2014

115-07/08 Rhetoric

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Dr. Alison Russell

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Office and Hours: 303 Hinkle Hall, TR 2:30 – 3:30, and by appointment. I am generally around on Mondays from about 1 - 3 also.

Mailbox: Give mail (such as late papers) to staff in Faculty Services, atrium area in Hinkle Hall. If you turn in assignments this way, be sure to get a receipt from faculty services. Do not put papers under my office door or e-mail them to me unless we have made such arrangements.

Texts and Other Required Materials:

Situations of Writing, 1st ed, Sidney Dobrin (not the brief edition)

ISBN: 978-0-205-73543-3

Pocket Folder to use for turning in work for papers. Please note: Each time a major graded assignment is due, you should turn in all of your drafts, notes, prewriting, etc. along with the final version of the paper/project.

Course Description and Goals:

Rhetoric is an advanced course designed primarily for English Majors, University Scholars/Honors students and other students who are prepared for a challenging course designed to enrich critical thinking/writing skills. As Xavier’s catalog states, ENGL 115 offers an “intensive theoretical and practical study of discourse.” ENGL 115 assumes that students already have a fairly good knowledge of fundamental grammar and composition skills. Placement into this course is usually determined by your ACT or SAT scores if not by your program requirements. Talk to me if you think you’re not sure that you should be in this course rather than in Composition (ENGL 101).

English 115 fulfills a Core Curriculum Requirement. It particularly reinforces the first core goal, “students will be effective communicators in writing and orally,” and its three student learning outcomes: 1) students will organize and express their ideas in writing and orally; 2) students will formulate clear and arguable theses, supported by evidence drawn from appropriate sources; and 3) students will utilize an effective writing process guided by audience, purpose, cultural context, and disciplinary standards. ENGL 115 also addresses various learning outcomes for the major (see ENGL Dept website).
What is Rhetoric? In ancient Greece, Rhetoric referred to persuasive public speaking, but the term now applies also to writing—and to the ability to use language (or images) in ways best suited to one’s audience and purpose. Every act of writing—every rhetorical situation—requires writers to make specific choices for specific ends. For example, you probably write differently to your best friends than when you write for professors or for work. This course is about making effective rhetorical choices for any given writing situation, and it’s also about analyzing published writing to learn from the rhetorical choices of others. It is not about writing in limited forms such as a 5 paragraph essay.

What will we write? One goal of this course is to give you practice with common academic writing tasks such as analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting and arguing, all of which will be put to good use in your other courses. Related to these, additional assignments will focus on information/visual literacy: good writers have to be good (critical) readers, able to locate and evaluate the numerous sources of information available through our proliferating electronic resources. Another goal, equally important, is for you to develop writing skills that will serve you beyond school—for your personal and professional life. Academic writing is important to master, but personal writing gives you an opportunity to “own” your writing and to develop another kind of writing voice.

Why do we read in a writing class? Even though I’ll ask you to read essays from our textbook, the main goal is not to master the content of those essays (as you might do for another type of course). We’ll certainly discuss the reading with care, and I may even give you reading quizzes on the content, but our primary objective will always be writing. The textbook essays provide models, sources of useful writing strategies, and something to react to and write about. Finally, most people would agree that writing and reading go hand in hand: our skills in one area are usually reinforced by practice and familiarity with the other.

What is the class format? Nearly every class meeting will include some kind of writing activity, some of which will be related specifically to your assignments and some of which will serve as “workshop” activities—exercises to help you develop specific strategies and skills. I rarely lecture in a writing class, but I often incorporate group work into class meetings because collaborative work is a valuable method of learning. Writers always benefit from giving and getting feedback from others, so I’ll require you to bring in rough drafts for peer-critique.

What if I need extra help? I highly encourage all of you to meet with me for an individual conference at least once this semester and at any time you are struggling with an assignment. Professors’ office hours are for this exact purpose so don’t ever feel that you are interrupting my work. You may also e-mail me if you have questions or concerns.
Don’t forget the free Writing Center services: The Writing Center works with students of all abilities—not only those who struggle with writing—because even great writers benefit from trying out their drafts on others. If you’d like another perspective on your rough draft, consider dropping by the Center or making an appointment with any of the ten consultants, all of whom have been trained through a credit-bearing, semester-long course. They can offer assistance with any stage or part of the writing process. The Center also has a printer and PCs for student use. (CLC 400, 745-2875) Hours: M-TH 9:30-8:30, F 9:30-3:30, SU 1:00-9:00. Email: writingcenter@xavier.edu

Assignments and Grading: You must turn in all assignments to pass the course. You will also do quite a bit of writing that won’t be graded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project #</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>150 (possible points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Food Project (pres. And paper)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Visual Document</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation, quizzes</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief writing assignments*:</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*see end of syllabus for more info on these) 1,000

I use plus/minus grading based on a scale of 100, as follows: A 93-100, A- 90-92, B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82, C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72, D+ 67-69, D 63-66, D- 60-62, F 59 and under. (Xavier has no D- option for final grades.)

Course Policies: Please Read Carefully

If this is your first semester at college, you might not know that the syllabus for any course you take is one of the most important documents you will receive during the term. A syllabus is a contract: it tells you what the professor expects from you and what you can expect from the professor. By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to abide by the policies outlined below.

1. Attendance is crucial to success in this course. If you must miss a class, contact another student before the following meeting in case I have given a handout or assignment not listed on the syllabus. I don’t distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. You get three absences, so use them wisely. I will deduct 35 points from your cumulative course grade for each additional absence. If you cannot live with this policy or anticipate having to miss classes for a job or other reason, you should find another section of ENGL 115 more amenable to your schedule. I am willing to work with students who have unavoidable university obligations such as athletic team participation if I am
provided with a schedule in advance of the events. I also consider serious illness a reasonable excuse for missing multiple classes if I am given the appropriate documentation.

2. Tardiness is sometimes unavoidable, I realize, but consistent tardiness is downright inconsiderate to your classmates. Okay, I admit that it annoys me as well because it disrupts the work of the class. It might also jeopardize your grade since any reading quizzes, which cannot be made-up, will be given at the beginning of class. Please don’t make me count your persistent tardiness (as an absence) when I determine your course grade. If you can’t avoid being late to a class, be sure to see me afterwards to make sure I have recorded your arrival.

3. I love it when students are attentive and actively participate in class discussion and group work. Someday you might need a recommendation from me; be sure you’ve given me something to say about you! Peer-response sessions (rough draft workshops) are at the heart of this course, important to your own development as a writer and to other students in the class. If you choose not to participate on these days (whether due to absence, tardiness, or lack of a rough draft of at least a few pages to share), you force me to reduce your essay grade—and I just hate doing that! It’s always better to come with something than not to show up at all.

4. Late papers seem to arise when students go to print out an essay just before class and then face some kind of technology meltdown. Try to avoid this situation. If you have to turn in a paper after class on the same day it’s due, turn it in to Faculty Services in the atrium of Hinkle Hall (get a receipt). Also, see me or e-mail me (before the assignment is due) if that might help you to overcome any difficulties you’re having with the assignment. Out of fairness to other students who do not take extra time to complete assignments, late papers will receive a reduced letter grade for each calendar day late. Points will be deducted for late homework as well. In unusual circumstances, I might allow you to e-mail me a paper. In such cases, I always acknowledge receipt; if you haven’t heard from me, I do not have your paper!

5. I am a big fan of revision because it always improves writing. You will get the opportunity to revise nearly every paper you write this semester at least once before submitting it for a grade. I will sometimes offer to provide feedback on your drafts; take advantage of these chances by bringing in two copies of your paper on rough draft day. Please note: letting me see your rough draft will not reduce the impact of your revised version. Also note: If I offer to read a rough draft, you must turn it in by my due date. I won’t read them after that.

6. Plagiarism may take different forms, and none of them are acceptable in this class. If you turn in someone else’s work under your own name (and this includes online material or cut and pastes), you are basically stealing intellectual property. Whenever you use other people’s language or ideas or
images, whether you quote or paraphrase, you must acknowledge your sources. Plagiarism, or cheating, is a serious offense. It diminishes your integrity as a writer and as a person. We will discuss such issues in more detail during a future class meeting, but meanwhile, take note that any act of plagiarism will result in an F for the paper and/or for the course. See our handbook for guidelines to documenting sources.

7. **Classroom etiquette:** It should go without saying that texting and other electronic gadget activities shouldn’t occur during class time—when I expect to have your complete attention for the entire fifty minutes—so stow away your devices out of sight unless I invite you to use them. Unfortunately, other students who are less polite than you forced me to come up with this policy: if I see you using your device during class time (and this includes surreptitious glances to see if you have messages), I will mark you as absent for that class. If I see you do this beyond the first instance, I’ll deduct all participation points from your course grade (1/2 a letter grade). If you persist in being discourteous to me and to your peers, I will enact serious deductions from your grade or require you to drop the course.

**Guidelines for Essay Format and Submitting Work:**

- Final drafts of essays should be word-processed, double-spaced, and edited for typos and other errors.
- Use a standard font such as Times New Roman, 12 point size and standard margins on all sides of the essay (as per Microsoft Word).
- Type your name, course and section numbers, my name, and the date, on separate single spaced lines in the upper left hand corner. Double space down and center the title of your essay. Double space again and begin the body of your paper. A cover page is not necessary.
- Number pages (preferably beginning on page two) in the upper right corner or centered at the bottom of the page.
- Staple or paper clip the essay pages together in the upper left corner.
- Make any minor corrections by hand--using pen or pencil. The point is for you to edit your work and not to distract me with typos or missing words.
- Develop the practice of using gender inclusive language. See a handbook for guidelines.
- Submit the paper in a folder, along with all notes, drafts, and other specified work. Include all of your previous graded work in the left pocket and place all new material on the right side. (To reduce the bulkiness of your portfolio, you may remove all but the final graded papers on the left side, but keep the working material for later use in this course.) The final draft, the one you want me to grade, should be on top or clearly marked “final draft.”
- It is always wise to make a back-up copy of any paper you turn in for a grade. I also recommend printing out copies of your drafts so you (and I) will have a visible record of your revision practices.
**Reading and Assignment Schedule:** Reading and assignments are due on the date next to which they are listed. **RD** = Rough Draft. **FD** = Final/revised Draft. **BWA** = Brief Writing Assignment. I don’t envision any major changes to the schedule, but I reserve the right to make revisions as needed. Page assignments are for reading only; I will let you know if I want you to answer any questions or do exercises in those pages, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>8/26</td>
<td>Welcome! Introduction to the course. Be ready to write.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td>8/28</td>
<td>CH 1, Understanding Rhetoric, pp. 2-13, and Ch. 2, Audience and Purpose, pp. 17-27.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>9/2</td>
<td>Ch. 6, Thinking, pp. 76-92. [RSA video in class]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>Ch. 8, Writing to Narrate, pp. 114-42. <strong>BWA:</strong> For Tuesday, do Writing #1 on p. 143-44 (flash fiction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>9/9</td>
<td>Ch. 3, Generating Ideas, pp. 31-42. Also read essay by Tom Junod, My Mother Couldn’t Cook,” pp. 635-39.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td>9/11</td>
<td>Ch. 4, Drafting, pp. 45-58. Also, Ch. 28, Errors, 674-80. <strong>BWA:</strong> Writing #3 on p. 639.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>CH. 7, Reading and Viewing, pp. 95-109. <strong>RD due</strong> (word-processed, please)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td>9/18</td>
<td>Ch. 5, Revising, pp. 60 – 70. <strong>FD #1 due.</strong> Also, peruse Ch. 30, Punctuation and Mech., pp. 694-708.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>9/23</td>
<td>Ch. 12, Writing to Analyze, pp. 231-49 only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td>9/25</td>
<td>Ch. 23, Image/Culture, pp. 532-37, 49-57 only. Ch. 12 continued, pp. 250-58. <strong>BWA:</strong> write a brief analysis of the image on p. 253 or 260.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>9/30</td>
<td>Watching short film, The Story of Stuff. (See p. 564)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td>10/2</td>
<td>Ch. 23, “Falling Man” pp. 538-48. Focus on writing introductions. [Reread our syllabus, especially policies.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>10/7</td>
<td><strong>RD due.</strong> Focus on writing conclusions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td>10/9</td>
<td><strong>No classes—fall holiday! Go nuts.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>10/14</td>
<td>Read Ch. 14, Writing to Argue, pp. 290-99, and “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” on pp. 510-17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td>10/16</td>
<td>Read “Does the Internet Make You ....” 517-19. <strong>FD #2 due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>10/21</td>
<td>Ch. 14, pp. 300-318, and Goldberg essay on pp. 550-52. <strong>BWA:</strong> Analyzing the Rhetoric, #2 on p. 552.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
R 10/23  Ch. 19, Evaluating/Synthesizing Information, pp. 441-59.

T 10/28  Ch. 26, Food, pp. 622-34. (Watch film?)
R 10/30  RD due. Ch. 29, pp. 682-93. Writing Sentences.

T 11/4  Ch. 26, Food, pp. 640-46, 648-49.
        Ch. 18 – Planning/Conducting Research, 404-40. (Long)
R 11/6  FD #3 due. No reading/writing due. Madison Avenue Game

T 11/11 Time to work on projects.
R 11/13  Ch. 20, Presenting and Documenting Research.
        Peruse this chapter. We will look at sample paper.
        Do you have MLA style documentation questions? Review.

T 11/18 Presentations
R 11/20 Presentations

T 11/25 Paper part of FD #4 due.
        Discussion of options for final project.
R 11/27  No classes – Thanksgiving. Eat Tofurkey?

T 12/2  Ch. 16, Finding/Adapting ...Visuals
        BWA: Writing #1 on p. 376.
R 12/4  Ch. 17, Designing Documents.

T 12/9  No class. Research and Writing time.
R 12/11 Course Wrap Up. RD due for final project.

Final Exam: your final project is your final exam. It is due no later than the scheduled exam time. More info to follow.

11:30 class – T, Dec. 16, 10:30 – 12:20
1:00 class – R, Dec. 18, 10:30 – 12:20

**Brief Writing Assignments:** These assignments require about a page and a half (double spaced) of text (maybe 300 or so words?), depending on how much you have to say. They give you opportunities to explore topics, to share your thoughts, to develop ideas, etc. Ignore any textbook instruction about writing an essay for these; I just want about a longish paragraph. BWAs will be graded by checkmarks: a check (8 pts) means it’s a solid response; you gave a decent response but nothing out of the ordinary. A check plus (9 pts) means that you gave this serious thought; it looks like you took some time to do it right. A check minus (6 pts) means that you fulfilled the assignment but in a very
minimal way, as if you dashed it off just before class. There’s little substance or creativity. A check plus plus (10) means you knocked my socks off: you really had something to say about the topic at hand and did so eloquently. And if you do not turn in one on the day it’s due, well that’s a zero,

I’m looking forward to getting to know all of you this semester. I love teaching Rhetoric.