



# ENGL 3200.001

Rhetorical History and Historiography  
Fall 2023, University of North Texas  
MoWe 12:30PM - 1:50PM, Lang 317

## Instructor Information

Professor Matthew M. Heard, PhD.

[Matthew.heard@unt.edu](mailto:Matthew.heard@unt.edu) | LANG 409J (4<sup>th</sup> floor Language building) | Office Hours MW 11am - noon

## Catalog Description

3 hours. Explores the construction of the rhetorical tradition through canonical texts and figures; questions alternatives to the received tradition. Prerequisite(s): None.

## Course Description

In ENGL 3200, Rhetorical History and historiography, you (the student) and I (the teacher) will explore together how different histories have contributed to very different conceptions of what rhetoric means and what rhetoric can do. Asking these questions will be productive for students interested in writing, literature, law, politics, sociology, psychology, activism, and an almost limitless range of other fields and interests. The course begins by examining rhetoric as persuasion in the cultural context of the ancient Mediterranean, which we can read in works by Plato, Aristotle, Aspasia, and others. These Mediterranean writers produced the term **rhêtorikê** and encouraged key rhetorical habits (**logos, kairos, stasis**), many of which are still in use today. We use these cultural touchpoints to move on to other histories of rhetoric, setting aside the ancient Greek and Roman emphasis on persuasion in order to investigate how rhetoric in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and other cultural contexts builds relationships, creates art, and leads to social action (among many other possibilities). In this way, we consider the “Eurocentric” practices of ancient Greece and Rome as only a small part of the conversation about rhetoric that also includes rich, inventive ways of building community and forming coalitions. Ultimately, the class will help us consider how a “copia” or large set of different rhetorical skills and abilities might prepare us to navigate the world with others in our communities successfully.

## Course Structure

This course will be taught face to face for one semester

## Course Objectives

Over the course of this semester, you will be able to:

- Recognize cultural and historical contexts for the development of specific rhetorical practices
- Use rhetorical practices to understand, research, and analyze important social and cultural issues
- Practice using rhetorical tactics and strategies to take action in topics and issues important to our communities

## How to Succeed in this Course

### ADA Accommodation

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](http://www.unt.edu/oda) website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

### Communication practices

To facilitate communication with me, please connect with me through my UNT email and/or by attending office hours. Keep in mind that I always try to respond to emails within 24 hours. Please reach out if you need help or want to talk over anything related to our class.

### Success at UNT

UNT strives to offer you a high-quality education and a supportive environment, so you learn and grow. As a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can be successful at UNT, go to [unt.edu/success](http://unt.edu/success) and explore [unt.edu/wellness](http://unt.edu/wellness). To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to [scrappysays.unt.edu](http://scrappysays.unt.edu).

### Supporting an Inclusive Learning Environment

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.

## Required/Recommended Materials

### Textbooks



1. 9781319032746 [The Rhetorical Tradition](#) by Bizzell, Patricia / Herzberg, Bruce - 3RD Edition, Macmillan 2020. Required.
2. 9780525541912 [Such a Fun Age](#) by Reid, Kiley. Penguin, 2021. Required.

3. Course Readings – provided in PDFs via our CANVAS page.

## Technology requirements

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [Learn Anywhere \(https://online.unt.edu/learn\)](https://online.unt.edu/learn).

## Course Requirements

### Assignments

Due dates and full descriptions of each assignment will be provided on our course Canvas site. For more information about using Canvas, please see <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-use-the-Syllabus-as-an-instructor/ta-p/638>).

#### Overview

Assignment / Component	Percent of Total Grade
Rhetorical Analysis I: Scene Analysis -- <i>Such a Fun Age</i>	15
Rhetorical Analysis 2: Character Essay - <i>Such a Fun Age</i>	15
Rhetorical Analysis 3: Poster -- Rhetorical Terms and Practices	10
Project: Rhetoric for Change	30
Quizzes and Exams	15
Participation, Engagement, and Everyday Classwork	15
TOTAL	100

#### Rhetorical Analysis I: Scene Analysis -- *Such a Fun Age*

500 words. For this assignment, you will analyze a scene from Kiley Reid's *Such a Fun Age* using at least one central term from our studies of rhetoric this semester. Your goal will be to provide an account of how the characters make meaning in the scene you choose using rhetorical practices. You will need to analyze specific language from the novel and use specific quotations and ideas from our course texts to support your ideas.

#### Rhetorical Analysis 2: Character Essay - *Such a Fun Age*

500-750 words. For this assignment, you will analyze the rhetorical practices of one of the main characters from *Such a Fun Age*, using two or more central terms from our studies of rhetoric this semester. Your goal will be to explain how the character thinks, acts, and engages others using rhetoric. In order to support your ideas, you will use specific language from multiple scenes in the novel, as well as quotations and summaries of ideas from our course readings in rhetoric.

#### Rhetorical Analysis 3: Poster -- Rhetorical Terms and Practices

1 page poster. This assignment engages your creativity in developing a poster (8.5" x 11") that helps an audience of your peers understand and use one of our central practices from rhetorical studies this semester. Your poster needs to define the term and provide examples of how it is used. In addition, your poster should give audiences a deep understanding of how they might use the term effectively in their own lives to affect others.

## Project – Rhetoric for Change

1250-1500 words. Your final project for the course will be to write an essay that addresses how a social or cultural topic that is important to you might be affected specifically by one or more of the rhetorical practices we have studied this semester. Your essay should explain the context for the topic thoroughly and define the central challenges facing communities that are invested in the topic. Using specific language from our course readings and discussions, you should analyze how rhetoric currently “works” within the social topic, and how you believe a fresh take on rhetorical practices might affect the topic differently. We will work on this project in stages throughout the final weeks of the semester, but please think ahead to what social topics you might consider as interesting and important to you!

## Assessment

For the purposes of this course,

- “A” WORK will constitute a final score of 90-100% of total points, and will represent an overall response that is impressively sophisticated and illuminating: inventive, balanced, justified, effective, mature, and expertly-situated in time and context
- “B” WORK will constitute a final score of 80-89.99% of total points, and will represent an overall response that is thorough and systematic: skilled, revealing, developed, perceptive, but not unusually or surprisingly original
- “C” WORK will constitute a final score of 70-79.99% of total points, and will represent an overall response that is acceptable but limited: coherent, significant, and perhaps even insightful in places, but ultimately insufficient in organization, articulation, perception, and/or effectiveness
- “D” WORK will constitute a final score of 60-69.99% of total points, and will represent an overall response that is incomplete and severely lacking: incoherent, limited, uncritical, immature, undeveloped, and overall not reflective of the performance expected of UNT undergraduates
- “F” WORK will constitute a final score of 0-59.99% of total points, and will represent an overall response that is unacceptable.

## Academic Integrity

Every student in my class can improve by doing their own work and trying their hardest with access to appropriate resources. Students who use other people’s work without citations will be violating UNT’s Academic Integrity Policy.

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

The decision of the instructor will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity, which is responsible for maintaining student conduct records. The incident may result in an official disciplinary record for the student(s).

Academic integrity violations can include copying a passage from a source verbatim, but they can also include improper or misleading citations. Please note that all source material must be acknowledged, even if the material is paraphrased. Be careful to always acknowledge the work of other writers, and take the time to work out your thoughts and arguments without copying the work of others.

Please read and follow this important set of [guidelines for your academic success](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>). If you have questions about this, or any UNT policy, please email me or come discuss this with me during my office hours.

## Attendance and Participation

Please plan to make it to class each class period, and please let me know in advance if you will need to miss a class. If you miss more than 10% of classes this semester (3 class periods), I may take points off of your participation grade.

Note also that, in order to encourage your attendance, punctuality, and learning, I may provide pop quizzes of the previous week’s material at the beginning of class. Plan to arrive on time because you must be present when class begins in order to take the quiz and receive credit.

Please also inform me if you are unable to attend class meetings because you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community. If you are experiencing any COVID symptoms, please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider and consult with a professional before coming to class.

## Course Schedule

Note: the following course schedule is subject to change. Please make sure you check our course Canvas site frequently for up-to-date changes in readings and assignments. You will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact our class. See also [Emergency Notifications and Procedures Policy \(https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-049\)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-049).

Week	Mon	Class Topic	Wed	Class Topic
Wk 1	21-Aug	Welcome to Rhetoric!	23-Aug	What is rhetoric? Why do we study it?
Wk 2	28-Aug	What is historiography? Why is it vital to rhetorical practice?	30-Aug	How does rhetoric show up in our everyday lives? How do we read it in fiction? ● Villanueva, “Rhetoric of the First Indians” (PDF on Canvas) ☺ Such a Fun Age (Reid) (SFA) - 1-19
Wk 3	4-Sep	NO CLASS – Labor Day!	6-Sep	What relationship does rhetoric have to “truth-seeking”? 📖 Plato, <i>Phaedrus</i> , RT 97-160 ☺ SFA 20-56
Wk 4	11-Sep	How might rhetoric help break down “entrenched” ideas? 📖 Alcidas, RT 78-83 📖 Dissoi Logoi - RT	13-Sep	How might rhetoric help break down “entrenched” ideas? ☺ SFA 57-83
Wk 5	18-Sep	How are emotions and other habits of “the body” important to rhetoric? 📖 Aristotle, <i>Rhetoric</i> , RT 200-240	20-Sep	How are emotions and other habits of “the body” important to rhetoric? ☺ SFA 84-112
Wk 6	25-Sep	How do history-makers exclude marginalized peoples from rhetorical history? 📖 Aspasia, RT	27-Sep	How do history-makers exclude marginalized peoples from rhetorical history? ☺ SFA 113-146
Wk 7	2-Oct	How can rhetoric help us in struggles with others in positions of power? ● Sor Juana, Respuesta (PDF on Canvas) 📖 Christine de Pizan, RT 649-654	4-Oct	How can rhetoric help us in struggles with others in positions of power? ☺ SFA 147-180

<b>Wk 8</b>	9-Oct	<p>How do rhetorical practices reflect our beliefs about meaning and purpose in life?</p> <p>📖 Abu-Nasr-Al-Farabi, RT 574-587</p> <p>🕒 Lipson, "Ancient Egyptian Rhetoric" (PDF on Canvas)</p>	11-Oct	<p>How do rhetorical practices reflect our beliefs about meaning and purpose in life?</p> <p>🕒 SFA 181-209</p>
<b>Wk 9</b>	16-Oct	<p>What rhetorical practices develop from play and storytelling?</p> <p>🕒 Campbell, "Rhetoric from the Ruins of African Antiquity" (PDF on Canvas)</p> <p>📖 Erasmus, RT 683-707</p>	18-Oct	<p>What rhetorical practices develop from play and storytelling?</p> <p>🕒 SFA 213-232</p>
<b>Wk 10</b>	23-Oct	<p>What are the risks of describing rhetorical practice as manipulative or "cheating"?</p> <p>📖 Locke, RT 887-901</p>	25-Oct	<p>What are the risks of describing rhetorical practice as manipulative or "cheating"?</p> <p>🕒 SFA 233-262</p>
<b>Wk 11</b>	30-Oct	<p>How can rhetoric build conversations and personal narratives?</p> <p>📖 De Scudery, RT 857-886</p> <p>📖 Douglas, 1121-1130</p>	1-Nov	<p>How can rhetoric build conversations and personal narratives?</p> <p>🕒 SFA 262-305</p>
<b>Wk 12</b>	6-Nov	<p>How might rhetorical practices develop from rituals and ceremony?</p> <p>🕒 Lyon, "Wuwei, Shi, and Methods of Comparative Rhetoric" (PDF on Canvas)</p>	8-Nov	<p>How might rhetorical practices develop from rituals and ceremony?</p> <p>🕒 Wilson, Research as Ceremony selections (PDF on Canvas)</p>
<b>Wk 13</b>	13-Nov	<p>How do rhetorical traditions impact the ways we understand law? Health? Politics?</p> <p>Readings TBD</p>	15-Nov	<p>How do rhetorical traditions impact the ways we understand law? Health? Politics?</p> <p>Readings TBD</p>
<b>BREAK</b>	20-Nov	NO CLASS	22-Nov	NO CLASS
<b>Wk 14</b>	27-Nov	<p>How can we use our rhetorical skills and practices to navigate our lives with others in our communities?</p> <p>Readings TBD</p>	29-Nov	<p>How can we use our rhetorical skills and practices to navigate our lives with others in our communities?</p> <p>Readings TBD</p>
<b>Wk 15</b>	4-Dec	<p>What else do we need to know about rhetorical histories in order to be effective and ethical rhetors?</p> <p>Readings TBD</p>	6-Dec	<p>What else do we need to know about rhetorical histories in order to be effective and ethical rhetors?</p> <p>Readings TBD</p>
<b>F</b>	11-Dec	Finals Week - No Class	13-Dec	Final Exam, 10:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.