

Perspectives on Rhetoric

University of Colorado Denver

Communication Department

COMM 4021/5021

Section 001

Fall, 2017

MW 12:30-1:45

North Classroom 1603

Part A

PROFESSOR

Dr. Sonja K. Foss

Office: 3317 Student Commons Building

Office Hours: Unless I have a meeting or other obligation, I can be found in my office between 11:30 and 12:15 and between 2:00 and 3:00 on Mondays and Wednesdays. I am available at other times by appointment.

Telephone: There is no telephone in my office; if you need to reach me during my office hours, please email me. My home telephone number is 303-355-5320.

Email: Sonja.Foss@ucdenver.edu

(For more information about who I am, see the final pages of Part B of the syllabus or go to my Web site: SonjaFoss.com)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To understand the key components of major classical and contemporary rhetorical theories
- To articulate orally the key components of major classical and contemporary rhetorical theories
- To analyze rhetorical phenomena using theories of classical and contemporary rhetoric
- To build self-discipline and the capacity to work independently

COURSE PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

The textbooks for the course are: (1) *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, 4th ed. (the 30th anniversary edition) by Sonja K. Foss, Karen A. Foss, and Robert Trapp (Waveland Press); (2)

Readings in Contemporary Rhetoric, ed. Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Robert Trapp (Waveland Press); and (3) A reading packet on classical rhetoric that is posted on Canvas. The two textbooks published by Waveland Press are on reserve in the library.

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The structure of this class is different from traditional university classes. I will deliver only two lectures at the beginning of the semester, and then you will be free to move through the course at your own pace.

Here's how the course will work: There are eight major units of material that comprise the course. For each unit you choose to complete, you will be asked to engage in four activities:

- **Read:** Read the chapters relevant to the unit and take notes on them.
- **Present:** Present the major ideas in the chapters orally to a classmate.
- **Listen:** Listen while a classmate presents the major ideas in the chapters to you.
- **Pass a Quiz:** Apply your knowledge of the concepts covered in the unit by taking a quiz on the chapters.

In addition, depending on the grade you choose to earn in the course, you will have the opportunity to write some think pieces on some of the units in which you apply a concept from the unit to an artifact or text of your choice.

What happens during class? During class sessions, some of you will be reading and taking notes on chapters, some will be summarizing chapters orally, some will be listening to others summarize chapters, and some will be taking quizzes. Once you complete all of the activities you came to class to do on a particular day, you are free to leave. Our teaching assistants and I will be available as a resource to answer questions about ideas in the chapters you don't understand, to monitor the oral summaries of the chapters, to dispense quizzes when you are ready to take them, and to grade quizzes. There are a few days during the semester when I will not be able to attend class (see schedule at the end of the syllabus). On those days, you will not be able to complete a unit, but you may use the classroom to read and take notes on chapters.

So, for example, let's say you are ready to complete the unit on Kenneth Burke. You would find the chapters on Burke in the textbooks and read them. Find the section in the "Guide for Note Taking" on Burke, locate those concepts in the chapters, and take notes about them as you are reading so you will be able to present those ideas to a classmate. You then will listen as a classmate talks about the ideas in that chapter to you. The last step of the process is to take the quiz on Burke. Once you pass it, you have completed the unit on Burke and may move on to the next unit. If you do not pass the quiz, you may re-take it as many times as necessary until you do pass.

COMPLETING UNITS

Here's a more detailed description of each of the activities you will do to complete a unit. You have two choices for completing units—the **individual option** or the **collaborative option**.

Individual Option

Read: Read the chapters relevant to a unit on your own and take notes using the “Guide for Note Taking” as a guide. You must take notes by hand; you may not type them on a computer. Studies have shown that taking notes by hand is better than taking notes on a computer for remembering conceptual information over the long term. In addition, taking notes by hand forces you to be more selective, and the extra processing of the material helps you learn it better.

Even if you work with other students to do the reading (which you may choose to do, even in the individual option), your notes should not be exactly the same as those of others in the class. Your notes should be in your own words to reflect your own understanding of the material. When you are asked to come up with an example of a concept in your notes, your example must be different from others in the class. ***If your notes are exactly the same as another student's in the class, you will not be allowed to complete the unit.***

Please read the chapters and complete the units in the order in which they are presented in the textbook.

Present: Present an oral summary approximately 10 minutes long to a classmate that covers the major concepts in the unit. Both you and your listener will sit down for this presentation (in other words, this is not a formal presentation, but you should use good eye contact and explain the concepts to your partner in a lively and interesting manner). These presentations are a key component of your learning in this class and should be conversational and demonstrate basic oral communication skills. If I determine that you do not have the oral skills that allow you to orally present material competently, you will not be allowed to proceed in the course until you are able to demonstrate your oral competence.

Use the “Guide for Note Taking” to tell you which concepts from the chapters you should cover in your presentation for a unit.

You may choose to pair up with someone in the class and complete your work at a similar pace so that you will have someone available to whom to present whenever you are ready. If you don't know anyone in class or can't find someone to pair up with, just come when you are ready to present on a unit, and I will pair you up with a partner. If no one is available to listen to your presentation, I or one of our teaching assistants will serve in that capacity for you.

These presentations must be completed in class.

Listen: Serve as the listener for a classmate's presentation of the chapters. You are to listen carefully and ask questions if you do not understand something your classmate says or if you sense that your classmate doesn't understand an idea. Although it will seem repetitious and perhaps silly, I do want

each of you in a pair to both present and listen. In other words, one of you will present the ideas in a unit while the partner listens, and then the partner will present those same ideas while the other person listens. This system is designed to reinforce your learning by both explaining the ideas to someone and listening while someone explains the ideas to you. If three people are working on the same unit, you might be asked to form a threesome to discuss the concepts. In this case, you may treat the presenting and listening more as a discussion, with each of you taking turns talking about a concept and the others adding ideas or asking questions to clarify the concepts.

Pass a Quiz: You must demonstrate your understanding of the material by completing a quiz on each unit. Completion of the quiz means you have successfully completed a unit. The quiz is a short-answer quiz that asks you to apply concepts from the unit to a rhetorical artifact such as a speech or an ad. The artifact will be given to you when you take the quiz.

You may use the notes you used for your presentation to a classmate while taking the quiz; you may *not* use the textbooks or the reading packet. You also may not use iPads or laptops. For unit 1 on classical rhetoric, you may *not* use my lecture notes posted on Canvas while you take the quiz. You must take notes from those lecture notes.

To pass the quiz, you must answer four out of the five questions correctly. If you do not pass a quiz, you and I will have a conversation about what you missed, and I will help you understand the concept(s) involved. You then will be asked to re-do the answer(s) you missed, either orally or in writing. You may take a quiz as many times as you need to in order to pass it.

You may not take a quiz without talking about the unit to a classmate, a teaching assistant, or me. You also may not take more than one quiz per class session.

Before you take a quiz, you must show me or one of the teaching assistants your reading notes. If your notes are incomplete or incorrect, you will be asked to research the wrong answers or complete the notes before you take the quiz. ***If your notes are exactly the same as those of another student in the class, you will not be allowed to complete the unit.***

You may listen to music while you are taking quizzes.

When you take a quiz, you must adhere to the following: (1) You may use only your notes; you may not use the textbooks, and you may not use iPads or laptops; (2) When you take the quiz, you must sit one chair apart from other students; and (3) You may not talk while you are taking a quiz except to ask questions of me or a teaching assistant. If you fail to adhere to these rules while taking a quiz, you will not be allowed to complete that unit.

You may complete only one unit per class session. Do not put off completing units until the very last days of the semester. School may be closed because of weather, you may get sick, or any number of things could happen, and if you are counting on being able to complete units on the last day or two of the semester, you might not be able to do so. I will not listen to you present your notes outside of class so that you can complete a unit.

Collaborative Option

If you choose the collaborative option, you will work with one or two other students in the class to complete all or most of the activities for a unit. You will select another student or students as your

partner or partners at the beginning of the semester and will work through all of the units with those students.

Read: Read the chapters relevant to a unit on your own or with members of your pair or group and take notes using the “Guide for Note Taking.” You must take notes by hand; you may not type them on a computer. Studies have shown that taking notes by hand is better than taking notes on a computer for remembering conceptual information over the long term. In addition, taking notes by hand forces you to be more selective, and the extra processing of the material helps you learn it better.

Even if you work with other students to do the reading, your notes should not be exactly the same as the others in your pair or group. Your notes should be in your own words to reflect your own understanding of the material. When you are asked to come up with an example of a concept in your notes, your example must be different from the others in your group. ***If your notes are exactly the same as other students in the class, you will not be allowed to complete the unit.***

Please read the chapters and complete the units in the order in which they are presented in the textbook.

Present: Talk through the concepts in the “Guide for Note Taking” with your partner or group members. Each student in the pair or group should take the lead in presenting a concept, and the others should listen carefully, ask questions if they do not understand something or sense the classmate does not understand the concept, and add ideas to clarify the concept. You and the other student(s) will sit down for this presentation (in other words, this is not a formal presentation, but you should use good eye contact and explain the concepts to your partner(s) in a lively and interesting manner). These presentations are a key component of your learning in this class and should be conversational and demonstrate basic oral communication skills. I or one of our TAs will try to sit in on the conversations of pairs or groups to answer any questions you might have.

Use the “Guide for Note Taking” to tell you which concepts from the chapters you should cover in your presentation/conversation for a unit.

These presentations must be completed in class.

Listen: Serve as the listener for a classmate’s presentation of the chapters. You are to listen carefully and ask questions if you do not understand something your classmate says or if you sense that your classmate doesn’t understand an idea. Although it will seem repetitious and perhaps silly, I do want each of you in a pair to both present and listen. In other words, one of you will present the ideas in a unit while the partner listens, and then the partner will present those same ideas while the other person listens. This system is designed to reinforce your learning by both explaining the ideas to someone and listening while someone explains the ideas to you. If three people are working on the same unit, you might be asked to form a threesome to discuss the concepts. In this case, you may treat the presenting and listening more as a discussion, with each of you taking turns talking about a concept and the others adding ideas or asking questions to clarify the concepts.

Pass a Quiz: You must demonstrate your understanding of the material by completing a quiz on each unit. Completion of the quiz means you have successfully completed a unit. The quiz is a short-answer quiz that asks you to apply concepts from the unit to a rhetorical artifact such as a speech or an ad. You will be given the artifact when you take the quiz.

The members of a pair or a group will take the quiz together, figuring out the answers in discussion before one student writes them on the quiz for the pair or group.

You may use the notes you used for your presentation/discussion of concepts while taking the quiz; you may *not* use the textbooks or the reading packet. You also may not use iPads or laptops. For unit 1 on classical rhetoric, you may *not* use my lecture notes posted on Canvas while you take the quiz. You must take notes from those lecture notes.

To pass the quiz, you must answer four out of the five questions correctly. If you do not pass a quiz, the pair/group and I will have a conversation about what you missed, and I will help you understand the concept(s) involved. You then will be asked to re-do the answer(s) you missed, either orally or in writing. You may take a quiz as many times as you need to in order to pass it.

You may not take a quiz without talking about the unit to your partner or group. You also may not take more than one quiz per class session. All members of a group or a pair must be present in order to take a quiz.

Before you take a quiz, the members of a pair or a group must show me or one of the teaching assistants your reading notes. If your notes are incomplete or incorrect, you will be asked to research the wrong answers or complete the notes before you take the quiz. ***If your notes are exactly the same as those of another student in the class, you will not be allowed to complete the unit.***

If two members of a group decide that a member of the group has not contributed appropriately to the activities required of the group (for example, if someone is not contributing equally to the discussions or to the formulation of answers on the quizzes), they may vote that member out of the group. If you are voted out of your group, you will be required to complete the rest of the course using the individual option.

You may complete only one unit per class session. Do not put off completing units until the very last days of the semester. School may be closed because of weather, you may get sick, or any number of things could happen, and if you are counting on being able to complete units on the last day or two of the semester, you might not be able to do so. I will not listen to you present your notes outside of class so that you can complete a unit.

THINK PIECES

Depending on the grade you want to receive in the course, you may choose to write between one and three think pieces. Think pieces are short papers (approximately three pages long) formulated in response to questions I have prepared. For topics for think pieces, see the handout “Think-Piece Questions.” For each think piece, choose just one of the questions on the list to answer. Think pieces are designed to allow you to expand and/or apply principles and concepts to facilitate your understanding of them. The term *think piece* is used to suggest solid, thorough analysis and the integration of ideas and concepts, not mere opinions or casual preparation. You are not expected to do outside research for these think pieces. ***Please type the question you are answering at the top of your think piece.***

If you have chosen the collaborative option for completing units, the members of a pair or group may write think pieces either individually or together.

Late papers will not be accepted. Do not put off writing your papers at the last minute in case your printer does not work, your Internet connection is down, you become ill, you are involved in a car accident, or you encounter other such difficulties.

You may email your papers to me at Sonja.Foss@ucdenver.edu. If you are analyzing an artifact in your paper, please try to email me a copy of it, the text of it, or a link to it. If you email a think piece to me, be sure that I respond and tell you I received it. If you do not receive a response from me, I did not receive your paper, so contact me and re-send it.

I keep copies of think pieces that students submit for three years. ***If you submit a think piece that was written by someone else or is largely based on a paper submitted by someone else in a previous semester or if you copy your paper from the Internet or otherwise plagiarize it, three of the units you have completed will be “erased” and will not count toward your final grade.*** Thus, if you completed eight units and would have received a final grade of “A,” if you submit a think piece largely written by someone else, you will receive a final grade of “D.”

To have a think piece count toward your grade, you must earn a grade no lower than a B- on it. The think pieces will be graded according to the criteria on the evaluation sheet, so please consult it as you are writing your papers. You will be assigned a grade according to the following scale:

A	14-15
A-	13
B+	12
B	10-11
B-	9
C+	8
C	6-7
C-	5
D+	4
D	2-3

If you receive a grade lower than a B- on a think piece, you may re-write it once in an effort to raise your grade. I will be happy to talk through ideas for re-writes with you, but I will not read drafts of papers other than the ones you submit for a grade. All re-writes of think pieces are due no later than midnight on **Wednesday, December 6.**

If you are completing three think pieces to earn a grade of A in the class, the first think piece is due no later than midnight on **Wednesday, September 27**; the second is due no later than midnight on **Wednesday, November 1**; and the third is due no later than midnight on **Wednesday, December 6.** For graduate students, the fourth think piece is due no later than midnight on **Wednesday, December 6.** If you are completing fewer than three think pieces, they may be submitted on any of the due dates for think pieces.

ACADEMIC ETHICS

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and will lead to possible dismissal from the University. You are responsible for being attentive to and observant of campus policies about academic honesty as stated in the University's Student Conduct Code. For more on academic ethics, see the Academic Honor Code and Policies section under "Student Resources" on the Communication Department's Web site: communication.ucdenver.edu.

This course is based on two key assumptions—that you want to learn the material and that I can trust you to put in the time and effort required so that you *do* learn the material. If you are not interested in actually learning the material, please do not take the course.

GRADING

Your grade in the course will depend on the number of units you cover:

To receive a grade of A, you must satisfactorily complete:

- 8 units: Classical rhetoric, Richards, Toulmin, Weaver, Burke, hooks, Baudrillard, and Foucault
- Deliver 8 presentations and listen to 8 presentations
- Complete 8 quizzes on the 8 units
- Complete 3 think pieces from 3 different units with grades of B- or higher (graduate students must complete 4 think pieces from 4 different units with grades of B- or higher)

To receive a grade of A-, you must satisfactorily complete;

- 8 units: Classical rhetoric, Richards, Toulmin, Weaver, Burke, hooks, Baudrillard, and Foucault
- Deliver 8 presentations and listen to 8 presentations
- Complete 8 quizzes on the 8 units
- Complete 2 think pieces from 2 different units with grades of B- or higher (graduate students must complete 3 think pieces from 3 different units with grades of B- or higher)

To receive a grade of B+, you must satisfactorily complete:

- 8 units: Classical rhetoric, Richards, Toulmin, Weaver, Burke, hooks, Baudrillard, and Foucault
- Deliver 8 presentations and listen to 8 presentations
- Complete 8 quizzes on the 8 units
- Complete 1 think piece on a unit of your choice with a grade of B- or higher (graduate students must complete 2 think pieces from 2 different units with grades of B- or higher)

To receive a grade of B, you must satisfactorily complete:

- 7 units: You may choose from among the units of classical rhetoric, Richards, Toulmin, Weaver, Burke, hooks, Baudrillard, and Foucault.
- Deliver 7 presentations and listen to 7 presentations
- Complete 7 quizzes on the 7 units
- Complete 1 think piece on a unit of your choice with a grade of B- or higher (graduate students must complete 2 think pieces from 2 different units with grades of B- or higher)

To receive a grade of B-, you must satisfactorily complete:

- 7 units: You may choose from among the units of classical rhetoric, Richards, Toulmin, Weaver, Burke, hooks, Baudrillard, and Foucault.
- Deliver 7 presentations and listen to 7 presentations
- Complete 7 quizzes on the 7 units

To receive a grade of C, you must satisfactorily complete:

- 6 units: You may choose from among the units of: Classical rhetoric, Richards, Toulmin, Weaver, Burke, hooks, Baudrillard, and Foucault.
- Deliver 6 presentations and listen to 6 presentations
- Complete 6 quizzes on the 6 units

To receive a grade of D, you must satisfactorily complete:

- 5 units: You may choose from among the units of: Classical rhetoric, Richards, Toulmin, Weaver, Burke, hooks, Baudrillard, and Foucault.
- Deliver 5 presentations and listen to 5 presentations
- Complete 5 quizzes on the 5 units

A grade of F will be given if fewer than 5 units are completed.

Assignment of final grade: If the number of assignments you have completed does not fall precisely into one of the grade categories above, you will be given the highest grade for which you have fulfilled all requirements.

Completion date: The last day to complete work on any of the units in class is **Wednesday, December 6**. There is no final exam in the class.

Attendance: Attend class when you are ready to present an oral summary, listen to an oral summary, take a quiz, or submit a think piece (think pieces also may be submitted by email). You may also choose to use the classroom to take notes on the reading. If you are working toward a grade of A, A-, or B+ in the class, you should attend the two initial lectures on classical rhetoric; if you do not, you will find that passing the first quiz on classical rhetoric will be more difficult.

Extra-Credit Options: There are no extra-credit options in the class.

RATIONALE FOR THE STRUCTURE

Why is the course structured in this way?

- One of the primary goals of a university education is to encourage you to develop self-directed learning or life-long learning skills. As self-directed learners, individuals have the ability to identify and set personally meaningful goals for their own learning; develop and use a wide range of learning strategies appropriate to different learning tasks; work independently and/or with others to achieve their learning goals; and persist to overcome obstacles in order to achieve their learning goals. This course is designed to help you develop these skills in a semi-structured environment in which you can experiment with learning preferences and methods.
- The traditional educational format of lectures by a professor is no longer appropriate for the learning styles and preferences of most students. This course is designed to help you learn in ways that better fit you.
- Traditional classrooms often do not promote learning and instead encourage students to focus on earning good grades. At the end of the course, you may have earned a good grade but may have learned very little. The focus of this course is on learning the subject.
- If you are like most students, you have very little time, and you are employing a variety of strategies to manage your time. This course is designed to meet your need to manage your time by giving you flexibility in terms of when you do the reading, the class sessions you attend, and the amount of work you choose to complete.
- Learning is a cooperative endeavor between a professor and a student. I have contributed textbooks and a reading packet, a plan for learning, and my expertise, available at any time for clarification and discussion. I have also hired teaching assistants to help you with your understanding of concepts. You also bring resources to the learning experience, and the format of this course is designed to encourage you to value yourself and one another as resources for teaching and learning.

UNITS AND READING

Below are the reading assignments that must be completed for each of the units. Please note that we are not covering all of the chapters in the textbooks, so be sure that you are reading the appropriate chapters and completing the correct units.

- **Unit 1: Classical rhetoric:** *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, chapter 1 (pages 1-18); Reading Packet (posted on Canvas); and professor's lecture notes, all.
- **Unit 2: I. A. Richards:** *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, chapter 2 (pages 19-49) and *Readings in Contemporary Rhetoric*, chapters 1, 2, and 3 (pages 1-34).

- **Unit 3: Stephen Toulmin:** *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, chapter 5 (pages 115-51) and *Readings in Contemporary Rhetoric*, chapters 7 and 8 (pages 93-129).
- **Unit 4: Richard M. Weaver:** *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, chapter 6 (pages 153-184) and *Readings in Contemporary Rhetoric*, chapters 9, 10, and 11 (pages 130-59).
- **Unit 5: Kenneth Burke:** *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, chapter 7 (pages 185-231) and *Readings in Contemporary Rhetoric*, chapters 12 and 13 (pages 160-98).
- **Unit 6: bell hooks:** *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, chapter 9 (pages 267-302) and *Readings in Contemporary Rhetoric*, chapters 16-20 (pages 222-54).
- **Unit 7: Jean Baudrillard:** *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, chapter 10 (pages 303-342) and *Readings in Contemporary Rhetoric*, chapters 21, 22, and 23 (pages 255-82).
- **Unit 8: Michel Foucault:** *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, chapter 11 (pages 343-83) and *Readings in Contemporary Rhetoric*, chapters 24 and 25 (pages 283-318).

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Here's how to pronounce some of the most difficult theorists' names:

- Toulmin: Toól-man
- Baudrillard: Bow-dree-yárd
- Michel Foucault: Michelle (just like our woman's name—it's not *Michael*) Foo-kó (second syllable rhymes with *slow*)

COURSE SCHEDULE

Mon., Aug. 21	Introduction to the course and to one another
Wed., Aug. 23	Classical theories of rhetoric: Lecture by professor Reading: <i>Contemporary Perspectives</i> , pgs. 1-18; Reading packet on classical rhetoric posted on Canvas, pgs. 1-8
Mon., Aug. 28	Classical theories of rhetoric: Lecture by professor Reading: Reading packet on classical rhetoric posted on Canvas, pgs. 9-13
Wed., Aug. 30	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Mon., Sept. 4	No class: Labor Day
Wed., Sept. 6	Individual demonstration of mastery of units

Mon., Sept. 11	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Sept. 13	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Mon., Sept. 18	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Sept. 20	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Mon., Sept. 25	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Sept. 27	Individual demonstration of mastery of units Think piece due
Mon., Oct. 2	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Oct. 4	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Mon., Oct. 9	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Oct. 11	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Mon., Oct. 16	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Oct. 18	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Mon., Oct. 23	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Oct. 25	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Mon., Oct. 30	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Nov. 1	Individual demonstration of mastery of units Think piece due
Mon., Nov. 6	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Nov. 8	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Mon., Nov. 13	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Nov. 15	No class: I will be attending the National Communication Association convention in Dallas. You may use our classroom to take notes on the readings, but you will not be able to complete any units on this day.

Mon., Nov. 20	No class: Fall Break
Wed., Nov. 22	No class: Fall Break
Mon., Nov. 27	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Nov. 29	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Mon., Dec. 4	Individual demonstration of mastery of units
Wed., Dec. 6	Individual demonstration of mastery of units Think piece due Re-writes of think pieces due