

COMS 100B: Rhetorical Analysis of Messages

Fall 2015

Dr. Jacqueline Irwin

Sacramento State University

TEXTBOOKS:

Rowland, R. C. (2012). *Analyzing Rhetoric: A handbook for the informed citizen in a new millennium* (4th ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Rowland, R. C. (2012). *Workbook for Analyzing Rhetoric: A handbook for the informed citizen in a new millennium* (4th ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNING GOALS:

Classical and contemporary models for analyzing messages. Discussion of techniques applicable to a variety of basic message types. Practice in written analysis. The two major goals for this class are that you learn to think critically and write well. As a required core class, COMS 100B has both individual and departmental objectives.

Individual student objectives-- Messages constitute a point in time consisting of many variables and dimensions. When messages are studied carefully and systematically, they reveal the influence of culture, history, social context, and personality, helping the student gain critical insight into the workings of human society. This foundational course in critical examination of messages is meant to provide the student with the following:

- an understanding of the role of messages and ideas as both a cause and a product of human culture and history.
- basic skills and methods for uncovering the rhetorical properties of a message.
- an introduction to the field of rhetorical criticism, including its history and a survey of its most prominent approaches to critical study.

Department objectives-- Within its departmental context as a core course as well as a university writing intensive course, COMS 100B is meant to serve the following functions:

- to provide a general introduction to the study of criticism, with emphasis on qualitative approaches to message analysis.
- to develop an appreciation for the role and significance of rhetoric in shaping human thought and behavior.
- to require practice in formal, analytical writing the evaluation of at least twenty-five typed pages of critical analysis broken into at least three individually prepared assignments.

The assignments in the class are to achieve these specific goals. Textbook readings, class lectures, and in-class activities, will not only provide you with information about major concepts, but will allow you the opportunity to experience the concepts.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Exams. There will be three examinations during the semester (two midterms and a final). They are all take home and are extensive essay exams. All students must take both midterm exams and the final exam listed at the dates on the schedule. Each student is responsible for obtaining a copy of each exam for explanations and directions relating to the exam. No completed exams will be accepted for any reason after class begins on the day examinations are returned and discussed in class. You will have seven days to complete each exam and exams will be returned one week after they are due. All exams remain the property of the Communication Studies department. 20 points of each exam will come from the turning in of outlines during class prior to each exam.

Critical Analysis Papers. There will be two papers during the semester, each no longer than 5-6 type written pages. All should be cited in APA format and must analyze works created after the date set in the assignment sheet. A copy of the rhetorical act must be submitted with the paper and these papers require substantial outside research. More information will be given later.

Outlines. You are to complete an outline sheet from your workbook for each and every piece of rhetoric that is assigned. These will be collected at random and will contribute to 20 points (20%) of each exam score. These are to be completed prior to class, not in class as you are expected to actively participate in the rhetorical analysis that occurs in discussion.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Reading assignments are by chapter number unless otherwise indicated and should be completed for class on the day which they appear on the syllabus. You will be responsible for knowing the material in the texts even if it is not discussed in class. Keep in mind that this is a tentative schedule and is subject to change.

You should do an appropriate analysis outline for every work of rhetoric assigned for the day.

This includes the “for further discussion” rhetoric at the end of each chapter of the textbook, although not the chapter itself. In other words, when the syllabus says “read,” you should both read AND outline the rhetoric. Always bring the completed outlines to class as they will be collected most days. Begin using the “Outline of rhetorical and contextual analysis categories” outline sheet. You will be told when to switch outline sheets.

Week: Topic & Assignments

Readings:

1	Introduction, syllabus, how to do an outline	
1	What is Rhetoric? “I CARE” system	<i>Text:</i> Intro & Chp. 1
2	Choice and analysis	<i>Text:</i> Chp. 2 <i>Text "For Further Discussion:"</i> pg. 38 Bush address on embryonic stem cell research
2	Elements of analysis continued	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 3 Reagan “America’s Best Days are

		Yet to Come”
3	Elements of analysis continued	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 17 Obama “Keynote address at the 2004 Democratic Convention”
3	Finish elements of analysis	<i>Handouts:</i> George W. Bush “Radio Address” <i>Handouts:</i> Philip Morris Ad and Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids Ad
4	Elements of contextual research	<i>Text:</i> Chp. 3 <i>Text "For Further Discussion:"</i> pg. 64 Norton "Helping citizens conserve their own land-and America's"
4	Rhetorical Barriers	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 16 Jimmy Swaggart speech <i>Workbook:</i> pg. 29 David Zhou "College textbooks prices are unfair and unnecessary"
5	Audience Barriers	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 7 Henry Grady “The New South”
5	Argument & Evidence: Strategy Types: Evidence types–	<i>Text:</i> Chp. 4 The limits of rationality <i>Text "For Further Discussion:"</i> pg. 95 Testimony of Foster <i>Workbook:</i> pg. 25 Martin Lindstrom "You love your iPhone, Literally"
6	Using evidence for your audience Exam #1 Distributed	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 11 Edward Kennedy “Tolerance & Truth in America” pg. 26 Warren E. Buffett "Stop coddling the super rich"
6	Strategy Types: Narrative dramatic form	<i>Text:</i> Chp. 5 <i>Text "For Further Discussion:"</i> pg. 124 Testimony of Marilyn Van Derbur <i>Workbook:</i> pg. 31 Geoffrey Canada “Cherries for my Grandma”
7	Narrative dramatic form Exam #1 Due	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 35 Testimony of Michael J. Fox, pg. 34 Testimony of Lisa Herdahl <i>Handouts:</i> Bergalis “I blame everyone of you bastards”
7	Strategy types: Language & persuasion	<i>Text:</i> Chp. 7 <i>Text "For Further Discussion:"</i> pg. 178 Nancy Pelosi’s speech on becoming Speaker of the House <i>Workbook:</i> pg. 47 National Head Start “I Has a Dream”
8	How to do a project Exam #1 Returned Get rhetoric approved for project #1 Memphis”	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 53 Clinton “Remarks to the Convocation of the Church of God in Christ in

8	Strategy types: Language & persuasion con't	<i>Handouts:</i> Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" Dr. King's "I Have Been to the Mountain Top"
9	Strategy types: <i>Text:</i> Chp. 6 Ethos and source credibility Effectiveness Analysis #1 Due	<i>Text "For Further Discussion:"</i> pg. 148 Written testimony of Neil Armstrong <i>Handouts:</i> Michele Obama 2012 DNC Address
9	Strategy types: <i>Text:</i> Chp. 8 persuasion and appeals to value	<i>Text "For Further Discussion:"</i> pg. 211 Statement of Tracey L. Cooper-Harris
10	Strategy types: Confrontation & rhetorical action Exam #2 Distributed	<i>Text:</i> Chp. 9 <i>Text "For Further Discussion:"</i> pg. 234 Nikolay Palchikoff "The Nuclear August of 1945"
10	Finish confrontation	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 68 PeTA Ad, pg. 66 "I'm Mad as Hell" <i>Handouts:</i> Michael Moore "Those Who Say "I Support the Troops" Should Just Stop"
11	Genre & Rhetorical Analysis Exam #2 Due	<i>Text:</i> Chp. 10 <i>Text "For Further Discussion:"</i> pg. 268 A Fire Captain's Eulogy <i>Handouts:</i> RFK's eulogy for Dr. King
11	The Eulogy	<i>Handouts:</i> Mona Simpson's eulogy for Steve Jobs <i>Workbook:</i> pg. 69 Nixon eulogies (4 outlines total)
12	The Eulogy Exam #2 Returned	<i>Handouts:</i> Obama's eulogy for Clementa Pinckney
12	Inaugural as rhetorical form Get rhetoric approved for project #2 Final Exam Distributed	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 82 Kennedy Inaugural Address pg. 88 Clinton Inaugural Address
13	Farewell Addresses Effectiveness Analysis #2 Due	<i>Workbook:</i> pg. 102 Clinton Farewell Address <i>Handouts:</i> Bush Farewell Address
13	Apologia -	<i>PDF on Blackboard:</i> Ware & Linkugel article They spoke in defense of themselves <i>Workbook:</i> pg. 105 Clinton "Map Room Speech" pg. 103 Reagan "Address to the Nation on the Iran Arms and <i>Contra</i> Aid Controversy"
14	Rhetoric & Music Final Exam Due	<i>Handouts:</i> Outline 4 of the songs on the handout