Welcome!
In this graduate seminar course, we will explore, investigate, interrogate, and survey various concepts of rhetoric from across time, cultures, and the globe.

As the name implies, this course will focus on the history of rhetoric. But what does that mean, exactly? The most straightforward way to interpret this question is to ask how the term "rhetoric" has meant in different contexts. Another way to think about it would be to think about how rhetoric has developed over time. And yet another approach would be to consider what it means for history to be rhetorically constructed. With this course, we will explore each of these concepts, in addition to the ideas and questions that you introduce into the conversation.

This course design is divided into topical units which are presented in a sequence (more on that below and on the wiki), but that organization is not meant to imply that this is the only way to think about these subjects. Rather, much like our objectives in this course, the design for this course represents a way of exploring the history of rhetoric.

Although a focus on Rhetoric will consume a plurality of our efforts, we will move into the related fields of Composition and Literacy Studies in order to develop our rhetorical theories into pedagogical praxes.

As a graduate student, meeting these objectives will largely – and increasingly – be your own responsibility, but rest assured that I am here to help usher you through that process. I don’t plan to give you too many direct answers to your questions, but instead I hope to help figure out how to come up with your own answers – and your own questions.

Overview & Expectations
Writing, Response, Revision
It shouldn’t come as a surprise to find out that successfully navigating this class will involve a lot of writing on your part. That’s partially because graduate school has always required a lot of writing. But it’s also because it is through writing, through composing in a variety of modes, that you will be able to learn articulate your ideas with thoughtfulness and to the widest range of audiences. Writing, too, serves an epistemological function. In other words, writing is just how to show what you’ve learned, but it is the exacting process through which you create meaning. You learn by writing.
With that in mind, one of my main goals when I teach is to help students develop a sense that writing is a work of process. That is, impactful writing begins well before you type your first word of a given project, and it continues until well after you’ve typed your last. To help make your writing the best that it can be, you should expect to meet with me and your peers, individually and in small group, at various points during the semester. While I will not assign grades to each stage of the writing process, you will be required to rethink and revise parts or all of every piece of writing based on the feedback you get. As you work on your drafts, you will need to keep track of the feedback you receive, as well as the revision and editing changes you make with each successive draft. In doing so, you will create a track record of your work that spans the entire course and semester.

In spite of our better efforts, however, it can be difficult to estimate your course grade throughout the semester. If you’d like to have an idea of where you stand after you’ve completed a substantial amount of writing and revision, please make an appointment to meet me outside of class, and I will review your work with you and give you a better sense of where you are, grade-wise. It will be entirely your responsibility to set up a meeting if you’re curious or concerned, and it’s important that you not wait until the last week or so to start asking about grades. At that point, it will likely be too late for you to do what needs to be done to significantly raise your overall course grade.

Accessibility
This class is designed with the goal of being accessible for all students. If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted at (956) 882-7374. Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted at (956) 665-7005 or via fax at (956) 665-3840. You can contact the office via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu.

Support Services
This is a writing intensive course, and writing, of course, is a collaborative process - even if you’ll be individually assessed on your writing. Fortunately, the UTRGV Writing Center offers tutoring, instruction, and support for all things writing based. Best off, it’s free (or, more accurately, you’ve already paid for it). The WC can be found in STAC 3.119 (Edinburg) and UBLB 3.206 (Brownsville). In addition to face-to-face consultations, the Writing Center offers feedback through Skype meetings and asynchronous consultations. Contact the Writing Center at wc@utrgv.edu for more info.

For those aspects of your life that cause your difficulty or pause, UTRGV offers counseling services for all of its students. Balancing work, personal life, and school can be stressful, so seek support as it’s needed. You can reach the UTRGV Counseling service at counseling@utrgv.edu.

Course Readings & Discussions
The course sequence will be divided according to a series of topical units: Ancient & Classical, Historical, Modern, Feminist, Contemporary, and “Looking Forward.” Within each unit, we will focus on sub-topics and concepts while also keeping an eye on how each topic relates to the others. As you would expect, each unit will include its own set of readings, and the bulk of these readings will be culled from past and present academic journal articles, book chapters, and other scholarly discourses. Occasionally, we will venture outside of the academy to read particularly insightful content that may be culled from popular, political, and academic culture, and will not be limited to traditional text-based sources. In each case, the readings are meant to be intensive, and at times, difficult.
The readings will be free and easy to access (via the course wiki)… so you got that going for you. If at some point you are asked to assign a supplemental reading to the class, you should be sure to prioritize accessibility along with disciplinary usefulness.

Each assigned reading must be completed (read, annotated, and prepared for discussion) by the dates specified in the course calendar. In other words, readings listed on a particular date are due on that date. This goes for whole group and hybrid course meetings, whether synchronous or asynchronous. Most frequently, we will meet and discuss the course readings during the regularly scheduled class time. Often, we will meet online (via the course wiki and Twitter). At times, we may meet in some other space entirely, including small group and individual consultations. If you’ve made it this far into the syllabus, please pause to email me a picture of a dinosaur.

**Sequence**

**Readings**
The assigned readings for this course can be found on the “Readings Historiography in RCL - Spring 2018” and “Calendar S18 Historiography” pages on the course wiki.

**Assignments**

**Participation & Discussion**

300 points - 30% of final grade

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to participate in all discussions and workshops. The class discussions will help you understand the course content and improve your writing. Class workshop days will incorporate guided discussions of a sample student project (sometimes yours, sometimes one written by a classmate). As you should expect of a graduate course, you need to be in class on time, with the readings prepared and your work completed.

This class is scheduled to meet as a whole group on Monday evenings throughout the semester, but a more accurate way of understanding the class would be think of it as a continuous hybrid course. In other words, students will be expected to participate in the class throughout the week, through a variety of spaces. For some whole group meetings, the instructor will lead class from Edinburg, and for other meetings, they will be in Brownsville. If you cannot attend the whole group meeting in person, it is your responsibility to join the rest of the class to Skype or Google Hangout into the class meeting. In addition, it is vital that students consistently check in and participate via the course wiki. Participation via Twitter will be handled on a case-by-case basis for extra (or make-up) credit. In addition, students will occasionally be required to meet on hybrid days to participate in library research, technology workshops, presentations, individual and small group consultations, or other activities.

**Diagnostic Essay**

20 - 2%

Objective: Determine where you’re at in terms of understanding main concepts of this course, and to prime you for the upcoming semester.

Description: Write a brief essay where you evaluate, compare, and contrast the terms “history” and “historiography.” Explain rhetoric’s role in defining these concepts.

Genre: Essay (in the Montaigne sense).

Assessment: Individual; single-point rubric. Submit to assignment page on wiki.

**Collaborative Writing Opportunities**

180 - 18%

Objective: Summarize main points of each reading, and draft discussion questions based on those readings.

Description: Throughout the semester, students will collaboratively respond to a prompt based on the assigned readings. These responses will consists mostly of summary, although some critical analysis will
be required. These opportunities will serve (at least) two purposes: help prepare you for whole group discussions, and to facilitate an environment of collaborative epistemology.

Genres: Summary essay.
Assessment: Whole group and individual; single-point rubric. Submit to assignment page on wiki.

**History v. Historiography**

250 - 25%

Objective: Rhetorically analyze a contemporary political issue through the lens of a theory discussed in this class in order to place the "official" or hegemonic historical narrative in conversation with counternarratives.

Description: Develop a comprehensive, thoughtfully written argument, supported with an appropriate number of scholarly sources (drawn from the class readings as well as your own secondary research), and composed and edited for publishable quality.

Genre: Article-length analytic essay.
Assessment: Individual; collaboratively-designed, whole group rubric.

**Rhetorical History Course Design**

250 - 25%

Objective: Apply concepts learned in this class to the development of a new course design.

Description: Create a syllabus and reading list for a rhetorical history course of a grade level of your choosing. Provide a critical rationale for your course design choices.

Genre: Syllabus; Listicle w/ reflective essay.
Assessment: Individual; single-point rubric

**Assessment**

**Rubrics**

Individual assignments in this course will be assessed using a mix of rubric styles. Specifically, we will employ holistic, analytic, and single-point rubrics. In addition, we will discuss the contextual applications, rationales, and dis/advantages of each of these approaches. For the History v. Historiography and Rhetorical History Course Design assignments, we will collaboratively design new instruments that I will use to assess your completed projects.

**Scoring**

You may have noticed that the possible points for the assignments and activities listed in the section above add up to more than 100 points. In fact, there will be a total of 1000 possible points available to you over the course of this semester, and this move has more meaning than simply adding a zero. What this change does is provides me with a better way to organize and track student data, while providing you with a greater assurance that you will be assessed and credited for each task you are asked to complete.

In order to ensure that you receive proper credit for your day-to-day efforts in this course, I will periodically evaluate everything else you do for class (reading responses, workshops, in-class writings, blog posts & comments, homework, etc.), and assign scores based on participation. Available points will be determined as the quotient of participation points available for that day and the number of distinct activities for that class meeting, weighted for time and effort. For example: Let’s say a class meeting that is 60 minutes long has 12 points available, and during that class meeting, there are three different activities taking 15, 30, and 15 minutes each. The available points for each activity will be 3, 6, and 3, respectively.

This will allow me a chance to let you know how you’re doing in different areas and how you can improve throughout the semester. At the end the semester, there will be a total number of possible points. Your specific grade will be determined by what percentage of the total points you have accumulated. For example:
1000-900 total points; 90-100% of total possible points = A
899-800 total points; 80-89% of total possible points = B
799-700 total points; 70-79% of total possible points = C
699-0 total points; 60-69% of total possible points = F

Formatting
In order to ease the peer review and submission processes, please use a font and text size that will make it easier for your readers to print and respond to your work. Rough drafts can be submitted in whatever format it appropriate. Final drafts must be submitted in PDF format. For security and software limitation concerns, I will not respond to or assess work that is not submitted in one of these formats, unless specifically noted. When you save your drafts, use the following naming convention: first initial last name, assignment name, submission date. For example: RWMonty HvH 03.17.18

You will earn individual scores and a cumulative grade based on your work. Quantity, while important, is no substitute for quality. In other words, simply completing an assignment will not guarantee a certain result – you must produce work befitting a graduate student.

A note on grades…
Meeting course and assignment requirements will result in the student earning an average grade for this course, as in “C,” not “A.” Likewise, coming to and participating in every class meeting, and submitting every assignment on time, are not acts that earn extra credit; those are expected by you enrolling in this course. A higher grade of “B” will be based on the distinctive quality, development, and reflective nature of your work, as well as your ability to guide a piece of writing through the various stages of a writing process and your willingness to peer review and explore new readings, genres, and techniques. Work that earns an “A” grade for each assignment will demonstrate exceptional quality, advanced thought, and expert production.

Policies & Resources
Attendance
“The student is expected to attend all classes and laboratory sessions. It is the responsibility of the student to inform each instructor of absences. When, however, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of ‘DP’ or ‘DF’” (HOP 5.2.4).

If a student is absent for any combination of more than two (2) whole group class days, hybrid assignments, or group or individual meetings, they will have difficulty passing the course or earning a high final grade. If these cumulative absences occur prior to the university’s stated drop date, the student may be dropped from the class.

Late Work
Late work makes life hard for all of us (you, me, your peers, the program, the department, the institution, the local flora and fauna, etc.), so you should expect and prepare to turn in all assignments by their due dates. Assignments submitted after their due dates may not be accepted. If you know of an upcoming absence, make arrangements to complete and turn in your work early. The hybrid nature of this course allows for some flexibility with regards to participating in class, even when a student is not physically present.

Preparing Yourself to Work
Bring your course readings and anything you need to do your writing work to class every day, and be on time for the start of each class. If we start an activity and you don’t have the necessary materials or walk in late, you won’t be able to constructively contribute to the work, and you may not receive credit for that portion of that assignment.
Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement (department approved)
Dishonest acts, such as plagiarism (using words or a specific author’s ideas from another source without acknowledging the source) or collusion (having other people write parts of your paper for you), may result in an “F” on the assignment and may lead to a disciplinary hearing conducted through the office of the Dean of Students, which could result in suspension or expulsion from UTPA (this policy is consistent with the Student Conduct Code printed in the UTPA Student Guide). If you have questions about whether your use of other sources (such as books, websites, friends, writing center tutors) is fair or not, please ask before turning in the work that you have a question about.

Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence
In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

Goals & Outcomes
Graduate Student Learning Outcomes
SLO 1: Students will demonstrate a graduate-level understanding of rhetorical theories, including the history of rhetoric, as these relate to the field of rhetoric and composition.
SLO 2: Students will demonstrate a graduate-level understanding of contemporary composition theory, such as core issues, debates, research, history, ethics and technology.
SLO 3: Students will demonstrate graduate-level understanding of contemporary composition pedagogy, such as core issues, debates, research, history, ethics, and/or technology.
SLO 4: Students will demonstrate a graduate-level understanding of larger disciplinary issues surrounding writing (for example, the myriad theoretical, pedagogical, and research implications of the “social turn” in writing, and the role of theory or theorizing in the field), not just about the teaching of writing.

Course Evaluations
Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available: April 2-May 11

Changes to the Syllabus
This syllabus represents a plan for this semester. While the rules and regulations will remain consistent, individual assignments and dates may be modified depending upon the individualized nature and progression of this course section.