

Moravian College

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M,W 12:50-2:00

Writing 100 N

Self Extension Through Language: The Individual's Involvement with Literature

The purpose of this course is to hone and strengthen your abilities as researchers, analytical thinkers, and critical, persuasive, argumentative, and courageous writers. By extending the self through the language of others, you will develop a rhetoric that has style, voice, and consequence. In discerning how language works in others' and one's own writing, the "how" of language will be examined. Over the course of the semester you will read and adapt a personal vision in your writing through performance based assignments of selected literature in shared involvement with your peers.

Books for purchase at the Moravian College Bookstore:

Beckett, Samuel. Waiting for Godot. New York: Grove Press, 1982.

Hacker, Diana. The Bedford Handbook. 7th ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006.

Mamet, David. Oleanna. New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 1993.

Shakespeare, William. Macbeth. New York: Washington Square Press, 2003.

Shaw, Bernard. Saint Joan. London: Penguin Books, 1968.

Stoppard, Tom. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead. New York: Grove Press, 1967.

Strindberg, August. Miss Julie. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1992.

Vendler, Helen. The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998.

Objectives

Maintain a **discourse diary** to write to learn more about the materials read and your personal relationship to them.

Read and respond in meaningful ways to a wide array of literature and learning to make allusions to supplemental materials provided.

Perform within a collaborative network with your peers in order to maintain ownership of materials read and thereby extend yourself through your writing.

Utilize a process approach to writing to create documents in a variety of academic genre, including the research paper, personal essays, reflective essays, and academic essays.

Adhere to a code of academic honesty within a collaborative, intellectually challenging community.

What is *rhetoric*?

Rhetoric is the study of effective speaking and writing. And the art of persuasion. And many other things.

In its long and vigorous history rhetoric has enjoyed many definitions, accommodated differing purposes, and varied widely in what it included. And yet, for most of its history it has maintained its fundamental character as a discipline for training students 1) to perceive how language is at work orally and in writing, and 2) to become proficient in applying the resources of language in their own speaking and writing.

Discerning how language is working in others' or one's own writing and speaking, one must (artificially) divide form and content, *what* is being said and *how* this is said. Because rhetoric examines so attentively the *how* of language, the *methods* and *means* of communication, it has sometimes been

discounted as something only concerned with style or appearances, and not with the quality or *content* of communication. For many (such as Plato) rhetoric deals with the superficial at best, the deceptive at worst ("mere rhetoric"), when one might better attend to matters of substance, truth, or reason as attempted in dialectic or philosophy or religion.

Rhetoric has sometimes lived down to its critics, but as set forth from antiquity, rhetoric was a comprehensive art just as much concerned with *what* one could say as *how* one might say it. Indeed, a basic premise for rhetoric is the indivisibility of means from meaning; *how* one says something conveys meaning as much as *what* one says. Rhetoric studies the effectiveness of language comprehensively, including its emotional impact, as much as its propositional content . To see how language and thought worked together, however, it has first been necessary to artificially divide **content and form**.

Effective College Writing

1) Insightful and Developed Ideas: Your writing should express and develop your own insightful ideas, ideas that draw upon class material but do more than simply rehearse or report the material back. There is a difference between *asserting* beliefs and *developing* your ideas: when you assert a belief, you put forth unsupported opinion and ask that your reader trust you. When you develop an idea, you establish the complexity of your thoughts and explain why you hold those ideas. You should strive to develop your ideas and assert alternative points of view to them.

2) A Supported Thesis: A thesis is the proposal of your ideas through a claim (a set of related claims) that your reader can clearly and precisely identify. By developing your ideas, your writing should identify how they are justified--the sound reasoning, related evidence, illustrative examples, allusions to similar or argumentative works, or relevant authorities that support your points and give readers a basis to understand them.

3) Audience and Discourse Conventions: Your writing should convey an effective sense of both purpose and audience--why you are writing and whom you are writing for--while addressing the specific requirements of a writing task. In addition, different academic disciplines use different research methods and writing styles, as chemists and journalists have different writing needs and expectations. You should use proper rhetorical strategies as well as appropriate citation procedures when incorporating your research through quotation, paraphrase, and summary (note plagiarism and academic honesty).

4) Coherence and Logical Organization: The design of your ideas and their evidence should follow a coherent and logical pattern, an organization that clarifies the sophisticated relationships among your claims and expresses those relationships through appropriate transitions. Readers should be able to understand why you connect particular evidence and ideas with each other.

5) A Sophisticated and Professional Style: Your writing should use clear, precise words that avoid tired and worn-out clichés. You should be able to fashion mature, varied sentence

structures and paragraph constructions. The tone and style you employ should be appropriate for the topic and discipline about which you are writing.

6) Revision Process and Manuscript Preparation: Your writing should reflect a process of proofreading and revising through which you correct mistakes in grammar and mechanics and make other sound editing decisions. Often, you'll receive feedback from either your peers or your instructor on early drafts, and you should use this information as you decide how to improve upon your writing. The final manuscript that you submit should be of professional quality.

Evaluation Standards: Essay Grades

While grade judgments for any particular essay may consider the difficulty of an assignment or its place within the course sequence, your work will be read and evaluated holistically on its own merits.

The following categories will be used as a basis to evaluate essays. There are three categories that describe successful college writing, beginning with “C” work that adequately meets all of the writing assignments expectations.

C Fair

Work which adequately meets an assignment’s specifications, “C” writing has a clear claim, a serviceable structure and provides enough elaboration with appropriate examples or analysis to make its intent understandable. Its sentences are grammatically correct and reasonably varied, its paragraphs coherent. Nevertheless, “C” work lacks the sharp focus, the full and purposeful development, or the stylistic awareness necessary for a higher grade.

B Good

“B” work meets all of the assignment’s expectations with clear competence. An essay in this category demonstrates its author’s ability to respond intelligently to an assignment’s demands, to articulate a clear and coherent claim or series of claims, to structure writing soundly, to select significant details and examples and to organize them effectively, to choose words accurately, and to revise sentences for conciseness and emphasis.

A Superior

“A” work uses an assignment as the occasion for a piece of writing compelling enough to engage readers on its own terms. Building on the strengths of “B” work, the “A” essay presents an individual insight or viewpoint with enough fullness to command readers’ respect, if not their assent. It complements its fresh thought by creating a distinctive voice

through aptly chosen words and through sentences both grammatically accurate and rhetorically sophisticated.

Additionally, two categories (“D” and “F”) represent unsuccessful writing.

D Poor

“D” work is clearly inadequate in at least one way. Although “D” work may demonstrate competence in other facets, its strengths will be outweighed by one or two pervasive weaknesses: failure to engage meaningfully an important aspect of the writing task or to maintain a focus; skimpy or illogical development; significant errors in grammar or persistent lack of subordination; repeated or distracting errors in mechanics or in idiom.

F Failure

Work which fails to respond acceptably to an assignment, “F” work may misunderstand or disregard the assignment’s intent, lack any pattern or organization, or make enough error in Standard English sentence structure to make it difficult for a reader to follow the author’s thought. While an “F” will be given for unsubmitted or uncompleted work, it should not be understood solely as a penalty grade: it will be given to any work which fails to meet an assignment’s demands or to meet the minimum standards of college discourse.

Evaluation

Engagement	25%
Dialogic Discourse Diary	15%
Essay #1	10%
Essay #2	15%
Essay #3	15%
Research Assignment	20%

The Basics

- 1) I will set aside time to meet with individual students by appointment. I am happy to help you with any questions you may have.**
- 2) Please feel free to ask questions in class, on e-mail, or in conference. Don't let a question about an assignment fester.**
- 3) You cannot pass this course without fulfilling all assignments and requirements.**
- 4) I recommend seeking additional help at the Writing Center. Make an appointment and request feedback on the clarity of your assignment and language.**
- 5) I do not accept late assignments, except in appropriately documented emergency situations. For the sake of equity, please do not ask for special treatment.**
- 6) Expect to work six hours on average outside of class per week. Some weeks the reading load will be lighter, some weeks it will be considerably heavier.**

7) Students with a documented learning disability who desire accommodations for this course must first visit the Office of Learning Services (ext. 1510) and follow college procedures on receiving accommodations.

8) Plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment in this class. Please see Moravian College Student Handbook for an account of academic honesty. See www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic2.htm

9) Do not miss class. We work as a group. Undocumented absences harm your engagement grade at the rate of 5% per absence.

10) No food in the classroom, please. Drinks are fine.

11) Turn cell phones and paging devices off.

Course Schedule

Please note that while every effort will be made to follow the schedule indicated below, the syllabus is subject to change as the instructor deems necessary to help students meet the objectives of the course.

Monday, August 27

- Course overview, objectives, and requirements**
- Discourse Diary**

- What is Rhetoric
- Effective College Writing
- The Sympathetic Contract
- Macbeth/Bloom
- A Moment with Grammar

Wednesday, August 29

- A Moment with Grammar Review
- Discourse Diary Assignment

Monday, September 3

- Labor Day

Wednesday, September 5

- Macbeth/Bloom
- Discussion of Essay #1

Monday, September 10

- Presentation of Discourse Diary Entries and discussion
- Discussion of Essay #1

Wednesday, September 12

- Essay Revision Workshop

Monday, September 17

- The Sonnet
- Discourse Diary Assignment

Wednesday, September 19

- The Sonnet Pre Writing

Monday, September 24

- Sonnet Presentations

Wednesday, September 26

- Sonnet Presentations
- Discussion of Essay #2

Monday, October 1

- Sonnet Essay Workshop

Wednesday, October 3

•Introduction to Waiting for Godot and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

FALL BREAK

Wednesday, October 10

- Discussion Beckett and Stoppard
- Discourse Diary Assignment

Monday, October 15

- Sinclair Essay
- Robert D. Lane Essay

Wednesday, October 17

- Discussion of Lane essay
- Assignment of Essay #3

Monday, October 22

- Essay Workshop
- Discourse Diary Assignment: Saint Joan

Wednesday, October 24

- Essay Workshop

Monday, October 29

- Presentation of Dialogic Discourse pieces
- Discussion of Saint Joan

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Wednesday, October 31

- Saint Joan Presentations
- Miss Julie and Oleanna Discourse Diary Assignment

Monday, November 5

- Oleanna and Miss Julie
- Discourse Diary Assignment Discussion

Wednesday, November 7

- Setting the Stage for Self Guided Inquiry

Monday, November 12

- Identifying the Research Question

Wednesday, November 14

- Gathering Information

Monday, November 19

- Revising and Editing Research

Wednesday, November 21

THANKSGIVING RECESS

Monday, November 26

- Organization of completed research report

Wednesday, November 28

- Research Report Presentation Planning

Monday, December 3

- Research Report Presentations

Wednesday, December 5

- Research Report Presentations**
- Discussion of final revision of individual reports**

Monday, December 10

- Final Draft of Research Report**