

## **ENGL 381: Rhetoric—Pr. Bizzell—Spring 2012**

Fenwick 210 office hours: M 1-3, T 2:30-3:30, W 10-12 and 1-3, F 11-12, and by appointment; phone x 2524, email pbizzell@holycross.edu

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions about our course.

### **Required texts:**

Bizzell, Patricia, and Bruce Herzberg, editors. *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*. 2d edition. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 2001. NOTE: you must have the 2d edition.

Farnsworth, Ward. *Farnsworth's Classical English Rhetoric*. Boston: David R. Godine, 2010.

### **Course Plan:**

Rhetoric is thoroughly interdisciplinary, encompassing literary criticism, poetry, philosophy, psychology, political science, theatre and more. Above all, rhetoric is a verbal art: a good capsule definition is that rhetoric studies how to do things with words.

This course has two purposes: to introduce you to theoretical writings on rhetoric and to give you intensive practice in public speaking. Achieving these purposes will develop all your verbal abilities: speaking, reading, listening, and writing.

To achieve these purposes, the syllabus alternates between sections that concentrate on preparing, delivering, and critiquing speeches, and sections that focus on reading and understanding rhetorical theory.

### **Assignments and Grading:**

You will be graded on both oral and written work in this course. The assignments with their percentages in your final grade are as follows:

informational speech, 10%  
ceremonial speech, 10%  
forensic speech, 20%  
deliberative speech, 20%  
short paper on classical rhetoric, 10%  
short paper on gender, race and rhetoric, 10%  
short paper on modern/postmodern rhetoric, 10%  
class participation/attendance grade (may include occasional ungraded assignments),  
10%

There will be no final exam in this course.

You will receive detailed instructions for each speech and paper, and we will work on them in class. You may rewrite the first or second paper if you wish, and I will record for that assignment the average of the original grade and the grade on the rewrite. A rewrite must come in no later than one week after I return the first version; attach the first version with my comments and grade to your rewrite.

PLEASE NOTE: It is extremely important that you be ready to deliver your speech on the day you are assigned to speak. Our time frame is very tight, and we must get through a certain number of speeches in each class meeting in order to give everyone a fair chance to present. If you are not ready, you inconvenience everyone else in the class.

ALSO NOTE: It is extremely important that you attend class when your classmates are giving their speeches, even if you are not presenting on that day. We need to provide a responsive audience for each other and to give constructive comments after each speech.

## Syllabus

In the reading assignments given below, RT = *The Rhetorical Tradition* and Farns = *Farnsworth's Classical English Rhetoric*.

Please read the head note for any author assigned in RT.

25 Jan. : Introductions and toasts

30 Jan. : Read in RT, *Dissoi Logoi*, and Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*; read Farns Chapters 1-6; informational speech assignment given

1 Feb. : Read in RT, Plato, *Gorgias*

6 Feb. : Read in RT, Plato, *Phaedrus*; first paper assignment given

8 Feb. : Read in Farns Chapters 7-12; workshop on informational speeches

13, 15 Feb. : Informational speeches given (NOTE your required delivery date)

20 Feb. : Read in RT, Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*, pp. 364-391 only; ceremonial speech assignment given

22 Feb. : Read in RT, Erasmus, *On Copia* (selections)

27, 29 Feb.: Ceremonial speeches given (NOTE your required delivery date)

29 Feb. : First paper due

SPRING BREAK

12 March: Read in RT, Castiglione, *The Courtier* (selections), Christine de Pizan (selections); assignments for second paper and forensic and deliberative speeches given

14 March: Read in RT, Margaret Fell, Maria Stewart, Sarah Grimké, Frances Willard (all selections)

19 March: Read in RT, Frederick Douglass, Gloria Anzaldúa (all selections) ); screen *The Great Debaters* (on reserve in the Media Resource Center)

21 March: Read in Farns, Chapters 13-18; workshop on forensic speeches

26, 28 March, 2, 4 April: Forensic speeches given (NOTE your required delivery date)  
2 April: Second paper due

#### EASTER BREAK

11 April : Read in RT, Richard Weaver “Language Is Sermonic” and “The *Phaedrus* and the Nature of Rhetoric”

16 April: Read in RT, Wayne Booth, *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent* (selections); Weaver, continued

18 April: Read in RT, Stanley Fish, “Rhetoric”; Booth, continued

23 April : Fish, continued; workshop on deliberative speeches

25, 30 April, 2, 7 May: Deliberative speeches given  
7 May: Third paper due