Readings in Rhetoric: Keywords in Rhetoric

COMM 5320

Fall 2014

Thursdays, 3:30-6:00 p.m.
Hellems 77

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Office Hours: T: 11-12:30/Th 2-3:15 and by appt.

Overview

This course provides an introduction to rhetorical thought in historical perspective. This year it is organized around the idea of rhetorical keywords—key terms and “essentially contested concepts” in the Western rhetorical tradition, read with reflexive awareness of its particularity within the global scene. The idea is to deepen your understanding of rhetorical concepts, different historically situated perspectives on them, and their continued usefulness as ways of interpreting the world. It’s a kind of ‘advanced rhetorical literacy’ course designed to equip you to teach courses in rhetorical theory and the history of rhetoric to undergraduates, critically discuss rhetoric in your comprehensive exams, and practice a kind of rhetorical scholarship that could lead to publication.

The course tacks among four different perspectives. At a meta-level, we will consider what it means to consider historically situated keywords and concepts and appropriate methods for doing so. In the process of doing that, we also consider what we mean by rhetorical theory and how one “does” it. Theoretically, we will give close readings to passages on key concepts from central texts in the tradition as well as contemporary engagements with them. The goals here are to understand, compare, and apply the concepts and different perspectives on them. Third, the course has a historical element, designed to familiarize you with key thinkers and their intellectual and socio-political contexts. Finally, at the level of intellectual production, the course gives you practice with a text-based, humanistic, and historicist approach to conducting scholarship on rhetorical thought.
Course Requirements and Evaluation

Three requirements:

1. **Participation in weekly discussion/Week 1 Reading Response**: read and prepare carefully, provide short oral summaries of designated readings when called on, raise discussion questions for the class, share and respond productively to other people’s opinions, venture efforts to synthesize thinkers and texts, listen well; write 1000-response to first week’s readings and discussion (30%)

2. **Take-home midterm**: 10-12 page comp-style essay in response to a prompt I provide (30%)

3. **Final paper**: 15-20 page engagement with one rhetorical keyword that critically discusses different perspectives and makes a case for one way of interpreting or applying it (40%)

**Required Texts**


Resources and books for students of rhetoric to think about investing in

Gideon Burton, *Silvae Rhetoricae* website (www.rhetoric.byu.edu): a marvelous site with short explanations of traditional rhetorical concepts with examples and textual references.


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**Course Schedule**

Week 1 (August 28): Starting the Conversation
Alan G. Gross, “The Rhetorical Tradition”
Raymond Williams, Introduction to *Keywords* plus entry: “Tradition”

*Following class discussion:* Write a 1000-word response to the first week’s readings, class discussion of them, and your thoughts about them. Answer the following questions: What issues/key topics do these essays raise? What are their main arguments and ideas about them? What important dimensions of the issues are left out? What is worth further consideration and why?
Week 2 (Sept 4): Rhetoric: Traditions and Keywords
Richard Graff and Michael Leff, “Revisionist Historiography and Rhetorical Tradition(s)” (2005)
Thomas O. Sloane, Preface and Synoptic Table of Contents, Encyclopedia of Rhetoric (2001)
Cheryl Glenn, “Mapping the Silences, or Remapping Rhetorical Territory” (1997)
Williams, Keywords, “History,” “Theory,” “Western”

Week 3 (Sept 11): Rhetorikē and the Sophists
Conley, Rhetoric in the European Tradition, ch. 1
Edward Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos: A Study in Greek Philosophy and Rhetoric, 2nd ed. (2003), chs. 1, 3 (skip ch. 4 that’s on the PDF)
Susan Jarratt, “The First Sophists and Feminism: Discourses of the Other” (1990)
Aristotle, Rhetoric, Introduction (Kennedy) and Book I, chs. 1-3
Williams, Keywords, “Democracy”

Week 4 (Sept 18): Rhetoric: Twentieth Century Revisions I
Conley, Rhetoric in the European Tradition, chs. 9, 10
Richard Weaver, “Ultimate Terms in Contemporary Rhetoric” (1953)
Richard McKeon, “McKeon, “On Rhetoric in a Technological Age” (1971) [skip first chapter that was included on this PDF]
Williams, Keywords, “Liberal,” “Modern,” “Masses,” “Media,” “Mediation,” “Technology”

Week 5 (Sept 25): Rhetoric: Twentieth Century Revisions II
Kenneth Burke, Rhetoric of Motives (1950), xiii-65
Sally Miller Gearhart, “The Womanization of Rhetoric” (1979)
Williams, Keywords, “Communication,” “Man,” “Sex,” “Unconscious”
Week 6 (Oct 2): Eloquence
Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, ch. 2 (pp. 29-52), and selections from ch. 4 (72-78), ch. 5 (109-114), and ch. 8 (235-36, 246-50)
Isocrates, selections
Celeste Condit, “In Praise of Eloquent Diversity: Gender and Rhetoric as Public Persuasion” (1997)
Peter Simonson and Pascal Gagné, “On Eloquence in a Digital Age: Toward a Comparative Historical Anthropology” (ms. 2014)
Williams, *Keywords*, “Educated,” “Jargon,” “Humanity,” “Race”

*Recommended*: Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Eloquence” (1847)

*Friday Oct 3*: **Take-Home Midterm Questions** distributed after class, due by 11:59 pm on Tuesday, October 7

Week 7 (Oct 9): Take-Home Midterm Week.

*Tuesday Oct 7*: **Midterm exams due by 11:59 pm**

*Thursday Oct 9*: Oral defenses of midterm answers

Week 8 ([reschedule meeting date]): Logos I—Ancient Sophists, Philosophers, & Jews/Christians
Gorgias, “Encomium of Helen”
Protagoras, fragments
Schiappa, *Protagoras and Logos*, chs. 5-6
*Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*, “Philosophy” entries: “Rhetoric and Philosophy” (Brian Vickers) and “Perennial Topics and Terms” (Christopher Johnstone)
Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, Book I, ch. 2, 14-22; Bk I, chs 4-15
Isocrates, selections
Bible, selections
Williams, *Keywords*, “Dialectic,” “Philosophy,” “Rational”
Week 8 (Oct 23): Logos II—Renaissance Humanism, (French) Enlightenment, Critique
Catherine Hobbs Peaden, “Condillac and the History of Rhetoric” (1992)
Michel Foucault, selections from The Archaeology of Knowledge (1969) in Bizzell and Herzberg, The Rhetorical Tradition
Williams, Keywords, “Aesthetics,” “Ideology,” “Hegemony”

Week 9 (Oct 30): Pathos I: Ancient (Greek, Roman) and Enlightenment (Scottish) Views
Conley, Rhetoric in the European Tradition, 211-25
Aristotle, On Rhetoric, Book 2
Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, Book 6, Preface plus Sections I and II (373-439 in Loeb Classical Library, Vol II (H.E. Butler, trans.)
George Campbell, Philosophy of Rhetoric (o.p. 1776) ch. 7 (pp. 87-111 in 7th, 1823 ed.)
Williams, Keywords, “Romantic,” “Sensibility,” “Taste”

Week 10 (Nov 6): Pathos II—Contemporary Articulations
Craig Smith and Michael Hyde, “Rethinking the Public: The Role of Emotion in Being-With-Others” (1991)
Williams, Keywords, “Society,” “Structural”

Week 11 (Nov 13): Ethos
Aristotle, On Rhetoric, Book I, ch. 2; Book II, chs. 1, 12-17
Judy Holiday, “In(ter)vention: Locating Rhetoric’s Ethos” (2009)
Mathew M. Heard, “Tonality and Ethos” (2013)
Williams, Keywords, “Personality

Week 12: No Class, NCA

Week 13 (Dec 4): Invention
Thomas O. Sloane, On the Contrary, ch. 3, “Copiousness”
Peter Simonson, “Reinventing Invention, Again” (2014)
Williams, Keywords, “Creative,” “Genius,” “Originality”

Week 14 (Dec 11): Writing Week, No Class

Final Papers Due Monday, December 15, 5pm