

Syllabus for E309S Critical Reading and Persuasive Writing
(Ruszkiewicz)

E 309S Critical Reading and Persuasive Writing

Division of Rhetoric and Composition

The University of Texas at Austin

1994-95

E 309S Critical Reading and Persuasive Writing

Introduction

E 309S Critical Reading and Persuasive Writing is a course in argumentation designed expressly for students who have earned credit for E 306 Rhetoric and Composition by examination. Like E 306, E 309S teaches students how to analyze and write arguments, but it also introduces students to rhetoric as a liberal art. The aims of E 309S are to teach students:

- to identify, evaluate, construct, and organize **effective arguments**;
- to read critically;
- to understand the art of rhetoric, ancient and modern;
- to conduct library research and document sources;
- to produce an eloquent style adaptable to various rhetorical situations;
- to edit and proofread their own and others' prose.

In short, while E 309S resembles E 306 and covers the same basic concepts, it presents them from different and more challenging perspectives, offering advanced students special opportunities to develop their talents as writers.

Individual sections of E 309S will vary in emphasis and outlook, but classes will share the following pedagogical methods and goals:

- Students should write **four or five major papers**. At least one of these papers should entail library research and significant practice in documentation.
- Students should be guided through a **process of writing**, preparing drafts of most assignments.
- Students should be introduced to the five **canons of classical rhetoric**: *invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery*.
- Students should participate in rough-draft **workshops**.
- Students should practice **editing and proofreading** their papers carefully to eliminate errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.

The Syllabus

The syllabus covers seven units, but no single course must include them all. Each section of E 309S should cover the following material:

Unit I:	Introducing E 309S—Critical Reading and Persuasive Writing
Unit II:	Introduction to Classical Rhetoric
Unit VII:	The Canons of Delivery & Memory (Presentation)—Research

It is not necessary, however, to teach these units in the order above or to assign a major paper in each of them; you may prefer that your students write papers from other units. But all E 309S students should learn something about classical rhetoric. Similarly, all E 309S students should prepare a college-level research essay and know how to deal with the handbook proficiencies discussed on pages 3-4.

Instructors of E 309S should feel free to select, arrange, and adapt the remaining units of the syllabus to reflect their own preferences. They may simply choose to follow the sequence in their rhetoric textbook. Exercises and writing assignments throughout the syllabus are offered as suggestions. Please submit copies of your most successful exercises or writing assignments to Parlin 3 for inclusion in future versions of this syllabus.

Textbooks

All sections of E 309S require a rhetoric text and a handbook. Readers are optional. For 1994-95, you may choose from the following books:

Rhetorics

Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, 3rd ed., Edward P.J. Corbett
Rhetoric in the Classical Tradition, Winifred Bryan Horner
Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students, Sharon Crowley

Handbooks

The Bedford Handbook for Writers, 3rd ed., Diana Hacker
The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers, 3rd ed., Maxine Hairston and John J. Ruszkiewicz
The Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers, 3rd ed., Lynn Quitman Troyka

Handbook Proficiencies

We want all E 309S students to be able to write mechanically correct prose. Students should receive classroom instruction to be sure that their completed papers have the ten attributes expected in E 306 courses:

1. No run-ons, comma splices, or inappropriate fragments.
2. No offensive or inappropriate language.
3. A lean, jargon-free style.
4. No subject/verb agreement errors.
5. No pronoun agreement errors.
6. No ambiguous pronouns.
7. No misused, dangling, or misplaced modifiers.
8. Commas used correctly.
9. No spelling errors.
10. Text carefully edited and proofread.

In addition, students in E 309S should be introduced to the elements of a more polished and sophisticated style. These additional attributes should be evident in their papers:

11. A sensitivity to the connotations of words.
12. An awareness of levels of style.
13. A pleasing variety of sentence structures and lengths.
14. A skillful management of parallel elements: phrases, clauses, and sentences.
15. An employment of appropriate rhetorical schemes and tropes.

Grammar, mechanics, and usage features should always be taught with an awareness of their social and conventional nature. These features are examined and taught effectively through examples of student prose. Grammar exercises presented alone and out of context usually don't improve undergraduate writing.

Among the services offered by the Undergraduate Writing Center (UWC) is assistance for students with particular grammar and usage problems. Feel free to refer students to the UWC for help.

1. **No run-ons, comma splices, or inappropriate fragments.** Review basic sentence structure.; examine basic sentence errors. Consult the following handbook chapters or sections:

Bedford: chs. 19-20
Scott, Foresman: ch. 24
Simon & Schuster: chs. 13-14
2. **A lean, efficient, jargon-free style.** Work on eliminating wordiness. Explain and practice techniques for eliminating wordiness, deadwood, redundancy, and clutter. Discuss jargon.

Bedford: chs. 16
Scott, Foresman: chs. 11-12
Simon & Schuster: ch. 16
3. **No offensive or inappropriate language.** Explore what constitutes appropriate language in the academic and professional world.

Bedford: ch. 17
Scott, Foresman: chs. 10c-d; 23d
Simon & Schuster: ch. 21a-b
4. **No subject/verb agreement errors.**

Bedford: ch. 21
Scott, Foresman: ch. 16
Simon & Schuster: pp. 250-62
5. **No pronoun agreement errors.**

Bedford: ch. 22
Scott, Foresman: ch. 21
Simon & Schuster: pp. 262-70
6. **No pronoun reference problems.**

Bedford: ch. 23
Scott, Foresman: ch. 20
Simon & Schuster: ch. 10
7. **No misused, dangling, or misplaced modifiers.** Review clauses and phrases and examine the proper use and placement of adjectives and adverbs.

Bedford: ch. 12
Scott, Foresman: ch. 25
Simon & Schuster: ch. 15b-c
8. **Commas used correctly.**

Bedford: ch. 32
Scott, Foresman: ch. 26
Simon & Schuster: ch. 24

9. **No spelling errors.** Be sure to discuss the limitations of spelling checkers.

Bedford: ch. 43
Scott, Foresman: ch. 37
Simon & Schuster: ch. 22

10. **Final text carefully edited and proofread.** As required by individual students, review key punctuation problems, including semi-colons and quotation marks. Review editing and proofreading strategies.

Bedford: pp. 56-62
Scott, Foresman: ch. 4
Simon & Schuster: ch. 3c-e

11. **A sensitivity to the connotations of words.**

Bedford: pp. 188-89
Scott, Foresman: ch. 10b
Simon & Schuster: ch. 21
Corbett: pp. 405-06
Horner: p. 271
Crowley: p. 191

12. **A awareness of levels of style.**

Scott, Foresman: ch. 10a
Corbett: pp. 380-82
Horner: pp. 283-87
Crowley: pp. 187-94

13. **A pleasing variety of sentence structures and lengths.**

Bedford: ch. 15
Scott, Foresman: ch. 15
Simon & Schuster: ch. 19
Corbett: pp. 398-23
Horner: pp. 311-23
Crowley: pp. 195-97

14. **A skillful management of parallel elements: phrases, clauses, and sentences.**

Bedford: ch. 9
Scott, Foresman: ch. 13d; 15c-2
Simon & Schuster: Ch. 18
Corbett: pp. 398-404
Horner: pp. 311-23
Crowley: p. 197

15. **An employment of appropriate rhetorical schemes and tropes.**

Corbett: pp. 424-58
Horner: Ch. 11
Crowley: pp. 206-19

E 309S Critical Reading and Persuasive Writing. Designed for students who receive placement credit for E 306. An advanced version of E 306 stressing rigorous analysis and practice in writing arguments. *Prerequisite:* Placement credit for E 306.

Overview

- *Unit I** **Introducing E 309S Critical Reading and Persuasive Writing:** Introduction to E 309S, the definition of *rhetoric*; the process of writing; the protocols of writing groups and peer editing; the use of handbooks; the art of critical reading; the routines of computer classrooms (in CA classes).
- *Unit II** **Introduction to Classical Rhetoric(s):** Definition of rhetoric. History of Rhetoric. The five rhetorical canons. The genres of persuasive discourse—deliberative, forensic, epideictic. Sophists, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian.
- Unit III** **Invention:** Modes of persuasion—ethos, pathos, logos. Syllogisms and enthymemes. The topics, common and special. Stasis theory.
- Unit IV** **Refutation / Fallacies of Argument:** Reading and analyzing arguments. Confirmation and refutation. Fallacies of argument.
- Unit V** **Arrangement:** The structure of classical orations. Thesis and proof. Dealing with opposing arguments. Dealing with audience needs and expectations.
- Unit VI** **Style:** Schemes and tropes (figures of speech). Copiousness. Diction and vocabulary. Clarity and appropriateness. Sentence rhetoric.
- *Unit VII** **Memory & Delivery (Presentation)—Research:** Ancient memory systems. Contemporary memory systems—literate and electronic. Using sources. Presenting a researched argument.

* Units required in all sections of E 309S.

Unit I	Introducing E 309S Critical Reading and Persuasive Writing
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Coverage

- 1) Discuss course title and aims.
 - 2) Explain policy statement.
 - 3) Introduce *Student Guide to First-Year Writing*.
 - 4) Explain protocols of the computer classroom (in CA classes).
- 5) Explore the definition of **rhetoric** and the rhetorical triangle and Kinneavy's aims of discourse .
 - 6) Provide an overview of the writing process. Cover pre-writing and invention, drafting, revision, and editing.
 - 7) Introduce principles of critical reading.
 - Situating the writer
 - Previewing a text: title; structure; main point
 - Reading actively—asking questions; talking back
 - Taking notes, glossing a text
 - Summarizing and evaluating
 - Analyzing and comparing
 - Rereading
 - Responding in writing
 - 8) Discuss peer-revision and editing. Explain its rationale and establish classroom policies for writing groups, peer-editing, etc.
 - 9) Explain how to use a composition handbook and editing log. Explain editing symbols. List and discuss the fifteen **handbook proficiencies** E 309S students are expected to demonstrate.

Exercises

Analyze printed advertisements for examples of different rhetorical appeals—logos, pathos, ethos.

Editing log assignment. Distribute a paragraph with specific errors and ask students to respond to it as they would in their editing logs.

Paper

Ask students to write a few paragraphs exploring the ways Americans are persuaded to vote for or against particular candidates. Or ask them to explore the way public opinion on particular issues is shaped. You may want to use a particular example to focus the papers. (2-3 pages)

Rhetorics

Corbett: pp. 1-19
Horner: pp. 2-4
Crowley: Ch. 1

Unit II	Introduction to Classical Rhetoric(s)
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Coverage

- 1) Explore various definitions of rhetoric.
- 2) Introduce the five canons of classical rhetoric.
- 3) Introduce the types of persuasive discourse: deliberative, forensic, epideictic.
- 4) Introduce the major figures of classical rhetoric: the sophists, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian.

Exercises

Ask students to prepare lists of contemporary examples of deliberative, forensic, and epideictic discourse.

Assign several short argumentative pieces and ask students to identify and evaluate the logical, ethical, and pathetic appeals.

Papers Analysis of a contemporary speech. Ask students to locate a copy of a contemporary speech and to evaluate it. The evaluation should also describe the type of speech it is and the nature of the appeals it makes. Be sure that the evaluation supports a clearly stated claim. (3-4 pages)

Rhetorics *Corbett*: pp. 20-31; Chapter V
Horner: Ch. 1
Crowley: Ch. 2

Unit III The Canon of Invention

Coverage

- 1) Examine logical arguments.
- 2) Examine syllogisms and enthymemes.
- 3) Examine the general and common topics and other tools of invention.
- 4) Examine stasis theory.
- 5) Examine deliberative arguments.

Exercises Assign students to writing groups. Ask them to come up with a list of what might be described as "shared values"—cultural assumptions expressed in terms of aphorisms, slogans, sayings, or clichés. Have the groups compare and discuss their lists of assumptions.

Have students select a topic and then generate arguments by using the general and common topics.

Paper A deliberative essay. Ask students to identify some troubling problem in society and to argue for a solution to that problem. Expect them to describe the problem convincingly and to explain why current approaches to it may have failed. Then they should argue for the feasibility of a solution they propose themselves, taking into account the need to accommodate those who might disagree. Have them recall that, according to Aristotle, deliberative arguments are chiefly concerned with issues of the expedient and the inexpedient. (4-5 pages)

Rhetorics *Corbett*: Pp. 32-70; 94-136
Horner: Chs. 2, 6
Crowley: Chs. 3-5, 8-9

Unit IV Refutation / Fallacies of Argument

Coverage

- 1) Examine pathetic appeals.
- 2) Examine ethical appeals.
- 3) Explore confirmation and refutation.
- 4) Review the fallacies of argument.
- 5) Review critical reading.

Exercises Ask students to identify the emotional arguments on the editorial page of *The Daily Texan*.

Ask students to write a one-page paper stuffed with fallacies of argument.

Have students choose ideal spokespersons for a variety of political and social causes. Or choose the worst possible spokesperson for given causes or products.

Ask students to examine the strategies in a set of essays with differing views on a particular subject. Explore commonalities as well as differences. Focus on differing premises and assumptions.

Paper

A refutation. Have students refute an essay or editorial with which they disagree or which they find improperly argued. (3-4 pages)

Rhetorics

Corbett: pp. 73-77; 300-307
Horner: Chs. 3, 8
Crowley: Chs. 6-7, p. 293

Unit V	The Canon of Arrangement
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Coverage

- 1) Discuss the notion of thesis.
- 2) Discuss classical principles of structure: the oration.
- 2) Examine openings and closing.
- 3) Examine forensic arguments.

Exercises

Ask students to locate examples of forensic arguments in periodicals, news magazines, or newspapers. Then have them identify the various parts of the essay, using the classical terms: *exordium*, *narratio*, *confirmatio*, *refutatio*, and *peroratio*.

Ask students working in a group to prepare for an in-class debate over some decision made in the recent past on campus and its consequences. Arrange the debate to encourage participants to speak at some length about the issue, as they might in a courtroom or deliberative body.

Paper

A forensic essay. Ask students to write an argument in which they seek to defend or condemn some past governmental action (local, state, or federal), recent or distant. Have them recall that, according to Aristotle, forensic arguments are chiefly concerned with issues of justice and injustice. The essay should be organized according to classical form, with an *exordium*, *narratio*, *confirmatio*, *refutatio*, and *peroratio*.

Rhetorics

Corbett: pp. 136-39; Ch. III
Horner: Ch. 9
Crowley: Ch. 10

Unit VI	The Canon of Style
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Coverage

- 1) Explore classical principles of style: correctness, clarity, and appropriateness.
- 2) Examine the meaning of "copiousness."
- 3) Discuss the contemporary relevance of classical "levels of style": high, middle, low.
- 3) Examine figures of speech—schemes and tropes.
- 4) Explore classical stylistic exercises: imitation, translation, and paraphrase.

Exercise

Show students a specimen of Erasmus' famous exercise in copiousness—200 variations of one sentence, 100 hundred renditions of another. Then, in class, try to come up with twenty or so versions of a sentence or two suggested by students.

Encourage students to locate examples of a dozen or so specific schemes and tropes in their reading. Then ask them to create their own examples of particular rhetorical figures.

In class, rewrite a passage in a distinctive level of style, moving it up or down.

Have students identify some writers with distinctive styles and to furnish examples of that style. Then ask them to imitate (or parody) the passages they have selected.

Have students read and analyze the style of a famous speech: Pericles' funeral oration; Antony's eulogy for Caesar (*Antony and Cleopatra*); Henry V's St. Crispin's Day Speech (*Henry V*); Lincoln's Gettysburg Address; Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream."

Paper

An epideictic essay. Recall that epideictic arguments are also described as *demonstrative*, *declamatory*, *panegyric*, and *ceremonial* forms of discourse. Ask students to write an argument in which they consider or explicate some value of contemporary society; their aim is to please, inspire, or move their readers. Have them recall that, according to Aristotle, epideictic arguments are chiefly concerned with issues of praise and blame. Encourage them to write in a higher style and with greater attention to style than the usually do. (4-5 pages)

As an alternative, you may ask students to write an essay of evaluation.

Rhetorics

Corbett: pp. 139-43, Ch. IV
Horner: Chs. 10-11
Crowley: Chs. 11, 14

Unit VII	The Canon of Memory & Delivery—Research
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Coverage

- 1) Explore ancient classical principles of memory and delivery.
- 2) Distribute library packets and survey library resources.
- 3) Explain the use of contemporary sources: how to vary and evaluate them.
- 4) Review systems of documentation (MLA and APA)

Exercises

Ask students to quote directly from an assigned essay several times, carefully introducing or contextualizing the quotations. Then ask students to paraphrase the same quotations, again being careful to introduce or contextualize them.

Ask students to repeat exercise #1 above, this time using an essay they have themselves located for their research paper.

Ask students to prepare annotated bibliographies of their research papers to present to their writing groups as assessments of their progress.

Papers

A researched argument. Ask students to research a serious problem and then to write a fully documented paper making a specific and well-supported claim about the issue they have studied. Be sure that they identify and characterize the most difficult concerns surrounding the problem. (5-8 pages)

A researched argument. Ask students to write a thoroughly researched paper arguing that some widespread belief is, in fact, a misconception. (5-8 pages)

An exploratory research paper. Have students learn about and evaluate several sides of a controversy.

Rhetorics

Corbett: pp. 155-200
Horner: Chs. 12-13
Crowley: Chs. 8, 12

Handbooks generally provide much more detailed coverage of research and documentation than do rhetorics. Consult the following handbook chapters for coverage of sources and documentation.

Bedford: chs. 51-54
Scott, Foresman: chs. 32-34
Simon & Schuster: chs. 32-34