instructor information
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required texts
*Rhetoric and Civic Life.* LA101H Spring 2011 Custom Textbook

description
This honors course offers comprehensive training in oral, written, visual, and digital communication for the twenty-first century. It unites these various modes under the flexible art of rhetoric and uses rhetoric both to strengthen communication skills and to sharpen awareness of the challenges and advantages presented by oral, written, visual, and digital modes. Students will read about and discuss rhetorical concepts and situations and put their knowledge immediately to use by 1) analyzing civic rhetoric on campus and in their communities (including their networked communities), 2) researching current issues, and 3) developing and presenting arguments in oral, written, visual, and digital form.

Assignments, Grading, and Policies

major assignments
Liberal Arts 101H has four required speeches (one performed as a podcast) and four required essays. In addition, the course requires one multi-media project, which will use media editing and podcasting technology and will be designed, composed, performed, and produced in groups. As a capstone requirement, students will select, revise, and arrange their work into an e-portfolio.
All assignments must be completed in order to pass this class. Specific details on the assignments will be available on the course website and discussed in class.

**blogs**

Early in the semester, students will set up three distinct blogs using the The Blogs at Penn State platform (http://blogs.psu.edu). These blogs will be devoted to LA101H and will be distinct from any other blogs you keep on the site. Blogs from this particular section of LA101H will be aggregated so that you, your classmates, and your instructor may easily find and read one other’s posts. Blogs will be due each Friday prior to class. Students will be placed in blog groups of three or four classmates, and it will be the responsibility of these blog groups to engage one another’s entries by means of the comment function. Students will be able to revise and select entries for inclusion in final e-portfolios. For more specific information on blogging in LA101H, consult the “About Blogging” tab on the course website.

**participation**

Participation in this class is strongly encouraged, which is why it counts for 5% of the final grade (see below). Participation has several dimensions, not the least of which is presence in class. This doesn’t simply mean bodily presence (this is covered in the attendance policy below), but actual attunement to the class discussion. Engaged vocal contributions (questions, discussion points, etc.) are considered central to the success of the class. Also valuable is recognizing when it’s time for other students to contribute. There will be opportunities to contribute in small-group discussion. All these in-class activities represent opportunities to work out ideas.

**attendance/lateness**

Attendance is required. More than three absences—excused or unexcused—may result in a lower final grade for the course (down to and including an “F”). Three late arrivals equal one absence. Students will bring the reading material to class on the day it is assigned or risk being counted absent for that day. Students who come to class without having completed the assigned reading or writing may be counted absent as well.

**grading breakdown**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit One: “This I Believe” Podcast</th>
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<tr>
<td>Unit One: “This I Believe” Essay</td>
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<td>Unit Two: Rhetorical Situation Speech</td>
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<td>Unit Two: Rhetorical Analysis Essay</td>
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<td>Unit Three: Group Multi-Media Text</td>
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<td>Unit Four: Persuasive Speech</td>
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<td>Unit Four: Persuasive Essay</td>
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<td>Unit Five: E-portfolio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation and Attendance</td>
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**grading scale**

A = 95 to 100, A- = 90 to 94.9, B+ = 87.9 to 89.9, B = 83.3 to 87.6, B- = 80 to 83.32, C+ = 75 to 79.9, C = 70 to 74.9, D = 60 to 69.9, F = 59.9 and below. Note: The Penn State grading scale does not allow the option of awarding grades of C-, D+ or D- grades.
academic integrity/plagiarism
Penn State defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students’ dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20). Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University’s Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.

We will discuss proper citation practices in class, and I welcome questions on this issue at any time before assignments are due. I’d like to stress too that plagiarism is not to be confused with the sharing of ideas—all writers get advice from friends and colleagues. For the purposes of this course, the element that distinguishes such productive collaborative moments from plagiarism is that of willful deception—i.e., cheating.

mobile devices
Please silence your mobile devices before entering class.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

Please note: all HOMEWORK assignments are to be completed for the next class meeting, unless otherwise noted.

Unit One: Introductions: Rhetoric and Civic Life

Tuesday, January 11  Introduction to class. Introduction to rhetoric. In-class writing. 
**HOMEWORK:** Read Chapter 1 of *Rhetoric and Civic Life (RCL)*. Choose one of the Rhetorical Activities (choose either Activity 1, 2, 3, or 4) at the end of Chapter 1 and post your 300-word response on the course blog by Thursday’s class. Read the Unit One “This I Believe” Assignment and “About Blogging” on the course website. Request personal space at blogs.psu.edu
Thursday, January 13  Discuss reading. Introduction to “This I Believe” Assignments. Listen to sample “This I Believe” podcasts.

Friday, January 14  Setting up LA101H blogs
**HOMEWORK:** Read Chapters 2 and 3 of *RCL*. Consider topics for “This I Believe” piece and Passion Blog.

Tuesday, January 18  Discuss reading. Listen to more “This I Believe” pieces.
**HOMEWORK:** Read Chapter 4 of *RCL*. Begin drafting your “This I Believe” piece.

Thursday, January 20  Class visit to Media Commons. Schedule your podcast recording appointment. Discuss reading. **HOMEWORK:** Finish first draft of “This I Believe” Essay and post on Work-in-Progress Blog.

Friday, January 21  Draft workshop of “This I Believe” Essay. More discussion and samples of “This I Believe” podcasts. Brainstorm ideas for Passion Blog. **HOMEWORK:** Read “On the Difference between Writing and Speaking” (William Hazlett, 1825, link on course website).

Tuesday, January 25  No Formal Class: Individual conferences about Passion Blog and “This I Believe” pieces.

Thursday, January 27  “This I Believe” Speeches. Ungraded, with peer and instructor feedback.

Friday, January 28  Blogging Day, Week One. First full set of blogs are due before class: Passion, RCL, and Work-in-Progress. “This I Believe” podcasts should appear on your Work-in-Progress blog along with the latest draft of your “This I Believe” Essay. **HOMEWORK:** Revise “This I Believe” essays and podcasts for submission on Tuesday.” Read Chapter 5 of *RCL*.

**Unit Two: Situating Rhetoric**

Tuesday, February 1  **DUE:** “This I Believe” Essays and Podcasts. Discuss reading. Introduction to Unit Two Assignments. **HOMEWORK:** Consider text(s) to analyze for Unit Two. Read Chapter 6 of *RCL*.

Thursday, February 3  Discuss reading and apply concept of *kairos*. Examine sample rhetorical analysis essays.
Friday, February 4  Blogging Day, Week Two. Practice rhetorical analysis in class. **HOMEWORK:** Read Chapter 7 of *RCL*.

Tuesday, February 8  Discuss reading and practice delivery. More practice with rhetorical analysis and the rhetorical situation. **HOMEWORK:** Read Chapters 8 and 9 of *RCL*.

Thursday, February 10  Discuss reading and practice delivery in class. Consider possibilities for effective speech arrangement. Discuss movie speeches (from Americanrhetoric.com).

Friday, February 11  Blogging Day, Week Three. Discuss multi-media project and e-portfolio briefly. **HOMEWORK:** Read Chapter 10 of *RCL* for next Friday.

Tuesday, February 15  No Formal Class: Individual Conferences for Unit One Assignments. **HOMEWORK:** Revise draft of Rhetorical Analysis essay and place on Work-In-Progress Blog for Friday).

Thursday, February 17  No Formal Class: Individual Conferences for Unit One Assignments. **HOMEWORK:** Revise draft of Rhetorical Analysis essay and place on Work-In-Progress Blog for Friday).

Friday, February 18  Blogging Day, Week Four. Draft workshop of Rhetorical Analysis Essay (Put on Work-In-Progress Blog). Discuss Chapter 10 of *RCL*. **HOMEWORK:** Prepare speeches for next week.

Tuesday, February 22  Unit Two Speeches

Thursday, February 24  Unit Two Speeches

Friday, February 25  Overflow, Unit Two Speeches. Blogging Day, Week Five. **HOMEWORK:** Read Chapter 11 and 14 of *RCL*. Prepare essays for submission on Tuesday.

**Unit Three: The Anatomy of a Controversy**

Tuesday, March 1  **DUE:** Unit Two Rhetorical Analysis Essay
Discuss reading. Introduction to Unit Three Assignment. View sample multi-media projects. Brainstorm project topics. **HOMEWORK:** Read Chapter 15 of *RCL*.

Thursday, March 3  Discuss reading. Work in groups developing projects and/or tinkering with media platforms (e.g., Kaltura or iMovie).

Friday, March 5  Blogging Day, Week Six. Discuss voice performance.
Work in groups on developing projects.

March 7-11: Spring Break; No classes. Over the break, watch *An Inconvenient Truth* and *Supersize Me*.

Tuesday, March 15 Identify elements of controversies and discuss framing questions and visual rhetoric. View more multi-media project samples. **HOMEWORK:** Groups prepare work plan.

Thursday, March 17 **DUE:** Group work plan. Discussion of copyright and fair use. Groups work on multi-media projects.

Friday, March 18 Blogging Day, Week Seven. Groups work on multi-media project. **HOMEWORK:** Continue working on multi-media projects. Read Chapter 12 of *RCL*.

Tuesday, March 22 Discuss reading. Introduction to Unit Four Assignments. Groups meet to discuss multi-media project.

Thursday, March 24 No formal class: Groups meet with instructor to discuss multi-media project.

Friday, March 25 Blogging Day, Week Eight. **HOMEWORK:** Continue working on multi-media projects. Read Chapter 12 of *RCL*.

**Unit Four: Communicating Persuasively**

Tuesday, March 29 No formal class: Groups meet independently to complete multi-media project.

Thursday, March 31 History of a Public Controversy Presentations.

Friday, April 1 Blogging Day, Week Nine. Presentation on Online Research and Resources. **HOMEWORK:** Read Chapter 13 of *RCL*.

Tuesday, April 5 Discuss reading. Review sample persuasive essays and speeches. Brainstorm topics. **HOMEWORK:** Read Chapter 16 of *RCL* for next Tuesday.

Thursday, April 7 No formal class. Work on e-portfolio.

Friday, April 8 Blogging Day, Week Ten. Begin drafting your persuasive essay and speech.
Tuesday, April 12  
Discuss reading.

Thursday, April 14  
Blogging Day, Week Ten. **HOMEWORK:** Read Chapter 17 and 18 of *RCL* for next Friday.

Friday, April 15  
Blogging Day, Week 11. Draft workshop for Unit Four Assignments. Discuss readings. Final preparations and advice for next week’s speeches.

Tuesday, April 19  
Persuasive Speeches

Thursday, April 21  
Persuasive Speeches

Friday, April 22  
Persuasive Speeches overflow. Blogging Day, Week Twelve. **HOMEWORK:** Read Chapters 19 and 20 of *RCL*.

**Unit Five: Revising and Self-Presenting**

Tuesday, April 26  
Discuss reading and look at sample e-portfolios.

Thursday, April 28  
Revision and design session. Review more sample e-portfolios.

Friday, April 29  
Group workshop of e-portfolios

E-portfolio due on Monday, May 2 at noon.