

English 5350.001
Classical Rhetoric
Mondays, 2:00-4:50

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Since the rhetorician offers to speak and to write about everything, and the philosopher tries to think about everything, they have always been rivals in their claim to provide a universal training of the mind.

—P. O. Kristeller, "The Humanist Movement"

When Kristeller suggests that "the rhetorician offers to speak and write about everything, and the philosopher tries to think about everything..." our attention should be drawn not to the apparent object of both inquiries—the "everything"—but to the modes, the methods, the processes assumed for such investigations. That is, philosophers think. Rhetoricians speak and write.

Often, the result of this assumption is that philosophy is given priority over rhetoric, since one must have knowledge in order to disseminate/demonstrate and rhetoric proper is mostly the ability to organize knowledge and make it presentable. Rhetoric dresses knowledge up for an audience, makes truth attractive for polite circles. At least, that's one assumption.

This course is an introduction to the earliest traditions of rhetoric. But as we follow the *grand recit* of rhetoric from the Sophists to Augustine—in some sense, a journey from display to interpretation—we will consider what these texts allege regarding the definition and limits of rhetoric and its relationship to/with other (ancient and contemporary) critical systems. What are the differences (if any) between rhetoric and other systems that claim a body of knowledge (philosophy, religion, politics)? Can the differences (if any) be expressed in terms of suppositions about what words (should, can) do? In particular, we will be looking at some examples of late antique Rabbinic exegesis with an eye (or ear) toward discovering how the tradition may fit with the study of classical rhetorics.

Explicit here is the belief that the old folks are still useful, and the enduring significance of Classical rhetorical theory in and for contemporary thought will be a constant platform for discussion.

Toward these goals:

- Each student will produce a substantial blog-post response to the reading each week.
- Each week, select students will present a three-page, double-spaced position statement on the readings and will lead our discussions via questions they have prepared.
- By roughly the middle of the session, students will have produced a short (5+) exploratory paper on whatever topic they have chosen. Topics are relatively open, but should tie the work we're studying to present questions or problems and must be approved in advance. This is an informal prospectus that will need to state precisely what you are intending, how you are going to do it, and should include a preliminary bibliography. See the next description for the final project. A version of this will be presented to the class later.
- Finally, at the end of the semester, each of you will submit a (15-25 page) paper on some aspect of rhetoric discussed during the semester as it relates to *current* concerns. This will require research with secondary sources in contemporary rhetoric and philosophy. If you have a longer project in mind (thesis, dissertation, etc.), this may be a chance to work toward it. If not, then we can work to find something you're interested in (literature, film, whatever) that you'd like to spend more time with and that you think can be interestingly complicated by our material.

Required texts are:

- Aristotle, *Aristotle on Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, trans. George A. Kennedy
- Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D.W. Robertson
- Daniel Boyarin, *Borderlines*
- Handelman, Susan. *The Slayers of Moses: The Emergence of Rabbinic Interpretation in Modern Literary Theory*
- Isocrates, *Against the Sophists*, trans. George Norlin ([Perseus; online](#))
- Longinus, *On the Sublime*, tr. W. Rhys Roberts ([Peitho's Web; online](#))
- Plato, *Plato on Rhetoric and Language: Four Key Dialogues*, ed. Jean Nienkamp
- Quintilian, *Quintilian on the Teaching of Speaking and Writing: Translations from Books One, Two, and Ten of the Institutio Oratoria*, ed. James J. Murphy
- Shorter selections available online, on reserve, etc.

Grades:

- Blog posts: 30 points total
- Position/Discussion: 20 points total
- Informal Precis: 10 points
- Presentation: 10 points
- Final Paper: 30 points

Schedule:

Jan 16	MLK - NO CLASS
Jan 23	Course Introduction; sign up for responses
Jan 30	<i>Dissoi Logoi</i> , <i>Encomium of Helen</i> , <i>Against the Sophists</i> , <i>Ion</i>
Feb 6	<i>Protagoras</i> , begin <i>Gorgias</i>
Feb 13	finish <i>Gorgias</i> , <i>Phaedrus</i>
Feb 20	Discuss final projects; Intro to <i>On Rhetoric</i> ; <i>Rhetoric</i> : Book 1
Feb 27	<i>Rhetoric</i> : Book 2
March 6	Short Essay Due <i>Rhetoric</i> : Book 3 <i>On the Sublime</i>
March 13	SPRING BREAK
March 20	<i>The Slayers of Moses</i> chapters 1-4
March 27	<i>Institutio Oratoria</i> : Book 1, 2 & 10
April 3	<i>Borderlines</i> chapters 1-6
April 10	<i>On Christian Doctrine</i> : Intro, Prologue, Books 1-3
April 17	<i>On Christian Doctrine</i> , Book 4
April 24	Presentations of final projects
May 1	Presentations of final projects
May 8	Final Essay Due

Policies:

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

Disability Accommodations: UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a **letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability.

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

Non-Discrimination Policy: *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos.*

Title IX Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or

activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.

Academic Integrity: Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Campus Carry: Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback via the SFS

database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students' anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: for semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, [which is located \[insert a description of the nearest exit/emergency exit\]](#). When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.