



CLASSICAL RHETORIC & THEORY BUILDING

ENGL 760/860

Meeting Information

Thursdays, 4:20–7:00pm
agora860.wordpress.com
Gornto 217 + WebEx

Catalog Description

Analysis and discussion of classical theories of rhetoric, with attention to how rhetoric describes discourse in the public sphere.

Professor Information

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Course Frame

The artwork gracing the front page of this syllabus, Angelica Kauffmann's "Zeuxis Selecting Models for Helen of Troy" (1764),¹ offers both historical and symbolic frameworks for this course. Historically, the account of Zeuxis choosing his models is taken from the work of Cicero, who tells of the artist having been commissioned to paint a portrait of Helen of Troy for the Temple of Jupiter at Crotona. His method was to seek the most perfect characteristics from five of the greatest beauties of the city, as, you might remember, Greek mythology unequivocally describes Helen of Troy to be of transcendent, unparalleled beauty. In her book² on Kauffmann's artwork, Angela Rosenthal notes the dilemma posed by this subject:

Eighteenth-century humanism promoted a set of classical stories as models of artistic creation and prototypes of artist's self-identification. Retellings of the legendary stories of Zeuxis, Pygmalion, and Apelles do not simply reveal the infrastructure of the creative act but define it in clearly gendered terms. Within these antique discourses, eighteenth-century artists could, and often did, reaffirm the status of the man as artist/subject and the woman as model/object. Facing such mythologies, a female artist confronted a problem of identification. By identifying too closely with the male artist and his creative potential, she ran the risk of denying what was perhaps her most important attribute, her gender, and therefore opening herself to attack for being sexually transgressive. But identification with the passive female model would seem to deny the woman artist her status as agent. It is the apparent impossibility of escaping this impasse that makes Kauffman's painting so remarkable.

The painting tells the story of Zeuxis, who, in order to portray the world's most beautiful women, chooses five becoming models from whom to distill an ideal synthesis. Kauffman shows Zeuxis in the act of anatomical study, inspecting one of the models as three others prepare for the master's gaze. But one model, set behind the artist and in the right background, defies the patriarchal conventions of representation encoded in the narrative and in Zeuxis's attentive gaze. Stepping behind the male artist, she takes up the artist's brush and moves toward the empty canvas. The active model claims the canvas and in doing so seems to enact what Kauffman herself performs. The analogy is given substance by the inclusion on the fictive canvas of a signature: Angelica Kauffman pinx.

Symbolically, we, as modern scholars of rhetoric, might be Zeuxis—some reluctantly, some unabashedly. We are often commissioned to gaze and select upon the beautiful ancient manuscripts in our view and, as Rosenthal pens, "distill an ideal synthesis" into a coherent figure, *our* Helen of Troy: *the* history of rhetoric. We, as modern scholars of rhetoric, might also be the defying model/Kauffmann: shattering the gaze of the brush wielders in an attempt to brandish our own so as to disrupt the distillation process and resist the very notion of an ideal synthesis. In traversing the mainstays and the counter-histories of classical rhetoric—indeed its figurings and refigurings, as Susan Jarratt would have—this course ultimately challenges students to consider: can we be both?

¹ Photo credit: flickr.com/photos/edcnyc. Original in collection at Brown University, Providence.

² Rosenthal, Angela. *Angelica Kauffmann: Art and Sensibility* (Yale University Press, 2006), p. 4.

Course Objectives

This course in a way provides a historical overview of ancient rhetorical texts from the pre-Socratics to Saint Augustine. In doing so, however, it is invariably colored by the contemporary moment through which we are viewing the texts. By extension, it is imperative that we are also cognizant then of the fact that what is included in such an “overview” has too been colored by centuries upon centuries of interpretive lenses of what and who is deemed significant and seminal. This is why the second half of the course title is substantial: a course in classical rhetoric merely traces the breadcrumbs, stopping to observe the biggest ones; a course that attends to theory-building traces the breadcrumbs, yes, but asks *why* certain breadcrumbs are bigger than others, and who exactly placed them there.

Naturally, then, it is expected that students in this course also do a bit of theory-building on their own, in addition to attending to how various theories of rhetorics have been built, destroyed, re-built, painted, stripped, and re-painted over the years. Students in this course can expect to be met with three over-arching objectives. The first is that this course seeks to provide a relatively detailed survey of the key rhetorical figures, ideas, and works that comprise the “classical” period. The second is that students examine the discursive strategies that constitute historical rhetorical criticism as an academic discourse. The third, and perhaps most challenging, is that this course will explore how to construct persuasive arguments using forms of written and oral performance privileged by rhetorical studies.

Course Policies

Please review the following course policies and inform me immediately if you have any questions.

Course Delivery

On-campus students will meet in Gornto 217. Distance students will login to class using WebEx. The link to access the course will be made available on the course website. All classes will be archived and made accessible to students.

Attendance

Students in 760 sections must attend in person. Students registered as on-campus Ph.D. students in 860 sections must also attend in person. Only those registered as distance Ph.D. students in English or a Ph.D. program in another field can attend using WebEx. No matter how you attend, graduate education is about showing up consistently and participating regularly. Students are afforded two unexcused absences. Any student who misses three classes—excused or not—will fail the course. The lone exception is for medical emergencies, and in these unfortunate circumstances I would need appropriate documentation.

Plagiarism

As Old Dominion University’s honor code states, you cannot copy the language or the ideas of another person’s work without acknowledging them, nor can you submit another person’s work as your own. Any student caught plagiarizing will receive an F on the assignment, be referred to the Office of Student Affairs, and may receive an F for the class.

Educational Accessibility

Students with disabilities who require special accommodations must register with the Office of Educational Accessibility, located at 1021 Student Success Center Webb Center, accessible by phone at 757-683-4655, or online at odu.edu/educationalaccessibility.

Course Technology

It is required that all students create or use a WordPress account in order to contribute to weekly discussions and the annotated bibliography. The WordPress site will be private, only accessible to the students in the course. Online "chat" will take place only through tlk.io, either on the course site or the chat page (tlk.io/agora860). WordPress and email will be the main methods of communication in the course. In terms of email, Old Dominion University recognizes e-mail as an official means of communication between faculty and students.

Lateness & Revision Policy

Late work will receive a penalty of a full letter grade per day. If you would like to revise an assignment, you must meet with me to discuss your plan for completing the revisions. You should also submit an approximately 300-word summary of your revisions with the revised assignment. You do not need to meet with me or submit a summary if you would like to revise your annotated bibliography entries. The final assignments for the course (the anthology assignment and the journal-length article) cannot be revised.

In-Class Discussion

Be respectful of others' ideas and allow time and space for open dialogue. This means connecting your ideas and conversation points in meaningful, honest ways to those of your peers. This also means, on a more practical level, acknowledging the fact that the discussion is taking place across a range of spaces: in-person, satellite campuses, and the homes and schools of distance students. Hear and understand the words and names of students in different spaces than yours. Try and allow for periodic moments of silence or transition to afford all students the opportunity to contribute without having to interject or interrupt.

Grading Scale

Categories of assessment for papers and essays include: depth of argument, clarity of ideas, format, and originality. Categories for annotations include succinctness, clarity, and synthesis.

94–100%: A (Exemplary). You have met and exceeded the expectations of all categories. Your work serves as a model for your peers.

93–90%: A– (Good). You have met all of the requirements, and exceeded requirements in some areas. Other areas, however, need more development.

80–89%: B+, B, B– (Average). You have met all the requirements, but have exceeded none. You have accomplished average work for expected level.

70–79%: C+, C, C– (Marginal) . You have fulfilled some requirements, but other requirements remain unfulfilled. You should consult the professor as soon as possible.

69% or below: F (Failing). You have fulfilled few, if any, requirements of the assignment. You should consult the professor as soon as possible.

Assignments

While there are different assignments and weighting for those enrolled in the 760 and 860 sections, the purpose of all assignments is the same: engage with primary and secondary texts in a way that leads to productive scholarship to be presented at conferences or published in journals.

Assignments	Sect. 760	Sect. 860	Due Dates
Participation	15%	20%	Weekly
Annotated Bibliography	15%	15%	February 1; March 1
Abstract	10%	10%	February 15
Conference Paper	30%	20%	March 22
Anthology	30%	–	April 29
Article Manuscript	–	35%	April 29

Participation

Weekly responses, due by noon on the day of class, will be composed on the blog part of the course website, a space that serves as the digital extension of our agora. Let's playfully call this—the home page—our *blogora*. Students will respond to the weekly post written by the professor. To frame what this will look like, let's turn to a brief passage in Plato's *Gorgias* (449b5-c1) on the nature of dialectic:

SOCRATES: Well now, Gorgias, would you be willing to complete the discussion in the way we're having it right now, that of alternatively asking questions and answering them, and to put aside for another time this long style of speechmaking like the one Polus began with? Please don't go back on your promise, but be willing to give a brief answer to what you're asked.

GORGIAS: There are some answers, Socrates, that must be given by way of long speeches.

Responses on the blogora can take two forms: Socratic inquiry or Gorgian grandiloquence. Choosing the former means that you will post both an original question (250 words) as well as an answer to an existing question (250 words) asked by one of your peers. Choosing the latter means that you will post a longer (500 words) topical post—be it a rant, rave, or diatribe—on an idea of your choosing and not necessary immediately connected to an already-posed question. Do note that those of the Socratic disposition for the week can have their "answer" be in response to a long post. The criteria I look for in weekly responses are, for the Socratic inquiry type, originality of question, strength of question to drive discussion, explicit connections to a text, and rationale for the question; for the Socratic answer type, helpfulness, direction to sources that might address the question, and coherent response for the purpose of furthering the conversation; and, for the Gorgian grandiloquence type, relevance to the topic(s) at hand, depth of position and purpose, and pertinence to a broader course theme. It is expected that a student post each week (excluding weeks I, IX, XV, and XVI). The participation grade also covers in-class participation, including but not limited to discussion, activities, group work, and peer review, but excluding chat. While participation will be graded holistically at semester's end, students will receive a midterm grade in participation at around week eight to afford opportunities for possible improvement.

Annotated Bibliography

Each student will contribute two, 300-word entries to the class annotated bibliography. Commonly seen as a form of punishment, annotated bibliographies are, on the contrary, useful to both yourself and your community of student-scholars: useful to *you* because you are engaging in scholarship off the course reading list, and useful to *others* because you are sharing a succinct, synthetic overview of an article that will help your peers understand if it will be relevant to their project or not. A strong annotation consists of the following: impeccable formatting (MLA, 8th edition); three to five keywords that help best describe the content of the article; 200 words summarizing the purposes and arguments of the article; and 100 words identifying the article's limitations, gaps in coverage, and connections to other sources.

The annotations will be written to a broader scholarly audience, not directly to your immediate peers in the class. The annotations will be written on contemporary rhetorical studies articles that focus on some aspect of theory building pertaining to an ancient Greek rhetorician, poet, or philosopher; it is recommended that students begin their search in the major journals of rhetorical studies, including but not limited to *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, *Rhetoric Review*, *Advances in the History of Rhetoric*, *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, *Southern Communications Journal*, and *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. Students will submit their first annotation on February 1 and their second on March 1. Annotations will be submitted via email to the professor in a Word document, which will include the MLA citation of the article in bold, and the 300-word annotation. The document should be single-spaced, with 12 point Times New Roman font.

Abstract & Conference Paper

These two major assignments are combined together as they are intended to model a larger process of invention that scholars often employ to produce and disseminate their research. This process involves: first, locating a call for papers (CFP) that is relevant to the subject(s) of this course; second, drafting a 500-word abstract in response to the CFP; and, lastly, developing the ideas presented in the abstract into a conference-length paper, which are approximately eight double-spaced pages. Students must select a CFP by February 1. An abstract is most likely to get accepted if it: responds appropriately to the conference theme or purpose; is positioned within that specific group of academics, referencing key ideas or concepts related to by the audience; seeks to (re)solve or (re)address an existing topic of conversation in the field; presents ideas clearly; details what will be discussed; and concludes briefly what participants will "walk away with" after hearing the paper. The paper must include, at a minimum, in-depth coverage of one primary source text and five secondary sources procured from outside the syllabus reading list. The paper should focus on a relevant application of an ancient idea; a challenge to extant interpretations of a text; a theoretical argument relevant to a given scholarly community; a parallel between a historical aspect of rhetoric and a contemporary one; or an in-depth analysis of an understudied text. Acceptance to or rejection from the conference CFP will not impact a student's grade, but the purpose is that you find some place to present your research on the topic some time soon.

Anthology Assignment

Students will compile an anthology of 10 primary texts that is designed to illustrate a theme relevant to the subject of this course (historical rhetoric during the classical period). Your anthology should include a 10-page introductory essay that provides a critical justification for the theme of the anthology and explains the relevance of each work in the anthology to this theme. The justification should include 10 secondary texts in its works cited; only four of them can be taken from the course reading list. In all, the final anthology will include: a cover page with the title of the anthology and the student's name; an MLA-formatted list of the 10 primary texts, each with 100-word summaries underneath; the 10-page introductory essay (double-spaced); and the works cited page that includes the 10 secondary sources consulted in the construction of the anthology. Each of the 20 sources in total must be directly referenced in the introductory essay, which should be imagined as an introduction to a scholarly edited collection. The anthology will be sent to the professor via email as one Word document by end of day on April 29.

Article Manuscript

Students will revise, re-develop, or extend their conference-length papers into a journal-length manuscript, thereby culminating the ideal sequence of scholarly production: responding to a public exigency, testing out your idea in front of real people, and then submitting it for publication. (Do note, however, that students are not wedded to their conference topic should they acquire sudden disdain or disinterest in their original inquiry of choice. The manuscript could be on something entirely different.) The scope of the manuscript is up to the student, as quality scholarship in the field of rhetoric includes: re-reading or re-figuring historical texts; offering a critical application of an idea or concept to a contemporary public or pedagogical context; engaging in theoretical building in a way that challenges, continues, or revises existing approaches; and engaging in high-level close reading of a network of texts to produce a new, emerging idea. It is suggested that students identify or locate a piece of scholarship that resonated with them throughout the semester and "model" their approach after it in terms of how arguments are developed in the field of rhetoric and how manuscripts are structured in terms of literature review, analysis, and conclusions. In terms of quality, the manuscript should be as close to publication quality as possible; that said, I acknowledge that high-quality scholarship is not produced under such a truncated time period as a reading-intensive semester, but students should still strive to compose the best work they can within the parameters granted.

The manuscript must be at least 6500 words but no more than 8000, which reflects the typical length of a journal article in the field of rhetoric. The essay should be formatted with impeccable MLA style and include at least 15 sources in the works cited—these can be a mix of both primary and secondary sources. The manuscript will be prefaced with a single-spaced reflection of about 250 words outlining the decisions the student made in transforming the conference paper into a manuscript. The manuscript will be sent to the professor via email as one Word document by end of day on April 29.

Course Texts

The reading list is divided into two sections: the texts that all students are required to purchase and the texts recommended for eventual purchase by doctoral students interested in long-term scholarship in the field of rhetoric. You are free to use any edition of the works below, unless otherwise noted, and, should you not mind digital screen-reading, you are also free to use digital, open-access versions if available.

Required

Aristotle. *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. 2nd ed., translated by George A. Kennedy, Oxford UP, 2007.

Augustine. *On Christian Doctrine*. Any ed./year.

Cicero. *On Oratory and Orators*. Edited and translated by J. S. Watson, Southern Illinois UP, 1970.

Isocrates. "Against the Sophists." *Isocrates II*, edited by Jeffrey Henderson, translated by George Norlin, Harvard UP, 1929, pp. 159–178.

Isocrates. "Antidosis." *Isocrates II*, edited by Jeffrey Henderson, translated by George Norlin, Harvard UP, 1929, pp. 179–366.

Herrick, James A. *The History and Theory of Rhetoric: An Introduction*. Routledge, any ed.

Jarratt, Susan C. *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Refigured*. Southern Illinois UP, 1991.

Osborne, Catherine. *Presocratic Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*. Harvard UP, 2004.

Plato. *Gorgias*. Translated by Donald J. Zeyl, Hackett Publishing, 1987.

Plato. *Phaedrus*. Translated by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff, Hackett Publishing, 1995.

Quintilian. *Institutes of Oratory; or, Education of an Orator*. Translated by John Selby Watson, any ed.

Suggested for Ph.D Students in Rhetoric

Aristotle. *Poetics*. Translated by Gerald F. Else, University of Michigan Press, 1967.

Beard, Mary. *Women & Power: A Manifesto*. Liveright, 2017.

Bizzell, Patricia and Bruce Herzberg, editors. *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*. 2nd ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001.

Brooke, Collin Gifford. *Lingua Fracta: Toward a Rhetoric of New Media*. Hampton Press, 2009.

Cooper, John. M., editor. *Plato: Complete Works*. Hackett Publishing Company, 1997.

Davis, D. Diane. *Breaking Up [at] Totality: A Rhetoric of Laughter*. Southern Illinois UP, 2000.

Glenn, Cheryl. *Rhetoric Retold: Regendering the Tradition from Antiquity Through the Renaissance*. Southern Illinois UP, 1997.

Havelock, Eric A. *Preface to Plato*. Harvard UP, 1982.

Kennedy, George A. *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*. University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Kennedy, George A. *A New History of Classical Rhetoric*. Princeton UP, 1994.

Kerferd, G. B. *The Sophistic Movement*. Cambridge UP, 1981.

Sprague, Rosamond Kent, editor. *The Older Sophists*. Hackett Publishing, 2001.

Schedule

Each week typically includes a primary ancient text and secondary texts from modern rhetorical scholarship. The texts interplay, of course, so it is up to the student to decide which to read first. For some weeks, students are given to the option to read one secondary text or another (this is marked by an “-or-”). This options are provided to allow for flexibility and self-direction as students move towards producing their own writing. In rarer cases, students are given the option between sections of primary texts. Read all footnotes. And lastly, do note that while it is ideal that it remain intact, this schedule is subject to change based upon the trajectory of class discussion and acts of God.

Week I Jan 11	Man Is the Measure of All Things Gorgias, <i>Encomium of Helen</i> ³ and <i>On Non-Existence</i> ⁴ Osborne (Ch. 1, 2, 7); Kerferd (1-58); Kennedy (1994, 3-10) ⁵	Due WordPress Account
Week II Jan 18	Isocrates On Trial Isocrates, <i>Against the Sophists</i> and <i>Antidosis</i> Herrick (Ch. 1-3); Glenn (1997, 33-56); Poulakos	
Week III Jan 25	Where Have You Been? And Where Are You Going? Plato, <i>Phaedrus</i> Derrida -or- Nussbaum	
Week IV Feb 1	Rhetoric on Trial: What Is It You Do? Plato, <i>Gorgias</i> Welch -or- Zuckert	1st Annotation CFP Selection
Week V Feb 8	Thin Thighs, Thick Theory Kennedy's Aristotle, <i>On Rhetoric</i> (ix-110) Herrick (Ch. 4); Gross	
Week VI Feb 15	Are You Available? Aristotle, <i>On Rhetoric</i> (111-250) Walzer; Kennedy's Aristotle (293-312)	Abstract
Week VII Feb 22	Canonizations Cicero, <i>Books I+II</i> Herrick (89-102); Enos -or- Glenn (1997, 56-73)	

³ The strongest translation of this text is found in Kennedy's edition of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* you purchased (pp. 251-255).

⁴ Ample discussion of this text from a rhetorical perspective is available in *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 1997, vol. 30, no.1. Also note that this text has also been translated as, among other variations, "On the Non-Existent."

⁵ This reading from Kennedy is separate from his book about and translation of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*

Week VIII Mar 1	The Decay of Oratory, The Sublimeness of Literature Cicero, <i>Book III</i> -or- Longinus, <i>On the Sublime</i> O’Gorman; Herrick (103-14)	2nd Annotation
Week IX Mar 8	On the Shores of the Ilusis No class meeting or readings due to spring holiday	
Week X Mar 15	No Meeting <i>Again</i>; or, Still Sublime? Quintilian, <i>Institutes of Oratory</i> (Bks. I, II -or- VI) ⁶ Fleming -or- Davis	Meet with professor
Week XI Mar 22	The “Q” Question Quintilian, <i>Institutes of Oratory</i> (Bks. XI–XII) Lanham; Logie -or- Stewart	Conference Paper
Week XII Mar 29	Lies My Father Told Me Jarratt (Ch. 1-2) Glenn (1994)	
Week XII Apr 5	Man <i>Might</i> the Measure of Some Things Jarratt (Ch. 3–4) Crowley; Jarratt & Ong	
Week XIV Apr 12	...And the Word Was (With) God Augustine, <i>On Christian Doctrine</i> Murphy; Herrick (115-22)	
Week XV Apr 19	On Rhetoric and the Building of Theory No readings—refining and finalizing our theories	Draft of Final Projects
Week XVI Exam Week	No Meeting; Only Writing Final papers and anthologies due April 29	Anthology Journal Manuscript

⁶ If you select Fleming, then pay particular attention to Books I and II of Quintilian’s *Institutes of Oratory*; if Davis, then focus attention on Book VI, particularly, I might add, chapter 3.