

**ENGL 215: Rhetoric and/of Narrative
Fall 2012**

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Zinzendorf 304

Office hours:

MWF, 9-10 a.m.

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Course description and learning outcomes

Rhetoric is ordinarily thought of as a tool of orators, politicians, and advertisers; it is not usually thought of as something employed by “creative” writers: memoirists or novelists. In this course, we will study rhetoric as it works in literary and cultural narratives: fiction and nonfiction prose, popular culture texts, narratives of cultural myth. We will read some rhetorical theory and some literary theory and several narratives: novels, memoirs, film, and social texts. Here are what I see as the outcomes of your learning in ENGL 215:

- Gain increased sophistication with literary criticism, particularly with rhetorical criticism
- Demonstrate an ability to read texts rhetorically
- Demonstrate an ability to convey an interpretation of a text to others: classmates and teacher
- Demonstrate an understanding of critical terminology related to rhetorical criticism by successfully deploying that terminology in speech and writing
- Read a number of American short stories, an American memoir, at least one novel and at least one cultural text
- Produce two pieces of written criticism in essay form: one a midterm paper on *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, one a final paper emerging from a class presentation.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the rhetorical purposes and means of at least one text from popular culture
- Improve your written and spoken literary criticism

Assignments and evaluation

In general, we will read, talk, and write. Specifically, we will read almost all of the three required books (see below). I will expect you to learn and use the terminology and perspective afforded by Booth’s book and to be able to apply what you have learned to selected examples of narrative in several genres. This course is also writing-intensive, so you should expect to read and respond to drafts of at least the final paper, if not the take-home test and midterm exam. Here are the major assignments, as I see them, and their weights in your semester grade:

- a paper that analyzes the rhetorical features of a short story (15%)
- a paper that analyzes the rhetorical features of a memoir (15%)

- a paper that analyzes the rhetorical features of a novel (15%)
- a report that analyzes the rhetorical features of a text from popular culture (15%)
- a final portfolio in which all the above work will be collected, in which all four papers are examined for revision possibilities and those possibilities written out, in which one of the four papers will be revised again, and in which you will provide a cover letter that evaluates your writing from your own point of view and reflects on your development as a writer and thinker in the semester. (30%)
- Class participation, including attendance (10%)

Required books

Booth, Wayne C. *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1982. (*TRoF* in assignment schedule)

Franklin, Benjamin. *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*. Ed. Louis P. Masur. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003. (*AoBF* in assignment schedule)

Wingard, Joel. *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and the Essay*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.

Statement on academic honesty

Moravian College expects its students to perform their academic work honestly and fairly. A Moravian student, moreover, should neither hinder nor unfairly assist the efforts of other students to complete their work successfully. This policy of academic integrity is the foundation on which learning at Moravian is built.

The College's expectations and the consequences of failure to meet these expectations are outlined below. If at any point in your academic work at Moravian you are uncertain about your responsibility as a scholar or about the propriety of a particular action, consult your instructor.

All work that you submit or present as part of course assignments or requirements must be your original work unless otherwise expressly permitted by the instructor. This includes any work presented, be it in written, oral, or electronic form or in any other technical or artistic medium. When you use the specific thoughts, ideas, writings, or expressions of another person, you must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source. Direct quotes from any source (including the Internet) must be placed in quotation marks (or otherwise marked appropriately) and accompanied by proper citation, following the preferred bibliographic conventions of your department or instructor. It is the instructor's responsibility to make clear to all students in his or her class the preferred or required citation style for student work. Student ignorance of bibliographic convention and citation procedures is not a valid excuse for having committed plagiarism. When you use the specific thoughts, ideas, writing, or expressions of another person, you must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source.

You may not collaborate during an in-class examination, test, or quiz. You may not work with others on out-of-class assignments, exams, or projects unless expressly allowed

or instructed to do so by the course instructor. If you have any reservations about your role in working on any out-of-class assignments, you must consult with your course instructor. In each FYS class and in the Writing Center, we try to establish a community of writers who can review and provide helpful criticism of each other's work. Although no students in your class or in the Writing Center should ever be allowed to write your paper for you, they are encouraged to read your work and to offer suggestions for improving it. Such collaboration is a natural part of a community of writers.

You may not use writing or research that is obtained from a "paper service" or that is purchased from any person or entity, unless you fully disclose such activity to the instructor and are given express permission.

You may not use writing or research obtained from any other student previously or currently enrolled at Moravian or elsewhere or from the files of any student organization, such as fraternity or sorority files, unless you are expressly permitted to do so by the instructor.

You must keep all notes, drafts, and materials used in preparing assignments until a final course grade is given. In the case of work in electronic form, you may be asked to maintain all intermediate drafts and notes electronically or in hard copy until final grades are given. All these materials must be available for inspection by the instructor at any time. *In preparation for creating an English Major Portfolio in your senior capstone seminar, please save both digital and hard copies of your work for this class, including drafts with peer and instructor comments.*

Statement on disabilities

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street, at 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Office of Learning Services. Students are also encouraged, yet not required, to inform course faculty of those situations that can affect academic performance. Resources may be available to aid students who are experiencing academic difficulty. It is important to contact the office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Any student who wishes to disclose a disability and request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for this course first **MUST** meet with either Mrs. Laurie Roth in the Office of Learning Services (for learning disabilities and/or ADD/ADHD) or Dr. Ronald Kline in the Counseling Center (for all other disabilities).

The Writing Center

The Writing Center, on the second floor of Zinzendorf Hall, is there to support the efforts of all writers at Moravian College. The tutors there are students who are good, experienced writers and who are professionally trained to help you improve your writing. They will go over an essay draft with you and guide your understanding of how you might improve that draft. You could also drop by to pick up some of the free handouts on

virtually every part of writing: getting started, writing a thesis, developing paragraphs, eliminating wordiness, using commas, and the like. The Writing Center is generally open Monday-Thursday afternoons and Sunday evenings during the semester. The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.

Tentative schedule of assignments

Week I M 8/27 – F 8/31	M - Course introduction etc.; Definitions: “rhetoric,” “narrative”; info. on feature films W – Steinmann, “The Old Novel and the New” (handout) <i>TRoF</i> , Preface to 1 st ed., Afterword to 2 nd ed. GASS – preview of short stories R – Decide on novel; feature film
Week II T 9/4 – F 9/7	T – “Drinking underage: Fun or Dangerous?” (handout); Ong, “The Writer’s Audience is Always a Fiction” (handout) R - <i>TRoF</i> , chapters 1-3
Week III M 9/10 – F 9/14	T – <i>TRoF</i> , chapters 4-6 R – <i>TRoF</i> , chapters 7-9
Week IV M 9/17 – F 9/21	T -- <i>TRoF</i> , chapters 10-12 R – Reading a short story rhetorically.
Week V M 9/24 – F 9/28	T- individual report(s): rhetorical analysis of short fiction R - individual report(s): rhetorical analysis of short fiction
Week VI M 10/1 – F 10/5 (mid-term)	T - <i>AoBF</i> , Introduction; “Cultural Criticism” (handout) R – Paper on a short story due
Fall break Sa 10/6 – Tu 10/9	
Week VII W 10/10 – F 10/12	R – <i>AoBF</i> , parts I-II
Week VIII M 10/15 – F 10/19	T - <i>AoBF</i> , parts III-IV R – Workshop on memoir paper

Week IX M 10/22 – F 10/26	T – “Analyzing Media” (handout); Schedule individual reports on “media texts” (These will occupy class meetings from M 11/26 to W 12/5) R - Film screening: Class meeting will run from ___ to ___ Location TBA F – Paper on memoir due
Week X M 10/29 – F 11/2	T – Novel (read all) R – Novel (teacher-led discussion)
Week XI M 11/5 – F 11/9	T – Novel (student-led discussion) R – Novel (student-led discussion)
Week XII M 11/12 – F 11/16	T – Novel wrap-up; Workshop on novel paper R – Workshop on novel paper
Week XIII M 11/19 – Tu 11/20	T – Novel paper due
Thanksgiving break W 11/21 – Su 11/25	
Week XIV M 11/26 – F 11/30	T – Report(s) on media texts R – Report(s) on media texts
Week XV M 12/3 – F 12/7	T– Report(s) on media texts R – Report(s) on media texts; course evaluation
Final exams M 12/10 – Sa 12/15	Portfolio due in lieu of final exam; deadline TBA