COM 750: Rhetoric and Everyday Life
Sample Syllabus

Course Description
This course offers grounding in core rhetorical concepts, focusing on their critical utility in “everyday” controversies and struggles over premises, meanings, values, norms, orientations, policies, conditions, structures and regimes. Endeavoring to bridge critical theory and social engagement, the course brings pivotal rhetorical concepts to bear on the lived struggles over and between historical differences. Ultimately, we hope to re-appreciate the positive critical-and-productive role that rhetoric plays promoting a robust democratic social order.

Course Objectives
1. To recognize, explain, and enact self-reflexivity in rhetorical action and analysis.
2. To identify, analyze, and evaluate the rhetorical dynamics of social controversies.
3. To demonstrate a critical attunement toward everyday uses of rhetoric.
4. To explain and apply key theories and concepts from the field of rhetoric in order to analyze and evaluate everyday uses of rhetoric.
5. To summarize, examine, and adapt research in the field of rhetoric.
6. To explain the value of ethical rhetoric to a healthy society and to integrate these lessons into practice.

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of this course students should be able to satisfy the following learning objectives, as outlined by the Department of Communication Studies:

1. Critically analyze and evaluate messages and interactions in rhetorical settings.
2. Identify and characterize examples of self-reflexivity.
3. Critically analyze and evaluate published research articles.
4. Identify and explain multiple perspectives in rhetorical communication.
5. Successfully conduct research in rhetorical communication at a level appropriate for undergraduate students.
6. Improve written and oral composition skills.
Reading Materials
2. Additional readings will be made available through our online course portal.

Assignments
Students will choose one social controversy to engage the entire semester. For each module students will write a pithy 5-7 page “Critical Analysis” essay on that controversy, with a final “reflective” essay of roughly 12-15 pages culminating the semester’s efforts.

*** Each assignment will be accompanied by a detailed handout that will be discussed at greater length in class.

1. Critical Analysis Papers (15 + 15 + 15 + 20) each .......................................................... 65%
2. Case Study Presentation ........................................................................................................... 15%
3. Take Home Midterm Exam ................................................................................................. 20%

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<th>Grade Scale</th>
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(702) 895-3301 • FAX (702) 895-4054 • http://www.unlv.edu/provost
Course Policies

Format

The course will be conducted as a seminar, so come prepared each week to engage one another with questions, comments, fresh interpretations, provocations, and curiosities. Everyone will be expected to participate actively and regularly in class discussions. The best way to be prepared for this kind of interaction is to read the day’s materials closely, thoroughly, and critically. Take plenty of notes and be ready to share your views, questions, hypotheses, frustrations, and inspirations with your colleagues.

Absence Policy

Class attendance is mandatory. Satisfactory performance is unlikely for students who accumulate absences. Insight gained from class discussion cannot be obtained through other sources. Thus, students are expected to be present and prepared for each and every class meeting.

Policy on Late Work

Assignments must be completed and/or received on the dates specified in the class schedule. Work that is handed in passed the deadline, unexcused, will be assessed a “late fee” of 5% / day.

Policy on Academic Honesty

All material submitted for course credit must be the original work of the student claiming credit for it. Students guilty of knowingly using, or attempting to use, another person’s work as though that work were their own, and students guilty of knowingly permitting, or attempting to permit, another student to use their work, will receive a grade of “F” for the course. Such conduct may also constitute grounds for dismissal from the University. Students who are unfamiliar with the University’s policy on plagiarism should consult the most recent edition of the UNLV Student Handbook.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

For a full list of UNLV policies updated by term please click here. Specific policies are also noted below.

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the Campus community; we all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and are encouraged to always take the ethical path whenever faced with choices. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s educational mission. An example of academic
misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person, from the
Internet or any other source without proper citation of the sources. See the [Student Conduct Code](https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct).

**Auditing Classes**
Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.

**Classroom Conduct**
Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn or of instructors to teach. Use of electronic devices such as pagers, cellular phones, or recording devices, or potentially disruptive devices or activities, are only permitted with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative drop of the student from the course.

**Copyright**
The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with, and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional [copyright policy information](http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright) is available at http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright.

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)**
The [UNLV Disability Resource Center](https://www.unlv.edu/drc) (SSC-A, Room 143, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. Students who believe that they may need academic accommodations due to injury, disability, or due to pregnancy should contact the DRC as early as possible in the academic term. A Disabilities Specialist will discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours, so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.
Final Examinations
The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur on the date and at the
time specified in the Final Exam schedule. The general schedule is typically available at the start
of the semester, and the classroom locations are available approximately one month before the
end of the semester. See the Final Exam Schedule, https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars.

Identity Verification in Online Courses
All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to
WebCampus.

UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the
Student Academic Misconduct Policy, https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy, which defines, “acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to
use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment” as a form of academic misconduct.
Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to
use a substitute and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student
Academic Misconduct Policy.

UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the Acceptable
Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy, https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy, which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without
authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses
should be hosted in WebCampus or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login
credentials for access.

Incomplete Grades
The grade of “I” (Incomplete) may be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-
fourths of course work for that semester/session, but cannot complete the last part of the course
for reason(s) beyond the student’s control and acceptable to the instructor, and the instructor
believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. For undergraduate courses,
the incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester. Graduate
students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to
complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed
within the period indicated, a grade of “F” will be recorded, and the student’s GPA will be
adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete grade do not register for the course, but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the “I” grade.

Library Resources
Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the Libraries’ Research Consultation website: http://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian. You can also ask the library staff questions via chat and text message at: http://ask.library.unlv.edu/.

Missed Classwork
Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Policy for Missed Work, under Registration Policies, on the Academic Policies webpage, https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=26&navoid=6046.

In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student provides official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a “Drop one” option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate’s policy, and an infringement on the student’s right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could reasonably have been avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/Unit Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.
For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to: fine arts activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, science and engineering competitions, liberal arts competitions, academic recruitment activities, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Rebelmail
Rebelmail is UNLV’s official email system for students, and by University policy, instructors and staff should only send emails to students’ Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is one of the primary ways students receive official University communications, information about deadlines, major Campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the University. Emailing within WebCampus is also acceptable.

Tutoring and Coaching
The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, please visit the ASC website, https://www.unlv.edu/asc, or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A, Room 254. Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library, and on the second floor of the College of Engineering building (TBE A 207).

UNLV Writing Center
One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/, located in the Central Desert Complex, Building 3, Room 301 (CDC 3–301). Walk-in consultations are sometimes available, but students with appointments receive priority assistance. Students may make appointments in person or by calling the Center, 702-895-3908. Students are requested to bring to their appointments their Rebel ID Card, a copy of the instructions for their assignment, and two copies of any writing they have completed on their assignment.
Example Schedule

I. RHETORIC AND/AS CONTROVERSY

Rhetoric’s Situatedness
Jan. 23
Bitzer, “The Rhetorical Situation”
Scott, “Rhetoric as Epistemic”
Rorty, “American National Pride”

Controversy
Jan. 30
Jasinski, “Controversy” (113-116)
Zafesky, “The Two Faces of Democratic Rhetoric”
Mouffe, “Democracy, Power and the ‘Political’”

Positionality
Feb. 6
Jasinski, “Contingency” (108-113)
Dissoi Logoi
Burke, “Terministic Screens”
Ryan and Natalle, “Fusing Horizons”

(Cases)
Feb. 13
Phillips, “A Rhetoric of Controversy”
Olson and Goodnight, “Entanglements of Consumption”
Ceccerelli, “Manufactured Scientific Controversy”

II. RHETORIC AND/AS DOXA

Enthymemes & Doxa
Feb. 20
Jasinski, “Enthymeme” (205-209) & “Doxa” (183-187)
Ritivoi, “Doxa,” from Ricoeur: Tradition and Innovation…
Hauser, “Vernacular Dialogue…”
*** Critical Analysis Paper # 1 Due (15%)***

Topoi & Identification
Feb. 27
Jasinski, “Identification” (305-308) & “Topoi” (578-582)
Miller, “The Aristotelian Topos: Hunting for Novelty”
Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives (selection)
Davis, “Identification: Burke and Freud on Who You Are”
March 5
Zompetti, “The Value of Topoi”
Cheney, “The Rhetoric of Identification…”
Stobb, “Kenneth Burke, John Dewey…”

III. RHETORIC AND/AS DIFFERENCE

Alterity & Otherness
March 12
Jasinski, “Other” (411-415)
Davis, “Addicted to Love; Or, Toward an Issential Solidarity”
Young, “Communication and the Other”
Mifsud, “On Rhetoric as Gift/Giving”
*** Critical Analysis Paper #2 Due (15%)

March 19
Spring Break

Agonism
March 26
Jasinski, “Articulation” (65-67)
Hawhee, “Agonism and Arete”
DeLuca, “Articulation Theory”
Mouffe, “The Construction of a People”

March 27
*** Take Home Midterm Due (20%)

(Cases)
April 2
Conley, “More than a Membrane”
Miller, “Fighting Without Hatred”
Flores, “Creating Discursive Space”

IV. RHETORIC AND/AS JUDGMENT

Propriety
April 9
Jasinski, “Judgment” (339-344) & “Decorum” (146-151)
Cooper, “Decentering Judgment”
Stuckey, “Civility, Democracy, and National Politics”
Hariman, “Justifying, Positioning, Persuading in the Intermediate World”
*** Critical Analysis Paper #3 Due (15%)

Kairos & Norms
April 16
Thompson, “Kairos Revisited”
Scott, “On Viewing ‘Rhetoric as Epistemic’ Ten Years Later”
Poulakos, “Toward a Postmodern Rhetorical Theory”

V. RHETORIC AND/AS ENACTMENT

Agency
April 23
Campbell, “Agency: Promiscuous and Protean”
Young, “Activist Challenges to Deliberative Democracy”
Foss, Waters and Armada, “Toward a Theory of Agentic Orientation”

Voice
April 30
Watts, “‘Voice’ and ‘Voicelessness’ in Rhetorical Studies”
Hauser, from Vernacular Voices
Greene, “Money/Speech”

(Cases)
May 7
Olson, “On the Margins of Rhetoric”
Pezzullo, “Performing Critical Interruptions”
Hartnett, “Communication, Social Justice, and Joyful Commitment”

May 15  Critical Analysis Paper #4 Due (20%)