



**Writing Rhetorical Histories (CMN 538-CF)
Spring 2019
Thursdays, 2-4:50 pm, 4103 Lincoln Hall**

Contact Information

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Office Hours: Fridays 12:30-2 pm and by appointment
Course Web Site (Moodle): <https://learn.illinois.edu/course/view.php?id=43230>
Library Research Portal: <https://www.library.illinois.edu/commedia/guides/rhetresource/>

There's never any highway when you're looking for the past... (Rosanne Cash)

Course Description

This seminar explores the joys and dilemmas of a research approach known as “rhetorical history.” Conceived variously as the historical study of rhetorical events, the study of non-contemporary public address, the placing of rhetorical acts in their context, the reading of history as a series of rhetorical problems, the study of rhetoric to reveal its connections to the history of ideas, or the privileging of archives, rhetorical history is a multifaceted perspective that is interested in teasing out the relationship of rhetoric to its times.

The course consists of three parts. Part One examines the role of history in rhetorical scholarship. Part Two takes up the role of archives in rhetorical research. Part Three functions like a workshop, as students in the class research and write their own rhetorical history project proposals. Here, students have the option of developing a research proposal from an idea they bring with them to class (e.g., revising a conference paper, exploring a potential dissertation topic) or proposing a new rhetorical history project – perhaps one that makes use of campus archives. Shorter assignments invite students to reflect upon various approaches to rhetorical history as well as the rhetoric of archives. We will also devote significant time to discussing the writing process. This course is appropriate for any graduate student interested in exploring rhetorical/historical perspectives on communication research. Previous graduate-level coursework in rhetoric is recommended, but not required.

Assigned Readings

We will read a number of articles available via PDF at our Moodle site. In addition to these, you should obtain a copy of Ramsey, Sharer, et al.'s *Working in the Archives: Practical Research Methods for Rhetoric and Composition* (e-book is available at UIUC library). You will also select a book on writing to read and discuss in class during the week of Feb. 27.

Assignments (total 250 points)

Short paper one (25 points): *Synthesizing rhetorical history*. After completing the readings for the second week of class, write a 5-page paper in which you discuss 2-3 ways this week's readings articulate rhetoric's relationship to history. We will use the papers to ground our Jan. 30 class discussion; for this reason, no late papers will be accepted.

Short paper two (25 points): *Brick-and-mortar archive report*. In consultation with CF, select and visit in person a campus, local, regional, or state archive. Write a 4-5 page report about your archive visit that incorporates ideas about the rhetoric of archives from our readings. Due on March 5.

Short paper three (25 points): *Writing process activities/report*. During the week of March 9 we will not have class. Instead, you will select one of the following writing activities to try. Then, you will write a 3-4 page report discussing your experiences with this new process and how/whether/in what ways it worked/didn't work for you: Pomodoro method; writing date; writing group (2-3 people share drafts and offer feedback); department Friday Write-In or Writers Workshop Graduate Writing Group. Due on March 12 by 5 pm; upload to designated forum on Moodle.

Discussion leader (25 points): During the first half of the semester, you and 2 classmates will be responsible for leading the first two hours of class discussion on your assigned day. On the Tuesday of the week you will lead discussion, your group should post 3-5 discussion questions for your classmates to consider as they prepare for class on Thursday. Dates for discussion leaders are: Feb. 6, Feb. 13, Feb. 20, March 5.

Research project proposal (150 points): The goal of this assignment is to introduce you to an important genre of research writing, that of the *research proposal*. Researchers working both inside and outside of academia routinely write grant proposals, fellowship proposals, and thesis or dissertation proposals in which they make the case for the value of a research project, ask for resources, and/or make a commitment to a committee that a research project will unfold in a particular way. For this assignment you will plan, research, draft, revise, and submit a 10-12 page research proposal. Points will be divided among staged assignments that you complete between Spring Break and the end of the term.

After Spring Break, you will be doing research and planning in order to write the proposal. In class, we will spend time learning the parts of the proposal genre, doing writing practice, and engaging in research consultations with one another in preparation for our final drafts. Outside of class, your job will be to do the primary and secondary source research necessary to write the proposal and to complete staged draft assignments that will form the basis of our work in class each week.

Useful Rhetoric Reference Books

The following books may be helpful to you as reference material, especially if you intend to focus your work in rhetorical studies. All are available as full text e-books via the UIUC library.

Fahnestock, *Rhetorical Style: The Uses of Language in Persuasion*

Jasinski, *Sourcebook on Rhetoric*

Lunsford, et. al., *Sage Handbook of Rhetorical Studies*

Parry-Giles and Hogan, *Handbook of Rhetoric and Public Address*

Sloan, *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*

Seminar Participation

You are successfully participating in the seminar when you (a) read (or write) carefully and bring detailed reading notes, drafts, and/or questions to class; (b) engage productively in class—that is, ask questions, raise issues, deliberate with others in the room; (c) listen and respond to others critically yet charitably; (d) avoid behaviors that block productive classroom conversation, such as monopolizing discussion, remaining silent, or offering comments that are merely informational or (un)appreciative.

Miscellany

- (1) Use Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition (endnote style) for all writing assignments. For CMS help see <http://guides.library.illinois.edu/citingsources/chicagostyle>
- (2) Work that does not conform to minimum standards of grammar, spelling, mechanics, and citation for graduate-level work will be returned to the student for corrections before grading.
- (3) All written work should be turned in on paper and in person unless we have mutually agreed otherwise. I do not accept graded assignments via email.
- (4) Students who are found to have violated the University's academic integrity policies should expect to fail the course.
- (5) Barring a documented, serious family or medical emergency, I will give no incompletes for this course.
- (6) If you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, or if you discover that structural aspects of this course make it more difficult for you to learn successfully, let's talk. I'm happy to discuss your specific needs.
- (7) Laptops, tablets, etc. are welcome in class for notetaking, referring to articles, and other activities directly related to class. I reserve the right to declare "screens down" at any point during class. Please turn off your phones or set them on silent mode when you come to class. If you really need to answer a text or call during class, quietly step out to attend to your business.
- (8) Generally speaking, you should not miss a meeting of a graduate seminar because discussions, workshops, and the like cannot really be "made up." However, life happens. If you know now you will need to miss class on a specific day because of a previous commitment (e.g., a professional conference or family commitment), please let me know ahead of time. If you find that you are ill with cold or flu, it's also a good idea to stay home and get your rest instead of coming to class; nasty germs travel quickly around the seminar table. ☺

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Note: WA= *Working in the Archives*. All other readings are available as PDFs on Moodle.

1/23: *Course Introduction*

Before class, read Singh, "In the Company of Citizens," Jensen et al, "Mapping *Nature's* Scientist" and Bisbee, "Driving the Three-Horse Team." Come to class ready to discuss the different types of evidence used by each of these authors.

1/30: *Disciplinary Conversations about Rhetorical History, part I*

Discussion of Wraga, "Public Address"; Smith/Asante, "Socio-Historical Perspectives of Black Oratory"; Gronbeck, "Rhetorical History and Rhetorical Criticism"; Baskerville, "Must We All Be Rhetorical Critics?"; Turner, "Rhetorical History as Social Construction"; Farrell, "Rhetoric in History"

Short paper #1 due.

2/6: *Disciplinary Conversations about Rhetorical History, part II*

Discussion of Jasinski & Mercieca, "Analyzing Constitutive Rhetorics"; Morris, "Sexuality and Public Address"; Enoch, "Releasing Hold"; Hawhee & Olson, "Pan-Historiography"; Flores, "Between Abundance and Marginalization"

Discussion Leaders: TBA

2/13 *Archives: Working in Archives*

Discussion of Johnson and Duff, "Chatting Up the Archivist," along with the following chapters of *Working in the Archives* book: Introduction; Enoch and Glenn; Gaillet; Tirabassi; Bergmann; interviews with Gold and Mortensen.

Discussion Leaders: TBA

After today's class, plan and schedule archive visit.

2/20 *Archives: Challenges of Doing Archival Research*

Discussion of Morris, "The Archival Turn in Rhetorical Studies"; Finnegan, "What is this a Picture of?"; Houck, "Textual Recovery, Textual Discovery"; Stuckey, "Presidential Secrecy"; Clark, "In Defense of Presidential Libraries"; Rawson, "Rhetorical Power of Archival Description"; Van Haitsma, "Between Archival Absence"

Discussion Leaders: TBA

Selection of book on writing to read and report on for next week's class.

2/27 *Books on Writing: Top Ten Pieces of Advice*

CF will be out of town at an NCA leadership retreat, but class will meet to report on and discuss the writing books you read for this week. Each of you will share a key takeaway from the book you chose to read, and collectively you will generate and post to Moodle a list of the Top Ten Pieces of Advice on Writing that you got from this group of books.

Complete archive visit and write short paper #2.

3/5 *Archives: Recognizing the Perspectives of Archivists and Archival Studies*

Discussion of Morris & Rose (WA); Caswell, "The Archive"; Caswell, Punzalan, and Sangwand, "Critical Archival Studies"; Sutherland, "Archival Amnesty"

Discussion Leaders: TBA

Between March 2-9: Sign up to meet with CF re: research proposal topic.

Turn in short paper #2 (archive visit report).

3/12 *No Class (CF at USC Visual Studies Research Institute)*

Between March 2-9: Sign up to meet with CF re: research proposal topic.

Short paper #3 (Writing Process Activities and Report) due today by 5 pm. Upload to the designated forum on Moodle to share your experiences with classmates.

3/19 *No Class (Spring Break)*

3/26 *Rhetorical History Research Proposal: Introducing and Articulating the Significance of a Project*

Discussion of Call for Proposals; Gillis, "Writing Proposals"; Przeworski & Salomon, "Art of Writing Proposals"; Booth, Colomb, Williams, "From Topics to Questions," "From Questions to Problems," and "Connecting With Your Reader"; NCA video, "[Grantseeking Basics](#)"; sample proposals on Moodle.

Draft 1-2 page project description due. Bring 3 paper copies to class for workshopping.

Begin pulling together annotated bibliography.

4/2 *RH Research Proposal: Situating the Project in Conversation with Other Research*

Annotated bibliography due (15-20 secondary sources related to your project).

Literature Review Workshop. Discussion of Finnegan, "The Literature Review"; Semenza, "The Seminar Paper"; Foss and Waters, "Lit Review: Travel Companions"

4/9 *RH Research Proposal: Articulating Your Methods and Expertise*

Literature review due. Methods and Procedures Workshop.

4/16 *RH Research Proposal: Pulling Together the Full Proposal*

First draft of full proposal due. Bring 3 copies to class. Feedback from CF and classmates.

4/23 *No class (CF at University of St. Thomas Undergraduate Research Conference)*

Keep working on proposal revisions; make one-on-one appt with CF to discuss your progress and revisions.

4/30 *RH Research Proposal: Reviewing and Revising Workshop*

Second draft of full proposal due. Bring 3 copies to class.

Feedback from CF and classmates; editing/revision/polishing workshop.

5/13 *Final RH Research Proposal due to CF between 3-5 pm in 4098 LH
(note: this is a WEDNESDAY)*