Objectives: The subject of this course is rhetoric, the effective use of language. The goal is to help you develop your skill in rhetoric - a skill that is essential to success at Penn State and beyond. All human beings are somewhat skilled in rhetoric, in more or less intuitive ways. But the difference between intuitive rhetoric and conscious artful rhetoric is something like the difference between walking and dancing, or between tossing a ball around and playing an organized sport. Our goal, then, is to develop a more conscious skill.

Acquiring skill in rhetoric means learning to write and speak with a coherent sense of audience and purpose, and with a strategic sense of argument and design. It also means learning to read rhetorically, with critical yet open minded attention to the methods of argument and persuasion employed by others. Such methods may be used to teach, explain, create knowledge, alter beliefs, protect the innocent, recommend actions, reform society; they also may be used to manipulate, exploit, and deceive. If we do not learn to look at rhetoric analytically, we risk putting ourselves in powerless situations — the dupe of others.

In this course we will focus attention on the main aspects of effective discourse (logos, ethos, pathos, structure, style) and on the parts of the writing process (invention, planning, drafting, revising, editing). By the end of this semester, you should be better able to evaluate the quality of other's arguments and to develop and articulate your own position clearly, thoughtfully, persuasively, and even eloquently.

Some things to keep in mind: This course asks not simply for self-expression, but for your participation in public discourse on matters of public interest - such as might be expected of educated adults in the world outside of school. Interesting, important discourse develops not in isolated egos, but within communities committed to some mutual inquiry or to some shared question. In consequence, this course depends greatly on what you bring to it, which means you need to make a real commitment to the work and to your peers in the classroom. Note, too, that the University estimates that students should spend a minimum of two hours of study time outside of class for every hour in class. Consequently, you can expect to have various kind of reading and writing homework due at virtually every meeting of this class and I will expect you to come to class prepared.

Requirements: In order to pass this course (with a "C") you must satisfactorily fulfill the following requirements:
--Write four papers. Each paper must be submitted in a folder (not a three-ring binder), along with the rough drafts, signed peer review comments from draft workshops, and other materials and notes that represent the various stages of the paper's development (including notes and photocopies and printout from any sources you have used), along with the revised version of your argument proposal. Papers must be handed in on time. Late papers will lose one whole letter grade per day.
--Revise a paper or papers.
--Complete the library research assignment.
--Complete all homework assignments (reading and writing).
--Maintain a reading journal throughout the semester.
--Maintain regular attendance and active participation as both reader and writer in draft workshops, in class exercises, and classroom discussions.
Attendance: Regular attendance is required. Your grade will be lowered for poor attendance, down to and including "F." This is university policy. Specifically, you have two unexcused absences. Absences beyond that will lower your grade. If you miss class it is your responsibility to get the assignments and complete the work. English 15 depends on your presence and participation every day.

Grades: Grades on individual assignments are meant to reflect the quality of your work. You will find in the course packet the department's grading standards, which I will use when I read your papers. When figuring your overall grade, I will use the following formula:

- Library research assignment 5%
- Paper #1 5%
- Paper #2 15%
- Paper #3 20%
- Paper #4 20%
- Required Revision 15%
- Participation and Homework 10%
- Journal 16%

Office Conferences: Think of my office as an extension of the classroom and use my office hours to discuss any aspect of your reading or writing: problems, questions, papers you're working on, ideas you wish to develop, strategies you'd like to try, and so on. Plan on having at least two conferences with me this semester to discuss your work and your progress in the course.

Plagiarism: You will find in the packet a departmental statement on what plagiarism is and why it is bad. If you still have questions about what plagiarism is after reading the description, see me. Plagiarism demonstrates contempt for ethical standards, your instructor, and your classmates. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will fail this course. You will also be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs which may recommend academic probation, suspension, or expulsion for academic dishonesty.

Format: Your papers must be typed in black ink, double spaced, on one side of the page only, and have approximately one and one-half inch margins. No strange fonts. No title page should be used. Place your name, date, class, and name of the assignment in the upper right hand corner of the paper. Place the title at the top of page one. Number all pages. Staple all papers securely together.

Paper Extensions: I will grant extensions on papers only if: the request is submitted in writing with the proposed deadline, requests must be submitted at the latest by the end of the class period before the paper is due. No explanation is necessary for an extension.

Reading Journal: The journal is meant to help you understand and think about the readings that will be assigned over the course of the semester. I expect you to write a response to all reading assignments. These responses should be at least one page and numbered; the date and the reading assignment should also be written at the top of the page. Your responses do not need to be grammatically correct, properly spelled, or even separated into paragraphs. The form of the response is unimportant; I only ask that you keep it legible. Your responses can take many forms; it could be a series of questions that the readings made you think about; it could be a list of topics that you didn't understand; you could write about parts of the reading that you agreed with or you could write about parts of the reading which you disagreed with; you can write about pretty much anything as long as it relates back to the reading and class in some way. Please bring this notebook to class every day; occasionally I will ask you to read parts of your journal out loud to the class or to discuss your entries in small groups. I will collect your journals twice during the course of the semester: once around mid-term and again at the end of the semester. Your grade for this journal will depend on how many entries you have completed out of the total number required; it will also depend to a lesser degree on the quality of those entries. Keep this journal separate from any class notes that you take for the course. I suggest a spiral bound notebook or something similar.

Reminder: At the end of the semester, you will submit a portfolio of your work including all the major papers as well as any revision that you and I have agreed you will undertake.
Week One

June

Wed. 24. Introduction to Course and Instructor. In class writing: personal introduction for college selection committee.

Thur. 25. ARCS pgs. 1 - 17. Personal introduction for friend with amnesia due. Introduction to the Encomium assignment.


Week Two

Mon. 29. Draft Workshop.


July

Wed. 1. ARCS pgs. 29 - top of 33; top of 37 - 47; 58 - 60. Types of Arguments. In class invention exercise.

Thur. 2. ARCS pgs. 49 - middle of 54. Ideology. CONS pgs. 1015 - 1019.


Week Three

Mon. 6. CONS pgs. 1019 - 1028. ARCS pgs. 133 - 149. In class invention exercise.

Tue. 7. CONS pgs. 1038 - 1045. Discuss Exploring an issue paper.

Wed. 8. PS Exploring an issue readings.

Thur. 9. Draft Workshop.


Week Four

Mon. 13. ARCS pgs. 81 - 115. CONS pgs. middle of 710 - bottom of 712.


Fri. 17. CONS pgs. 1066 - 1069. ARCS pgs. 171 - 185. Using the appeals.

Week Five

Mon. 20. PS Evaluation readings.

Tue. 21. Draft Workshop.


Thur. 23. CONS pgs. 82 - 94. Discuss the Proposal paper. In class writing exercise.


Week Six

Mon. 27. To Be Announced.

Tue. 28. PS Proposal readings.

Wed. 29. Draft Workshop.


Fri. 31. Revision workshop.

Week Seven

August

Mon. 3. Revision workshop.

Tue. 4. Revisions Due. Portfolios Due. Class Evaluations.