

ENGL 4311: History of Rhetoric



Fall 2020

Modality: This is a blended online course with synchronous meetings via WebEx on Mondays from 2:00-3:15 p.m. and asynchronous activities throughout the week.

Instructor: Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr.

E-mail: bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu

Office: Warrior Hall 420A or WebEx Meeting

Office Hours: Walk-in or Email for an Appointment

TAMUCT Course Description: This course provides students with a foundation in the history of rhetoric, paying particular attention to what many have labeled as the origin of rhetorical studies in classical Greece.

Dr. Bowles' Course Description: This course introduces students to the history of, and key concepts in, the study of rhetoric; to frameworks useful for the analysis of texts, events, communication, and other phenomena; and to the principles of rhetoric in the contexts of many media and cultures. The primary goals of this course are for students to develop expertise in the history of rhetoric, a vocabulary of key rhetorical terms, a firm grasp of major rhetorical concepts, the ability to critically evaluate texts and other communicative endeavors through various rhetorical lenses, an awareness of how media and culture shape rhetoric, and—most importantly—a keen understanding of how rhetoric influences how we interpret and experience reality.

For WI Courses: This is a Writing Instructive (WI) course so writing will be an integral part of instruction and student-teacher interactions. Writing will also be a fundamental way that student

mastery of course content is assessed. WI means that you will have several opportunities to work on improving your writing skills.

In this course, you will have three major written projects that will account for 60% of your grade. For each of these assignments, you will have the opportunity to receive feedback from a trained UWC tutor before you submit, whether in a group setting or in a one-to-one consultation; additionally, you can conference with me at any juncture during the writing process for additional help. All three major written projects will ask you to demonstrate your knowledge of rhetorical theory and practice by having you directly apply what you have learned in class to analysis of theories and artifacts.

Course Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Summarize the history of rhetoric from classical Greece to the 21st century, including how various epistemological influences shaped rhetorical theory during different time periods
- Define and explain major rhetorical terms and concepts throughout the history of rhetoric
- Understand how the cultures we communicate in, and the media we communicate through, influence our rhetoric
- Analyze a variety of texts by applying key rhetorical terminology and concepts to produce meaningful interpretations and insights
- Articulate the various ways rhetoric influences our interpretations and experiences of reality

Required Textbooks and Materials:

- *The Rhetoric of Western Thought: From the Mediterranean World to the Global Setting (10th Edition)*, James Golden, Goodwin Berquist, William Coleman, J. Michael Sproule, ISBN (13) # 9780757579448
- Various .pdf articles and selections from texts (available through Canvas)
- Access to a Computer (the university provides a number of computer labs)

Technology Requirements:

This course will use the A&M–Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome or Firefox browsers. Canvas no longer supports any version of Internet Explorer.

Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/>] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [<https://tamuct.onecampus.com/>]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal.

Username: Your MyCT email address; Password: Your MyCT password

Grading Scheme: Various activities and discussion boards, two major tests, and three major written projects will comprise students' grades. The weights for each component are as follows:

Activities and Discussion Boards= 10%

Unit #1 Test= 10%

“Let Me, Let Me Update (Your Rhetorical Theory)! Reimagining Classical Rhetoric in the Modern World”= 20%

Unit #2 Test= 10%

“Rhetoric—It’s Everywhere! A Rhetorical Analysis of a Seemingly Trivial Text”= 20%

“Enter the Matrix! How Rhetoric Frames Reality”= 30%

Activities: As this is a blended online course, you will have various asynchronous activities to complete and—on certain weeks—artifact sharing and discussion boards to participate in. The activities you are asked to complete will vary substantially depending on the content being covered in class. However, you are expected to read the instructions for the activity carefully and complete all of the requirements of the activity within the parameters set forth. Your activities will be graded on a 0-100 scale. Mere participation does not ensure a 100—you are expected to offer quality work in order to receive an exemplary grade.

Discussion Boards: You will participate in discussion boards at other times as well. Most often, the initial discussion board topics and/or questions will be predetermined. Some weeks, however, they will be more wide open.

Throughout the week, you should contribute a total of at least three times (or as many times as the prompt indicates) to the discussion board throughout the week, including making your first post by the date indicated. Your contributions should be roughly two to three paragraphs each, yet I will evaluate this across all of your posts. Thus, you can write longer posts and couple them with shorter posts, reply more succinctly to five or six classmates, etc. Furthermore, make sure to directly engage with what other students in the class are discussing and questioning. Your discussion board posts should form a cohesive thread and narrative with the discussions of your classmates. As with your activities, grades will be awarded on a 0-100 scale and will account for both your initial post as well as your contributions throughout the week.

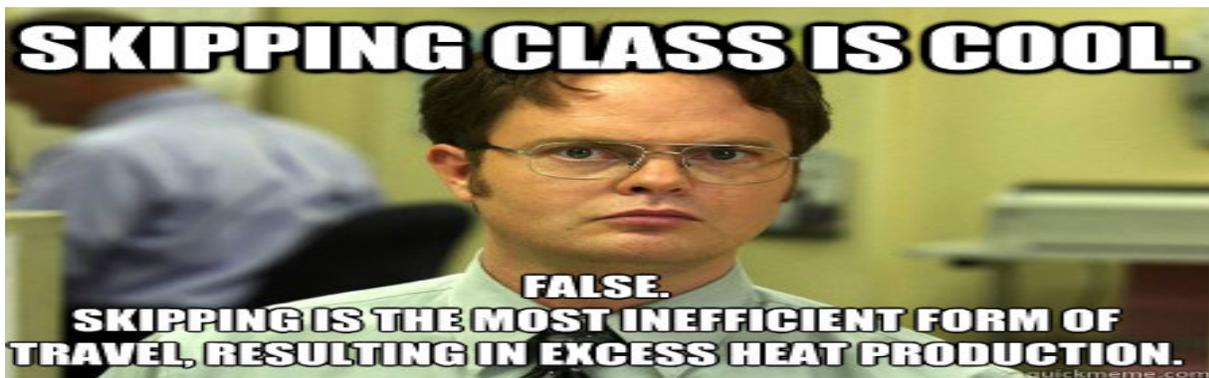
Unit Tests: You will have two in-depth unit tests over the course of the semester. These unit tests will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions. For the essay questions, you will be given a choice of completing 1-2 questions from a selection of questions.

We will go over the material that will be covered on each unit test through review videos. However, any of the readings, lectures, and/or class activities that occurred during the time frame being covered for the unit test are available to be drawn upon for the examination. Nevertheless, do not worry—if you are actively engaged in class, I will make sure that you perform well on these unit tests.

Class Attendance Policy: Attending class is vital if you are to get the most out of this course and to build a productive community of engaged learners. As a result, I do require that you have

no more than two uninformed absences throughout the semester for the Monday class meetings. If you have more than two uniformed absences, this will be grounds for possible failure.

The distinction between uninformed and informed absences is critical here. An uniformed absence occurs when you do not contact me ahead of class (or immediately after) to alert me to your absence and discuss how you will engage with the material from the class that day. If you inform me of your absence, though, and discuss with me how you will engage with the material you missed, your absence will be considered an informed absence and will not be counted against you. I am more than willing to work with you if you miss class. **However, these issues cannot be dealt with retroactively at the end of the semester. This is your one and only warning.**



Lastly, incompletes should be reserved for unexpected, life altering situations that develop after the drop deadline. Students should drop a course should something happen that prevents them from completing the course ahead of the drop deadline. Failure to do so may result in failing grades on assignments or the course if missing work is not completed and submitted before the last day of the semester. Please let me know immediately if serious health or life issues prevent you from attending class or submitting assignments.



Class Civility Policy: This class will tolerate neither disruptive language nor disruptive behavior. Disruptive language includes, but is not limited to, violent and/or belligerent and/or insulting remarks, including sexist, racist, homophobic or anti-ethnic slurs, bigotry, and disparaging commentary, either spoken or written (offensive slang is included in this category). While each of you have a right to your own opinions, inflammatory language founded in ignorance or hate is unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately.

Disruptive behavior includes the use of cell phones, pagers, or any other form of electronic communication during the class session (email, web-browsing, etc.). Disruptive behavior also includes whispering or talking

when another member of the class is speaking or engaged in relevant conversation (remember that I am a member of this class as well). This classroom functions on the premise of respect, and you will be asked to leave the classroom if you violate any part of this statement on civility.

However, please do feel free to engage in constructive criticism and debates. This policy is not meant to discourage disagreement or passionate conversation. We will be engaging in discussions and/or debates about a host of potentially controversial topics; it is not my intention to censor your opinions. Yet, I do feel it is important to foster an environment conducive to learning where no one feels threatened and/or not entitled to their opinion.

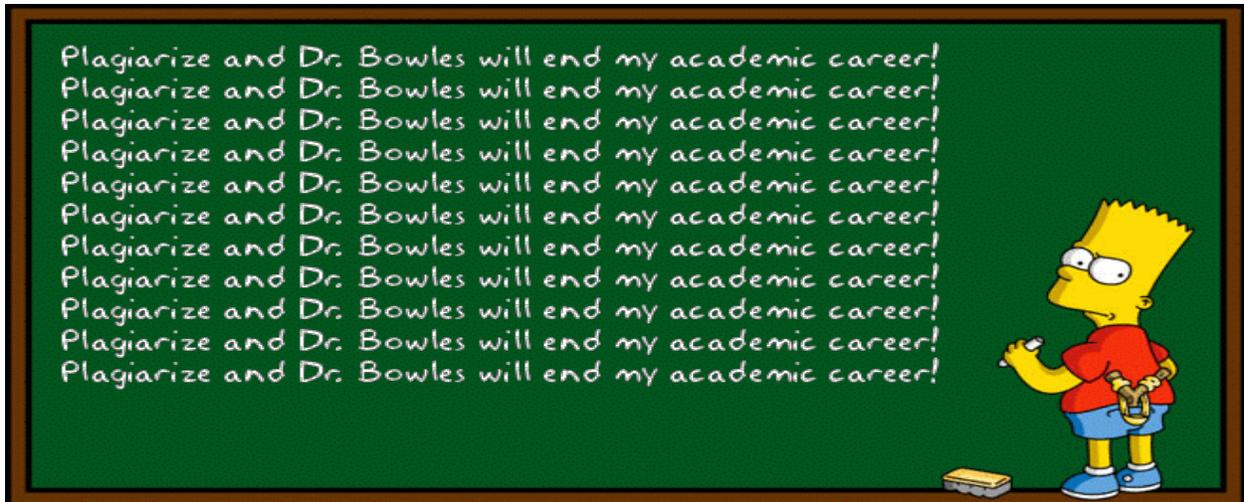
Remember, if you disagree with someone (including myself), always remember to argue against the **IDEA** the person is presenting—not the individual.

Late Work: While I understand that circumstances may arise that could prevent you from turning an assignment in on time, **I do not accept late work—period!** However, **I am always willing to discuss extensions ahead of time.** If you have a reasonable reason why you believe you should be entitled to an extension, either come see me after class, arrange to visit me in my office or the UWC, or e-mail me.

Academic Integrity: Texas A&M University–Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M–Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student’s academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student’s work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university’s Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university’s standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

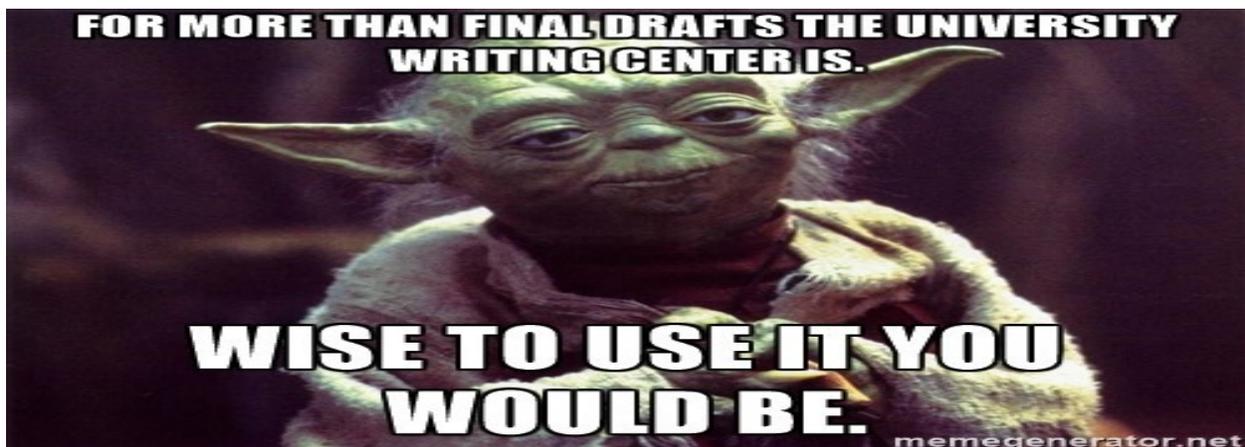
Class Plagiarism Policy: As an instructor, I operate by the WPA (Council of Writing Program Administrators) definition of plagiarism: “In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer **deliberately** uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.” The key here is deliberate—I do not want you to be so paranoid about plagiarism that it inhibits your creativity.

To that extent, any instance of “plagiarism” that **does not appear to be deliberate in intent** will be dealt with “in house.” You may be asked to revise; I may even deduct from your grade if this was a result of negligence. However, unless intentional, you will not fail merely as a result of plagiarism nor will you be brought up on plagiarism charges.



That being said, **deliberate plagiarism will not be tolerated in any manner.** If you willfully steal someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledgment, or submit an assignment for this class that you submitted for another (without previously discussing it with me), **be forewarned—you will receive a 0 for the assignment, and I will pursue plagiarism charges with the utmost zeal!** Such behavior hinders your learning, is unfair to your classmates, is a violation of my trust, and—above all else—is highly unethical. **This is your one and only warning—you would be wise to heed it!**

University Writing Center: The University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free service open to all TAMUCT students. For the Fall 2020 semester, all services will be online as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours online Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. The UWC is also offering hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.



Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the

various stages of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a second set of eyes, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by making an appointment via WOnline at <https://tamuct.mywconline.com/>. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC and/or need any assistance with scheduling.

Tutoring: Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both on-campus and online. Subjects tutored on campus include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or have any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at (254) 519-5796, or by emailing Dr. DeEadra Albert-Green at deeadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu.

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive FREE online tutoring support. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Library: The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 85,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index).
[<http://tamuct.libguides.com/index>]

For Fall 2020, all reference service will be conducted virtually. Please go to our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index] to access our virtual reference help and our current hours.

911 Cellular: Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University – Central Texas
911Cellular is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in 911 Cellular through their myCT email account.

Connect at 911Cellular [<https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management>] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in 911Cellular, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

Canvas Support: Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select “Chat with Canvas Support,” submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953. For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Technology Support: For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

Web Chat: <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student. For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Drop Policy: If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a Drop Request Form:

https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar’s Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed, and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar’s Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar’s Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Accommodations: At Texas A&M University–Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier free education. The Department of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the University’s programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Department of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion](https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717) Canvas page (log-in required): <https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717>

Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students: Texas A&M University–Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs’ Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit the [Student Affairs](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html) web page: <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html>. Students may also contact the institution’s Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf) online, please visit the website: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>.

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M–Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator.

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas: Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don’t agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don’t be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php): <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php>.

COVID-19 Safety Measures: To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, Texas A&M University–Central Texas has adopted policies

and practices to minimize virus transmission. All members of the university community are expected to adhere to these measures to ensure their own safety and the safety of others. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses, course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.) and co-curricular programs:

- **Self-monitoring**—Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction. Students required to quarantine must participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and must not attend face-to-face course activities. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities.
- **Face Coverings**— Face coverings must be worn inside of buildings and within 50 feet of building entrances on the A&M-Central Texas Campus. This includes lobbies, restrooms, hallways, elevators, classrooms, laboratories, conference rooms, break rooms, non-private office spaces, and other shared spaces. Face coverings are also required in outdoor spaces where physical distancing is not maintained. The university will evaluate exceptions to this requirement on a case by case basis. Students can request an exception through the Office of Access and Inclusion in Student Affairs.
 - If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the Office of Student Conduct. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day’s class remotely for all students.
- **Physical Distancing**—Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in the course and course-related activities.
- **Classroom Ingress/Egress**—Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded. Do not congregate in hallways and maintain 6-foot physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.

The university will notify students in the event that the COVID-19 situation necessitates changes to the course schedule or modality.

Artifact Collection: To ensure the learning outcomes are met in the B.A. in English program, there is a program-wide artifact collection process. To that end, artifacts from ENGL 4311: History of Rhetoric this semester may be used for programmatic assessment. Please note that all efforts will be made to keep your identity anonymous; as such, all identifying markers will be removed from your work if used for programmatic assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu.

Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the grading scheme, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

ENGL 4311: History of Rhetoric

Major Projects

“Let Me, Let Me Update (Your Rhetorical Theory)! Reimagining Classical Rhetoric in the Modern World” (3-4 pages double-spaced)

While they were legends in their own time, and they were well ahead of the curve on rhetorical thought, many of the theories and concepts developed by the great minds of classical rhetoric are not entirely perfect. Time passes, knowledge increases and shifts epistemological vantage points, cultures change, etc. What was once innovative and fresh may have grown slightly less insightful over time. Every once in a while, a key theory and/or concept in rhetoric needs to be updated!

Reflecting on the rhetors, theories, and concepts you have engaged with during this first unit, which rhetorical theories and concepts stood out to you as problematic and in need of an update? Or were you a fan of a particular theory or concept but believed that it needs to be expounded upon considering different cultural contexts, media, current views, etc.? Your first step will be to identify a theory or concept that you believe is lacking in some critical way. Remember, this does not necessarily have to be an exercise in “hating”—you can address a rhetor, theory, and/or concept that you are fond of yet you consider needs to be envisioned through a new lens. The possibilities are endless!

Next, you will want to do some research on how other scholars have analyzed and interpreted this rhetor, theory, and/or concept over the years. How has this classic rhetorical work been interpreted? What issues have arisen in the scholarly debate? Who have been some of the key scholars in the discussion? You do not have to be exhaustive with your research, but you should have a thorough understanding in regard to how this rhetor, theory, and/or concept has evolved over time.



After you have done your research, you will want to compose your argument for the update. First and foremost, you will want to assume an audience similar to yourself—someone just becoming interested in rhetoric. As a result, you will want to make sure to depict the rhetor’s work, to explicate the theory, etc. so that your audience has an in-depth awareness of this classical rhetor, theory, and/or concept. Once you have established this baseline knowledge for your audience, you will want to present your critique of the rhetor, theory, and/or concept. Why is the work of this rhetor problematic in a modern context? What aspects of the theory are

still quite apt today? Which aspects of the theory seem to cause issues? Why are these issues arising? Remember to engage with the scholarship to demonstrate the conversation around this rhetor, theory, and/or concept.

And, lastly, you will want to offer your update of the theory. How should scholars re-envision this rhetorical theory? What new ideas, concepts, modifications, etc. will make this particular rhetorical theory more apt for modern times? What did the original rhetor and/or rhetorical theory miss? Why is your update an improvement? Make sure that you make a clear and compelling argument for how your update re-envisions—and enhances—the rhetorical theory with which you are engaging.

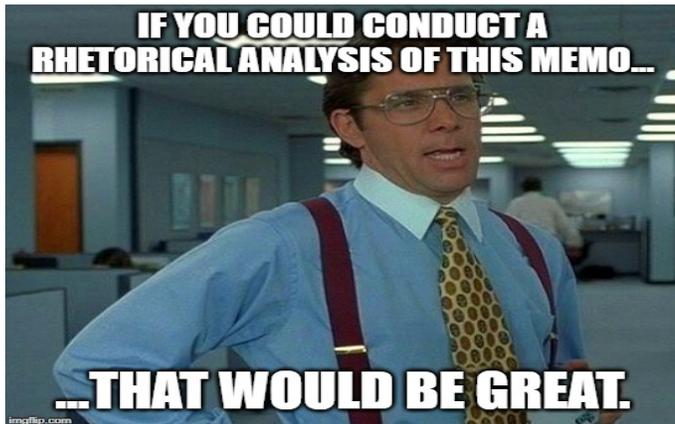
Your “Let Me, Let Me Update (Your Rhetorical Theory)! Reimagining Classical Rhetoric in the Modern World” project should be three to four pages double-spaced, include at least two outside sources (beyond the original rhetorical text and/or the textbook), and employ proper MLA or APA citation.

Assessment for this project will be predicated on how well you explicate the particular rhetorical theory for your audience, the strength of the critique you offer of the rhetorical theory, the manner in which you credibly engage the scholarship surrounding this rhetorical theory, and the validity of your argument for the particular update you believe needs to be made. When I am done reading your “Let Me, Let Me Update (Your Rhetorical Theory)! Reimagining Classical Rhetoric in the Modern World” project, I will ask myself: *Does this suggested update of a classical rhetorical theory demonstrate a keen awareness of the rhetorical theory being examined as well as provide a valid update to the theory to address modern circumstances?*

**“Rhetoric—It’s Everywhere! A Rhetorical Analysis of a Seemingly Trivial Text”
(3-4 pages double-spaced)**

Rhetoric, unfortunately, tends to get a bad—and exceedingly narrow—rap. People disparage politicians for engaging in “rhetoric” rather than substantive policy debate (as if the two are somehow separate). Rhetoric is viewed as disingenuous. It belongs only to the realm of persuasion. However, this class is smarter—you realize that rhetoric is everywhere around you!

For this project, you are going to perform a rhetorical analysis of a text that is, at face value, inherently mundane—mostly devoid of persuasion or substance (e.g. business memos, government forms, written instructions, textbook chapters, etc.). You, though, are going to dig deeper. Look closely at the text. How does it employ language? Where, and for whom, is it produced? What meaning is the audience supposed to derive from it? Although it might seem inane, what values does it possibly convey to its audience? Take time to thoroughly inspect the text—there is probably more there than meets the eye!



Once you have thoroughly examined your text, you will want to begin composing your analysis. The best place to begin is probably the rhetorical situation for the text. What is the exigence for the text? Who is the audience? Are there constraints? Assume an audience interested in rhetoric but not necessarily familiar with the text under discussion. (Unless, of course, your text is so ubiquitous that everyone would know it.) Make sure you provide sufficient background for your analysis.

After establishing the background, you will next wish to discuss the various facets of the text that you believe are the most rhetorical. This can range from the language employed to the design of the text to the manner in which it circulates. At this juncture, you will want to draw upon the rhetorical theories and concepts we have learned in class in order to inform your analysis. Provide examples from the text and demonstrate how they align with various rhetorical theories. Make a convincing argument for how this text is operating rhetorically.

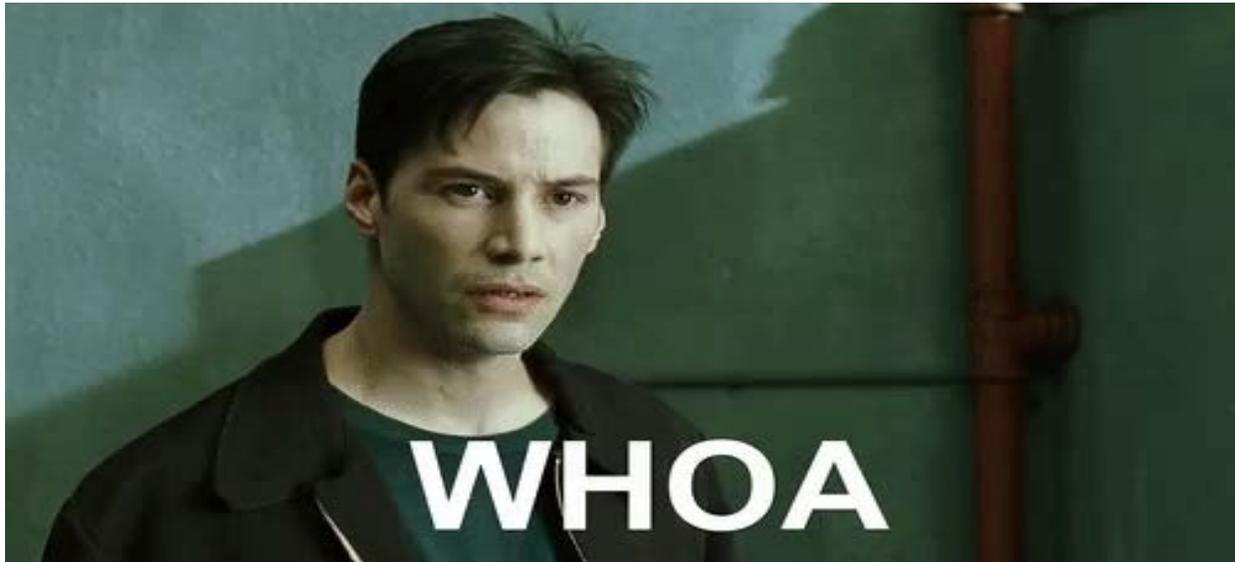
Finally, you will want to make an overall argument as to why this text should be considered rhetorical. Why is this text operating in a rhetorical fashion? Make sure to convincingly persuade your audience that they should view this text in a newer, more rhetorical light.

Your “Rhetoric—It’s Everywhere! A Rhetorical Analysis of a Seemingly Trivial Text” project should be three to four pages double-spaced and include at least two of the rhetorical theories we have covered in class so far. You may include outside sources if you wish; however, they are not required. Your rhetorical analysis should be in MLA or APA format.

When I assess your “Rhetoric—It’s Everywhere! A Rhetorical Analysis of a Seemingly Trivial Text” project, I will primarily be focusing on the manner in which you adequately depict the rhetorical situation for the text, the strength of your analysis of the various facets of the text, the aptness with which you apply various rhetorical theories to the text, and the overall effectiveness of your argument for this text being rhetorical. In the end, the main question that will drive my assessment will be: *How convincingly does this rhetorical analysis argue that this seemingly innocuous text carries rhetorical value and influences its readers?*

**“Enter the Matrix! How Rhetoric Frames Reality”
(7-8 pages double-spaced)**

At this juncture in the semester, hopefully you have finally seen the truth—rhetoric has a profound influence on how we perceive and interpret reality! (Perhaps it even constructs reality?) As a result, the conversations that surround us, the knowledge we create, the values we hold dear, the beliefs we cherish, etc. are strongly affected by the rhetoric we consume and create. If you examine almost any issue that is of consequence in politics, philosophy, religion, etc., you will invariably see the influence of rhetoric in framing the manner in which that particular issue is viewed, thought about, and interpreted.



For your final project, you are going to examine the rhetoric surrounding a particular issue and analyze how rhetoric frames the reality surrounding this particular issue. Your first step, somewhat obviously, will be to pick a particular issue to explore. Try to pick an issue that is particularly fascinating for you but that you are not entirely biased about. If you are rather biased, you may tend to miss the manner in which rhetoric influences the issue; in essence, you can view yourself as “outside” the rhetoric.

Once you have picked your issue, you will want to research it some with a particular focus on finding artifacts that can aid you in articulating the rhetoric surrounding the issue. Explore how the issue has evolved over time. Look for prominent artifacts (e.g. speeches, written texts, videos, performances, etc.) that have influenced thought around the issue. See if you cannot discern any trends in how the issue has been, and currently is, perceived.

As you gain a clearer sense of where you are going with this project, you can begin to compose your essay. First and foremost, you will want to provide background and context for the particular issue you are exploring. Do not assume that your audience is immensely familiar with this issue; rather, take time to acquaint your audience with the issue. Then, you will want to present your main argument for how rhetoric has framed the reality surrounding this issue (unless you intend to delay your thesis for rhetorical purposes).

Afterward, you will want to begin analyzing your artifacts, placing them in conversation with the various rhetorical theories we have engaged with throughout the semester. Delve deeply into the artifacts and analyze the language and symbols present in them. What do these artifacts tell us about the rhetoric surrounding the issue? Which rhetorical theories seem most apt to describe the phenomenon witnessed in these artifacts? How should we interpret these artifacts in relation to the rhetoric surrounding the issue? Why are they important in framing the reality surrounding the issue? Etc. Closely examine the manner in which these artifacts frame the reality of this issue.

Lastly, you will want to conclude by either reaffirming your thesis and offering new insights or—if you took a different approach—by presenting an intriguing and engaging argument as to what these artifacts show us about the rhetoric surrounding the issue. Make sure to move beyond the artifacts to present a more comprehensive picture of how rhetoric works epistemologically, ideologically, and rhetorically in regard to this issue.

Your “Enter the Matrix! How Rhetoric Frames Reality” project should be seven to eight pages double-spaced. You need to engage with at least three rhetorical theories from the class, two of which need to be from unit three. For citation and formatting purposes, you should employ either MLA or APA format.

The emphasis of my assessment for your “Enter the Matrix! How Rhetoric Frames Reality” project will be in regard to the manner in which you explicate the background and context of the issue, the suitability of the artifacts you examine and their connections to the issue, the quality of your analysis of the artifacts in relation to the rhetorical theories you have chosen, and the overall persuasiveness of your argument in regard to how rhetoric frames reality for this issue. After I am finished with your “Enter the Matrix! How Rhetoric Frames Reality” project, the main question I will ask myself is: *How impressive is this text in exploring the rhetoric surrounding this particular issue and in analyzing the manner in which rhetoric frames the reality surrounding the issue, influencing the thoughts, perceptions, and interpretations of those involved?*