

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Rhetoric scholar Timothy Oleksiak uses the concept of “worldmaking” as a frame for thinking about how rhetorical practices such as writing create the possibility for a present and future world that is “habitable” for many different communities. Drawing on queer worldmaking practices, specifically, Oleksiak writes, “worldmaking creates relationality and moving together in ways that are messy, complicated, embodied, intimate, and aware of the matrices of oppression that complicate privilege and marginalization.” Worldmaking in this way both works actively towards the “survivability” of the world for all people and also rejects the “legitimized and routinized conventions of normativity” that preserve an (often inhospitable) status quo.

In our 4200 class this semester, we will use the idea of “worldmaking” to engage in the two central actions that Oleksiak helps us imagine. One is to question the routines and norms that represent the status quo of rhetorical practices. The other is to study and engage in rhetorical practices that promote survivability and relationality for others. As we read and study “Modern” rhetorical theories including those of Kenneth Burke, J.L. Austin, Hannah Arendt, Helene Cixous, Gloria Anzaldúa, and others, we will focus on how different practices both enable and close down the possibilities of survival for ourselves and others in the worlds we imagine and make.

ASSIGNMENTS

Dubs (W’s): Critical Reading Assignments (x4)

You will reflect your engagement with central class readings with the W’s (Dubs) assignment. Respond critically to the What, Why, and So What, connecting readings to your experiences. Respond with informal but insightful comments, including images, memes, personal experiences, etc. that best represents your insights.

ClusterLead: Team Project

For the ClusterLead team project, you will collaborate with a small team of classmates to lead in-class activities for two class periods. This project will emphasize leadership, listening, and



WORLDMAKING RHETORICS
ENGL 4200: STUDIES IN MODERN RHETORIC

problem-solving in a group. To succeed, you will need to be organized, well-prepared, and thoughtful in your approach to the rest of the class.

Commonplace Book: Ongoing Informal Responses

Our Commonplace Book will be an informal document kept by you to record your thoughts, insights, and questions throughout the semester. Commonplace Books will need to reflect close attention to class topics and questions, and will be taken up throughout the semester.

Analyses: Short Essays on Research Clusters (x4)

After each research cluster, you will write a short essay drawing together your thoughts from the cluster with close analysis and/or critical thinking about particular questions and cases. Topics for each Analysis will be provided throughout the semester.

Final Project: Real-world Application

For the Final Project, you will apply class theories and practices to real-world challenges. This project will be extensive, involving your synthesis of critical reading, outside research, and audience-focused writing as you experiment with using rhetorical theories and practices to address issues that matter to you and your community.

Course Reflection

You will cap off the course with reflective writing that traces your insights and learning across the semester. The reflection will ask you to use specific examples from your learning this semester to address the

implications of research in Modern Rhetorical Studies.

Attendance and Participation

Your attendance and participation assessment recognizes varied forms of engagement—verbal, non-verbal, online, in-person, encouragement of others, etc.. To engage well means to help support a healthy, desirable learning environment for all of us in the class. A high grade for attendance and participation will reflect consistent attendance and meaningful contributions to the class through discussions, encouragement, and

other forms of communication.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

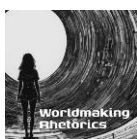
Assignment	Pts
Attendance and Participation	15
Dubs	15
Analyses	15
ClusterLead	10
Final Project	20
Reflection	5
Commonplace Book	20
TOTAL	100



ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Note: assignments and readings due by the start of class on the date indicated below. All readings unless indicated are from required course texts. Schedule subject to change: check Canvas for all up-to-date assignment due dates.

Wk	UNIT	Tu	Class Readings and Assignments	Th	Class Readings and Assignments
Wk 1	INTRO	16-Jan	Intro to course	18-Jan	Intro to Course Develop Assignment Rubrics
Wk 2	CLUSTER 1 (C1): IDENTIFICATION	23-Jan	Course Overview	25-Jan	Kenneth Burke, "Grammar of Motives" RT 1268-1286
Wk 3	C1: IDENTIFICATION	30-Jan	Burke, "Rhetoric of Motives," RT 1286-1292 ****Dub 1 DUE	1-Feb	Megan Morrissey, "Disidentification" (Online)
Wk 4	C1: IDENTIFICATION	6-Feb	Class Discussion and Rhetorical Analysis of N.K. Jemisin, Story 1	8-Feb	ClusterLead 1 ***Analysis 1 DUE
Wk 5	C2: LANGUAGE AND LOGIC	13-Feb	J.L. Austin, "How to Do Things with Words" RT 1301-1318	15-Feb	Helene Cixous, "Laugh of the Medusa" RT 1535 - 1552 *****Dub 2 DUE
Wk 6	C2: LANGUAGE AND LOGIC	20-Feb	Class Discussion and Rhetorical Analysis of Jemisin, Story 2	22-Feb	ClusterLead 2 *****Analysis 2 DUE
Wk 7	C3: POWER	27-Feb	Hannah Arendt, "Human Condition" RT 1365-1412	29-Feb	Michel Foucault, "The Order of Discourse" RT 1447-1462 ****Dub 3 DUE
Wk 8	C3: POWER	5-Mar	Class Discussion and Rhetorical Analysis of Jemisin, Story 3	7-Mar	ClusterLead 3 *****Analysis 3 DUE
SB		12-Mar	SB	14-Mar	SB
Wk 9	C4: BORDERS AND SPACES	19-Mar	Gloria Anzaldúa, "Borderlands" RT 1606-1620	21-Mar	Anzaldúa, Lecture (online) *****Dub 4 DUE
Wk 10	C4: BORDERS AND SPACES	26-Mar	Class Discussion and Rhetorical Analysis of Jemisin, Story 4	28-Mar	ClusterLead 4 *****Analysis 4 DUE
Wk 11	FINAL PROJECT	2-Apr	Project Research	4-Apr	Project Research
Wk 12	FINAL PROJECT	9-Apr	Project Development	11-Apr	Project Development
Wk 13	FINAL PROJECT	16-Apr	Project Workshop	18-Apr	Project Workshop ****Final Project DUE
Wk 14	FINAL PROJECT	23-Apr	Presentations	25-Apr	Presentations
Wk 15	FINAL PROJECT	30-Apr	Reflection	2-May	Reflection
F			In-Class Reflection		



CATALOG DESCRIPTION

ENGL 4200 - Studies in Modern Rhetoric. 3 hours. Study of theories, practices and questions raised after the "rhetorical turn" of the 20th century. Prerequisite(s): None.

REQUIRED MATERIALS



You can purchase or rent these texts in any form, including e-books. Please bring a print or electronic copy of all assigned books / readings to class. Note that additional readings will be posted to Canvas as PDF files during some weeks.

- 9781319032746 The Rhetorical Tradition 3rd Ed by Bizzell, Patricia / Herzberg, Bruce . Required
- 9780316491372 How Long 'til Black Future Month? (Short Stories) by Jemisin, N. K.. Required.

- 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 and [faculty member to include other required equipment or software such as a webcam, microphone, Adobe Photoshop, etc.]. 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).

OBJECTIVES

We will thoughtfully consider these big questions:

- How is "modern" rhetoric evolving and adapting to meet emerging challenges and needs in our contemporary world?
- What rhetorical practices and theories shape the "status quo" of our various responsibilities and roles?
- How might studying rhetorical practices of identity, power, space, borders, and relationality help us understand and work with/against the status quo in ways that benefit us and others?
- What kind of world can/should we make through our rhetorical practices?

We will work to understand that:

- Our practices of reading, speaking, thinking, and acting are guided by rhetorical practices that we can study and put into focus.
- Framing rhetorical practices through concepts such as identity, power, borders, spaces, and bodies can help us recognize the consequences of our practices and our entanglements with other communities and institutions.
- Facility with a wide range (*copia*) of rhetorical practices helps us recognize and adapt to new or unexpected challenges in workplaces, relationships, family environments, etc.
- Awareness of our own rhetorical theories and practices is a first step towards taking responsibility for the worlds we create and inhabit with others.

We will develop these key ideas and skills:

- Reading, understanding, summarizing, and discussing key concepts and ideas from modern rhetorical theories
- Making connections between the different theories we read, and recognizing how the different practices they offer overlap, clash, and work together
- Applying rhetorical theories to social issues that affect us and others
- Creating written "products" that deploy modern rhetorical theories in ways that educate others

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Although I encourage perfect attendance, I recognize the chaos of the semester by offering you four "free" absences. You do not need to provide any excuses or doctor's notes for these, although I always appreciate a heads-up when you know you will be absent. After four absences, each additional absence will bring down your attendance and participation grade. Note that if you are absent more than 8 times, you will not earn any points for your entire attendance and participation grade. If you are absent more than 12 times, you will not pass the course.

Our course only works through your close engagement and participation. I will offer you many ways to participate, including speaking up in class and also engaging in online discussions or in office hour conversations with me. Your participation and attendance both are part of your grade for this course. At the same time, I want your access to the course to be as unimpeded as possible, and so [please contact me](#) if you experience any barriers that are keeping you from feeling fully engaged. I will be happy to work with you to make sure your perspective is heard and your needs are addressed.



In my experiences, students who attend class are much more successful in courses than students with multiple absences. You should attend every class unless you have a university excused absence such as active military service, a religious holy day, or an official university function as stated in the [Student Attendance and Authorized Absences Policy \(PDF\)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039>). If you cannot attend a class due to an emergency, please let me know. Your safety and well-being are important to me.

Please note that I will begin class on time every class period, and that we may have quizzes or other in-class assignments at the start of class. These assignments cannot be made up or missed if you are late or absent. If you are late, please join the class, without distracting others. More than two instances of lateness will result in an absence from class, and habitual lateness will need to be addressed with me in person. I urge you to communicate with me about any lateness or absences in advance.

Keep in mind also that I expect us to collaborate and listen to one another, even though we might have very different experiences and ideas! Our readings, discussions, and project-based activities require you to be actively engaged in the class and occasionally to work in teams and groups. If you experience any group tensions or situations that make you uncomfortable, please let me know right away.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

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.

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 website at <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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 and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

SUPPORTING YOUR SUCCESS AND CREATING AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

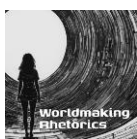
I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, 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. I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline expectations ([Code of Student Conduct](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012)) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>).

ASSESSING YOUR WORK

Grading Scale

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.

LATE WORK

All assignments are due by class time on the due date indicated on the assignment schedule or in Canvas. In some cases, I may grant extensions on assignments. To request an extension, please contact me before the assignment is due and I will consider your circumstances. Note that I will not grade subsequent assignments from any students until all previous assignments have been completed, and you cannot pass the course if you have not received a grade for all major assignments. Please contact me as soon as possible if you miss a deadline for an assignment.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

This syllabus is accurate as of the beginning of the semester; however, in extreme cases I may need to modify the syllabus to accommodate changes in our class composition or expectations. If any changes are made to the syllabus, I will make a new copy of the syllabus available to you and draw attention to the changes.

THE WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center can help you get started on a paper or help you to decide what to revise on an existing draft. A tutor can help you to develop your ideas, organize your thoughts, and clarify your prose. For more information or to make an appointment, visit writingcenter.unt.edu, call 940-565-4665, or stop by Sage Hall 150.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

In order to help support you as a student in every way, UNT offers multiple resources to care for your physical, mental, and academic health. Here are some of the resources:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling)

Other student support services offered by UNT include

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/registration) (https://registrar.unt.edu/registration)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (https://financialaid.unt.edu/)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance)
- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry)

