

ENGL 301 Rhetoric & Science

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Fall 2015

001: TR 11:00am-12:15pm
 LA 2209
 002: TR 12:30-1:45pm
 LA4329
 Towson University
 Course Syllabus

Words to Remember

“People assume that authors are experts in the field about which they have chosen to write. Possibly most are. Possibly I’m the only one who begins a project from a state of near absolute ignorance.” -- Mary Roach

Course Description and Prereqs

ENGL 301 Rhetoric and Science studies the role language plays in the making and unmaking of facts in the contemporary world of science and technology. Prerequisite: ENGL 102 or ENGL 190 with a C or better. GenEd II.A Scientific Inquiry or Core Category 14: Ethical Issues & Perspectives.

Why We’re Here: The Course’s Purpose

The purpose of this course is to approach, analyze, and engage critically with scientific texts. You will read primary and secondary texts, and you will be exposed to theoretical frameworks that provide the foundation for different types of scientific discourse.

We will answer these questions:

- What is rhetoric? What is science?
- How does science convey itself to an audience?
- What role does rhetoric and language play in scientific discourse?
- How has scientific communication evolved over the past few centuries?
- How can/does the public engage with the scientific community? Vice versa?
- What role do values and ethics play in scientific discourse?

What We’ll Learn: Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

You will learn to:

- Recognize the rhetorical impact of language and visuals of scientific texts
- Identify important themes and topics in the rhetoric of science
- Engage with texts and synthesize readings
- Connect information through critical thinking
- Conduct effective research to make a sound rhetorical argument

- Analyze argument structure and its effects on an audience

You also will meet the following outcomes and goals.

Core Curriculum Outcomes the English Department Learning Goals:

1. **Gather and analyze evidence** from a variety of sources pertinent to the issue under study, including materials that might support opposing points of view.
2. **Evaluate the logic** of persuasive rhetoric in arguments for all major positions on a topic and formulate cogent counter-argument to each one.
3. Articulate an understanding of the ethical dimensions of significant issues or dilemmas under study.
4. **Construct and assess possible solutions** to programs or dilemmas within an informed ethical and societal context.
5. **Communicate arguments and conclusions** effectively and clearly.

The English Department's Learning Goals:

Read. Interpret written materials flexibly: understand that although multiple meanings are possible, textual evidence needs to support individual interpretations of the literature being read as well as the implications drawn from it.

Write. Write in a variety of forms (e.g. expository, argumentative, imaginative, business/technical) as appropriate to audience, purpose, and occasion, using evidence to support interpretations.

Research. Use research skills that include understanding of methods, technology, and conventions.

Reflect. Be reflective and lifelong learners.

Information Literacy and Technological Competence. Use software as appropriate to writing and research.

Global Awareness. Engaging intellectually in the experiences and views of people with different cultural backgrounds and beliefs.

What You Need: Books, Office Supplies, and Technology Responsibilities

Required Books

Keith, W. M., & C. O. Lundberg. (2008). *The essential guide to rhetoric*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Klemke, E. D., R. H. Hollinger, D. W. Rudge, & A. D. Kline (Eds.). (1998). *Introductory readings in the philosophy of science*. (3rd ed.). Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

Roach, M. (2004). *Stiff: The curious life of human cadavers*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

E-reserves: <http://towson.docutek.com/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=889>

More readings are on Blackboard under "Readings."

Office Supplies – Bring Them to Each Class

- Highlighters, tabs, or other supplies to mark the readings
- A notebook or a way to take notes in class
- A pen or pencil
- Printing paper (keep at home)
- Flashcards if they help you memorize terms

Technology Responsibilities

- Check your Towson email daily
- Create a folder for this course and save messages. Saving emails ensures you have proof of sending emails, submitting work, etc.
- Be open to learning new technology, like Google Docs
- Use Microsoft Office
- Use Blackboard to post assignments; read and download documents
- Print documents as needed
- Ensure your printer works and has ink and paper. Check the amount of money on your printing account and adjust accordingly.

Put in the Time: Required Time Commitment

Over the 16 weeks of the semester, you will need **6 to 8 hours a week** on average to complete the assigned work—including class time. The workload is steady throughout the semester, and you will be completing readings and assignments for every class.

How We'll Achieve Course Goals and Learning Outcomes: Course Work

You will complete a variety of formal assignments, which I'll describe in more detail throughout the semester. The final course grade consists of 300 course-grade points:

<i>Course Component</i>	<i>Points Possible</i>	<i>Your Points</i>	<i>% of Final Grade</i>
Quiz (1), tests (2)	60		20%
Midterm project	60		20%
Final exam	80		26.7%
Prof. / partic. / attend.	60		20%
Informal assignments	30		10%
Minutes	10		3.3%
<i>Total</i>	<i>300</i>		<i>100%</i>

I follow Towson's policy for undergraduate grading:

<i>Point Range</i>	<i>% Range</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Grade Points</i>
279-300	93-100%	A	4.00
270-278	90-92%	A-	3.67
261-269	87-89%	B+	3.33
249-260	83-86%	B	3.00
240-248	80-82%	B-	2.67
228-239	76-79%	C+	2.33

210-227	70-75%	C	2.00
204-209	68-69%	D+	1.33
180-203	60-67%	D	1.00
0-179	0-59%	F	0.00

I am happy to discuss grades 24 hours after you receive the graded assignment.

Quiz and Tests (60 points)

You will take a syllabus reading quiz (10 points) and two reading tests (25 points). You will take them at the beginning of class. No make-ups are given unless you schedule it in advance. If you come to class after the quiz or test is over, you cannot make it up unless you have made previous arrangements with me.

Midterm Project: Infographic and Rhetorical Analysis Paper (60 points)

You will create an infographic that teaches a specific audience about an area of science/medicine/technology that interests you. You will conduct research on this area of interest to gather the necessary content for the infographic. You will apply the knowledge you learn from class material to create your infographic and write the accompanying rhetorical analysis.

The rhetorical analysis is a 3-page single-spaced/1,500-word paper. You will use the rhetorical approaches we learn in class to analyze your infographic and persuade your reader that your infographic effectively conveys your argument.

Class Minutes (10 points)

During one class this semester, you will be responsible for taking class notes and posting them to our class Google doc. Please see the Class Minutes Guidelines PDF for more information.

Final Exam (80 points)

The final exam is cumulative. You will take it during our scheduled final exam time.

Professionalism, Participation, and Attendance (60 points)

Our classroom is a professional environment. Professionalism encompasses all of the intangible aspects of the course: courtesy, leadership, collaboration, teamwork, participation, and following directions. You are expected to govern your face-to-face and online communication and interaction in a courteous and respectful manner. I will caution and counsel violators of these norms in private.

The following items count against you and will affect your grade:

- Missing class, arriving late, or leaving early
- Rarely speaking up or routinely participating in a passive, pro-forma way
- Consistently not following directions and/or coming to class unprepared
- Completing other work during class
- Checking email and social media, texting during class
- Failing to complete or doing rushed, unprofessional work
- Failing to complete assignments for participation credit

Grading Scheme for Formal Assignments

<i>Letter Grade Ranges</i>	<i>Work Quality</i>	<i>Prof./Participation/Attendance (any combination of the following characteristics)</i>
A = exceptional work; exceeds expectations	Work needs little to no revision. The document would be completely acceptable for its intended rhetorical situation.	Student attended most or all classes; arrived on time and did not leave early. Actively, appropriately participated all semester. Demonstrated high level of professionalism as outlined above. Actions, attitude are acceptable in professional contexts.
B = above average work; above expectations	Work needs minor revision but is generally acceptable. The document would be mostly acceptable for its intended rhetorical situation.	Student attended most classes; may have arrived late or left early. Participated most of the semester. Demonstrated basic components of professionalism. Actions, attitude are acceptable in professional contexts but may need some improvement.
C = average work; meets expectations	Work meets requirements but needs revision. The document may or may not be acceptable for its intended rhetorical situation.	Student missed classes; arrived late or left early consistently. Did not participate or participated in a pro forma way. Demonstrates some aspects of professionalism but needs improvement.
D = below average work; does not meet expectations	Work needs significant revision to be acceptable for its intended rhetorical situation.	Student missed many classes; arrived late or left early consistently. Did not participate all semester. Lacked professionalism.
F = unacceptable work	Work lacks basic required components.	Student did not attend enough classes to pass the class. Did not participate all semester and/or contributed negatively. Lacked professionalism consistently.

Informal Assignments (30 points)

Informal assignments are worth participation credit. These assignments are not graded, but missed or incomplete assignments count against you. Late informal assignments are not accepted. These informal assignments include grids and reading responses.

Reading Responses

Reading responses require you to synthesize readings. I will provide you with a prompt on Blackboard. In these responses, write ~300-word single space Word document that responds to the prompt. A fully developed responses has these qualities:

- Demonstrates that you completed the readings and understood them to the best of your ability
- Illustrates a critical engagement with the readings and goes beyond summary
- Directly quotes and synthesizes the readings
- Is professional, clear, and carefully edited
- Includes a question for discussion (label it “DQ”) and word count at the end

Print your responses and bring them to class.

Assessment Scheme for Informal Assignments

Informal assignments earn scores according to completion level and idea development.

- L = late in the process
- M = middle of the process
- E = early in the process

This assessment scale asks you to focus on the process of reading and learning rather than the product and grade. I'll offer feedback on these assignments that will help you critically engage with the texts and prepare you to complete the midterm project.

For the final grade, your informal assignments will count as follows:

- All, mostly Ls = earn 9-10% of final grade
- Mix of Ms and Es = earn 8-9% of final grade
- Mostly Ms = earn 7-8% of final grade
- Mostly Es = 0-7% of final grade

Deadlines are Important: Penalties for Late Work

Assignments are due on the due date at the beginning of class. They must adhere to the assignment requirements to be accepted (i.e., printed, stapled, etc.). I will post deadlines and guidelines for all assignments well in advance. In-class activities, quizzes and tests, and informal assignments cannot be made up or submitted late.

Work turned in late will be reduced three points for each day it is late—including weekends. For example, an assignment turned in three days late earning 40/50 points will receive 31/50. You can turn in work up to one week after the original deadline, including weekends. After a week, the work will earn zero points. If you turn in an assignment the same day it is due after class, the grade will be reduced by two points.

If an unavoidable problem arises, email me before the deadline.

Follow the Course Email Policy

All emails you send must conform to the following seven guidelines:

- Appropriate subject heading that includes your section number, e.g., “English 301-001” or “English 301-002,” and a brief phrase describing the email’s content, e.g., English 301-001: Question on Reading
- Appropriate address line, e.g., Dear Dr. Angeli,

- Appropriate closing line, e.g., Sincerely, Regards, etc.
- Awareness of appropriate level of formality
- Clear language and a lack of glaring grammatical/spelling problems
- If an attachment is included, clearly refer to and indicate the attachment's relationship to the email message
- Next steps indication, i.e., what the email recipient is to do with the information

If your email doesn't conform to this guideline, I will reply with a blank email. This blank email is your notice that your original email lacked the above features. Upon receiving this email, please check this list and re-send me your email.

The aim of this email policy is not to punish you for certain writing behaviors. Rather, it is intended to help you develop professional writing practices that you will employ in a professional workplace.

My Responsibilities as the Professor

Throughout the course, I will do the following:

- Prepare you to meet course objectives and learning outcomes
- Establish, explain course objectives, assignments, evaluation criteria, schedule
- Reply to emails within 24 hours Monday through Friday (I do not check email on weekends. Please plan accordingly.)
- Maintain a regular schedule of office hours
- Review and offer directive advice on assignments
- Return graded evaluations of assignments within a reasonable time and, in all cases, before the evaluative feedback would be needed to improve performance on a subsequent assignment

Your Responsibilities as a Student

To earn a satisfactory grade in this course, you are expected to do the following:

- Complete all readings and work before class
- Participate actively and cooperatively in class discussions and group work
- Ask questions respectfully
- Abide by the course policies outlined in the syllabus
- Follow directions; ask questions if directions are unclear
- Hand in complete, carefully written and edited assignments on or before the deadlines for them; print and staple assignments before submitting them
- Demonstrate professional standards for reliability, communication, pro-active problem solving, critical analysis, and cooperation

You will be reading a lot this semester. Your success depends on your ability to complete and engage with the readings and come prepared to class.

Be Present: The Attendance Policy

To be considered present in a class, you must do the following:

- Sign your name on the attendance sheet; you may not have another student sign your name or ask another student sign in for you (doing so violates the Student Academic Integrity Policy and will be handled accordingly)
- Keep your cell phone off; do not text
- Arrive to class on time and stay until class is over
- Refrain from being online unless instructed (see “Laptop, Tablet Policy”)

Long story short: Don’t miss class unless you have no choice. Missing class will affect your course grade.

Excused Absences

Here is Towson’s policy on excused absences (from the student handbook):

“Students are expected to adhere to all university attendance policies. Students who are absent from class are responsible for any missed work.

Absences due to illness, bereavement, or athletic events require documentation in order to be considered for an excused absence. Absences due to religious holidays are excused on the holiday date(s). Absences due to travel associated with observance of religious holidays are unexcused.”

In short: contact me ASAP if you need to be absent. Following university guidelines, you must provide me written documentation for illness, bereavement, athletic events, and religious holidays. If you do not provide documentation in the given timeframe, the absence will be unexcused.

<i>Reason for Absence</i>	<i>Required Documentation</i>
Illness:	an email as soon as you know that you cannot make it to class; a doctor’s note upon your return to class
Bereavement:	an email (in advance if possible)
Athletic events:	an email from your athletic director/ advisor at least a week before the event—an email only from you is not acceptable
Religious holidays:	an email a week in advance

Penalties for Unexcused Absences and Arriving Late

- 1-2 absences = no grade deduction (missed assignments will be counted late)
- 3 absences = final grade drops 20 course grade points
- 4 absences = final grade drops 30 course grade points
- 5+ absences = an F in the course
- 4 “lates” = 1 absence

If you arrive late to class or leave early (more than 15 minutes) from class without an acceptable reason/ documentation, you will be marked late.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones must be on silent—not vibrate—during class. Texting stops as soon as you enter the classroom and class begins. If you text during class, you will be marked absent for the day. If you have an emergency and need to access your phone during class, answer your phone in the hall.

Laptop, Tablet Policy

You may bring your laptop or tablet to class, but you are expected to use them for class purposes. Do not check social media, news sites, email, etc. or work on other homework during class. Doing so will affect your professionalism grade.

Academic Integrity

You will be held to the traditional standards for academic honesty, which are codified in the Student Academic Integrity Policy (<http://tinyurl.com/pq4bxfx>). Violating this policy is likely to have grave consequences for your grade in the course and could even lead, in severe cases, to dismissal from the university. Students caught cheating will immediately receive a grade of F on the assignment and may result in a grade of F in the course. I will report the incident to the Division of Student Affairs.

To ensure you do not plagiarize, you must follow APA, MLA, or CMS citation style. You can find all these rules online: the Purdue OWL (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>), APA Style Blog (<http://blog.apastyle.org/>), or buy the manuals at the bookstore.

Students Needing Accommodation for a Disability

Students needing accommodation due to a disability should see me during office hours. Please bring with you a statement from Disability Support Services authorizing your accommodation. You may contact Towson's Disability Support Services (<http://wwwnew.towson.edu/dss/welcome.html>) at 410-704-2638.

Additional Writing Assistance

If you would like to improve your writing skills, make an appointment at Towson's Writing Center (LA 5330, 410-704-3426). You also can visit Towson's OWS (<http://www.towson.edu/ows/>) and the Purdue OWL (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>). You can come to office hours, too.

Counseling Center

If you are experiencing academic, interpersonal, or behavioral challenges, please contact the Counseling Center (<http://towson.edu/counseling>) at 410-704-2512. You may also contact me to seek assistance.

Course Schedule*

I will post a more detailed weekly schedule on Blackboard every Monday by 9am. Check Blackboard weekly to ensure you are up-to-date.

Week	Topic Readings ** (read before class)	Deadlines, Test Dates
<i>Week 1</i>	<i>Introductions</i>	
R 8/27		
<i>Week 2</i>	<i>Syllabus, Rhetoric & Audience</i>	
T 9/1	1. Syllabus 2. Minutes guidelines 3. Keith & Lundberg (K&L): Ch. 1	Syllabus quiz
R 9/3	1. K&L: Ch. 2	
<i>Week 3</i>	<i>Speech Types & the Proofs</i>	
T 9/8	1. K&L: Ch. 3	Grid: Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Bitzer
R 9/10	1. K&L: pp. 35-40 1. Prelli, "The Rhetorical Construction of Scientific Ethos" (PDF)	
<i>Week 4</i>	<i>Argument</i>	
T 9/15	1. K&L: pp. 40-50 2. Aristotle, "Posterior Analytics" Book 1, Parts 1-4 http://tinyurl.com/qgmjnhm 3. Bacon, "Novum Organum" Preface http://tinyurl.com/37437l	Grid: Aristotle, Bacon
R 9/17	1. Fahnestock "Accommodating Science" (PDF)	Grid: Fahnestock
<i>Week 5</i>	<i>Organization & Style</i>	
T 9/22	1. K&L: Ch. 5	Reading response #1
R 9/24	1. K&L: Ch. 6	Reading test #1
<i>Week 6</i>	<i>Epistemology</i>	
T 9/29	1. Klemke: pp. 29-37 2. Klemke: Popper, Ch. 1	Grid: Popper
R 10/1	3. Klemke: Ziman, Ch. 2	Grid: Ziman
<i>Week 7</i>	<i>Scientific Revolutions</i>	
T 10/6	1. Kuhn: pp. 92-111 http://tinyurl.com/mt9rue	Grid: Kuhn
R 10/8	1. Klemke: Kuhn, Ch. 7 2. "Goodbye MBTI" http://tinyurl.com/oetxhbz	Grid: Kuhn
<i>Week 8</i>	<i>Visual Rhetoric</i>	
T 10/13	1. Tufte (E) 2. "5 Science Infographics" http://tinyurl.comq/np3w5pw	Grid: Tufte
R 10/15	1. "Making Sense of Science Infographics" http://tinyurl.com/m29lmrt	

	2. "Storytelling with Data" http://tinyurl.com/qh7jlnx	
<i>Week 9</i>	<i>Agency & Ethics</i>	
T 10/20	1. Stone, "In Search of Patient Agency" (PDF) 2. "Anesth. Trashes Patient" http://tinyurl.com/odyrjkm 3. "Our Family Secrets" http://tinyurl.com/pre3chf	
R 10/22	1. Katz, "The Ethic of Expediency" (PDF)	Grid: Katz
<i>Week 10</i>	<i>Mary Roach</i>	
T 10/27	1. Roach, Introduction & Ch. 1	Reading response #2
R 10/29	1. Roach, Ch. 3 & 4	
<i>Week 11</i>	<i>Stasis Theory</i>	
T 11/3	1. Fahnestock & Secor, "Stases in Scientific and Literary Argument" (PDF)	Grid: Fahnestock & Secor Last day to withdraw from classes is 11/4
R 11/5	1. Graham & Teston, "Stasis Theory" http://tinyurl.com/luka3s3	
<i>Week 12</i>	<i>Mary Roach Visit</i>	
T 11/10	1. Roach, Ch. 6	Reading test #2
W 11/11	Mary Roach Skype visit 7:45pm	
R 11/12	Mary Roach Skype visit video (come to class if you missed W night)	
<i>Week 13</i>	<i>Truth</i>	
T 11/17	1. Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense" (PDF) 2. Klemke: Feyerabend, Ch. 3	Grid: Nietzsche, Feyerabend
R 11/19	1. Re-read Nietzsche and Feyerabend	Infographic and Rhet. Analysis Paper
<i>Week 14</i>	<i>Values</i>	
T 11/24	1. Klemke: pp. 481-491 2. Klemke: Hempel, Ch. 30	Grid: Hempel
R 11/26	Happy Thanksgiving	Happy Thanksgiving
<i>Week 15</i>	<i>Public Communication</i>	
T 12/1	1. Schryer et al. "The Trial of the Expert Witness" (PDF)	
R 12/3	1. Brown, "Inoculating the Public" http://tinyurl.com/mbjgiky	
<i>Week 16</i>	<i>Final Review</i>	
T 12/8	Review for final, last class	
<i>Finals</i>		
F 12/11	8-10am Section 002	Final exam
M 12/14	10:15am-12:15pm Section 001	Final exam

*Subject to change. I will notify you via class, email, and Blackboard.

** E = readings on e-reserve; PDF = readings uploaded as PDFs to Blackboard under "Readings"