

## PROPOSING A WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSE

### Information about the person submitting the proposal:

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Department: **Communication and Media Studies**  
College: **Arts and Sciences**

### Information about the course:

Course Title: **Classical Rhetoric**  
Course Number: **COMM 311**

Course description (*Bulletin* copy is fine): **A study of ancient theories of rhetoric, providing an understanding and appreciation of rhetorical traditions, as well as a grounding for developing a modern theory of rhetoric and rhetorical criticism.**

Has this course been offered before? **Yes, but not as a Writing Intensive course**

Is this course a Gen Ed course? **No**

Has this course been approved by the relevant curriculum committees in your College/School? **Yes**

### Curricular Information:

- 1.) How many students will typically enroll in this course? **12-16**
- 2.) How does this course's WI emphasis support the academic and programmatic goals of the University or College/School curriculum?

**Through enhancing students' knowledge of foundational rhetorical concepts and giving them myriad ways to learn through writing, Classical Rhetoric's Writing Intensive emphasis supports the University's, the College's, and my department's commitment to giving students the opportunity to engage with and apply significant, culture-shaping ideas. Students will think critically and ground their critical thinking in the discourse of ancient and contemporary rhetorical scholars, as well as reflect, write, discuss, and present about these ideas within the discourse community of their Classical Rhetoric seminar.**

- 3.) After consultation with the Department Chair or Program Director, please explain how this course enhances or complements the regular curricular offerings of the department or program and how the course will be scheduled to avoid conflicts with other course offerings and rotations.

**Classical Rhetoric complements the Department of Communication and Media Studies' slate of rhetoric-oriented courses, especially Public Speaking, Rhetorical Theory and Criticism, Rhetoric, Culture, and Identity, and History and Criticism of American Public Address. All of our majors and minors must take Public Speaking (COMM 201). All of our majors must take Rhetorical Theory and Criticism (COMM 302), while it is one of two methodology options for minors. Classical Rhetoric is included in the "menu" of upper-division theory courses, of which majors must choose one.**

**Majors who have taken Rhetorical Theory and Criticism as juniors and want further grounding in rhetoric as they look toward a rhetoric-based senior thesis are encouraged to enroll in Classical Rhetoric. Majors who have not yet taken Rhetorical Theory and Criticism and enroll in Classical Rhetoric as sophomores or in the fall of the junior year are given additional background in rhetorical principles that helps them once they enroll in Rhetorical Theory and Criticism in spring of the junior year. Typically, the course is offered every other fall semester; as our department faculty grows, we may be able to offer Classical Rhetoric annually in the future. Classical Rhetoric is offered in the fall semester so that it is not offered in the same semester as Rhetorical Theory and Criticism, which is almost always taught in the spring semester.**

Please answer each of the following.

- 1.) What are the writing-related learning goals for students in this course? What do students typically know about writing (or what can they typically do with writing) before they come to this class, and what do you expect them to learn over the course of the semester?

**Classical Rhetoric is an ideal Writing Intensive course in that the entire semester of course content is itself focused on reading, understanding, and applying ideas encompassed by the five canons of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. Thus, in addition to the many opportunities to learn *through* writing, students are reading, discussing, and writing *about* how these long-established ideas about rhetoric can be understood in their historical context as well as how they are helpful for both interpreting and creating written and oral communication today. In other words, students spend the semester reading, reflecting, discussing, and writing about what makes for effective writing and speaking, in addition to having the opportunity to put these principles into practice.**

**Students who take this course range from sophomores through seniors, and are typically either communication majors or minors. Thus, students taking Classical Rhetoric will have completed a first-year seminar and a writing course, in addition to the public speaking course required for our major and minor (which includes heavy emphasis on invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery as applied to speaking). Some of the students in the course will have already taken or be enrolled in a junior seminar concurrent with taking Classical Rhetoric.**

In the two major course papers, as well as in the essay-format exams, students are expected to be able to synthesize passages from primary texts with supporting material from relevant, credible secondary sources along with their own original, critical thinking about the texts under analysis. Students must be able to identify relevant passages for analysis from their selected primary texts, find and integrate material from credible secondary sources that inform their perspective on the primary texts, and articulate clearly their original rhetorical criticism of the primary texts. In addition to being able to employ ideas related to the five canons of rhetoric in the rhetorical criticism of selected texts, students are also expected to enact their knowledge of the five canons of rhetoric in their own writing and speaking used to share their original rhetorical criticism with their peers and professor.

2.) How is information literacy incorporated in this course? (In other words, in what ways will students be finding, evaluating, and incorporating outside source material into their written texts.)

For both of the major, high-stakes papers required for the course, students must find primary texts for analysis from beyond the course readings. Typically, these primary texts are drawn from contemporary political or popular discourse. In addition, for both of these major papers students are required to find appropriate articles from rhetoric-focused academic journals to enhance their understanding of the rhetorical concept they have selected to drive their analysis. These sources are all in addition to course readings drawn from extant classical rhetoric texts (such as those by Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero, Quintilian, Augustine) and contemporary rhetorical scholars (especially George Kennedy), which the students are also required to incorporate into their papers.

In the midterm and final exam essays, students are expected to incorporate relevant citations from course readings drawn from extant classical rhetoric texts (such as those by Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero, Quintilian, Augustine) and contemporary rhetorical scholars (especially George Kennedy), in addition to identifying relevant contemporary examples of the rhetorical concepts being discussed in their exam essays.

Students are given individualized guidance in the topic proposal process as they seek primary texts for analysis. They are also offered individualized guidance as they seek and evaluate relevant, credible articles from the rhetoric discipline to inform their thinking and integrate into their papers.

3.) How much will students' written assignments count toward the final grade? 70-85%


1. Mini Papers, Blog Posts, Paper Proposals, & Discussion Questions (and the like) = 10-15% (these low-stakes assignments vary in length from a couple/few sentences to a few paragraphs; these are not graded per se, but receive comments and completion points)
2. Greek paper = 15-20% (9-10 pages, requires peer review of full draft before final version)
3. Roman paper = 15-20% (9-10 pages, requires peer review of full draft before final version)
4. Midterm Exam = 15-20% (multiple essay-format questions, usually given as take-home exam; usually four 750-900 word essay questions for a total of around 12 pages)
5. Final Exam = 15-20% (multiple essay-format questions, usually given as take-home exam; usually four 750-900 word essay questions for a total of around 12 pages)

4.) How is revision incorporated into writing assignments? How will feedback be given, and which assignments will include required revisions?

**For both the Greek paper and the Roman paper, students are required to bring a full-length paper draft to class a few to several days before the final paper is due. We devote most, if not all, of one course period (1 hr., 15 min.) to peer review of these drafts. Each student gets feedback from one or two other students, depending on how I structure the peer review session. I give the students guidance as far as both macro- and micro-level writing concerns on which they should focus as they review one another's writing.**

**In addition, I have sometimes given students the opportunity to revise one or both of their major papers prior to the end of the semester, so that they can apply the detailed, narrative comments they received from me when they turned in the paper/s initially. If this course is approved as a Writing Intensive course, I will make this revision opportunity a consistent element of the course.**

**Approvals:**

- Writing Program Director 
- Chair of the Department
- Curriculum Committee of (circle one)    A&S                      Business                      Music
- University General Education Committee, as necessary
- UCCAP

## Appendix A: Greek Paper (first of two high-stakes papers required for the course)

COMM 311  
Fall 2010  
Watts

### Paper 1: Greek Rhetorical Theory Applied to Contemporary Rhetorical Practice (20% of course grade)

**Proposal due date:** By Mon, Sept. 27, you must e-mail me a paragraph in which you describe the specific focus of your paper (which Greek rhetorical concept and why, which contemporary rhetorical text and why, and why this particular rhetorical concept is appropriate for understanding this particular rhetorical text). (This is required; points will be deducted from your paper if this requirement is not met.)

**Proposal meeting:** You must make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your paper sometime on Mon., Sept. 27 or Wed., Sept. 29. (This is required; points will be deducted from your paper if this requirement is not met.)

**Draft due:** A full-length draft of your paper is due at the beginning of class on Monday, Oct. 4, for the purposes of peer review and sharing the highlights of your paper with the class. (This is required; points will be deducted from your paper if this requirement is not met.)

**Paper due:** Your completed paper is due by Fri., Oct. 8.

**Length:** 2,700-3,000 words (approx. 9-10 pages; word count more important than page count; please include word count on cover page or in heading on first page)

**Format:** typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, 10-12 point type size, standard font such as Garamond, Palatino, or Times New Roman

**Focus:** You will select a concept from classical Greek rhetorical theory (from our readings of Plato, Isocrates, or Aristotle) to use as your theoretical lens for analyzing a contemporary rhetorical text/artifact such as a political speech, political campaign advertisements or materials, print or television advertising, or other appropriate persuasive texts.

**Organization:**

1) Your **introduction** should include what concept will be used, which text will be analyzed, why this concept is appropriate for analyzing this text (or these texts), why the contemporary text is relevant, why it is important to analyze this text from a rhetorical perspective, and, of

course, the thesis you will be proving throughout your paper. **This should take about one well-developed paragraph (about one page)**

**Assignment continues on next page.**

**Organization, continued:**

2) You should then move into an **explanation of the theory/theories** you will be using as your analytical perspective. You will be citing the original Greek rhetorical theory (by Plato, Isocrates, or Aristotle) here and you will be explaining your understanding of it and its relevance to contemporary rhetorical practice. In this section of the paper you will also cite the academic journal articles (or book chapters) in which other contemporary rhetorical scholars have discussed this rhetorical concept or have used it to analyze other texts. **(This should take about three pages.)**

3) You will then move into **the analysis section** of the paper, in which you will analyze your selected contemporary rhetorical text/s. First you will need to **explain the original context** of the text—who authored it, where and when it was communicated, to what audience, under what cultural and historical conditions, etc. Then you will move into the actual application of your selected rhetorical concept/s to analyzing your selected contemporary rhetorical text/s. This is where you use Greek rhetorical theory to explain, in as much specific detail as possible, the rhetorical strategies present in your contemporary rhetorical text/s. **(This should take about five to six pages.)**

4) Finally, you will **conclude** by looking back over what you have done in the paper, reiterating your main points and thesis, and establishing closure. **This will take about one well developed paragraph (about one page).**

**Sources:**

1) You must cite appropriately from *Readings in Classical Rhetoric* edited by Thomas Benson and Michael Prosser (source of the concept you are using as the basis for your rhetorical analysis) and *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* by George Kennedy.

2) You must also cite appropriately from your primary text (the contemporary rhetorical text you are analyzing).

3) You must cite two to three relevant academic journal articles (or possibly academic book chapters) related to the particular classical Greek rhetorical theory, concept, or scholar you are using as the basis of your analysis. Journals such as *Rhetorica*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, and the *Southern Communication Journal* are the most likely to include relevant articles. These articles may be about the Greek rhetorical concept itself or may be examples of other scholars using this Greek rhetorical concept to analyze other rhetorical texts/artifacts (models of the kind of analysis you are doing).

Please use Modern Language Association (MLA) style parenthetical citations for any paraphrased or quoted material as well as an MLA style works cited page at the end of your paper (does not count toward the required word count).

## Appendix B: Roman Paper (second of two high-stakes papers required for the course)

COMM 311  
Fall 2012  
Watts

### Paper 2: Roman Rhetorical Theory Applied to Contemporary Rhetorical Practice (15% of course grade)

**Proposal due date:** By Mon., Nov. 19, you must e-mail me a paragraph in which you describe the specific focus of your paper (which Roman rhetorical concept and why, which contemporary rhetorical text and why, and why this particular rhetorical concept is appropriate for understanding this particular rhetorical text). (This is required; points will be deducted from your paper if this requirement is not met.)

**Draft due:** A full-length draft of your paper is due at the beginning of class on Mon., Dec. 3, for the purposes of peer review and sharing the highlights of your paper with the class. (This is required; points will be deducted from your paper if this requirement is not met.)

**Paper due:** Your completed paper is due by Fri., Dec. 7. You must give a brief, informal presentation of the highlights of your paper in class that day.

**Length:** 2,400-3,000 words (approx. 9-10 pages; word count more important than page count; please include word count on cover page or in heading on first page)

**Format:** typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, 10-12 point type size, standard font such as Garamond, Palatino, or Times New Roman

**Focus:** You will select a concept from classical Roman rhetorical theory (from our readings of Cicero, Quintilian, Longinus, or possibly another Roman rhetorician) to use as your theoretical lens for analyzing a contemporary rhetorical text/artifact such as a political speech, political campaign advertisements or materials, print or television advertising, or other appropriate, relevant rhetorical texts. Please be sure to select a Roman rhetorical concept that is distinctive to Roman rhetorical theory rather than just a reiteration of some Greek rhetorical theory.

#### **Organization/Specific Content:**

1) Your **introduction** should include what concept will be used, which text will be analyzed, why this concept is appropriate for analyzing this text (or these texts), why the contemporary text is relevant, why it is important to analyze this text from a rhetorical perspective, and, of course, the thesis you will be proving throughout your paper. **This should take about one well-developed paragraph (about one page)**



2) You should then move into an **explanation of the theory/theories** you will be using as your analytical perspective. You will be citing the original Roman rhetorical theory (by Cicero, Quintilian, Longinus, etc.) here and you will be explaining your understanding of it and its relevance to contemporary rhetorical practice. In this section of the paper you will also cite the **academic journal articles** (or academic book chapters) in which other contemporary rhetorical scholars have discussed this rhetorical concept or have used it to analyze other texts. **(This should take about two-and-a-half to three pages.)**

3) You will then move into **the analysis section** of the paper, in which you will analyze your selected contemporary rhetorical text/s. First you will need to **explain the original context** of the text—who authored it, where and when it was communicated, to what audience, under what cultural and historical conditions, etc. Then you will move into the actual application of your selected rhetorical concept/s to analyzing your selected contemporary rhetorical text/s. This is where you use Roman rhetorical theory to explain, in as much specific detail as possible, the rhetorical strategies present in your contemporary rhetorical text/s. **(This should take about five to six pages.)**

4) Finally, you will **conclude** by looking back over what you have done in the paper, reiterating your main points and thesis, and establishing closure. **This will take about one well developed paragraph (about one page).**

#### **Sources:**

1) You must cite appropriately from *Readings in Classical Rhetoric* edited by Thomas Benson and Michael Prosser (source of the concept you are using as the basis for your rhetorical analysis) and *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* by George Kennedy. Be sure to cite directly from your selected Roman rhetorician, not just what Kennedy or Benson & Prosser say that they said.

2) You must also cite appropriately from your primary text (the contemporary rhetorical text you are analyzing).

3) You **must cite two to three relevant academic journal articles** (or possibly academic book chapters) related to the particular classical Roman rhetorical theory, concept, or scholar you are using as the basis of your analysis. **Please be sure to get your articles from rhetoric-focused journals such as *Rhetorica*, *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, and the *Southern Communication Journal*; any other journals must be cleared with me ahead of time.** These articles may be about the Roman rhetorical concept itself or may be examples of other scholars using this Roman rhetorical concept to analyze other rhetorical texts/artifacts (models of the kind of analysis you are doing).

Please use Modern Language Association (MLA) style parenthetical citations for any paraphrased or quoted material as well as an MLA style works cited page at the end of your paper (does not count toward the required word count).