COMM 220: RHETORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION

Instructor: Mark A. Pollock MWF 10:25-11:15, Corboy 303

Email: mpolloc@luc.edu Phone: 312-915-6912 (email more reliable)

Office: LT907 Hours: by appointment

This course introduces theories of rhetoric, emphasizing the relevance of classical disputes for understanding current controversies over the nature and function of rhetoric. A central theme is the tension between rhetoric's promise for constructing a rich and meaningful civic life and the dangers of its descent into demagoguery and irrationality. Students will work through theoretical issues by examining speeches and other rhetorical artifacts.

# Required texts

G. Hauser, Introduction to rhetorical theory, 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland, 2002).

Additional readings will be available on the Sakai site for this class. That site will be used to distribute not only those readings, but also assignment sheets and graded work.

# Assessments

Class participation 20 points

Students will submit a paragraph at the start of each week in which they indicate what contributions they made to the class during the previous week. They can receive 0, 1 or 2 points each week, up to a maximum of 20 points for the semester. We will discuss what class participation entails in some detail in class.

Midterm exam 20 points

Final exam 30 points

Two short written assignments (15 points each) 30 points

One paper will be based on a prompt about Plato and Aristotle on rhetoric; the other will be a short analysis of a rhetorical artifact. Details about each assignment will be forthcoming.

Grading scale: A=92+ A-=90+ B+=88+ B=84+ B-=80+ C+=77+ C=74+ C-=70+ D+=67+ D=64+ D-=60+

# General Rules

Written assignments must **be submitted electronically via Sakai**. Assignments are due by the start of class on the date indicated on the syllabus (unless adjusted by **prior** agreement with me). Ten percent will be deducted for each day it is late. The penalties for academic dishonesty are a grade of F for the course and notification of the dean’s office. All students must read the academic integrity policy of the [School of Communication](http://www.luc.edu/soc/Policy.shtml). If you have questions concerning acceptable practice, consult with me prior to submitting your work. (1) Never present another person’s work as your own. (2) Always provide full citation information for direct quotations. (3) Always provide full citation information when presenting the argument, interpretation, or claim of another, even if you are paraphrasing.

*Tentative schedule*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Topic | Assignment |
|  | **NATURE OF RHETORIC** |  |
| 8/25 | Introduction to courseEventfulness of rhetoric | Read Hauser, ch. 1; Gorgias, “Encomium to Helen;” |
| 9/1 | Rhetorical thinking | Read Hauser, ch. 2; Plato, *Gorgias* |
| 9/8 | Rhetorical thinking (concl.); Rhetorical occasions | Read Hauser, ch. 3; Aristotle, *On rhetoric*, Bk. I, ch. 1-3; Robert F. Kennedy on King assassination; Bush at Barksdale, 9/11/2001 |
| 9/15 | Making commitments through rhetoric | Read Hauser, ch. 4; TBA  |
| 9/22 | Rhetorical judgment (no class Friday) | Read Hauser, ch. 5; TBA |
|  | **RHETORICAL CONTENT** |  |
| 9/29 | Rhetorical invention | Read Hauser, ch. 6; Aristotle, *On rhetoric*, Bk. I, ch. 4-8 |
| 10/6 | No class Tu; Th: Invention (concl.) |  |
| 10/13 | Good reasons (*logos*) | Read Hauser, ch. 7; [*Nova*: Intelligent Design on Trial](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/id/) |
| 10/20 | Character (*ethos*) & emotion (*pathos*) | Read Hauser, ch. 8 & 9; Aristotle, On rhetoric, Bk. II; Bill Clinton, “map Room Speech” and “I Have Sinned;” FDR, “The Four Freedoms”  |
| 10/27 | Narrative | Read Hauser, ch. 10; Ronald Reagan, “Remarks on the 40th Anniversary of the Normandy Invasion”  |
|  | **RHETORICAL USES OF LANGUAGE** |  |
| 11/3 | Dramatism | Read Hauser, ch. 11 |
| 11/10 | Dramatism (concl.); Context theory of meaning | Read Hauser, ch. 12 |
|  | **RHETORICAL USES OF FORM** |  |
| 11/17 | Structure & strategy | Read Hauser, ch. 13 |
| 11/24 | Argument and form (no class Friday) | Read Hauser, ch. 14 |
| 12/1 | TBA |  |
| 12/8 | Final 9-11am |  |