Syllabus :: RWS 6310 :: History I

Fall 2023 (CRN 12273)

Dr. Lucía Durá (ldura@utep.edu) with PhD Student Co-Instructor Marissa Bond (mbond@miners.utep.edu)

TR 4:30-5:50 p.m. Hudspeth 313
Office hours TR 4:00 - 4:30 in person in Hudspeth or online in my personal Zoom room: Meeting ID: 599 511 1254. I’m also available by appointment.

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Course Description and Goals
In this course we explore the ways rhetoric has been historicized (up to ~1400 CE) from multiple perspectives, including rhetoric as theory, rhetoric as social practice, rhetoric as pedagogy, and rhetoric as performativity. We do our best to de-center Rhetoric from its etymological history and instead consider rhetorical concepts and practices that have existed simultaneously and across the globe. The course centers heavily on readings, discussions, and historiographical methods, research, and writing.

By the end of this course, students will be able to
1. Articulate the relationship across various theories and understandings of ancient rhetoric and their significance to contemporary life and different aspects of the RWS disciplinary landscape: theory, social practice, pedagogy, performativity.
2. Demonstrate a working knowledge of historiographical methodologies.

Course Materials
All course materials are accessible through our Library, Blackboard, and from open source platforms. Please ensure Dr. Durá knows by the second week of class if you foresee any difficulties accessing course materials.

Assignments
For the most part, in-class discussions will focus on context for readings on Tuesdays and on content on Thursdays. Every week students will post a reflection on Blackboard by Wednesday evening, which means readings should be completed by then. For major assignments, you will set the due dates based on what works best for you.
**Weekly Seminar Participation.** Every week that readings are assigned, you are responsible for the following:

- **Read** all assigned readings and context briefs. If you’re unsure what to focus on, consider, but don’t feel limited by, the following guiding questions:
  1. How does the author/tradition define/understand rhetoric?
  2. What ideological assumptions does this understanding carry?
  3. How does the author’s/tradition’s view of rhetoric compare to others’? What influence did this author’s/tradition's view have on the ways we understand rhetoric today?
  4. Do you see any contemporary value of the author’s/tradition’s work (in terms of rhetoric or related notions such as invention, kairos, access, epistemology, inclusion, etc.)?

- **Reflect** on what you’ve read and post a brief summary of your insights and questions on the Blackboard discussion board (Due on Wednesdays by 11 p.m.—except on the week when you are responsible for the context brief). Reflect also on the context information posted and on your peers’ insights and questions.

**Minimum Specifications for Reading Reflection Posts**

1. Questions and your initial thoughts/answers (e.g., I am wondering about this concept xxxx on page xx in Author’s chapter. I want to know more about xxxx.)

   AND / OR

2. Points/Concepts you’ve had insights about and/or want to discuss further in class (e.g., the concepts xxxx and xxxx came up in all the readings for this week—see Author page x and Author page x—but I still feel fuzzy about them. Could we spend some time talking about xxxx?)

- **Discuss** readings and key concepts in class on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. - 5:50 p.m.

To meet our course goal of articulating an understanding of rhetoric and/or rhetorical concepts across scholars, theories, places, and time periods, we will use class time to collectively to

1. Develop working notions of rhetorical concepts;
2. Point to key passages and work through their significance; and
3. Ask questions that help the class understand why we are reading a particular work, i.e., its relationship to the discipline.

**Context Brief.** One week in the semester (refer to calendar) you will be responsible for preparing a 50-minute context brief and posting it to the Blackboard Discussion Board by Monday of the week it is due. A context brief is a document or multimodal presentation that contains background information about the period, authors, and/or concepts we’ll be reviewing that week. Dr. Durá will provide examples early in the semester.

Rubric for context brief:

1. Essentials were conveyed: e.g., definitions of rhetoric or assumptions, context, significance, influences
2. Connections to other readings or outside resources, thoughtful provocations, helpful heuristics, activities that create conditions for deeper or long-term understanding
3. Submission was timely, sufficient, clear
4. Innovation points: for creative approaches, pedagogical risk, outstanding engagement

**Synthesis Paper.** You will submit one synthesis paper (2,000 - 2,500 words; single spaced due by October 29) after mid-semester when we will have covered more than half of the course readings. The purpose of the synthesis paper is to demonstrate that you can articulate an idea in the realm of history/historiography of rhetoric, support it with 3 to 5 readings from the course, and provide an original insight or make a novel connection. A more detailed set of assignment guidelines is linked here.

For the Synthesis Paper and Final Project, you will have at least one opportunity for **Peer Review.**

**Historiographical Literature Review** (2,500 to 4,000 words, single-spaced due by the date of the final). This assignment offers a space for you to think about the historical and theoretical precedents for a body of work and to engage in a preliminary historiographical inquiry or make a historiographical argument, towards a larger project. The purpose of this assignment is to show that you can use historiographical research and literature review methods in inquiry or argument as the basis, means, or end in a project. For this assignment you are required to either:
• Write a literature review with a historiographical component (trace a topic in history or a historical topic or in the way history has been written)
• Draw connections between a historical concept and a contemporary issue

More detailed assignment guidelines are linked here.

Peer Reviews. There will be three opportunities for formal peer review and multiple opportunities for informal peer review. The immediate purpose of these assignments is to enable you to obtain feedback on your ideas and work. A more mid- to long-term paper is to help you reflect upon and improve your ability to ask for feedback and to give feedback. I find a Liberating Structure called “Troika Consultation,” and another called “Wise Crowds” helpful for these reviews and encourage you to experiment with them, and with different variations, in your own class and work settings. Let me know how it goes!

Assessment
I am using a contract assessment system for this class in the hopes that you will feel free to take chances that you might otherwise avoid with a standard grading system. I am open to your feedback about these requirements.

You will receive an A in the class if you
• Fully complete at least 10 of the required 11 Bb posts (250-500 words), with no more than one of the posts being late over the course of the semester.
• Miss no more than 2 class days (unless exceptional circumstances occur, in which case we might consider video attendance).
• Participate in all class discussions. Participation doesn’t always require talking; listening is a form of participation as well, though we all are interested in your thoughts. Avoid dominating conversations as well.
• Receive an “excellent” ranking for Synthesis Paper, Final Project, and Peer Reviews. Though you will not be receiving a traditional grade for these assignments, be assured that you will receive extensive feedback. You may revise these assignments until you have received the “excellent” ranking. “Excellent” is not necessarily the same as an A grade; instead, this label recognizes that you have done your best work at this moment in time and revisions are not required.
• Demonstrate that you have prepared for your Context Brief session by showing knowledge of the reading, preparing topics and questions for discussion, keeping within the designated time frame, and collegially engaging with your partner(s).
• Meet all deadlines (with the exception of one late Bb post.)

You will receive a B in the class if you
• Fully complete 9 of the required 11 posts, with two late posts allowed.
• Miss no more than 2 class days (unless exceptional circumstances occur, in which case we might consider video attendance).
Participate in all class discussions. Participation doesn’t always require talking; listening is a form of participation as well. Conversely, avoid dominating discussions so that everyone has a chance to participate.

Receive a final “excellent” ranking for two of the three major assignments (Synthesis Paper, Final Project, Informal Presentation), and an “acceptable” ranking for the other assignment.

Demonstrate that you have prepared for your Context Brief session by showing knowledge of the reading, preparing topics and questions for discussion, keeping within the designated time frame, and collegially engaging with your partner(s).

Meet all deadlines (with the exception of two late Bb posts.)

You will receive a C or lower in the class if you

- Complete 8 or fewer of the required 11 posts.
- Miss more than 2 class days.
- Fail to participate effectively in all class discussions.
- Do not receive an “excellent” ranking for two or more of the major assignments.
- Do not adequately prepare for the Context Brief session, or do not work well with your colleagues.
- Fail to meet deadlines.

Professional Expectations

Participation. Graduate students, especially doctoral students, are expected to complete every assignment and participate in every class, both because we will do hands-on work that we can’t replicate on our own and because you have something unique to contribute to our collective understanding of the materials and to our thinking. If you must miss class or a daily assignment, please let me know ahead of time or right as it happens as a professional courtesy. Because life happens, I will drop your lowest in-class participation and online post grades (this only applies to weekly participation grades).

Unexpected changes to meeting in-person. I ask that you check online communications from me and from your peers regularly (UTEP e-mail and Blackboard). Please be prepared in case we need to move our class into an online format briefly due to prevailing circumstances. If that happens, I will post a Zoom link at the top of the Calendar document and in Blackboard for the class.

Please follow medical orders if you are feeling unwell, and let me know as soon as possible if you are unable to attend class so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. It’s important that we protect each other: Miners take care of Miners!
If you miss class due to illness, I will work with you on a personal completion plan. You and I can discuss ways to replace or revise assignments and their weights. If this is the case, we will in essence revise the syllabus expectations in writing.

**Courtesy.** It is important to provide information that discusses the use of proper online etiquette, also known as “netiquette.” Here is an article that explores this idea a little more in-depth: [10 Rules of Netiquette for Students](#).

**Late work.** You may not turn in late work. However, if you need an extension for an assignment, especially a major assignment I am very likely to grant it. You may ask for it at least 24 hours before the assignment is due. In your request include the day/time you plan to turn in the assignment should the extension be granted.

**Academic integrity.** Academic integrity is expected. If you have any questions about this, please ask your instructor. At UTEP, consequences for plagiarism, fabrication, and collusion include disciplinary probation, failing grade for an exam/assignment/course, suspension, and expulsion. If you are unsure what these are, it is better to ask than to risk it. Also refer to the University policy [here](#).

**Crowdsourcing answers to questions.** I anticipate many interesting questions and want to ensure that everyone benefits from hearing the answer, so rather than emailing me as the sole question and answer point of contact, I encourage you to post your questions in the available discussion areas or to contact your peers.

**Accommodations and Support.** UTEP provides a variety of student services and support.

**Technology Resources**

**Help Desk:** Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.

**Academic Resources**

**UTEP Library:** Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.

**University Writing Center (UWC):** Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
RefWorks: A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.

American Society for the History of Rhetoric: This disciplinary organization has a gathering attached to the Rhetoric Society of America conference and a journal.

Coalition of Women Scholars in the History of Rhetoric & Composition: This organization has its own conference “FemRhet” and a journal, Peitho.

CompPile: A searchable bibliographic database within RWS. The link here leads to a comprehensive search for the word “history” in RWS publications.

Individual Resources

Military Student Success Center: Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.

Center for Accommodations and Support Services: Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.

Counseling and Psychological Services: Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.

Links to Class Resources Outside of Blackboard (in case of network outage, illness, etc.)

Class Notes Google Doc
Dura - RWS 6310 FA23 Class Notes

Zoom Information
Lucía Durá's Personal Meeting Room
https://utep-edu.zoom.us/j/5995111254
Meeting ID: 599 511 1254
One tap mobile
+13462487799,,5995111254# US (Houston)
+12532158782,,5995111254# US (Tacoma)
Dial by your location
  +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
  +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
  +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
  +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
  +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
  +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 599 511 1254
Find your local number: https://utep-edu.zoom.us/u/kc9644928