

English 015: Rhetoric and Composition

Spring 2018, TR

Instructor:	Office Location:
Section:	Office Hours:
Classroom/Time:	Contact:

Course Goals

English 015 is an intensive, rhetorically based experience in reading and writing that will prepare you both to understand the communications that surround you and to succeed in your own communication efforts. Thus, in this course, we will focus specifically on analyzing verbal and visual texts (our reading) as well as on producing such texts (our writing)—always in terms of rhetorical principles.

Even if the term *rhetoric* isn't familiar to you, you bring a good deal of rhetorical skill to this class: you already know how to gauge the way you perceive and produce language according to the speaker, the intended audience, and the purpose. You may not always gauge perfectly, your perception may not always be accurate, and your production may not always be successful—but you still often try to interpret and choose language that is appropriate to the rhetorical situation. When you do not succeed, you often try again.

The goal of English 015, then, is to help you build on what you already know how to do as you become a more confident reader and writer. You will become more attuned to your goals as a writer, more aware of the ongoing conversation surrounding the topic, and more resourceful in terms of the appropriate delivery of your information, the rhetorical appeals at your disposal, and the needs and expectations of your audience. In other words, we hope you'll come to write with skill, conviction, sophistication, and grace—if not immediately, then soon. In the process, you'll learn how to read more critically as well.

Required and Recommended Texts

1. *The New Harbrace Guide: Genres for Composing* by Cheryl Glenn, 3rd edition (*required*)
ISBN-13: 978-1305956780
You must obtain the **third** edition.
2. *Penn Statements*, 2018 edition (*required*)
You must obtain the **2018** edition. Previous editions are outdated and therefore invalid.
3. The Penn State Library Guide for English 15, found at guides.libraries.psu.edu/UPEngl015
(*recommended for research*)

Requirements

To pass this course you must complete all the major assignments, submit all process work, fulfill all the weekly reading and writing assignments, and submit assignments on time. You are expected to attend all class meetings and to participate in draft workshops, in-class exercises, and classroom discussions. All proposals, drafts, peer-review work, papers, and revisions must be handed in on time; failing to turn in a proposal on time or appearing at a draft workshop without a draft is equivalent to turning in an assignment late (i.e., normally a penalty of one grade per late day). Final drafts of an assignment will *not* be accepted until a written proposal has been approved *and* a draft has been completed and peer reviewed. Please keep all graded assignments until the end of the semester.

Grading

GRADED WORK	PERCENTAGE
Assignment 1: Rhetorical Analysis	10%
Assignment 2: Evaluation Argument	15%
Assignment 3: Proposal Argument	20%
Assignment 4: Video Narrative	15%
Short Responses	15%
Peer Review Responses	15%
Participation (see attendance policy)	10%

All course assignments will be graded using the specific grading criteria established in the attached assignment sheets and the general **Program in Writing and Rhetoric Grading Standards** found at pwr.la.psu.edu/about/grading-standards and on pages 7-8 of *Penn Statements*.

Paper Format

Choosing a format is a rhetorical decision—it's all about delivery. So keep in mind that your papers should typically be submitted in 12-point, Times New Roman (TNR) font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Place your name, "English 015," the date, and the instructor's name in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. Number all of the pages in the upper right-hand corner. For paper copies, you should fasten the pages with a paper clip or staple and place the paper in a folder along with earlier drafts and peer review activities. For electronic copies, you should ensure the file is in a format your instructor can open, labeled with your name. You should always check that your submitted file successfully uploaded. Your instructor may have additional instructions, and requirements may change depending on your composition medium. Always check with your instructor well in advance of an assignment deadline if you are unsure.

Participation and Attendance

Participation includes being attentive during class, completing in-class writing and group work, and contributing to discussions. Your success and the success of this course depend on your active participation; therefore, your regular attendance is required. Excused absences are certainly appropriate, and of course you should communicate with your instructor about your absences as much as possible. Be aware, though, that University policy (*Policies and Rules*, 42-27) states that a student whose absences are excessive "may run the risk of receiving a lower grade or a failing grade," regardless of his or her performance in the class. *You run that risk if you exceed three unexcused absences in this course.* If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the assignments, class notes,

and course changes from a classmate. In addition, if you miss class on a day that written work is due, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to submit that work to your instructor. In-class work cannot be made up.

Writing Conferences

Plan to have *at least* two conferences with your instructor this semester to discuss your written work (at any stage of the process) and your progress in the course. At least one of these meetings *must* take place in the first four weeks of the term. In addition, I encourage you to take your ideas and your written work to **Penn State Learning** for writing support (220 Boucke, 814-863-3240), where trained peer tutors will consult with writers about any piece of writing at any stage of the writing process, from rough idea to final draft. For more information, use the following URL: pennstatelearning.psu.edu.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University's Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Academic integrity includes a commitment by all members of the University community not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others.

Accessibility: Disability Accommodation

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. The Student Disability Resources Web site provides contact information for every Penn State campus (equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources/disability-coordinator). For further information, please visit the Student Disability Resources website at equity.psu.edu/sdr.

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation (equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources/applying-for-services). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

Education Equity: Bias Reporting

Penn State takes great pride to foster a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity via the Report Bias webpage (equity.psu.edu/reportbias/).

Counseling and Psychological Services

Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): 814-863-0395,
studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/
Penn State Crisis Line (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400
Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741

Standards of Classroom Behavior

Classroom behavior should always reflect the essential Penn State values of civility, integrity, and respect for the dignity and rights of others. As such, the classroom space should be safe, orderly, and positive—free from disruptions, disorderly conduct, and harassment as defined in the University Code of Conduct (studentaffairs.psu.edu/conduct/Procedures.shtml). The University Code of Conduct defines disruption “as an action or combination of actions by one or more individuals that unreasonably interferes with, hinders, obstructs, or prevents the operation of the University or infringes on the rights of others to freely participate in its programs and services;” disorderly conduct includes but is not limited to “creating unreasonable noise; pushing and shoving; creating a physically hazardous or physically offensive condition;” and harassment may include “directing physical or verbal conduct at an individual...; subjecting a person or group of persons to unwanted physical contact or threat of such; or engaging in a course of conduct, including following the person without proper authority (e.g., stalking), under circumstances which would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety or the safety of others or to suffer emotional distress” (Section IV, B). The course instructor has the authority to request that any disruptive students leave the class for the class period. If disruptive behavior continues in subsequent class periods, a complaint may be filed with the Office of Student Conduct, which may result in the student being dismissed from class until University procedures have been completed. Any student with concerns or questions as to this policy should contact the Director of the Program in Writing and Rhetoric.

Submissions to *Penn Statements*

The editors of *Penn Statements* encourage students to submit essays and other projects for possible publication in this student journal. Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis and can be sent electronically two ways.

1. Navigate to pwr.psu.edu/penn-statements and follow the instructions there to submit your project online.
2. Email your project to pennstatementseditor@gmail.com. Please include the title of the essay, the assignment it satisfied, and a release statement along these lines: “I, <name>, give permission to *Penn Statements* to publish my <genre of assignment>, <assignment title>.” Make sure to attach your document to the email.

COURSE SCHEDULE **Key: *NHG*—*The New Harbrace Guide to Writing*; *PS*—*Penn Statements***

Week 1

Unit 1 of 4

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
1/9	T	Course Introduction		
1/11	R	Rhetorical Situation: Why Write? Introduction to Assignment 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 1 (Understanding the Rhetorical Situation: 3-17) ▪ <i>PS</i> (Preface: 5-6) ▪ Assignment 1 Instructions (<i>Syllabus</i>: 11) ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 3 (The Writer as Reader: 35-49) 	

Week 2

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
1/16	T	Responding to the Rhetorical Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 2 (Responding to the Rhetorical Situation: 18-34) ▪ Short Responses (<i>Syllabus</i>: 9) 	
1/18	R	Analyzing a Fitting Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (<i>Canvas</i>) 	

Week 3

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
1/23	T	Style Workshop #1; Analyzing Multimedia Rhetoric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 8 (Coherence—Word Choice, Repetition, and Sentence Structure: 154) ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 4 (Rhetorical Success in a Digital World: 51-74) ▪ <i>NHG</i> “A Tale of Two Profiles”: 454-57 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short Response #1: Bring to class for workshop
1/25	R	Introduction to the Writing Process: Proposal Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 13 (From Tentative Idea to Finished Project: 238-49) ▪ Peer Review Responses (<i>Syllabus</i>: 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposal for Rhetorical Analysis: Bring to class for workshop

Week 4

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
1/30	T	Understanding Grading Criteria with Samples; Peer Review Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>PS</i> (Grading Standards: 7-8; Rhetorical Analysis: 12-21) ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 13 (From Tentative Idea to Finished Project: 250-61) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rough Draft: Rhetorical Analysis
2/1	R	Responding to Feedback; Style Workshop #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 12 (Ellipses Points in Quotations: 235-37) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring draft and peer review feedback to class

Week 5**Unit 2 of 4**

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
2/6	T	Introduction to the Evaluation Argument; Analyzing Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 10 (Evaluations: 174-90) ▪ Assignment 2 Instructions (<i>Syllabus</i>: 12) ▪ <i>NHG</i> Food and Culture (407-12) & “Millennials: The Me Me Me Generation” (418-19) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final Draft: Rhetorical Analysis
2/8	R	Research in the Rhetorical Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 15 (Thinking Rhetorically about Research: 279-91) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short Response #2

Week 6

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
2/13	T	Proposal Workshop Research: Finding and Evaluating Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 16 (Identifying Sources: 292-304) ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 17 (Evaluating Sources: 311-21) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposal for Evaluation: Bring to class with the review
2/15	R	Evaluating Sample Evaluation Arguments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>PS</i> (Evaluation: 79-90) 	

Week 7

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
2/20	T	Research: Citing Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 18 (Synthesizing Sources: Summary, Paraphrase, and Quotation: 322-37) 	
2/22	R	Style Workshop #3; Writing the Cover Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 7 (Attributive Tags: 130-31) ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 10 (Adjectives and Adverbs: 192-93) ▪ <i>PS</i> (Cover Letters: 77; 83-84) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring two pages of paper with cited research

Week 8

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
2/27	T	Peer Review Workshop; Style Workshop #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revisit <i>NHG</i> Ch. 13 (From Tentative Idea to Finished Project: 250-52) & Ch. 10 (Evaluations: 174-90) ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 19 (Acknowledging Sources in MLA Style: 338-75) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rough Draft of Evaluation and Cover Letter: Bring to class
3/1	R	Introduction to the Proposal Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 9 (Proposals: 156-73) ▪ Assignment 3 Instructions (<i>Syllabus</i>: 13) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final Draft: Evaluation Argument

Date	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
3/6-3/8	No Class—Spring Break		

Week 9

Unit 3 of 4

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
3/13	T	Proposal Workshop: Defining Problem and Matching to Solution; Annotated Bibliographies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit <i>NHG</i> Ch. 9 (Proposals: 156-73) <i>PS</i> (Annotated Bibliography: 33; 58-60) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal for Proposal Argument: Bring to class
3/15	R	Planning Fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>NHG</i> Ch. 16 (Identifying Sources: 304-310) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotated Bibliography

Week 10

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
3/20	T	Rhetorical Methods of Development; Analyzing Sample Proposal Arguments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>NHG</i> Ch. 14 (Rhetorical Methods of Development: 262-79) <i>PS</i> (Proposal Argument: 32-45) 	
3/22	R	Style Workshop #5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>NHG</i> Ch. 6 (Inclusive Language: 102-11) <i>NHG</i> Ch. 11 (Precise Language: 212-14) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Response #3: Bring to class

Week 11

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
3/27	T	Establishing Feasibility; Researching and Addressing Acceptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>NHG</i> “The Other Side of Black Lives Matter” 462-63 & “Why It’s Crucial to Get More Women into Science” 482-92 	
3/29	R	Peer Review Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit <i>NHG</i> Ch. 13 (From Tentative Idea to Finished Project: 250-52) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rough Draft of Proposal Argument: Bring to class

Week 12

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
4/3	T	Rhetorical Fallacies; Style Workshop #6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intro to Fallacies (<i>Canvas</i>) <i>NHG</i> Ch. 9 (Linking Ideas: 172-73) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring current draft and cover letter to class
4/5	R	Introduction to the Video Narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment 4 Instructions (<i>Syllabus</i>: 14) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Draft: Proposal Argument

Week 13

Unit 4 of 4

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
4/10	T	Memoirs and the Rhetorical Situation; Composing Narratives with Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 5 (Memoirs: 75-90) ▪ <i>NHG</i> “Robert Moses: The Master Builder of the City” (434-35); “Being an 18-Year-Old Black Man a Year after Mike Brown” (458-60) 	▪ Short Response #4
4/12	R	Film and Narrative	▪ <i>PS</i> : Video Projects (69, 91, 95, and website)	▪ Proposal: Video Narrative

Week 14

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
4/17	T	Analyzing Example Narratives	▪ <i>PS</i> (Narrative Essays: 61-68)	
4/19	R	Script Workshop: Focusing Your Sequence of Events; Plotting a Story with Words and Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revisit <i>NHG</i> Ch. 5 (Memoirs: 75-90) ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 4 (Rhetorical Success in a Digital World: 53-60; 66-68) 	▪ Script: Video Narrative

Week 15

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Due
4/24	T	Peer Review Workshop; Style Workshop #7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revisit <i>NHG</i> Ch. 13 (From Tentative Idea to Finished Project: 250-52) ▪ <i>NHG</i> Ch. 5 (Verb Tense: 91) 	▪ Rough Draft of Video Narrative and Cover Letter: Bring to class with earphones
4/26	R	Course Wrap-Up		▪ Final Draft: Video Narrative

Finals Week

Date	Day	Topic	Writing Due
4/29	Sun	<i>Complete course SRTE before 11:59 p.m., Sunday, 4/29. There are no class meetings or exams during Finals Week.</i>	▪ SRTEs (online)

Short Responses

Due January 23rd, February 8th, March 22nd, and April 10th

Essay as a verb means to “attempt; to try to do, effect, [or] accomplish” (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Throughout the semester, you’ll be asked to complete four short essay assignments that give you opportunities to *try out* different tasks. You may be asked to respond to a reading, practice a specific rhetorical skill, engage with library resources, or develop a section of a paper you’re working on. These short responses, which respond to specific prompts, might take the form of blog posts, discussion posts on Canvas, or short papers. Their goal is to give you further opportunities to practice your writing and to learn course content.

Your instructor will announce the prompts and instructions for each short response ahead of the due date. Each response will be evaluated according to the following standards:

- ✓⁺ **Check plus:** Responds fully and thoughtfully to the prompt or assignment. Displays engagement with the relevant readings and/or writing skills. Uses fresh expression and an appropriate tone and style for the assignment. Demonstrates both the student’s awareness of course lessons and material and the student’s own creativity and original thinking. Meets the length requirement, follows all instructions, and is completed on time.
- ✓ **Check:** Responds to the prompt or assignment. Attempts to engage with the relevant readings or writing skills. Uses appropriate tone and style for the assignment. Meets the length requirement, follows all or most of the instructions, and is completed on time.
- ✓⁻ **Check minus:** Does not address the prompt or assignment, engage competently with the relevant readings, or demonstrate personal writing development in style, tone or content. Does not meet the length and/or due-date requirement, or follow all or most of the instructions.
Essay assignments that demonstrate any one of the above problems may be scored as “check minus,” even if otherwise sufficiently completed.

✗ **No check:** Not submitted

Each score will be converted to a number of points out of ten according to the following scale:

✓ ⁺	10
✓	7
✓ ⁻	5
✗	0

At the end of the semester, your grades on short response will be totaled and converted into a letter grade that counts for 15% of your overall course grade according to the following scale:

Total Score	Letter Grade
36-40	A (4.0)
30-35	B (3.0)
20-29	C (2.0)
10-19	D (1.0)
0-9	F (0.0)

Peer Review Responses

Due by February 6th, March 1st, April 5th, and April 26th

During in-class writing workshops, you'll be asked to complete four full-draft peer review assignments. **Your instructor will specify the format of these responses to your classmates' work.** The goals of the peer responses are (1) for you to develop collegiality by collaborating with your classmates on applying the concepts of rhetoric and writing you are learning, and (2) for students to come away with substantial feedback they can employ as they revise their draft. To ensure these goals are met, each response will be evaluated according to the following standards (these will be modified slightly for Assignment 4 due to its multimedia nature):

- ✓⁺ **Check plus:** Responds fully and thoughtfully to the ideas in the peer's paper. Reflects an understanding of the assignment and of the author's audience, purpose, and message, including at least one substantial comment on evidence, analysis, and/or arrangement (not just on style) per paragraph. Poses questions whenever such an understanding is unclear. Advises the author on specific ways to meet (even exceed) the criteria for the assignment.
- ✓ **Check:** Responds fully and thoughtfully to the ideas in the peer's paper, as described above, although some of the comments may be unhelpful or vague.
- ✓⁻ **Check minus:** Fails to respond *either* thoroughly or thoughtfully. That is, there might be an insufficient quantity or length of comments, or they might convey feedback that is not useful for revision.
- ✗ **No check:** Not submitted. Note: failure to submit a peer review response will also affect your final draft's grade, since your instructor cannot accept your assignment until it has been peer-reviewed.

Each score will be converted to a number of points out of ten according to the following scale:

✓ ⁺	10
✓	7
✓ ⁻	5
✗	0

At the end of the semester, your grades on each peer review response will be totaled and converted into a letter grade that counts for 15% of your overall course grade according to the following scale:

Total Score	Letter Grade
36-40	A (4.0)
30-35	B (3.0)
20-29	C (2.0)
10-19	D (1.0)
0-9	F (0.0)

Assignment 1: Rhetorical Analysis

Proposal Due: Thursday, January 25th

Rough Draft Due: Tuesday, January 30th

Final Draft Due: Tuesday, February 6th

Prompt: A rhetorical analysis *evaluates* how a rhetor attempts to reach, maybe even influence, an audience. Locate a visual/oral/verbal text that you deem interesting (feel free to use one of the essays in Chapters 21–25 in the *New Harbrace Guide*) and analyze it according to the way the text uses rhetorical effects and strategies to make its argument. Use specific textual evidence to establish a general argument (i.e., thesis) about how the text “works.” You should not simply paraphrase or summarize what the rhetor says or composes; rather, your goal is to provide a way of understanding the measure of persuasive effect by analyzing the rhetorical situation.

To do this, first identify the rhetor, intended audience, message, and intended purpose of the text. This information will set the foundation for the rest of your analysis. Next, explain *how* (and how effectively) the text

- appeals to its intended audience;
- employs the available means (the rhetorical appeals of ethos, logos, pathos; the rhetorical methods of development; and visual and/or aural elements, if applicable)

You should go beyond description of the rhetorical elements of the text to look at *how* those elements work to achieve the rhetor’s purpose. Your ideas should be developed through textual evidence and analysis of that evidence. Finally, evaluate the measure of persuasive effect—decide whether or not the text constitutes a fitting response (of informing, explaining, motivating, identifying, etc.). Make an argument regarding the feature of the text’s rhetoric that is most interesting, revealing, or important.

Process: As part of your *proposal*, submit a copy of your text for your instructor’s review and explain what makes this text an interesting subject (i.e., what is not rhetorically obvious) for rhetorical analysis.

As you are *drafting*, consider how you are supporting your claims about the text. Refer to specific moments in the text (using quotes and other concrete details) as evidence for your explanation of how the rhetor uses rhetorical strategies. At the same time, consider the balance between description and analysis in your writing. Describe moments in the text in order to make your argument, but remember that your job is not to summarize the text for your readers. Your job is to evaluate the text by analyzing these details and making an argument about their rhetorical effect. After drafting, *revise and edit*. Consider carefully the organization and coherence of your piece. Develop clear paragraphs that support your thesis organized around a definite topic.

Format: Your final draft should be three to four pages (double-spaced, TNR font, 1” margins). When citing your outside source(s), follow MLA format (see *NHG* Ch. 19 and/or the PSU Libraries’ Citation Guide: guides.libraries.psu.edu/mlacitation).

Grading Criteria: Your essay should

- (1) make a claim (a thesis) about an interesting, potentially persuasive text;
- (2) identify the rhetor, intended audience, message, and intended purpose of the text;
- (3) assess the text’s employment of available means; and
- (4) evaluate the text as a fitting response through sufficient textual evidence and analysis.

Assignment 2: Evaluation Argument

Proposal Due: Tuesday, February 13th

Rough Draft Due: Tuesday, February 27th

Final Draft Due: Thursday, March 1st

Prompt: An evaluation argument *assesses* the quality of a subject by *applying reasonable criteria* to it and *supporting* the assessment by these criteria through evidence gathered from reliable sources. In other words, an evaluation provides a judgment meant to persuade and the criteria used to arrive at that judgment (*NHG* 174).

In this essay, you will evaluate a subject (object, activity, place, phenomenon) by establishing a category and a set of evaluative criteria. You will articulate a clear argument in the form of a thesis statement, vivid descriptions of the subject being evaluated, and a hierarchy of clear criteria for the evaluation itself (necessary, sufficient, and accidental, all p. 178).

Process: For *brainstorming*, think about categories (dogs, sports cars, romcoms, rappers, coffee shops, etc.) that interest you. Once you settle on a category, consider what makes a member of that category excellent. This move from category to criteria is a crucial step toward making an ethical evaluation. The criteria you choose should apply equally well to *anything* in your subject's category. What criteria make for a great coffee shop? Quality of coffee, comfort of seating, ambient sound? Or something else? Next, choose a subject within this category. You are more likely to make a strong, insightful, and fresh argument about a subject pertinent to your hometown or university than about national or global issues like Barack Obama's presidency or the Winter Olympics. So, if your category is coffee shops, choose one you frequent in State College—Saint's, Webster's, Barranquero, etc.

As part of your *proposal*, describe your chosen *subject* and identify its *category*. Explain at least *four criteria* that determine the quality of items in that category. Describe your *exigence*—why evaluating the subject matters and to whom (name your *audience*). In addition, provide a copy (or link) of one *review* by another writer evaluating a subject that belongs to the same category as your subject. For example, if you are evaluating Pollock Dining Commons, you could find an article critiquing Penn State cafeteria dining overall.

As you are *drafting*, consider what persuasive arguments, examples, reasoning, and rhetorical appeals will best achieve your purpose and avoid fallacies, especially the fallacy of special pleading. To support your position, you should have sufficient evidence (from credible sources) that is properly integrated, cited, and developed through your own reasoning. As you *revise and edit*, consider tone.

The one-page cover letter should explain your rhetorical decision-making and, specifically for this paper, should include: (1) an explanation of your rhetorical purpose in relation to the subject/category and your audience, and (2) several examples of rhetorical choices you made to achieve your purpose with (3) an analysis of their outcomes. (4) exigence; (5) choice of research.

Format: Your final draft should be four to five pages (double-spaced, TNR font, 1" margins). When citing your outside source(s), follow MLA format (see *NHG* Ch. 19 and/or the PSU Libraries' Citation Guide: guides.libraries.psu.edu/mlacitation).

Grading Criteria: Your essay should

- (1) state the category of your subject clearly;
- (2) define and defend the criteria you apply to that category;
- (3) address and influence a specific audience;

- (4) make a case for the quality or lack thereof of your subject;
- (5) support your claims with examples, details, and reasoning;
- (6) use research that is credible, appropriate, and properly cited following MLA guidelines;
- (7) demonstrate the potential to influence your audience toward your purpose; and
- (8) explain and defend these rhetorical choices in a cover letter.

Assignment 3: Proposal Argument

Proposal Due: Tuesday, March 13th; Annotated Bibliography Due: Thursday, March 15th
Rough Draft Due: Thursday, March 29th
Final Draft Due: Thursday, April 5th

Prompt: In the Evaluation Argument, you engaged with a larger conversation and clearly expressed your position on an issue. In this Proposal Argument, you will build from those skills as you *identify* a problem and *advocate* for a way to address, solve, or resolve that problem. Identify an audience who can benefit from and participate in the solution your proposal addresses. You may need to convince your audience that a problem does, indeed, exist, if that is not obvious. Your starting point, then, is to identify something you feel, with good reason, should be changed. Next, argue that a certain action should be taken to respond to or resolve that problem. Your proposed plan of action should be both possible and desirable. Explore the costs and benefits of your solution. Most of the paper should be devoted to advocating your plan for addressing/resolving the problem.

Process: As you are *brainstorming*, explore your local communities, practices, and investments (national or international problems may be tough to address in the space of this essay). What real-life problem might benefit from a concrete solution you can identify?

You will write your *proposal* in two stages, first answering the questions your instructor assigns, and second composing an *annotated bibliography* of five sources you may consult for information about your topic. Your list of sources can be specific articles or books, titles of relevant publications, groups you could survey, or names of individuals you could interview.

As you are *drafting*, carefully consider issues of feasibility and audience acceptability. Think about how you are explaining the time, money, labor, resources, etc., that would be necessary to put your solution into action. Describe your plan to show that it is feasible. Consider how you might establish common ground and build consensus to make it acceptable. Understanding that not everyone will agree that your plan is best, address competing solutions and consider any concessions your audience might need to make. Do your best to convince them that your solution is the most effective option available to them. After drafting, *revise and edit*. Consider the tone you should establish and pay careful attention to precision and punctuation.

The one-page cover letter should explain your rhetorical decision-making, and specifically for this paper, it should include: (1) a brief overview of your audience, their values, and their relation to your proposal and (2) several supporting examples, with analysis, of how you influenced your audience.

Format: Your final draft should be four to six pages (double-spaced, TNR font, 1" margins). When citing your outside source(s), follow MLA format (see *NHG* Ch. 19 and/or the PSU Libraries' Citation Guide: guides.libraries.psu.edu/mlacitation).

Grading Criteria: Your essay should

- (1) identify and describe the problem clearly;
- (2) address a limited audience who can help you achieve and/or benefit from your solution;
- (3) present a concrete proposal for change that is feasible and acceptable;
- (4) explain how and why your solution will address the problem you have identified;
- (5) fairly assess and fully explore the possible costs and benefits (feasibility) of your solution;
- (6) use research that is credible, appropriate, and properly cited following MLA guidelines; and
- (7) explain and defend these rhetorical choices in a cover letter.

Assignment 4: Video Narrative

Proposal Due: Thursday, April 12th

Script Due: Thursday, April 19th

Rough Draft Due: Tuesday, April 24th

Final Draft Due: Thursday, April 26th

Prompt: In this assignment, you will have a chance to apply your new understanding of rhetoric to your own life by identifying and then narrating a moment where you demonstrated rhetorical awareness or linguistic prowess. With a clear rhetorical purpose, you will *narrate* a memorable moment to an audience through a carefully selected sequence of events, vivid sensory details, characters, scenery, dialogue, and personal reflection. You will use a video to *deliver* this story, taking advantage of the medium's aural and visual available means. You will also submit a cover letter that explains the thinking that guided both your rhetorical choices and your use of multimedia.

Process: As you *brainstorm*, you will think of significant—or *insignificant*—experiences in your life as a rhetor. You should analyze each of these options for your rhetorical purpose, their value to a particular audience, and how they can be delivered through a specific medium to fit that audience and purpose. While there isn't an expectation for your project to be ready for network TV, you do need to demonstrate an effort to make thoughtful and rhetorically minded production choices that will help you influence your audience. As you write your *proposal*, you will articulate your exigence, audience, mode of delivery, and the carefully chosen sequence of events that support your purpose. In your proposal, you may also indicate important details, scenes, characters, or dialogue you plan to include.

The process of *drafting* will involve a script (written document) and a rough draft (video file). Be sure to leave plenty of time for *editing* and *revision*. Multimedia editing can be time-consuming. In addition to checking for smooth and effective use of your chosen media, you will also need to pay attention to language and style, demonstrating purposeful use of sentence variety for emphasis.

Additionally, you will spend some time composing a final cover letter. In one page or less, the cover letter should explain how your project constitutes a fitting response to your chosen rhetorical situation and include the following: (1) a brief overview of your rhetorical situation, (2) a discussion of how your multimedia delivery suits the audience and purpose, and (3) several supporting examples of how you employed rhetorical decision-making, along with an analysis of the outcomes of those rhetorical choices.

Format: Length and format are determined by the task you set for yourself. Your instructor will discuss requirement details for your multimedia project in more detail. Your explanatory cover letter should be one page (double-spaced, TNR font, 1" margins). All copyrighted content should be properly cited.

Grading Criteria: Your assignment should

- (1) narrate a specific memorable moment that demonstrates your efficacy as a rhetor;
- (2) develop a clear narrative purpose with a selection of supporting details, characters, scenery, and reflection;
- (3) address a distinct audience who will respond to that purpose;
- (4) deliver your narrative clearly through purposeful use of sound and image; and
- (5) explain and defend these rhetorical choices in a cover letter.