

WRITING PROJECT 1, "HOW DOES SCIENCE PERSUADE?" / RHETORICAL ANALYSIS (25%)
WRT 334: Science Writing
Spring 2017

Important Dates:

Tuesday, January 31: Introduce Project
Thursday, February 9: Peer workshop #1
Thursday, February 16: Peer workshop #2
Tuesday, February 21: Final draft due

Length:

Six (6) pages double-spaced w/ consistent in-text citations, plus references

Description:

Writing project one invites you to select one academic journal article from your scientific discipline and create a rhetorical analysis of that article. You're probably used to reading and writing about scientific journal articles by focusing on their scientific content. This project asks you to focus on that, in part, but also to largely focus on the rhetorical moves the article makes. What choices of organization and style do the authors make? What are the article's main arguments and how are they supported? Who is the audience of the article, how can you tell, and what appeals do the authors make to this specific audience? This writing project invites you to engage with your discipline through an intense focus on a single piece of writing. How does the author use science and writing to craft a persuasive argument?

This project requires that you do a close reading of a journal article in your field to analyze the way that text utilizes deliberate rhetorical strategies to create an argument.

Individual student projects will vary in their emphases, but I would imagine that each paper would likely include sections like:

- **AUTHORS:** How do the authors establish credibility?
- **AUDIENCE:** What can you tell about the audience of this text? How do the authors work to connect with and persuade them?
- **ARGUMENT:** What is the main argument and how is it supported? What sorts of evidence do the authors include?
- **APPEALS:** What are some specific examples of the authors using appeals to ethos, pathos, logos, and mythos in the text?
- **ARRANGEMENT:** How is the text ordered? How does that organization impact the argument?
- **STYLE:** What style and tone choices do the authors make? How do those choices influence the impact of the argument?

Reading and resources:

- Bazerman, "Writing Well, Scientifically and Rhetorically Practical Consequences for Writers of Science and Their Teachers"
- Selzer, "Rhetorical Analysis: Understanding How Texts Persuade Readers"
- Cooper, "The Ecology of Writing"
- Lamott, "Shitty First Drafts"
- Articles from journals in your discipline
- Peer interaction on rhetorical analysis practice and peer workshops

Rhetorical analysis rubric adapted from Owen Williamson, University of Texas El Paso

CATEGORY	Meets expectations	Approaches expectations	Does not meet expectations
<p>Analysis</p> <p>30 pts.</p>	Specific, developed analysis and insightful observations.	Analysis is generally sound but could be more specific, insightful, or developed in some areas.	Analysis is sparse, lacks insight, or missing altogether.
<p>Supporting Details</p> <p>20 pts.</p>	Support information is related to analysis, supportive of the topic/subject, and specific.	Support information has minor or major weaknesses relative to analysis and/or support of the topic/subject.	Support information is unrelated, confusing, irrelevant, or absent.
<p>Focus</p> <p>20 pts.</p>	Maintains focus on topic/subject throughout.	Exhibits minor or major lapses in focus on topic/subject.	Fails to establish focus on topic/subject.
<p>Writing Fluency: Clear, Concise, Correct</p> <p>15 pts.</p>	Demonstrates skillful writing fluency; exhibits few or no mechanical errors.	Exhibits some mechanical errors that distract the reader.	Exhibits numerous mechanical errors that substantially distract the reader.
<p>Documentation</p> <p>15 pts.</p>	Sources are cited consistently in the document and on the reference page.	There are some omissions or inconsistencies of citation.	Citations are lacking or absent.