

New Course Proposal

English H591.02: Special Topics in the Study of Rhetoric

Submitted by: Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Area Group

New Course Proposal

The study of rhetoric is arguably the first subject to be developed in academic history. Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, and other Greek philosophers argued the virtues of speaking well and truthfully and warned against the misuse of persuasive oration. This course will introduce students to the ways in which language users (speakers, listeners, writers, readers) employ various patterns and strategies to create meaning through words and images. The topics for the course will include issues from classical rhetoric, visual rhetoric, and new media. Students will not only identify and investigate various aspects of rhetoric and literacy but also experiment with developing their own rhetorical expertise. Today's increasingly complex media demands educated and aware audiences; Special Topics in Rhetoric will provide much needed knowledge of the ways in which written, spoken, and visual representations shape the world in which our students live.

Course Rationale

Although the English Honors program offers eight different possibilities for seminars in literary periods (H590.01-H590.02), corresponding courses in non-literary seminars have been limited at this point to one course in creative writing (H591.01). H591.02, Special Topics in the Study of Rhetoric, is designed to add additional experiences in the examination and analysis of non-fiction texts, literacy communities, and new media. The seminar in Rhetoric will draw upon the same topics as offered in the department's already existing courses in rhetoric, history/theories of writing, rhetorical criticism, and digital media, but offer opportunities to work with the more complex issues that an honors seminar will provide. Several members of the RCL faculty have served on Honors committees and found these to be exciting opportunities. We hope that the addition of an honors seminar in Rhetoric will allow students to study connections between rhetoric, writing, composing, cultural studies, literature, folklore and other inter-field connections in greater detail.

Description: Course Offerings Bulletin

Study of rhetorical theories, practices, and literacies through examination of rhetorical communities, texts, movements, and periods both past and present.