The subject of this course is rhetoric, the study of how language works and how to make it work well. The goal is to help you develop your skill in rhetoric—a skill that is essential to success, not only in the university but in the “real” world beyond school. All human beings are somewhat skilled in rhetoric, in more or less intuitive ways. But the difference between intuitive and conscious, artful rhetoric is something like the difference between walking and dancing, or between tossing a ball around and playing an organized sport—or even whistling Metallica’s “Unforgiven” poorly and out of tune and being able to play Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata” on the piano. Our goal, then, is to develop 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 a 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 may also be used to manipulate, exploit, and deceive. If we do not learn to look at rhetoric analytically, we risk putting ourselves in powerless situations—we become 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 elements of the writing process (invention, planning, organizing, drafting, revising, editing). By the end of this semester, you should be better able to evaluate the quality of others’ arguments and to develop and articulate your own position clearly, thoughtfully, persuasively, and even eloquently.

Some things to keep in mind: This course does not simply ask for your self-expression, but for your participation in public discourse on matters of public interest—such as might be expected of the educated 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 will be required 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 the class for every hour in class. Consequently,
you can expect to have various kinds of reading and writing homework due at virtually every meeting of
the class, and I expect you to come to class prepared.

**Requirements:** In order to pass this course, you must satisfactorily fulfill the
following requirements:

--Complete all assignments. Each paper must be submitted in a pocketed
folder, along with all 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 of and printouts
from any sources you have used), along with a revised version of your
argument proposal.

--Papers must be handed in on time. Late papers will be graded down one
letter grade for each day that the paper is not turned in. This also holds for
drafts that are due for peer review: Not only must you present a draft on the
day it is due, but the draft must be a complete draft that is ready to share.

--Revise a paper or papers.

--Complete all homework assignments (reading and writing).

----Maintain regular attendance and active participation as both reader and writer in draft workshops, in-
class exercises, and classroom discussions.

--At the end of the semester, you will submit a portfolio of your work including all major papers as well as
any revisions that you and I have agreed you will undertake.

**Attendance:** As noted above, attendance is required. Your grade will be lowered for poor attendance,
down to and including "F." This is University policy. Specifically, you are Permitted Three (3) absences.
After that, I will reduce your final grade one (1) letter grade per absence over three days. If you miss a
class, it is your responsibility to get the assignments and complete the work. English 15 depends on your
presence and participation every day.

**Grades:** As noted above, to pass this course you must satisfactorily meet all requirements. Grades on
individual assignments are meant to reflect the quality of your work. When figuring out your overall grade,
I will use the following formula:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 3</td>
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<td>Paper 4</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 5</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Homework</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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, etc. Plan to have at least two conferences with me this summer
to discuss your work and your progress in the course. Try to have the first conference early; don't wait
until the final week.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism demonstrates contempt for ethical standards, your instructor, and your peers. If
you are caught plagiarizing, you risk failing the course. You may also be referred to the Office of Judicial
Affairs who may recommend academic probation, suspension, or expulsion for academic dishonesty.
Plagiarism is the act of passing off someone else's work as your own. Most of the time plagiarism is a
matter of simple dishonesty. Most people know when they are using someone else's work in lieu of their
own. It does happen, though, that a person might quote or paraphrase someone else without giving that
other person credit. We will be discussing ways to avoid these problems throughout the semester. We will
discuss pages 281-293 of *Everything's an Argument* where plagiarism and using sources is outlined in full.

**Format:** Keep in mind that choosing a format is a rhetorical decision, but normally (for the purposes of this
course) your papers should be typed or word-processed, using blue or black ink, double-spaced, with one
inch margins on all sides. Please use a ribbon in your typewriter or printer that produces copy dark enough
to be legible. No odd fonts, please. No separate title page should be used. Place your name, the date, and
the instructor's name in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. If you have a title, place it above the
text on page one and double space beneath it. The title should not be underlined or in quotation marks. Page one need not be numbered, but all subsequent pages should be numbered in the upper right hand corner. Fasten the pages with a paper clip. **Do not turn you papers in in a plastic binder.** All papers must be turned in in a pocketed folder.

**Nota Bene:** The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible.

**Note:** Reading assignments are to be read for the date by which they appear.

**WEEK ONE**
June 24— Introduction to course; Writing sample; What is an Argument? Paper #1 assigned

June 25— Ethos, Pathos, Logos; *Everything's an Argument* 32-39; 43-49; and 64-76.

June 26— Rhetorical Situation; Toulmin Arguments; *Everything's an Argument* 79-94.

June 27— Beethoven, Blues, and Pink Floyd; Pathos II: Fallacies of Emotional arguments, *Everything's an Argument* 268-272, *Everything's an Argument* 272-275 (Fallacies of Ethical Arguments); Writing workshop

June 28— Paper #1 Due (Summary and Analysis); *Everything's an Argument* 144-154 (Causal Arguments); Arguments of definition I; Assign class presentations; Assign Paper #2.

**WEEK TWO**
July 1— Arguments of definition II.

July 2— Arguments of definition III; Handout Reading: Excerpt from Plato's *Phaedrus*; Discussion.

July 3— Presentations; Discussion.

July 5— Presentations; Discussion.

**WEEK THREE**
July 8— Presentations; Class discussion

July 9— Writing exercise; Class discussion; *Everything's an Argument* 275-280 (Fallacies of Logic).

July 10— *Everything's an Argument* 231-238; *Glory*.

July 11— Draft Workshop.

July 12— Paper #2 Due (Definition); Assign paper #3

**WEEK FOUR**
July 15— Arguing the Encomium II;

July 16— Handout Reading (TBA); Discussion.

July 17— Handout Reading (TBA); Discussion.

July 18— Draft Workshop
July 19— Paper #3 Due (Evaluation); Rhetorical analysis I; Assign paper #4.

WEEK FIVE
July 22—Handout reading: “A Letter from Birmingham Jail”; **Bring in newspaper or magazine article to be analyzed.**

July 23—Handout Reading (TBA); Discussion.

July 24—Handout Reading (TBA); Discussion

July 25—Draft Workshop.

July 26—Paper #4 Due (Causal Arguments); Paper #5 assigned; What is a Proposal?

WEEK SIX
July 29—Everything’s an Argument 172-198; Topic proposal due; **Bring in newspaper or magazine article from which proposal is drawn.**

August 30—Class presentations; Discussion; **Bring in newspaper or magazine article from which proposal is drawn.**

August 31—Class Presentations; Discussion; **Bring in newspaper or magazine article from which proposal is drawn.**

August 1—Draft Workshop.

August 2—Paper #5 Due (Proposal); Last day of class

• Daily Responsibilities
  1. Each student is responsible for picking up the New York Times from one of the free vendors located in the HUB or Pattee Library prior to class and read the contents of the major news items for that day. Prior to class each student will write no less than one page of commentary on an article of particular interest to them. I will choose a student at random each day to begin class discussion with their observations on the article or issue they chose to write about.
  2. Students are required, as outlined above, to regularly attend class and participate fully in class discussion.
  3. Every student will have read the required reading and completed the appropriate assignment(s) due on that day.

“Try not. Do. Or do not. There is no try”