and encouraged to use the Writing Center, located in Wallerstedt Library. The Writing Center will assist you at any stage in the writing process, but it is not a proofreading service. Students are expected to be present during the session and engage with the tutor. You can call extension 8122 to make a 30 minute appointment or stop by; however, those who make an appointment have priority.

**Students with Learning Differences, Special Needs, or Disabilities** In order to be provided with appropriate accommodations, you must identify yourself to the Director of Student Accessibility and Disability Services. Visit Valerie Williams in the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) office, located in Wallerstedt Learning Center, Rm. 132, or contact her by email (williamsv@bethanylb.edu) or by phone (785-227-8456) preferably within the first week of classes.

**Academic Honesty** (from the Student Handbook) Students of Bethany College, as members of an academic community dedicated to the achievement of excellence, are expected to meet the highest possible standards of personal, ethical, and moral conduct. The discovery, advancement, and communication of knowledge are best achieved through commitment to these standards. Furthermore, without the trust that these standards are observed, an academic community cannot exist. The principle of academic honesty, therefore, applies to the integrity of every project, presentation, examination, or assignment presented by every student, and any departure from high standards of personal, ethical, and moral conduct shall be considered as academic dishonesty.

Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:
- Plagiarism (see definition below);
- Submission of work that is not the student’s own, but is the work of another person;
- Submission or use of falsified data;
- Theft of or unauthorized access to an examination;
- Use of alternate, stand-in, or proxy during an examination;
- Use of unauthorized material, including books, notes, computer programs, or any electronic device in the preparation of an assignment or during an examination;
- Supplying or communicating any unauthorized information to another student in preparation of an assignment or during an examination;
- Collaboration in the process of an assignment unless specifically permitted or required by the instructor;
- Submission of the same work for credit in two courses without prior approval of all instructors involved.

Plagiarism is defined as the wrongful act of theft of the research, work, and/or intellectual or creative product of another person by presenting that other person’s intellectual or creative product as one’s own. In an institution of higher learning, plagiarism includes the presentation, without proper attribution, of intellectual work of some person other than the student who expects to receive credit for the work. "Intellectual work" is defined as ideas, writings, analysis, conclusions, discoveries, compilation of facts, opinions, compilation of data, interpretations, phrasing, and/or words.