

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY
University Honors Program
One University Drive
Orange, CA 92866

COURSE SYLLABUS

HON 334
Rhetorics of Western Consciousness

Spring 2010

Catalog Description:

Prerequisite, acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor.
 This course will familiarize students with major themes and epistemologies in the history of Rhetoric. Beginning with the pre-Socratics and ending with post-modernism, students will explore the theoretical shifts and major figures that define a modern study of Rhetoric, one which also includes considerable attention to political theory, philosophy, psychology and linguistics. (Offered as needed.) 3 credits.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

1. demonstrate their understanding of the various ways cultures construct knowledge
2. identify the kinds of ideological work a text is capable of producing
3. analyze (orally and in writing) different cultural and historical perspectives on what constitutes valid “evidence” in persuasive discourse
4. articulate the relationships among language, power and social values and be able to examine how these relationships change through time, cultures and technologies
5. discuss the “ways of knowing” inherent in arguments from faith, from nature, from science, from history
6. produce a seminar paper geared to in-class presentation using multiple media

Content:

1. Joining the Conversation -- an overview of the relationships among language, thought and social structure. Kenneth Burke’s “On-Going Conversation” from *Philosophy of Literary Form* and “Terministic Screens” from *Language as Symbolic Action*.
2. Antiquity – classical Greek and Latin cosmologies, and how they define knowledge—rhetoric, philosophy and social theories
3. Medieval Scholasticism –institutionalizing knowledge as culture—Christian “Literature” and Muslim sources
4. Renaissance Humanism – from clergy, to cleric, to clerk—the rise of the city-state, mercantilism, and belles lettres
5. The Enlightenments of Science – revelation to reason—positivism, pragmatism

6. Modern Themes – ideological, cultural and intellectual disputes—“popular” culture, persuasion and globalization
7. Class Presentations – summing-up individual research

Current Required Texts:

Walter J. Ong S.J. and Adrian Johns. *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason.*

All other texts will be posted on Blackboard.

Instructional strategies:

Lecture/Group discussion/Seminar

Methods of Evaluation:

Grades will be determined by 4-5 take home exams, each worth a specific number of points. Total of these exams will constitute 1/3 of final grade.

A take home midterm will constitute 1/3 of final grade.

A seminar paper on topics selected by students and due the final two weeks of the semester will make up the other 1/3 of the final grade.

Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy:

The course syllabus should include the following statement:

Chapman University is a community of scholars which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated anywhere in the university

Students with Disabilities Policy:

The course syllabus should include the following statement:

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. The University, through the Center for Academic Success, will work with the appropriate faculty member who is asked to provide the accommodations for a student in determining what accommodations are suitable based on the documentation and the individual student needs. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Prepared by:

Doug Sweet, Spring 2010

Last revised:

Doug Sweet, Spring 2010