

# English 201

Catherine Gouge, ENGL 201, Fall 2005

## English 201: Advanced Composition and Rhetoric

Fall 2004 Section I

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### Required Resources\*

1. *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*, 3rd Edition (Crowley and I Iawhee)
2. Electronic Reserve Materials
3. An Activated MIX Account
4. WebCT Course Site

## Course Description

Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no One present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending on the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.'

--from Kenneth Burkes *Philosophy of Literary Form*

This course will explore the many definitions of and contexts for rhetoric, composition pedagogy, and the relationship between rhetoric and citizenship. To get a better sense of the context for modern-day composition studies, we will investigate the history of rhetoric and explore notions of rhetoric as a dialogue much like the kind Burke describes above. We will, furthermore, interrogate the many available sites for active citizenship using the principles of rhetoric we will study. Through a series of short papers and essay exams, you will synthesize course reading on

ancient and modern rhetoric and practice the skills required of a rhetorical analysis and argument, beginning with an analysis of your own writing and working your way “out” to exercising your civic voice in your community via a public policy speech. Your final exam will ask you to write about the relationship between language and power.

## **Course Goals**

Given the general focus on the study of rhetoric as the framing context for English 201, here are the specific goals you can strive for during the course of the semester:

1. Learn about the discipline of Composition and Rhetoric Studies and apply this learning to your lives as writers.
2. Gain a reflexive sense of yourselves as writers.
3. Recognize the links between reading and writing.
4. Learn to collaborate to make new knowledge and to offer other writers effective Critic is in 5. Consider issues of power, language, and knowledge.
5. Write in multiple genres with opportunities to write for different purposes and contexts.
6. Learn about the relationship of rhetoric and writing to participation in public or professional life.

## **Graded Work**

Your grade will be determined by the following maximum number of percentage points for required work:

- One-Pagers 20%
- Midterm Exam 15%
- Final Exam 25%
- Four Papers 40%

## **Overview of Required Work**

### **Participation**

Your participation will either boost or lower borderline final grades based on your level of preparedness for and professional conduct in aH course-related work. This includes your attendance at and preparedness for all course-related meetings, your conduct in all course-related activities, how consistently and effectively you engage with the demands of the course, and the overall quality and thoughtfulness of all aspects of your interaction with the course, and your instructor, your classmates.

### **One-Pagers**

During the term, you will be given the opportunity to complete at least 10 small investigative assignments relevant to the class and write up a typed, single-spaced ‘one-pager’ (no more) that

summarizes the details and results of your investigation. Unless I say otherwise, only the last two sentences may comment on the information you find. The rest of the ‘one-pager’ should simply and clearly summarize the key points of the information you find. See handout for further guidelines.

You may prepare these and submit them in class on any day when there is reading assigned for class. The investigation should be about an issue that comes up in the reading and should prepare you to be a bit of an expert on that issue for class discussion. There will be no extra credit work for this class, so make sure that you stay on top of these “one-pagers’ You will receive a zero for each one-pager less than ten [that you do not submit during the course of the term. You may only submit [them in class and you may not submit more than one on any given day. I will count the ten highest grades of those you submit. Each will be worth up to 2% toward your final grade (2 for excellent. 1.5 for acceptable. 1 for poor, and 0 for not submitted on time or at all).

## **Exams**

You will complete the Midterm Exam near the end of the first half of the term. The exam will cover elements of all required coursework (course reading, discussion, and all written work), Your Midterm will be worth up to 15% toward your final grade. Your Final will be worth up to 25% toward your final grade.

## **? Papers**

These short papers of 3-4 pages each will give you an opportunity to both 1) produce rhetorical analyses of your own writing, the writing of your discipline or profession, and a published speech; and 2) write a speech (which you will deliver) using the rhetorical principles you have learned over the course of the semester.

## **Course Policies**

**Attendance:** Because it is unprofessional and irresponsible to miss or be late to scheduled meetings, attendance is mandatory and absences and lateness will be noted and will affect your (Thai) course grade. Attendance includes being present and prepared for all class meetings, checking your email regularly (on days when we do not have class), and being present and prepared for all meetings you schedule with me and/or your classmates. If something very serious happens during the term which makes it impossible for you to attend class, you must contact me immediately and make arrangements to get notes, etc. from a classmate to minimize the disruption to your progress through the course. Missing four or more classes during the semester for any reason will result in a failing grade for the class.

**Deadlines:** It is unprofessional to miss a deadline. Because this course is one which places a strong emphasis on professionalism and professional responsibility, any work not submitted by the author when I collect it in class and will not be accepted or graded.

**Academic Honesty:** I expect that all of the work you will do for this class will be your own and will be done specifically to meet the requirements for this course. Trying to pass off someone

else's work as your own is plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course, Unless otherwise noted, then, you should assume that all work is to be done individually. That said, you may talk over ideas with someone, ask someone to read a draft to help you evaluate its effectiveness, work with a tutor, or ask me for help, in the end, however, you are responsible for evaluating the suggestions and ideas you get and you alone are responsible for deciding whether or not the feedback you get will ultimately help or hinder your final work submission.

**Social Justice Statement:** West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to foster a nurturing learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

**Special Needs:** If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me at the start of the term and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700).

## Schedule

### Weeks 1 and 2

Thursday, 8/26: Read around at << <http://vw.americanrhetoric.com/speechbank.htm>>>; Come prepared to discuss at least one speech and the rhetorical strategies used.

Tuesday, 8/31: Read Chapter 1 in Ancient Rhetorics (.4 C')

Thursday, 9/2: Read Chapter 2 in AC