MULTICULTURAL RHETORICS
CLASS POLICIES

WRTG 3020 section 068
Spring 2010 T/R: 11:00-12:15 ATLS 1B25
Instructor: Dr. Andrea Feldman
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Office Hours: T,R 8:30-9:30 AM and by appointment

Required Texts:
Online readings: http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/pwr/ (Multicultural Rhetorics thread)
These collections of readings address issues of multiculturalism in the context of education and offer
guidelines on ethnographic fieldwork.

Resources for writing conventions:
The Purdue University OWL (on-line writing lab): http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/
The Colorado State University Writing Center: http://writing.colostate.edu
The Oregon State Resource Center: http://cwl.oregonstate.edu/Webresourcespage.html
Silva Rhetoricae http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/Silva.htm
These resources will help extend your mastery of academic essay writing conventions.

In addition to the required texts, the course will draw on texts from rhetoric and discourse studies:
These additional readings will be assigned in the form of handouts:
Lanham, Richard. Revising Prose. (rhetorical approaches to grammar and style)
Norgaard, Rolf. Ideas in Action. (rhetoric and argument text)
Tannen, Deborah. The Argument Culture. (discourse analysis)
Essays on rhetoric and multiculturalism by Chief Seattle, June Jordan, and Ishmael Reed

Recommended Texts:

Brief course description:
This course will ask students to write analyses and arguments based on readings that reflect our
multicultural heritage. In responding to texts that represent cultural diversity, students will evaluate
issues and relate them to their own multicultural experiences. Through these readings as well as class
discussion of written assignments, students will learn to make reasoned arguments in defense of their
own opinions. By examining diverse voices, this course helps students meet the challenges of academic
writing. This course will extend your ability to adapt rhetorical strategies and arguments on
multiculturalism to address the needs of a range of different audiences and stakeholders.

The need for a cross-cultural writing course becomes more apparent as the United States becomes ever
more interdependent with our worldwide neighbors. Students need to join this "global village" by
thinking critically about the roles of writing and language in forging a multicultural society. Because
language and writing are necessarily culturally bound, diverse aspects of our own culture are often
neglected in traditional writing courses. This course offers a chance to examine and debate concerns
which are all too often undervalued or ignored. Language--often a tool to disenfranchise--can thereby
become a tool to meld.
Why is this class a “Core Course”?

This 3000-level writing and rhetoric seminar satisfies upper-division core requirements in various CU-Boulder schools and colleges because it extends rhetorical knowledge and writing skills in ways that draw on theoretical perspectives and address specialized disciplinary communities.

More broadly, this upper-division seminar is part of the statewide “Guaranteed Transfer” pathway of courses. In the context of statewide courses, this course meets the goals of an Advanced Writing Course (GT-CO3):

*Rhetorical Knowledge.* The course takes a rhetorical perspective on the process of inquiry and research. Key rhetorical texts that will guide our discussions include Rolf Norgaard’s *Composing Knowledge* (Bedford/StMartin’s), a rhetoric/reader that focuses on the role of writing and rhetoric in inquiry, and on the conventions that frame academic conversations. Because that text discusses academic discourse conventions and their application and adjustment to other discursive spheres, the book fosters metacognitive awareness and skills about writing and rhetoric. Discussions of academic research are also informed by the well-regarded *Craft of Research*, by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory Colomb, and Joseph Williams (U of Chicago Press). We will also draw on the substantive materials on two nationally recognized rhetoric and composition websites: The Purdue University OWL (on-line writing lab), and the Colorado State University Writing Center and Oregon State University websites. For elucidation of rhetorical concepts and specific terms, we’ll work with the nationally recognized website *Silva Rhetoricae.*

*Writing Process.* The course offers an opportunity to understand writing from the audience or reader perspective by focusing on the peer review of work in progress. Through this approach, you’ll discover how revision is central to writing as a tool for civic analysis and engagement. You will also have opportunities to integrate various technologies (e.g. PowerPoint, on-line course website) into your writing projects, and to develop advanced information literacy skills pertinent to your papers.

*Conventions.* The documents you will write for this course will call upon key genres for academic analysis and professional communication. In the process you will learn about genre conventions appropriate to your field and/or to your audience, about how to draw on specialized vocabularies in ways that still make your work accessible to secondary audiences, and about the role of textual features and document design as persuasive tools.

*Effective application.* Many of the assignments in the course are geared to real-world audiences—including members of your discipline or profession. In the process, you will become familiar with writing in a disciplinary or specialized rhetorical situation, even as you make your work accessible to secondary audiences in other related fields.

**Innovative uses of technology and active student learning:**
The course includes interactive workshops and analysis of visual rhetorics, including podcasts, video clips, cartoons, and other visual media. The classroom allows students to form both large and small groups to workshop their papers using the laptop carts and screen projector to instantly critique and evaluate each others’ papers.

In addition, the technology allows us to analyze the visual rhetoric components of the course. In both large and small group settings, we will critique video streams, isolate individual frames for analysis, and integrate text within the visual media.

A large portion of the course centers on writing workshops and peer critiques of others' papers. Using laptop carts in small interactive groups, students will highlight areas of concern in their own and others' papers, make necessary changes, instantaneously correct errors, access online databases and search engines, and rework areas of concern in their papers. Students can also reach the course website and other course materials made available by the library.
Writing Process and the Workshop Format:
The course offers an opportunity to understand writing from the audience or reader perspective by focusing on the peer review of work in progress. Through this approach, you will discover how revision is central to the writing process. Your own writing will be the principal text; we will all work together as a team to improve each paper. We will adopt the attitude that any paper can be improved, and give constructive criticism to everyone. Your job will be to provide oral and written commentary on other students’ papers when assigned to do so.

Method:
1. Attendance and promptness are mandatory. More than three absences will lower your final grade. More than six will result in an F for the course.
2. Papers must be typed, double-spaced. You are responsible for bringing in the specified number of copies when the paper is due. I will not read handwritten papers. Spelling and grammatical errors are not acceptable; see the recommended texts above if you have this problem. Word-processing is helpful for revision.
3. Assignments: see attached syllabus for dates.
   We will attempt to work on each paper once a week. Please note that your paper is due to be distributed in advance of the discussion on your paper. In addition, you will be required to give oral and written commentary on another student’s paper once a week. Oral and written participation constitute 30% of your final grade (see below). It is a good idea to revise your paper nightly even though you will only hand it in on the due date. Late papers will not be accepted. I will not accept final papers that have not been reviewed at least five times in class. "First draft" final versions are unacceptable and will not receive a grade.

4. Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a crime and will result in an F for the course, as well as possible disciplinary action by the university. Always be sure to give credit for words or ideas from another source and do not hand in work which is not your own.

5. I encourage students with disabilities, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury and attention deficit/hyperactive disorder, psychiatric disabilities, to discuss with me, after class or during my office hours, appropriate accommodations. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

6. Grading: (assignments worth less than 10% are graded on check/check plus/check minus basis):
   20% Five short assignments (includes assigned written comments on papers)
   10% Class participation (includes turning in drafts when due)
   70% Papers
   In addition to short assignments, you will write three formal papers in this class.
   1st paper: analysis (2-3 pp.)
   2nd paper: argument (4-5 pp.)
   3rd paper: analysis or argument (2-3 pp. or 4-5 pp.)
   The three formal papers will be weighted in the following manner.
   The better of the required papers will be worth 30% of your final grade. The next best paper will be worth 25% and the remaining paper worth 15%. Submit one hard copy of each full-length paper to me.
The standards for the papers are as follows:

The Program for Writing and Rhetoric assigns grades based on the evidence provided by the final version of the essay that you submitted. The classroom workshop in which your drafts are discussed encourages you to improve your work, and provides you with the tools to do so, but grades on the final papers are not assigned based on effort, progress, or time spent on the task. Pluses and minuses attached to grades reflect shades of difference, as do split grades (e.g. A-/B+).

A A paper that is excellent in content, form, and style: original, substantive, insightful, persuasive, well-organized, and written in a clear, graceful, error-free style. Although not necessarily “perfect,” an “A” paper rewards its reader with genuine insight, gracefully expressed. Such a paper is an ambitious project that engages interesting, complex ideas in a perceptive manner. It offers a nuanced, specific claim that responds to a genuine question at issue, and it follows a compelling line of reasoning. It engages and responds to questions and counterarguments in a thoughtful manner, and explores well-chosen evidence in a detailed and revealing way. The paper does not repeat, but rather enhances, what writer and reader already know. Offering a context for its ideas, the essay could be read and appreciated by someone outside of the class. The style is clear, precise, and graceful, and the author’s voice engaging.

B A clearly written, well-developed, interesting paper that shows above average thought and writing craft. The essay reaches high, and meets many, though not all, of its aims. The thinking and writing are generally solid, but the paper may have some unresolved problems in argument and style, some thin patches in content, or some tangents that don’t fit in. Despite these problems, the paper does not have major flaws that compromise the general effectiveness of the case it presents or the overall readability of its prose. OR A paper that is far less ambitious than an “A” paper, but reaches all of its aims. This is an essay that may be well organized and cleanly, even elegantly written, but whose reasoning and argument may nonetheless be somewhat routine or self-evident.

C A paper that represents a mixture of strengths and weaknesses. The paper may be somewhat readable, organized at the surface level, and have a claim, but it will have real unresolved problems in one or more key areas: conception, quality of the claim, line of reasoning, use of evidence, and language, style, or grammar. The paper may fulfill the basic requirements of the assignment, but, finally, say little of genuine importance or significance. OR A competently written essay that is largely descriptive. OR An essay that offers scant intellectual content and little more than personal opinion, even when well written.

D A paper that is seriously underdeveloped or seriously deficient in content, form, style, or mechanics. It may be disorganized, illogical, confusing, unfocused, or contain pervasive errors that impair readability. A paper that does not come close to meeting the basic expectations of the assignment.

F A paper that is incoherent, disastrously flawed, unacceptably late, plagiarized, or non-existent.
Unit 1: Rhetorical Approaches to Multiculturalism

T 1/12 Introduction
Readings:
Martin Luther King, Jr. “Letter from the Birmingham Jail” (online reading—Multicultural Rhetorics reading thread) and “The Last Wish of Martin Luther King” (handout).
Ishmael Reed, “The World is Here” (handout)
SA #1 (due Tues. 1/19) Summary of Reed article

R 1/14 Discussion: King and Reed articles
Introduction to forming analysis: Rhetorical situation and problem formation.


R 1/21 What is Multiculturalism? Discussion of Contrastive Rhetoric: Horace Miner, Body rituals of the Nacirema; Amy Tan, “The Language of Discretion”
Rebekah Nathan, “My Freshman Year,” p. 55-89 (handout)
SA #2 (due T 1/26). Write a summary of one of the articles by Miner, Tan, or Nathan.

T 1/26 All students turn in and distribute copies of first para of paper 1 (Topic – contrastive rhetoric). WS

R 1/28 Peer review strategies. Discussion of papers and rhetorical strategies.

T 2/2 Composing appropriate background information
Read: Handout on analysis. Discussion of rhetorical analysis and application.

SA #3 (due T 2/9) Explain the difference between rhetorical analysis/inquiry and descriptive genres. **Give examples of each genre to illustrate the differences.**

R 2/4 WS/C0M second para. **Rhetorical Focus:** Placing yourself in an ongoing conversation.

T 2/9 WS/REV/COM Third & Fourth paras
R 2/11 WS/REV/COM Third & Fourth paras **Rhetorical Focus:** Authority, voice and collaboration.

T 2/16 Turn in full drafts. **Rhetorical Focus:** Refining claims, lines of reasoning and organizational strategies.

R 2/18 Immigration dialogue

**Unit 2: Visual rhetoric and public discourse on multiculturalism**

T 2/23**Paper 1 due in class. Rhetorical approaches to grammar and style: Revising Prose. Read: Lanham, "Revising Prose," ch. 1 (handout) SA#4 Complete exercises from "Revising Prose" (handout) for next class. Video "Writing without Borders."

R 2/25 Visual Media. Cartoon description, analysis and argument Readings:
bell hooks, “Teaching New Worlds” p. 172, **Composing Knowledge**
June Jordan, “Nobody Mean More to Me than You” (handout “Environmental Statement,” Chief Seattle (online reading)
(Ebonics packet available online)

SA #5 (due R 3/4) summarize one of the assigned articles.

T 3/2 Discussion of Readings. All Students turn in first para of 2nd paper, and distribute copies to all students.

R 3/4 WS Discussion of digital literacy and visual rhetoric.

T 3/9 WS/REV/COM analysis of visual rhetoric
R 3/11 WS/REV/COM analysis of visual rhetoric

T 3/16 WS/REV/COM visual arguments—Full drafts
R 3/18 peer review and conferencing—no class
**Spring Break—No classes—3/22-3/26**

**Unit 3: Rhetorical approaches to gender and language**

T 3/30**Paper 2 due in class. Reflective writing. Discussion/Introduction to readings.

R 4/1 Topic 3 Readings: Gender and Language. **Composing Knowledge** ch. 5
Tannen, "How male and female students use language differently;
Smith, “Homophobia: Why bring it up?"
Handouts:
Tannen, "Talk in the intimate relationship: His and Hers;"
Pfeiffer, “Girl Talk - Boy Talk;” and “USA Today debates Single Sex Classes.”
Peer review strategies--partner assignments

T 4/6  All Students bring in intro para for paper 3, and distribute copies to all students.
R 4/8  WS

T 4/13  WS/COM second paras — Partner presentations
R 4/15  WS/COM second paras — Partner presentations

T 4/20  WS/COM  Peer review strategies—body paras
R 4/22  WS/COM  Peer review strategies—body paras

T 4/27  WS/REV/COM  Full drafts
R 4/29  WS/REV/COM  Polishing the final draft.

FINAL PAPER DUE ON FRI. 4/30 BY 5:00 PM IN MY MAILBOX AT TB 1.