Dr. Kathleen Horton  
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hortonk@uoregon.edu  
Office hrs: MWF 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. 
(and by appointment)  
ENG 494 – CRN 16835  
Noon – 276 Lokey  
Fall 2011

Syllabus  
ENG 494 – Reasoning/Speaking/Writing

Course Description: While reviewing practical points of rhetorical theory from various sources beginning with the classical period, we will invent questions-at-issue, develop propositions, and discover lines of reasoning to support those propositions through an organized process of inquiry based on students’ research, arguments, responses, and ensuing discussions. The goal is for students to sharpen their abilities as critical thinkers, effective public speakers, and compelling writers, preparing them to participate successfully in professional and public spheres. This is the capstone course for students earning the Minor or Certificate in Writing, Speaking, and Critical Reasoning.

Texts: There are no textbooks required for this class. I will present relevant rhetorical theory in lecture format to establish us as a discourse community sharing common terminologies and you will investigate issues of individual interest to you (and presumably of concern to the community at large) in a variety of sources.

Resources:

Library Research Contact: Elizabeth Peterson; 541-346-3047; emp@uoregon.edu

Research Sites:

1. Through UO Knight Library online, search databases by subject - “law,” for example. Lexus-Nexis Academic is a good starting place for many searches, and full-text downloads are often available.

2. Go to Google – Advanced Search. Enter a subject of interest followed by site:gov/edu/org.

For example, enter: “second amendment site:gov” or “...site:edu” or “...site:org”

This search will lead you to official government sources, educational sources, or organizations. Government and education sites are considered generally reliable. Organizations are likely to present various biases. They may in some cases be excellent and reliable sources of information, but be aware of the bias of any organization.

5. A good source of rhetorical theory: Silva Rhetoricae <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>

Requirements and Grading:

APP 10%
1 Rhetorical Analysis 10%
2 Essay Portfolios 40%
2 Speeches 40%
Policies and Procedures:

Meetings: I am happy to meet with you during the term to discuss your ideas, writing, speeches, concerns, questions, progress, or grades. Please come to my office hours or make an appointment if you can’t make the office hours. Brief answers to simple questions can be given just before or after class, but meaningful discussions on the fly are not possible, so please come see me.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is taking someone else’s ideas or writings and presenting them as your own without giving credit to their source. All work you do in this class must be your own work, based on your own original thinking, and done exclusively for this class. This of course does not mean that you don’t develop your ideas in relation to others’ ideas – that is the whole point of class discussion, which will be a crucial aspect of our class. But remember that ideas you incorporate into your essays or speeches from any other source – unless they are common knowledge (when in doubt, document) – must be properly attributed according to MLA methodology in your essays or appropriately cited in your speeches. Plagiarism will result in your failing the class and a report being sent to the Office of Student Conduct. See me if you do not understand what plagiarism means and please read the provisions in the code of student conduct regarding this: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/code.htm>

APP (attendance, preparation, participation): This significant portion of your grade assumes your rigorous intellectual engagement. It includes your presence at each class and on-time arrival, your preparation for each class, your willingness to share your ideas during discussion, and your respectful attention and respectful but honest responses to the ideas of others. This grade also includes your single-minded focus on the work of the class, which requires you to turn off and put away all electronics – music devices, earphones, computers, cell phones, etc. – before class begins and refrain from texting or checking for messages or leaving the room while class is in session to do so. Please take notes by hand and enter them into your computer later. (This method will actually help reinforce your memory of the material.) If you have a documented disability that requires use of electronic devices, please see me during my office hours to discuss.

APP also includes the following specifics:
- participate as a presenter or interlocutor in the course of the term
- attend writing workshops and engage in peer evaluations
- write a reflective essay at the end of the term evaluating your performance as a speaker and writer – due Monday of finals week by noon in my office – 265 PLC.

Tentative Schedule:

Unit One: On the Current State of Political Discourse

Begin brainstorming right away by listening to politicians discuss and debate ideas on the national, state, or local level. Find sources that allow you to listen to, watch, and read a speech, a discussion, or a debate in its entirety. For example, you might consider following the Republican primary campaign, remembering that more candidates than Romney and Perry are running (really). Or, consider following a debate over legislation in Congress. Consider following political speeches about how to end the recession and get people back to work. Then...examine the media coverage of the political discourse you have chosen to follow. For example, you could listen to a Republican presidential primary debate and then go to different news sources (with
different biases) to see how it gets covered: The Wall Street Journal, Fox News, NPR, PBS News Hour, The Boston Globe, New York Times, etc. You will be asked to analyze the effectiveness of the political discourse and the media coverage of it. Specific guidelines will be discussed in a handout.

1a introductions; theory lecture
1b theory lecture; invention workshop
1c invention workshop
2a theory lecture
2b theory lecture; invention workshop
2c rhetorical analysis rough draft due – rough draft workshop (2 copies)

Unit Two: A well regulated militia...? Negotiating the Law

For this unit you will choose a legal issue of interest to you. You might start by reading the Bill of Rights and Amendments to the Constitution if another issue doesn’t come quickly to mind. Your first speech and essay portfolio will be based on this issue.

3a theory lecture; rhetorical analysis portfolio due; begin researching legal issue
3b theory lecture; invention workshop
3c invention workshop
4a theory lecture; invention workshop
4b thesis workshop; outline due (2 copies)
4c speech #1
5a speech #1
5b speech #1
5c speech #1
6a speech #1
6b rough draft of legal issue essay due; rough draft workshop (2 copies)
6c Essay #1 Portfolio due; Brainstorm for Unit #3 Topic

Unit Three: Students’ Choice: We will focus on one topic developed by consensus (or vote) based on our brainstorming session during class on 6c.

7a invention workshop
7b invention workshop
7c invention workshop
8a thesis workshop; outline due (2 copies)
8b speech #2
8c speech #2
9a speech #2
9b independent research day – no class session
9c Thanksgiving holiday – no class session
10a speech #2
10b speech #2
10c rough draft of essay #2 due; rough draft workshop (2 copies)

Portfolio #2 with Reflection included due Monday of Final Exam week by noon in my office (265 PLC). There will be no final exam.