

Course Syllabus  
COMM 1323 Rhetoric and Public Speaking  
Spring 2009-10  
Department of Communication and Rhetoric

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course improves communication skills in a variety of contexts and develops an understanding and appreciation of the importance of public rhetoric in a democratic society. Since ancient Greek and Roman times, rhetoric has been taught both as the foundation of a liberal arts education and as an essential skill of democratic citizenship.

## **COURSE SEQUENCE IN CURRICULUM AND PREREQUISITE INFORMATION**

This course is required of all undergraduate students (see Smith College Core Requirements) seeking a bachelor's degree from HBU. There are no prerequisites to enroll in this course.

## **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Name: Dr. Sheila Ford  
E-mail: [sford@hbu.edu](mailto:sford@hbu.edu)  
Office Phone: 281.649.3604  
Office Location: 205J University Academic Center  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Blackboard Site:

## **LEARNING RESOURCES**

Course Text(s): Hogan, J. M., Andrews, P. H., Andrews, J. R., and Williams, G. (2008). *Public speaking and civic engagement*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.  
Supplementary Text(s): *The International Society for the History of Rhetoric-Online Resources* (available <http://ishr.cua.edu/resources.cfm>) and *American Rhetoric Speech Bank* (available at [www.americanrhetoric.com](http://www.americanrhetoric.com))  
Other Required Materials: Will be supplied when required.

## **RELATION TO THE PURPOSE STATEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY**

This course provides instruction in the liberal arts as required by HBU's Articles of Incorporation. The study of rhetoric dates back to the Greco-Roman period where it was studied by great thinkers like Aristotle and Cicero. In this classical tradition, personal ethics and civic virtue were the cornerstones of a rhetorical education. The study and practice of rhetoric has continued to be an important part of our democratic society.

## **RELATION TO COLLEGE GOALS AND PURPOSES**

This course promotes the development of students' analytical, critical-thinking, speaking and writing skills in the liberal arts so that they will be successful in both their personal and professional lives.

## **RELATION TO DEPARTMENTAL GOALS AND PURPOSES**

This course prepares students for participation in our dynamic economy and democratic society by examining the theory, practice, and critique of rhetoric in various contexts.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

### Overview/Purpose of the Course

This course is an introduction to the theory, practice, and critique of rhetoric.

### Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the role of public speaking in our democratic society
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of writing rhetorical critiques of speeches in our democratic society
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of writing position papers on political and social controversies in our democratic society
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the types of public speaking in our democratic society
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of developing a speech in our democratic society
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of presenting a speech in our democratic society

### Technology, Writing, or Oral Objectives

Students use technology to complete assignments and develop speaking and writing skills.

## TOPICAL OUTLINE

Class or Meeting	Topic: Class Assignment
1	Course and Colleague Introductions & Selections from Aristotle's "The Art of Rhetoric" in <i>The International Society for the History of Rhetoric-Online Resources</i>
2	Chapter 1: Public Speaking and Democratic Citizenship & Chapter 2: The Ethical Public Speaker
3	Chapter 3: Preparing to Speak with Commitment and Confidence & Chapter 4: The Listener as Engaged Citizen
4	Chapter 5: Diverse Audiences in a Democratic Society
5	Rhetorical Criticism Essay Due & Informal Presentations of Rhetorical Criticism Essays
6	Informal Presentations of Rhetorical Criticism Essays Continued
7	Chapter 6: Developing Significant Topics & Chapter 7: Responsible and Productive Research
8	Library Research Workshop in Computer Lab
9	Chapter 8: Supporting Your Ideas with Evidence
10	Position Papers Due & Informal Presentations of Position Papers
11	Informal Presentations of Position Papers Continued
12	Chapter 9: Organizing Your Speech & Chapter 10: Outlining Your Speech
13	Midterm Examination (Chapters 1-9)
14	Chapter 11: Using Language Effectively
15	Chapter 12: Delivering Your Speech Effectively
16	Chapter 13: Supporting Your Ideas Visually
17	Chapter 14: Speaking to Inform
18	Informative Speeches Due
19	Informative Speeches Due
20	Informative Speeches Due
21	Chapter 15: Persuasive Speaking in a Democratic Society & Chapter 16: Arguing Persuasively
22	Persuasive Speeches Due
23	Persuasive Speeches Due
24	Persuasive Speeches Due
25	Chapter 17: Speaking on Special Occasions
26	Epideictic Speeches Due
27	Epideictic Speeches Due
28	Epideictic Speeches Due
29	Chapter 18: Speaking and Deliberating in Groups
Tuesday, TBA (See HBU website for schedule)	Final Examination (Chapters 10-18)

The content of this outline and the attached schedule are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

## TEACHING STRATEGIES

This course will be taught using a combination of lecture, discussion, multimedia resources, experiential activities, spoken/written assignments, and the Socratic Method.

## ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

### Course Requirements

Rhetorical Criticism Essays/Position Papers-Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their skill in the critical analysis of a speech from the *American Rhetoric Speech Bank* and in the selection, research, and organization of written arguments in a position paper on a political or social issue of their choice. Organization, audience analysis, establishment of credibility, citation of evidence, use of argument, and clarity of expression are of paramount importance.

Informative, Persuasive, and Epideictic Speeches-Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their skill in audience analysis; in the selection, research, and organization of a topic; and in the delivery of a 4-6 minute informative speech. Additionally, they will have the occasion to present a 4-6 minute persuasive speech and a 4-6 minute epideictic speech. Organization, audience analysis, establishment of credibility, citation of evidence, use of argument, and delivery are of paramount importance.

Midterm/Final Examinations-Examinations will assess students' knowledge and understanding of the required readings, lectures, discussions, and multimedia resources. They may be fill-in-the-blank, matching, multiple choice, short-answer, or essay in nature.

### Grading Standards

The grading scale for this class is as follows: 90-100 is an A; 80-89 is a B; 70-79 is a C; 60-69 is a D; 59 and below is an F.

Grades will be determined by the following percentages:

Rhetorical Criticism Essay	(100 points)	10%
Position Paper	(100 points)	10%
Informative Speech	(100 points)	10%
Persuasive Speech	(100 points)	10%
Epideictic Speech	(100 points)	10%
Midterm Examination	(100 points)	25%
Final Examination	(100 points)	25%

#### Student Appraisal of Course

Students will complete faculty appraisal forms as regularly administered by the University.

### **CLASS POLICIES**

#### Absence and Tardy Policies

Attendance in class is important and it is university policy that students must attend class and that faculty will require attendance with penalties for non-compliance. Please see the catalog currently in use for the university's policy on classroom absences caused in the course of student representation of the university, such as athletics, chorale, and mock trial activities.

Apart from the absences caused when students represent the university, students might need to miss class and/or lab sessions from time to time due to illness or other reasons. Instructors will permit students to be absent from a maximum of three class meetings that are scheduled in this syllabus for MWF and for TTH courses during the Fall and Spring semesters. Upon the fourth absence, faculty will begin to penalize a student's grade in the course as the professor deems appropriate. For summer session courses that meet throughout the week, instructors will permit students to be absent a maximum of 2 class meetings. For courses that meet once a week, whether regular semesters or in the summer, instructors will permit students to be absent a maximum of one or two class meetings (upon the discretion of the instructor) before penalties are applied. Students are advised to use the allowed absences for illnesses and significant events beyond their control. Regular attendance in class is important for student success.

#### Academic Honesty

Please refer to the current catalog for the university's policy and procedures regarding academic honesty. Note that the university utilizes "Turn-It-In" and other programs to investigate possible plagiarism activities. All major papers for this course will be submitted to the plagiarism prevention software, **Turnitin.com** on or before a paper's due date. No paper will be graded without meeting this requirement beforehand. A separate handout will be provided to give detailed instructions on this process which must include the class identification number and class password.

In accordance with FERPA, and to best protect the students' privacy, no personal identification (e.g., name, social security number, H number) should be uploaded with the text of student papers. However, Turnitin will ask for the student's name and e-mail address when setting up a personal account. This identifying information will be used by the professor to evaluate the student's paper and cannot be viewed by other faculty or students. To further increase confidentiality, the student may choose to use a pseudonym (false name) when setting up his or her personal Turnitin account.

If a pseudonym is used for Turnitin, the student must provide this identifier next to his/her typed name on the paper copy which is submitted to the professor. Five (5) points will be deducted if the professor is unable to easily match the paper copy to the Turnitin submission of the student's paper.

#### Children in Classroom

In almost all instances, children are not allowed in the classroom nor are they allowed to be on campus unattended. Class sessions are for enrolled students only unless other arrangements are approved by the instructor in advance.

#### Classroom Behavior Expectations

The classroom environment is to be conducive to learning and is under the authority of the instructor. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are expected to demonstrate civil behavior in the classroom and show appropriate respect for the instructor and other students. Inappropriate behavior toward the instructor, in or out of the classroom, may result in a directive to the offending student to leave the classroom or the course entirely.

Classroom behaviors that disturb the teaching-learning experiences include the following behaviors: activated cellular phone or other device, demands for special treatment, frequent episodes of leaving and then returning to the class, excessive tardiness, leaving class early, making offensive remarks or disrespectful comments or gestures to the instructor or other students, missing deadlines, prolonged chattering, sleeping, arriving late to class, dominating discussions, shuffling backpacks or notebooks, disruption of group work, and overt inattentiveness. It is at the discretion of the instructor as to whether laptops will be allowed for use in the classroom.

### Early Alert

As an instructor, I am committed to your success, not only in this class, but in all aspects of HBU life. To ensure that every student takes full advantage of the educational and learning opportunities, HBU has implemented an *Academic Early Alert Referral System (EARS)*. If I think you would benefit from some of these special programs or services available to you, I will make the appropriate referral. You, in turn, will be expected to take advantage of the help offered to you.

### Email Policy

All university and class email communication will be sent to your HBU email account. You are responsible for checking this frequently. If you choose, you may reroute your HBU email to another email address. Your emails should be in a professional format with correct spelling, capitalization, and grammar.

### Grievance Procedures

The Academic Grievance Policy may be found in the catalog currently in use, in the Academic section of the HBU Forms section of the HBU Portal, and on the Registrar's page on the HBU Website.

### Late Work

Late written assignments will lose 10 points for each day that they are late. Late speeches without a verifiable medical/HBU service excuse will lose 10 points for each day that they are late.

### Learning Disabilities/Academic Accommodations

Houston Baptist University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Any student who needs learning accommodations should inform the professor immediately at the beginning of the semester that he/she will be requesting accommodations. In order to request and establish academic accommodations, the student should contact the Coordinator for Learning Disability Services (Alison Childers) at 281-649-3274, Hinton Bldg #101, to schedule an appointment to discuss and request academic accommodation services. Academic Accommodations must be applied for and written each semester. If academic accommodations are approved, a Letter of Accommodations will then be sent to the professor(s).

### Missed Examinations

You must notify the instructor within 24 hours and must provide verifiable medical/HBU service excuse. You may not make up an examination without a verifiable, official, excused absence.

## **PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING SYLLABUS**

Dr. Marie A. Mater, Chair, Department of Communication and Rhetoric

## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGARDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COURSE IN TERMS OF HISTORY, MOMENT, MOVEMENT, TRENDS, TIMELINESS, BODY OF BASIC KNOWLEDGE, ETC.**

This course will not only improve your communication skills, but will also develop an understanding and appreciation of the importance of public rhetoric in a democratic society. Whatever special expertise or talents a citizen may have, the ability to speak and write effectively in public, drawing upon a broad range of perspectives and sources of information, remains fundamental to one's success, not only professionally, but as a citizen. In our increasingly complex and technologically sophisticated world, the ability to analyze problems from a variety of perspectives, and to inform, persuade, and motivate others through public speaking and writing, is more important than ever.

In order to develop an appreciation of the importance of rhetoric in our personal, professional, and civic lives, this class will focus throughout the semester on actual, on-going political and social controversies. In this class you will investigate those public issues in depth, and you will learn how to effectively communicate what you have learned to others. Not only will you write and deliver your own position papers and speeches in this class, but you will also study and critique the speeches of others, both well-known public figures and ordinary students and citizens. Hopefully, your participation in this class will teach something about your rights and responsibilities as a citizen. In this class, you will be expected to listen closely to the speeches of your colleagues, and you will be expected to respond to those speeches, critically but constructively. You will learn to view public rhetoric not as one-way communication, but as part of the larger, on-going public dialogue that is known theoretically as discourse production in the public sphere.

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Instructor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date