

ENGL 15, Rhetoric & Composition: Writing in the Digital Age

Section 007/

MWF, 10:10 - 11:00/

Luerssen 120

Professor: Dr. Chloe Milligan

Email: cmm6663@psu.edu

Office Hours: MWF, 11:15 - 12:05, or by appointment

Location: Franco 143

Office Policy:

Office hours are designated time to meet with students outside of class. Please drop in to discuss any class related concerns, questions, or clarification. If these times do not work, please email with some dates and times to set a meeting time that will work.

Course Description

This course examines the rhetorical and practical elements of writing effective arguments for contemporary academic audiences.

We will begin by defining argument for an academic audience. To foster our development as academic writers, we will establish a writing culture in which we learn how to analyze both our own and our peers' writing. We will then explore various forms of analysis used in academic reasoning. In these units, we will apply our knowledge of rhetoric and persuasion to real-world issues revolving around the theme of writing in the digital age. Applying all of the skills developed throughout the course, students will finally put their ideas into action in such a way that moves an audience to act, not hypothetically, but in the real world and for a real audience.

As we practice our argumentative skills through the theme of writing in the digital age, we will also improve our critical thinking through reading, writing, and discussion, and will attend to basic research skills, including documentation and avoiding plagiarism. Additionally, we will examine and practice academic conventions of word choice, sentence structure and variation, and paragraph formation.

Texts will include academic readings from an open-education textbook as well as articles, stories, and media that demonstrate rhetoric at play within popular culture.

Required Texts

You will need to purchase the following digital game (\$2.99), which we will be discussing at length:

Park, Matilde and Penelope Evans. *Arc Symphony*. Aether Interactive, 2017.

You will also need to arrange availability to Netflix in order to access various viewing material. If this presents a particular problem, **please** contact me **prior** to relevant class periods.

All required textbook readings for this course can be found in [Writing Commons](#), a free, comprehensive, peer reviewed open text.

All other texts will be made available via Canvas

Assignments

(1000 total points possible)

150 Rhetorical Analysis

You will critically analyze a particular object of study (a text) according to the conventions of rhetorical criticism, determining how a particular text tries to persuade readers through the use of argumentative claims and evidence. Your essay will make a thesis claim about the argument, evaluate the method of persuasion, and work to support your claim with evidence from the primary text.

150 Thematic Analysis

You will critically analyze a particular object of study (a text) according to the conventions of literary close reading, supporting your textual interpretation with evidence from the text as well as interpretation of other scholars.

200 Digital Literacy Narrative

You will compose a video essay in [Adobe Spark](#) to explore your digital literacy narrative—how you have learned about, with, and through multimedia in your development as a writer. Your argument should be conveyed through both narrative and multimodal appeals. Your video should be five to seven minutes long and be turned in alongside its script.

100 Annotated Bibliography

You will compile a list of at least five sources you plan to utilize in your proposal argument, cite them correctly, then summarize and analyze them according to provided criteria.

300 Proposal Presentation

You will collaborate with classmates in groups of three to draft a proposal presentation that considers a contemporary problem and argue (1) that the problem exists, (2) how to solve the problem, (3) that the

solution is feasible, and (4) that particular benefits accrue to relevant stakeholders—paying particular attention to rhetorical scope, audience, and logical organization.

100 Participation

You must be an active and engaged part of the course to not only receive participation credit but to ensure that our course will be an academically fruitful experience. This grade will be gauged by not only your attendance, but your contribution to in class group activities and larger discussions. To guarantee receipt of a full grade, you must contribute within class regularly throughout each week.

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

UNIT 0: INTRODUCTION TO...

Week 1:

8/26 Course Introduction

8/28 “Backpacks vs. Briefcases: Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis,” Laura Bolin Carroll

8/30 *Writing Commons*, “[Kairos](#)”; *Phaedrus* (c. 370 BCE), Plato [excerpt]

UNIT 1: RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

Week 2:

9/2 (Labor Day)

9/4 *WC*, “[Fallacious Ethos](#),” “[Fallacious Pathos](#),” “[Fallacious Logos](#),” “[Fallacious Kairos](#)”

9/6 *WC*, “[Audience](#)”; “[On Twitter and opinion journalism](#),” Juliet Jacques

Week 3:

9/9 *WC*, “[Burke’s Pentad](#)”; “[Google Has a Striking History of Bias Against Black Girls](#),” Safiya Noble

9/11 *WC*, “[What to Think About When Writing for a Particular Audience](#)”; “[Valve is Not Your Friend, and Steam is Not Healthy for Gaming](#),” Tim Colwill

9/13 Mandatory Conferences

Week 4:

9/16 WC, "[Formulating a Thesis](#)," "[The Thesis](#)"

9/18 WC, "[MLA Checklist](#)"

9/20 Peer Review

UNIT 2: THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Week 5:

9/23 WC, "[Literary Criticism](#)"

- **Rhetorical Analysis DUE**

9/25 WC, "[Textual Research Methods](#)"; "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas" (1973), Ursula K. LeGuin

9/27 *Black Mirror*, "The Entire History of You" (2011), Jesse Armstrong & Brian Welsh

Week 6:

9/30 *BM*, "Be Right Back" (2013), Charlie Brooker & Owen Harris

10/2 *BM*, "Hated in the Nation" (2016), Brooker & James Hawes

10/4 Mandatory Conferences

Week 7:

10/7 WC, "[Sticking Your Nose In: Positioning Yourself in Academic Writing](#)"

10/9 WC, "[Conversation between Sources](#)," "[How Are Your Sources Using Sources?](#)", "[Finding and Examining the Sources in Your Sources](#)"

10/11 Peer Review

UNIT 3: MULTIMODAL COMPOSITION

Week 8:

10/14 WC, "[Medium, Media](#)"; "[F for Fake—How to Structure a Video Essay](#)" (2015), Every Frame a Painting

- **Thematic Analysis DUE**

10/16 WC, "[Literacy](#)"

10/18 Adobe Spark Tutorial

Week 9:

10/21 WC, "[Digital Literacy](#)," "[What Are New Literacies?](#)"

10/23 [Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives](#) (2007 -), Michael Harker & Ben McCorkle

10/25 Mandatory Conferences

Week 10:

10/28 WC, "[A New Hope for Games in the Classroom](#)"

10/30 [Arc Symphony](#) (2017), Matilde Park & Penelope Evans

11/1 Peer Review

UNIT 4: TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Week 11:

11/4 WC, "[Professional and Technical Communication: An Overview](#)"

- **Digital Literacy Narrative DUE**

11/6 WC, "[Managing Group Projects](#)"

11/8 Mandatory Conferences

Week 12:

11/11 WC, "[Annotated Bibliography](#)"

11/13 WC, "[Library and Internet Research](#)"

11/15 Peer Review

Week 13:

11/18 WC, "[Proposals](#)," "[Proposal Writing Basics](#)"

- **Annotated Bibliography DUE**

11/20 WC, "[Professional and Technical Writing Processes: Composing](#)"

11/22 Group Project Management

Week 14:

11/25 (Thanksgiving Holiday)

11/27 (Thanksgiving Holiday)

11/29 (Thanksgiving Holiday)

Week 15:

12/2 WC, "[Researching Your Audience](#)"

12/4 WC, "[Usability and User Experience](#)"

12/6 Usability Test

Week 16:

12/9 Peer Review

12/11 Proposal Presentations

12/13 Course Conclusion

Proposal Presentation DUE 12/16, 11:59PM