

COMMUN 735: RHETORICAL THEORY

Dr. John Jordan
Office: 235 Johnston Hall

jjordan@uwm.edu
Office Hours: by appt.

Required Texts

- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline & punish. The birth of the prison*. New York: Vintage.
- Porrovecchio, M. J., and Condit, C. M. (Eds.). (2016). *Contemporary rhetorical theory: A reader (2nd Ed.)*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- *Additional assigned readings will be made available as PDF downloads on the D2L course website.*

Course Description

The tradition of rhetoric in Western culture extends almost 3000 years through history and touches nearly every facet of human communication. This means, of course, that the literature comprising the rhetorical tradition – and all the accompanying theories and criticisms around these texts – is extremely large. A true survey of rhetorical theory would be impossible within a single class. What this course instead provides is a selected survey of the major themes and traditions in rhetorical theory ranging from classical times to the present. We will work through these themes and debates and cover a broad spectrum of definitions about rhetoric, ideas about how rhetoric works, and the uses of rhetoric in society. Studying theory provides us with the necessary perspective to make sense of our own ideas and the world of rhetoric in which we live.

By the end of the semester, you will have acquired a working knowledge of rhetorical theory and how it may assist you in your intellectual endeavors. Through the readings, assignments, and discussions, you will be able to articulate the utility and meaning of rhetorical theory in contemporary society, as well as demonstrate an understanding of the path rhetoric has taken during the past two millennia in Western society.

Grading Scale Distribution and Tabulation:

Depth of Theory Paper: 100 points	500-451 = A	450-436 = A-	
Short Paper #1: 100 points	435-416 = B+	415-401 = B	400-386 = B-
Short Paper #2: 100 points	385-366 = C+		
<u>Final Paper: 200 points</u>	<i>Work below a C+ is considered unacceptable for graduate study.</i>		
Total Possible: 500 points			

A complete syllabus will be distributed to all enrolled students no later than the first day of class.