

SPCM 201 | **The History and Theory of Rhetoric** (3 credits)
Colorado State University, Fall 2024
Department of Communication Studies
Class Meeting Times: MWF 10:00-10:50am, Glover 130
Class Format: 100% Face-to-Face (3-0-0)
Meets 3-credits of [AAUC Category 3B. Arts and Humanities](#)

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Office Hours: MF 11:00am-12:30pm or by appointment,
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Course Description:

Often when we hear the term uttered in popular culture, “rhetoric” carries a negative connotation. Sometimes, rhetoric is opposed to action: “*Instead of a real solution, all we get is rhetoric.*” Other times, rhetoric refers to meaningless words: “*It all sounds like empty rhetoric to me.*” And further still, rhetoric often refers to what sounds like a dirty trick: “*Don’t believe all of that rhetoric.*” It turns out that this reputation was acquired approximately 2500 years ago. Plato didn’t call it a dirty trick, but he did once call it “cooking,” as we’ll discover in this class. So, if rhetoric is so dangerous, why should we study it? First, that’s *exactly* why we should study it. But, more importantly, to call rhetoric a trick is to recognize its influence. And for many of those who have done so since Plato, rhetoric’s influence pervades social and political life. Some, even, have gone so far as to say that rhetoric is the very means by which we come to acquire knowledge of the world. This course aims at a working understanding of rhetorical theory and its histories.

Course Format:

This course will be delivered in a synchronous face-to-face format. This means that students and the instructor will meet *in person* at a designated time *on campus* to complete the required class hours for the course. Students will be expected to spend additional hours each week completing readings, homework, and supplemental assignments.

Course Objectives:

Upon the successful completion of this class, students should be able to:

- Articulate major theoretical concepts in rhetorical history and their development
- Identify several key theorists/practitioners and their understandings of rhetoric
- Reiterate rhetorical traditions and outline their critiques and elaborations
- Apply rhetorical thought to contemporary issues and concerns
- Situate themselves within the intellectual interests and concerns of the department

Readings and Texts:

Students in SPCM 201 will be assigned readings from three different sources over the course of the semester:

1. **TEXTBOOK:** *The Rhetorical Tradition, 3rd edition* by Patricia Bizzell, Bruce Herzberg, and Robin Reames (2020).
 - E-book ISBN: 9781319279271
 - Hardcover book ISBN: 9781319032746

*All students should purchase or rent the textbook during the first week of class. New and used copies of the physical textbook are available for purchase through the CSU Bookstore or online retailers. The e-book can be purchased or rented either via the CSU Bookstore or via the book publisher directly at <https://store.macmillanlearning.com/us/product/The-Rhetorical-Tradition/p/1319032745>. **If you choose to rent your textbook, be sure you rent it for the entirety of the semester!** In order to ensure that students are directed to the correct page numbers and translations of the readings in this class, students **must** have access to the 3rd edition of this text (earlier editions will differ in significant ways). However, students are encouraged to access the book as cost effectively as possible. **In general: digital access options to the book are the cheapest option.**

2. **ONLINE RESOURCE:** The Rhetoric Un-Textbook, by Atilla Hallsby (2024), <https://the-un-textbook.ghost.io/about/>

3. **CANVAS:** Student will be assigned additional readings in the course via the university learning management system, Canvas (<http://canvas.colostate.edu>). All CSU students have access to Canvas via their NeID and passwords at no cost.

*On both the Modules link on Canvas and on the class schedule below, parenthesis and page numbers indicate readings from the textbook; "CANVAS" indicates readings or video clips posted online on Canvas.

Assignments:

Each student enrolled in the class will be evaluated and graded based on whether/how successfully they complete the following assignments. Additional in-class assignments may be given at any time. All written work will be assessed for grammar, spelling, clarity, style, etc., and should be typed, double-spaced in 12-point, Times New Roman font with appropriate, one-inch borders and margins if completed outside of class. Papers for this class will conform to the *MLA Style Guide* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*. E-mailed work is **not** acceptable; all written assignments must be uploaded to Canvas for assessment by TurnItIn anti-plagiarism software. Student work may also be reviewed using AI-detection software. Point penalties will be applied as necessary.

I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE or MAKE-UP WORK without proper documentation from a credible source.

+In-Class Writing, Quizzes, and Participation

Student reading, comprehension, and participation will be assessed through a series of in-class writings, activities, quizzes, and/or participation opportunities. These activities will vary over the course of the semester, but students should attend class regularly so as to earn these points. **Quizzes may occur at any time -- plan accordingly!** All students should also bring some kind of paper and writing utensil to class every day to complete whatever task might be assigned.

+Mini-Exam

This class will include a micro-exam – a short, multiple-choice exam – given on Canvas early in the semester. This micro-exam will be graded, timed, and constitute a small but meaningful portion of the student’s grade. The purpose of this micro-exam is to give students and the instructor an early sense of student work and preparation in the class. It also provides students an opportunity to change course in their class preparation before suffering significant point losses on an in-class exam or short paper. Details on accessing and completing the micro-exam will be given in class.

+In-class Examinations

There will be two (2) in-class, face-to-face exams given during the course of the semester. Students will have a full class period to complete each exam (i.e., 50 minutes). All exams will draw from the assigned readings **and** class lectures/discussions. The format of each exam will be discussed in class. With the exception of In-Class Exam 1 (that includes content from the micro-exam), exams are not cumulative, though students will be expected to maintain their facility with basic knowledge learned throughout the semester.

+Short Papers

Twice during the semester, students will be required to complete a **250 word** short paper answering a question posed by the instructor. The instructor may choose to limit students’ topics in the class to provide for a greater diversity of ideas. A successful short paper should demonstrate the student’s reflection on the question(s), engagement with the reading(s), and views in relation to the class themes. Papers will be graded on designated content areas, **as well as the quality of the writing**.

Once Exam 3 is over, any outstanding assignments will receive an automatic zero.

Grading:

In-Class Writings/Quizzes/Participation	100 points	10%
Mini-Exam	50 points	5%
Mid Term Exam	275 points	27.5%
Final Exam	275 points	27.5%
Short Paper 1	150 points	15%
<u>Short Paper 2</u>	<u>150 points</u>	<u>15%</u>
TOTAL	1000 points	100%

Final grades will be allocated based upon the following scale:

A = 930-1000	B+ = 870-899	C+ = 770-799	D = 600-699
A- = 900-929	B = 830-869	C = 700-769	F = 599 or below
	B- = 800-829		

General Course Policies:

+Attendance

Students will be expected and encouraged to attend class every day; however, the instructor will **not** take attendance. Due to the extensive information covered during each class period, the pace of the class, and the various in-class activities that will be graded, students who do not attend class every day will place themselves at an **EXTREME disadvantage**, especially when completing exams. **Failure to attend class does not excuse a student from turning in a paper on time or taking an exam on the day it is due. Failure to turn in an assignment on time or to complete an exam in class will result in a zero on the assignment/exam.** If a student does miss class, it is

the student's responsibility to get notes from a classmate and **not** the instructor or GTA's responsibility to re-teach the class or furnish lecture notes. Students will be held accountable for all information in class lectures and assignments during their absence. Student late to class should enter the room quietly and politely and not cause a disturbance to others.

+Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to treat each other, the instructor, and themselves with respect and understanding. Disrespectful behavior/comments will not be tolerated. Students should also be active participants in the class; however, participation is not synonymous with attendance. Students who a) attend class regularly and on time, b) bring questions to class, c) vigorously engage the instructors and other students' ideas, d) demonstrate thought and attention in working with readings, and e) are willing to share their opinions with the class and instructor in productive ways will contribute to making the class a success. Inattentive behavior (text messaging, sleeping, reading for other classes, etc.) will not be tolerated.

+The Classroom and Technology

The instructor believes that technology can be conducive to the learning process and will use technology as necessary in the execution of the class. Likewise, students can choose to use a diverse set of technologies to facilitate their learning. For example, students may use laptops/netbooks to take notes or to complete class activities at the instructor's discretion. We will also use Canvas often to post and submit work. However, students will refrain from using technologies that are not conducive to an attentive and safe learning environment. In particular, **students should not use generative AI tools (i.e. ChatGPT, etc.) to complete course exams or assignments without express direction and permission of the class instructor.** In addition, in this class, all cell phones and mobile devices will be **turned off** and digital recording devices are **forbidden**. Students **WILL NOT take pictures of class slides or video tape the class without permission** as the University considers this action copyright infringement. Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis with the submission of appropriate documentation from the Student Disability Center (SDC). In addition, posting any such materials to GradeBuddy or similar notes-for-hire services will result in academic penalty and potential legal action. If you have questions about the value of a specific technological device in the class, please see the instructor or GTAs.

+E-mail Policy

The best way to contact the instructor is to utilize e-mail **or** attend office hours. However, due to the sheer volume of e-mail the instructor receives on a daily basis, students should expect an e-mail to be answered **no earlier than 24 hours after it was sent** (i.e. an e-mail sent at 2am will likely not get a response until the following business day). This is particularly important to note prior to an assignment/exam; students should plan their study and work time with this limitation in mind. If the instructor does not respond within 24 hours, the student should resend the e-mail or contact the professor by another means.

+TurnItIn

Student papers in this course will be checked using TurnItIn Software through Canvas. Every paper submitted in class via Canvas will automatically be assessed by TurnItIn; no extra steps are required on the part of the student.

+Academic Honesty

As a Colorado State University student, you have agreed to abide by the University's Policy on Academic Integrity as described in the University's General Catalog (<http://www.catalog.colostate.edu/>). All students will be expected to do and take credit for only their own work. There are many ways in which a student could fail to meet this standard, including: cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized possession of academic material, falsification, and facilitating other's violation of this policy. Students should particularly note that self-plagiarism (i.e., reusing the student's own materials from another class or earlier semester of this class) is considered academic dishonesty in SPCM 201. The instructor will take reasonable steps to prevent and detect academic dishonesty. Students found lacking in these areas will face at least one of a variety of academic penalties, including but not limited to failure of an assignment, failure of the class, or separation from the institution. If students have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, they are encouraged to speak with the instructor prior to taking any such action.

+ On Academic Writing and the AAUC Writing Requirement

SPCM 201 is an AAUC course at Colorado State University. Therefore, students in this course must meet a minimum writing requirement as outlined by the State of Colorado. The requirement is that at least **25%** of a student's grade in the class is derived from written work. For SPCM 201, approximately **48%** of your grade is determined by written work (30% for two short papers, a combined 15% for the essay sections of each exam, and 3% for in-class writings). As a **college-level course**, students will conform to the standard expectations for college-level writing. These expectations include but are not limited to: the ability to convey a theme or argument clearly and coherently, the ability to analyze critically and to synthesize the work of others, the ability to acquire and apply information from appropriate sources and reference sources appropriately, and the ability to demonstrate competence in standard written English. In other words, your writing should meet length requirements, be free of spelling and grammar errors, clearly expresses your ideas, cites sources often and appropriately, and include an accurate Works Cited, as well as a short but elegant introduction and conclusion. Failure to meet these minimum requirements will adversely affect your grade.

+Ability, Access, or Learning Accommodation

The instructor, department, and university are committed to creating an accessible learning environment for all students. If a student has a disability and requires reasonable learning accommodations, please speak with the instructor via e-mail or via virtual office hours **during the first week of the semester**. Students will also need to begin a conversation with the Student Disability Center (SDC) [970-491-6385

V/TDD; TILT Building, room 121; <https://disabilitycenter.colostate.edu/>]. This office will provide written documentation specifying needed accommodations and assist students in having their needs met along with the instructor. Accommodations can only be granted to a student through proper documentation from SDC. Please note: Failure to register with SDC or to request accommodations from the instructor will not constitute grounds for retroactive grade changes.

+ *Class Absences Related to Faith, Belief, and/or Religious Observance*

The instructor and department recognize and appreciate the numerous faiths, beliefs, and religious observances of our students. Should your faith require you to miss class, you need not tell the instructor as there is no attendance policy in the class. If you miss an in-class assignment due to a religious observance, please communicate this fact to your instructor and/or the GTAs and we will work with you to excuse or make-up that assignment. Conflicts with exams and religious observances should be discussed with the GTAs/instructor as soon as possible so we might rectify the situation. To facilitate absences from class based on your faith, you may choose to register your Faith, Belief, and/or Religious Observance with the university at: <https://studentaffairs.colostate.edu/resources/> **This last step is entirely optional and not required to seek assistance or accommodations.**

Class Schedule:

*This is a general plan for the course. Occasionally, deviations from this plan may be necessary. Deviations may arise at the instructor's discretion and will be announced to the class.

** All readings will come from either Bizzell, Herzberg, and Reames's *The Rhetorical Tradition*, Hallsby's *Un-Textbook*, or will be posted on Canvas.

UNIT I. Ancient Rhetoric

Week 1

M Aug. 19

Welcome

Discuss: Course Syllabus; Class structure

W Aug. 21

What is Rhetoric? What is Theory?

READING DUE: Hallsby, "Chapter 1: What is Rhetorical Theory?"

F Aug. 23

Pre-Socratic Rhetoric: Gorgias

READING DUE: Gorgias, "Encomium of Helen" (pp. 50-52)

Week 2

M Aug. 26

Framing Rhetorical Theory I

READING DUE: Fish, "Rhetoric" (CANVAS)

**Purchase or rent textbook by this date

W Aug. 28

Framing Rhetorical Theory II

READING DUE: Fish, "Rhetoric" (CANVAS)

F Aug. 30

Pre-Socratic Rhetoric & The Sophists

READINGS DUE: Hallsby, "Chapter 2: The 'Origins' of Rhetorical Theory"

Week 3

M Sept. 2

LABOR DAY: NO CLASS

W Sept. 4

Isocrates I

READINGS DUE TODAY: *Against the Sophists* (pp. 89-91)

F Sept. 6

Isocrates II

READINGS DUE TODAY: *Antidosis* (pp. 92-96)

Week 4

M Sept. 9

Plato I: Gorgias

READING DUE: Selections from *The Gorgias* (pp. 104-116)

W Sept. 11

Plato II: Polus & Callicles

READING DUE: Selections from *The Gorgias* (pp. 104-116)

F Sept. 13

Q&A + Mini-Exam

Come to class with questions and be prepared for short T/F and multiple choice exam.

Week 5

M Sept. 16

Aristotle I: Topi, Syllogisms, and Enthymemes

READING DUE TODAY: Selections from *On Rhetoric* (pp. 227-229)

W Sept. 18

Aristotle II: Topi, Syllogisms, and Enthymemes

READING DUE TODAY: Selections from *On Rhetoric* (pp. 227-229)

F. Sept. 20

Recap, Catch Up, and/or Get Ahead

Short Paper #1 Due at 11:59 pm on Canvas

UNIT II. Interregnum: Rhetoric, Empire, Revolution

Week 6

M Sept. 23

Rhetoric in Rome

READING DUE TODAY: Quintilian, *The Institutes of Oratory* (pp. 332-343, pp. 361-366)

W Sept. 25

Rhetoric and Letters

READING DUE TODAY: Hugh Blair, Lecture I and II in the *Lectures of Rhetoric and Belle Lettres* (pp. 1029-1041)

F Sept. 27

Rhetoric and Settler Colonialism 1

READING DUE TODAY: Hallsby, "Chapter 11: The Settler Situation"

Week 7

M Sept. 30

Rhetoric and Settler Colonialism 2

READING DUE TODAY: Shome, "Post-colonial Interventions in the Rhetorical Canon: An 'Other' View" (CANVAS)

W Oct. 2

Indigenous Rhetorics in North America

READING DUE TODAY: None

F Oct. 4

Existentialism

READING DUE TODAY: Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense" (pp. 1190-1199)

Week 8

M Oct. 7

Nietzsche's Rhetorical Sensibility

READING DUE TODAY: None

W Oct. 9

Exam Review

READING DUE TODAY: None

F Oct. 11

Mid-Term Exam

***Be sure to bring your student ID number, a bluebook, and blue or black pen to the exam*

UNIT III. Rhetoric and Power

Week 9

M Oct. 14

Rhetoric as Epistemic

WEEKLY READING: Robert L. Scott, "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic" (CANVAS)

W Oct. 16

F Oct. 18

Week 10

M Oct. 21

Constitutive Rhetoric

WEEKLY READING: Maurice Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Québécois*" (CANVAS)

W Oct. 23

F Oct. 25

Week 11

M Oct. 28

Rhetoric and the Public Sphere

WEEKLY READING: Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy" (CANVAS)

W Oct. 30

F Nov. 1

Week 12

M Nov. 4

Rhetoric and Social Movements

WEEKLY READINGS: Scott and Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," Foust & Hoyt, "Social Movement 2.0: Integrating and Assessing Scholarship on Social Media and Movement."

W Nov. 6

F Nov. 8

Week 13

M Nov. 11

Gendered Rhetorics

WEEKLY READINGS: Karlyn K. Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron" (CANVAS), Combahee River Collective, "Combahee River Collective Statement" (CANVAS)

W Nov. 13

F Nov. 15

Short Paper 2 Due at 11:59 pm on Canvas

Week 14

M Nov. 18

Racialized Rhetorics

WEEKLY READINGS: W.E.B. Du Bois, "Of Our Spiritual Strivings"

W Nov. 20

F Nov. 22

NO CLASS: Faculty and Graduate Students attend **National Communication Association Conference**

Week 15

MN.25-FN.29

NO CLASS: FALL RECESS/THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 16

M Dec. 2

Rhetoric's Political Economy

WEEKLY READING: Greene, "Rhetorical Capital: Communicative Labor, Money/Speech, and Neo-Liberal Governance "

W Dec. 4

F Dec. 6

Exam Review

Tuesday, Dec. 10 **Final Exam** (face-to-face, in classroom) between 11:50am-1:50pm in Glover 130

***Be sure to bring your student ID number, a bluebook, and blue or black pen to the exam*

*****ONE MORE TIME: THE LAST EXAM DATE IS THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14th between 4:10am-6:10pm*****

ALL EXAM DATES ARE FINAL AND ALL STUDENTS **WILL** TAKE EXAMS ON THE SCHEDULED DAY.
DO NOT BOOK TRAVEL

NO MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN, SO PLAN ACCORDINGLY!