

**Spring 2013**  
**RHE 306: Rhetoric and Writing**  
**Class Policy Statement**

**Instructor:** Kendall J. Gerdes

**Unique number:** 44210

**Class Time and Place:** PAR 6, MW 2:00 pm – 3:15 pm

**E-mail:** kendalljoy@utexas.edu

**Course Website:** <http://306spring13.pbworks.com>

**Office:** FAC 16

**Office hours:** MW 3:15 pm - 4:30 pm, F 10 am - 11 am, and by appointment

**Textbooks:**

- ✓ Crowley, Sharon and Debra Hawhee. *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*. 5th ed. New York: Pearson, 2012.
- ✓ Lundsford, Andrea. *Easy Writer: A Pocket Reference*. 4th ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009.

RHE 306 – Rhetoric & Writing is a course in argumentation that situates rhetoric as an art of **civic discourse**. It is designed to enhance your ability to analyze the various positions held in any public debate and to advocate your own position effectively. Your work in this course will help you advance the critical writing and reading skills you will need to succeed in courses for your major and university degree.

**You will learn how to:**

1. identify, evaluate, construct, and organize effective arguments;
2. read critically;
3. advocate a specific position responsibly;
4. conduct library and web-based research and document sources;
5. produce a clean, efficient style and adapt it to various rhetorical situations; and
6. revise and revise and revise your own and others' prose.

**Major Assignments:** Students will write three 5-7 page essays (designated as 1.1, 2.1, and 3.1), and they will revise each of these three based on the instructor's feedback (designated as 1.2, 2.2, and 3.2).

Unit 1. Mapping a Controversy.

Unit 2. Rhetorical Analysis.

Unit 3. Advocating a Position.

Additionally, students will compose 5-7 short research summaries, additional short exercises, and frequent Learning Record journal entries. Students will also compose one mid-term and one final Learning Record portfolio.

**Course Expectations:** I expect that you will come to class prepared, having read any assigned readings and completed any assignments that are due. Some class time will be devoted to lectures or other efforts on my part to share information you need for the course. However, I expect that most of your time in class will be spent asking questions, participating in discussions and group activities, combining resources, and working together with me and with each other to make this class as successful as possible.

We may deal with issues that provoke strong emotions and disagreement. I expect that all of our interactions (whether in discussion online or in person, peer review, or writing) will be conducted in a way that encourages the sharing and discussion of all viewpoints.

**Office Hours:** Please come to see me during office hours, make appointments to meet me at other times or discuss any questions you have through email. The more we talk about your work together, the better you are likely to do in the course. Email is the best way to contact me.

**Attendance:** In short, if you miss five or more classes you will fail the course. RHE 306 is writing and participation intensive. If you miss five or more days of class throughout the semester, you will lack the skills and knowledge needed to complete the course satisfactorily.

You are responsible for completing any peer review activities that you miss. If you know you will have to miss class, inform me ahead of time. Be sure to check with your classmates to discuss what you missed and check the class website for materials distributed during class.

**Tardiness:** If you know you will be late, please let me know why in advance of class. If you are late by accident, please enter the room quietly and catch up with the rest of the class. If you are 15+ minutes late, you will be docked 1/2 an absence: that is, two excessive tardies will count as one class absence.

**Distractions:** Please silence your cell phones before class and do not consult them during class meetings. If we make use of computers during class, do not use them for any other purpose than the ones I have requested: that is, do not check your email, facebook, twitter, tumblr, etc. unless I've asked you to.

\*\*\* If I see you fooling around, texting, or otherwise tuning out, I will mark you absent. \*\*\*

**Late Work:** All major and minor writing assignments are due on the days listed in the Course Calendar. Late work will negatively affect your Learning Record assessment (see "Grading Policy" section below). The online space used to turn in work for this course timestamps all file uploads.

As you will produce multiple drafts of the major assignments and falling behind in the sequence of the assignments will quickly put you at risk of failing the course, I will not grant extensions. If you have trouble with an assignment and feel that you cannot produce a complete assignment by the due date, please let me know *at least 24 hours* before the assignment is due and we will discuss your situation.

Writing is a recursive process. To put forth your best effort you have to go through a multiple step process of drafting, reviewing and revising. Work on essays should begin the day they are assigned with brainstorming or other prewriting and preliminary research, and it should continue at a regular pace until the assignment is completed. Starting the writing process early will allow you to portion out your workload over time, and I have designed the course schedule and workload with such a work ethic in mind.

Procrastinate at your own risk.

**Revision:** For each major writing assignment you will produce multiple drafts to be reviewed by both your peers and myself. The revisions made to papers in this course must be substantial. In other words, you cannot only *edit*, *proofread*, or *correct* for spelling and minor grammatical errors. You must also *revise* to change and enhance the overall structure of your arguments. I will be looking for revisions that focus on global aspects of writing, such as responding to the assignment, using appropriate and consistent tone, fair summary, good organization, effective argumentation and source use and critical thinking.

**If you do not revise the X.1 for the X.2 version or revise only minor, sentence-level details, it will be difficult or impossible for you to claim proficiency with the writing process Course Strand on the Learning Record.**

**Grading Policy:** Grades in this course will be determined by use of the Learning Record (LR). The LR requires you to compile a portfolio of work throughout the semester, record brief observations on your work, and to compose formal reflections on your work at the midterm and at the end of the semester. As documented in your portfolio and observations, your work in class (formal and informal writing assignments), group activities, and relevant work outside of the class will provide the evidence from which you will build an argument about your performance in the course. After reviewing your argument, I will either agree with or revise your self-assessment based on the evidence provided in your LR.

You will create this argument by relating the evidence from your portfolio to the four Course Strands (broad-level goals that cover a variety of skills): (1) Rhetoric, (2) Writing Process, (3) Research, and (4) Digital Literacy. In almost every learning situation, there are multiple dimensions by which the learner's experience can be gaged: confidence and independence, knowledge and understanding, skills and strategies, use of prior and emerging experience, and reflection. Your Learning Record reflections will discuss how your work measures on these dimensions in terms of the Course Strands. We will discuss the LR in detail at the beginning of the semester, and we will have various conversations about compiling the LR as the semester progresses. The grade criteria are as follows:

- A Continual participation in all course activities, perfect or near perfect attendance, and all assigned work completed on time. Excellent quality in work produced for the course along all dimensions of learning and in all Course Strands. LR reflections cite explicit and accurate evidence for quality of work. LR demonstrates both an awareness of student's place along the dimensions of learning and development along the dimensions throughout the semester, showing an awareness of both strengths and areas to work on in the future.
- B Almost continual participation in all course activities, near perfect attendance, and all assigned work completed on time. Good quality in work produced for the course along all dimensions of learning and in all Course Strands. LR reflections cite explicit and accurate evidence for quality of work, but do not provide the most appropriate evidence or fail to connect some claims about quality of work and development to evidence in the LR. LR demonstrates both an awareness of student's place along the dimensions of learning and development along the dimensions throughout the semester, showing an awareness of both strengths and areas to work on in the future.
- C Varied participation in all course activities, minimal absences, and all assigned work completed on time. Average quality in work produced for the course along all dimensions of learning and in all Course Strands. LR reflections cite explicit and accurate evidence for quality of work, but do not always provide appropriate evidence or fail to connect some claims about quality of work and development to evidence in the LR. LR demonstrates some awareness of student's place along the dimensions of learning and development along the dimensions throughout the semester, but does not describe development fully.
- D Intermittent participation in course activities, poor attendance, some late, incomplete or missing assignments, and/or below-average quality of work produced according to the Course Strands. LR provides little evidence of awareness of development along the

dimensions of learning, not discussing one or more dimensions and/or Strands.

- F Minimal or no participation in course activities, poor attendance, several late, incomplete or missing assignments and/or well below average quality of work produced according to the Course Strands. Evidence of development across the dimensions of learning is not given or does not support claims made in the LR reflection, and LR does not discuss multiple dimensions and/or Strands.

Plus and minus grades will be awarded where LR evidence falls between the criteria for two whole letter grades.

**Electronic Data Management:** You should back up all computer data for this class in a timely and consistent fashion. You will be turning in your essays using an online portfolio, but do not rely on either the portfolio or your own computer alone to save your work. A computer failure will not allow you to turn in work late. You should save your data to at least **three** separate sites. For example, you should copy your data to both the online portfolio and a flash drive in addition to saving data on your computer's hard drive. Also, save the different versions of your papers as different files (e.g. Paper 1.1 and 1.2 should be saved as different files).

**Any files shared with me or your classmates should be in .doc format (the older Microsoft Word format, *not* the new .docx).**

**Course Website & Email:** I will post copies of handouts, an updated calendar and other materials on our class website. Check the site frequently, at least before every class and when I ask you to check it.

Class-wide emails will be sent to the email address you have on file with the university. Please check this account on a regular basis. When you email me, you should expect a response no sooner than 24 hours, though I will try to respond before 24 hours have elapsed. In other words, don't wait until the last minute to ask me a critical question.

The Learning Record and online portfolio can be accessed at this address:

**<http://306spring13.pbworks.com>**

\*My extreme gratitude to DRW AD Todd Battistelli for help writing this syllabus.

## Course Calendar

Week	Date	Complete Before Class	In-Class Today
Week 1	M 1/14		Instructions, Syllabus + Course Policies
	W 1/16	LR Self-Assessment	What is Rhetoric? + Inventing Writing; Begin LR Journal
Week 2	M 1/21	IDing Controversies: Issues and Topic Areas	IDing Controversies: Framing Problems
	W 1/23	IDing Controversies: Communities and Stakes	IDing Controversies: IDing Positions
Week 3	M 1/28	Topic Proposals	Writing Summaries (Ethos)
	W 1/30	Paraphrase and Quotation Practice	MLA Citations
Week 4	M 2/4	Ethical Use of Sources	Ethical Use of Sources
	W 2/6		Evidence, Warrant, Claim (Logos); Discuss Paper 1
Week 5	M 2/11		Effective Research Practices
	W 2/13	Describing a conversation (Stasis)	Describing a Position (Commonplaces)
Week 6	M 2/18	Describing communities/stakes	Describing Multiple Positions: Remaining Neutral (Pathos)
	W 2/20		Peer Review
Week 7	M 2/25		Paper 1.1 Due
	W 2/27		Conferences
Week 8	M 3/4		Paper 1.2 Due; Discuss LR Midterm
	W 3/6		Discuss Paper 2; Making Rhetorical Judgments
Spring Break!	M 3/11	Spring Break!	
	W 3/13	Spring Break!	
Week 9	M 3/18		LR Midterms Due; Ethos/Pathos/Logos practice
	W 3/20		Audience/Context (Kairos)
Week 10	M 3/25		Insightful Conclusions
	W 3/27		Paper 2.1 Due
Week 11	M 4/1		Conferences
	W 4/3		Paper 2.2 Due; Discuss Paper 3
Week 12	M 4/8	Cover Letter draft	Invention with the Topics
	W 4/10		Introduction
Week 13	M 4/15		Refutation
	W 4/17		Conclusion
Week 14	M 4/22		Paper 3.1 Due
	W 4/24		Conferences
Week 15	M 4/29		Peer Review
	W 5/1		Paper 3.2 Due; Course Evals
	M 5/6		LR Final due

## Department of Rhetoric & Writing Policies

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rhetoric & Writing has established this attendance policy for all RHE courses. Any questions or appeals concerning this policy must be made directly to the department Associate Chair. You are expected to attend class, to arrive on time, to have prepared assigned reading and writing, and to participate in all in-class editing, revising, and discussion sessions. Should you miss the equivalent of five TTH or MW class sessions or seven MWF sessions this semester, excused or not, you will fail the course. If you find that an unavoidable problem prevents you from attending class, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible, preferably ahead of time, to let him or her know.

You will not be penalized for missing class on religious holy days. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor, in writing, well in advance of the absence, so that alternative arrangements can be made to complete work. If you know you will have to miss class(es) for this reason, provide your instructor with the date(s) as early as possible. Please note that the University specifies very few other excused absences (e.g., jury duty).

When you must miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes and assignments from a classmate.

### SCHOLASTIC HONESTY

Turning in work that is not your own, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty, will result in a major course penalty, possibly failure of the course. This standard applies to *all* drafts and assignments, and a report of the incident will be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Students and filed in your permanent UT record. Under certain circumstances, the Dean of Students will initiate proceedings to expel you from the University. So, take care to read and understand the *Statement on Scholastic Responsibility*, which can be found online at <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/rhetoric/firstyearwriting/plagiarismcollusion.php>. If you have any doubts about your use of sources, ask your instructor for help *before* handing in the assignment.

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 512-471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. More information is available online at <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>.

### EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Email is an official means of communication at UT-Austin, and your instructor will use this medium to communicate class information. You are therefore required to obtain a UT email account and to check it daily. All students may claim an email address at no cost by going to <http://www.utexas.edu/its/services/email/>.

### PLAGIARISM AND COLLUSION

#### STATEMENT ON SCHOLASTIC RESPONSIBILITY

<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/rhetoric/firstyearwriting/plagiarismcollusion.php>

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*Questions about these policies should be addressed to:*

Department of Rhetoric & Writing  
The University of Texas at Austin  
Parlin Hall, Room 3  
rhetoric@uts.cc.utexas.edu  
(512) 471-6109