

Rhetorical Myths: The Power of Persuasion

CRN: 30395
English K101: Composition (Rm 304) MO campus
Term: Fall 2008
Schedule: M 2-4:45
Instructor: Fredrick-Douglass Knowles
Office Hours: TBA
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Required Text:

- Colombo, Gary, Robert Cullen and Bonnie Lisle. Rereading America: Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing. 7th Ed. Boston: Bedford /St. Martins, 2007.

Recommended Text:

- Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th Ed. New York: Modern Language Association, 2003.

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the importance of writing and to develop their critical thinking, reading and writing skills. The class will focus on the writing of argumentative essays, often in response to complex readings. This course will emphasize the necessity of revision as means of producing college level writing. Intensive library and research techniques are an integral part of this course.

Objectives:

- Apply critical thinking and reading skills
- Show confidence in written expression
- Master writing as a process
- Refine writing mechanics
- Demonstrate confidence in MLA style citation, quotation, paraphrase and works cited entries

Measurable Outcomes:

In order to complete the course with a grade of “C” or better you must:

- Compose a minimum of 6,000 words (24 pages) of typed, revised, and prose

- Produce drafts evidencing a variety of prewriting techniques
- Develop a main idea expressed in a thesis statement
- Support a main idea with specific details
- Use a variety of rhetorical patterns
- Organize ideas with attention to transitions
- Support thesis with logical thinking and sources
- Improve drafts with substantial editing and revision
- Incorporate appropriate diction, sentence variety, grammar and mechanics
- Select, synthesize and accurately document sources
- Show evidence of library and electronic research techniques documented using MLA

Course Requirements:

The course is designed to provide a healthy, productive learning atmosphere in which the individual's oral and written thoughts, ideas and voice is not only heard but respected. Students are expected to engage in discussion to express various perspectives regarding subject matter. Students will be required to participate in classroom writing assignments, workshops, and media activities. Since the course is aim to improve argumentative writing skills students are expected to complete assignments and provide critical feedback to peers during the revision process. The nature of the course will feed off the energy of the material, instructor and students. Each component will contribute to the effectiveness of the course throughout the semester.

Assignments and Grade Percentage:

Informal writes:	15%
In-Class participation:	10%
Student Groups	15%
Response Papers	15%
Essay One:	10%
Essay Two:	15%
Essay Three:	20%

Attendance:

Classroom attendance is an integral part of the college experience. The faculty of the college believes that regular class attendance is necessary for a student to derive the maximum benefit from the learning experience and the overall value of the classroom instruction. College policy allows an instructor to issue, for academic reasons, an NC grade (no credit) if a student has more absences per semester than the number of times the class meets per week.

In addition, there are some degree and certificate programs with special attendance policies that must be satisfied due to licensing requirements. Students should refer to the

program handbooks. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor in the event of absence. If students miss more than two (2) classes, I reserve the right to issue an NC. Emergencies do arrive; however do not abuse the policy.

ADA Accommodations Policy:

Students with physical disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the College Health Office. Students with learning disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the Office for Students with Learning Disabilities. After disclosing, students are urged to discuss their needs with their individual instructors. This should be done at the beginning of each semester. Instructors, in conjunction with appropriate college officials, will provide assistance and/or accommodations only to those students who have completed this process.

Academic Honesty / Plagiarism Policy:

At NVCC we expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Trustees' Proscribed Policy in section 5.2.1 of the Board of Trustees' Policy Manual. This policy prohibits cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration of assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism and other proscribed activities. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's idea(s) or phrase(s) and representing that/those idea (s) or phrase(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally. Here are the penalties for plagiarism in this class:

First Offense: The first occurrence of plagiarism in any of your work will be treated as unintentional. I will show you the proper way to cite Sources so that you will avoid plagiarism in future work. You will be allowed to "fix" the paper and resubmit it for a grade.

Second Offense: If plagiarism occurs a second time, you will receive a "zero" for the paper, with no opportunity to resubmit the paper for a grade. In addition, a copy of the paper will be delivered to the Division Director.

Third Offense: If plagiarism is committed a third time, you will fail the course and a copy of the paper will be given to the Division Director.

Withdrawal Policy:

The last day to withdraw from this course is December 15. If you must withdraw from this course, it is your responsibility to go to the Registrar's office and fill out the correct form. If you are thinking about withdrawing, please talk to the instructor as soon as possible.

Class Cancellation Procedure:

If class is cancelled or delayed because of the weather, certain radio and television stations will carry an announcement. If I am unable to attend class, the Arts & Humanities Division Office will advise students of alternate learning activities.

Late Work:

Students are required to hand in **essays** on time. All work that is not turned in at the scheduled day and time is considered late. Students will have a 24 hour grace period to hand late work, after 24 hours, **no late essays** will be accepted and students will receive a **zero** for the assignment. Late essays will be lowered one grade (A is a B). Students are to deliver a copy to my mailbox in the English dept. No emails of essays will be accepted.

Informal writes:

During the course of the semester students will be responsible for completing informal writing assignments. The assignments are designed to generate critical thought in response to the course material. Prompts for the informal writes will vary depending on content. In conjunction with class discussion the informal writes will help you create and/ or develop an argument. The exercises are not designed to “make” you write. They’re designed to “trigger” you to write.

Response Papers:

Students are required to hand in a two-page response paper on assigned reading. Response papers are to be typed in Times Roman font, 12 pt. and stapled. They are to also follow MLA guidelines. Papers that do not follow the above guidelines will **not** be accepted. Response papers are **not summaries**. They are a critical analysis of the reading. Response papers should reflect how you, the reader reacts or responds to a particular argument; or overall response to the author’s topic (thesis). Students are required to complete 1 out of 2 response papers for **each** weekly reading (choose 1 reading out of the 2 to do a response paper on). Papers can be handed in anytime while studying the particular theme (e.g.: after the reading and class discussion). **No papers are accepted after the theme is complete.**

Student Groups: Students will be assigned to groups for peer editing. The goal of the group is to give and receive critical feedback on the progress on your writing skills. Students are expected to be present and fully participate in peer editing work.

Recommended Web Resources**Writing Help**

[Current Issues Companion Site](#)

[NVCC Library - "Opposing Viewpoints"](#)

[O'Keefe Library Hot Paper Topics](#)

[The Bedford Research Room](#)
[The Guide to Writing Research Papers](#)
[Thesis builder and online outliner](#)
[How to write a thesis statement](#)
[Writing a thesis statement](#)
[Strunk's *The Elements of Style*](#)

Documenting Sources

[Sample MLA-style research papers from Hacker's *Research and Documentation*](#)
[Online Purdue University's Online Writing Center - OWL](#)
[How to Document Your Sources Using MLA Style](#)
[CitationMachine.net](#)

Research Sources

[Internet Public Library](#)
[Electronic Databases at NVCC Library](#)
 (Search databases like Expanded Academic ASAP and EBSCOhost.)

Electronic Texts

[Bartleby.Com Great Books Online](#)
[Bibliomania/The Network Library](#)
[The Online Books Page](#)

Quotations

[Bartlett's Quotations](#)

Other Important Links

Vista/ WebCT <http://my.commnet.edu/>

Tutoring <http://www.etutoring.org/>

Online Student Center http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/distlearn/student_center.shtml

Course Schedule:

Week 1:

9/8 Intro to Thesis statement, Critical Thinking, Reading and Writing
 Thesis exercise and intro to argumentative essay structure

Myth of Freedom

Week 2:

9/16 *America the Beautiful: What We're Fighting For:* Dinesh D'Souza
The War on Terrorism: Joel Andreas and Visual Photos

Week 3:

9/23 *Resistance to Civil Government (Civil Disobedience):* Henry David
 Thoreau and *Let America be America Again:* Langston Hughes (poem)

Movie

Week 4:

9/30
 Peer Editing: 1st Draft Due (in class)

Week 5:

10/6 In class writing Activity on essay structure: **Final Paper #1 Due**

Myth of the Melting Pot

Week 6:

10/13 Columbus Day: No class

Week 7:

10/20 *Causes of Prejudice:* Vincent N. Parillo
Talking About Racism- How our Dialogue Gets Short-Circuited:
 Paul L. Wachtel and Visual Portfolio

Week 8:

10/27 *The Pressure to Cover:* Kenji Yoshino and *Child of the Americas:*
 Aurora Levins Morales

Movie

Week 9:

11/3 Student Conferencing

Week 10:

11/10 T Peer Editing Rough Full Draft Due

Myth of Church & State

Week 11:

11/17 In class activity on essay structure **Final Draft Essay #2**

Week 12:

11/24 *The Christian Paradox- How a Faithful Nation Gets Jesus Wrong:*
Bill McKibben and Law & Order Activity

Week 13:

12/1 *Afraid of Ourselves:* Diana L. Eck, Visual Portfolio
And Reasons in Exile: Sam Harris

Week 14:

12/8 Movie (student conferencing made by appt only)

Week 15:

12/15 Peer editing (student conferencing made by appt only)

Week 16

Final Essay #3 Due: TBA

* **Syllabus is tentative and can be subject to change during the course of the semester**