



# Rhetoric

## Instructor Handbook 2012-2013

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## QUICK REFERENCE: IMPORTANT CONTACTS

If you...	Call or Email...	At...
Need to find a sub for a predicted absence from class (e.g. conference).	The Rhetoric listserv	Rhet-instructors@list.uiowa.edu
Unexpectedly have to miss class and have not been able to arrange for a sub	Kris Bevelacqua, Phyllis Huston, and Katie McCullough	<a href="mailto:Kris-bevelacqua@uiowa.edu">Kris-bevelacqua@uiowa.edu</a> <a href="mailto:Phyllis-huston@uiowa.edu">Phyllis-huston@uiowa.edu</a> Katherine-mccullough@uiowa.edu 319-335-0178 <b>* email Kris and Phyllis and CC Katie. NO EXCEPTIONS.</b>
Need administrative help	Katie McCullough	<a href="mailto:Katherine-mccullough@uiowa.edu">Katherine-mccullough@uiowa.edu</a> 319-335-0020
Have students with concerns	Carol Severino	<a href="mailto:Carol-severino@uiowa.edu">Carol-severino@uiowa.edu</a> 319-335-0179
Suspect a case of plagiarism	Mary Trachsel	<a href="mailto:Mary-trachsel@uiowa.edu">Mary-trachsel@uiowa.edu</a> 319-335-0185
Need something beyond the scope of this list	Your Teaching Mentor, then Steve Duck	<a href="mailto:Steve-duck@uiowa.edu">Steve-duck@uiowa.edu</a> 319-335-0579

**More info at [clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric](http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric)**

## I. RHETORIC COURSES & CURRICULUM

### OVERVIEW – ROLE IN THE UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM – COURSES & CHARACTERISTICS – CURRICULUM SEQUENCE

#### OVERVIEW

The Rhetoric Department is charged with the serious responsibility of ensuring that all first-year students at The University of Iowa have a strong foundation in critical reading and thinking, effective processes for writing and presentations, and public speaking skills.

#### OUR ROLE IN THE UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM

Rhetoric is the first foundational course for the General Education curriculum for the entire University. Most students take Rhetoric during their first or second semester of University study: thus, we strive to prepare every student to competently participate in University life: they should leave with the critical thinking, writing, and speaking skills that their future courses will build upon. Ideally, Rhetoric is a gateway to college learning, not a gatekeeper.

#### COURSES & CHARACTERISTICS

Nearly all students take RHET 1030, the 4 semester hour course, but there are 3 semester hour versions for students who have completed partial requirements. The **vast majority** of Rhetoric instructors will only teach RHET 1030.

RHET 1030 Rhetoric (4 sh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The general education Rhetoric course, which includes both college-level writing and public speaking in its curriculum.</li> <li>• Requires 2 major writing assignments and 2 major speeches</li> </ul>
RHET 1040 Writing and Reading (3 sh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Rhetoric course for students who have fulfilled the public speaking requirement, but not requirements for college-level writing coursework.</li> <li>• Requires 3 major writing assignments</li> </ul>
RHET 1060 Speaking and Reading (3 sh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Rhetoric course for students who have fulfilled all college-level writing requirements, but have not yet taken a course in public speaking.</li> <li>• Requires 3 major speeches</li> </ul>
Academic Seminar I and II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Seminar courses are part of the IowaLink program, a two-semester academic support program administered jointly by the Rhetoric Department and the Academic Advising Center.</li> </ul>

**Honors:** The DEO may designate some 1030 sections as “Honors,” which limits enrollment to students in the Honors program. Qualified students may receive Honors credit for any section if the teacher is willing to supervise a special project.

**Courses in Common:** Courses in Common is a special program for first-year students at UI that allows them to enroll in a shared set of courses with the same group of classmates. Sometimes, sections of Rhetoric are designated CIC (you can tell by checking MAUI and looking for a “C” next to your course). CIC courses have the benefit of a strong bond among students, and thus can be a bit boisterous. Some CIC sections are for students who’ve declared majors in a specific field, e.g. Business or Engineering. Talk to your Teaching Mentor if you have questions about leading a CIC section.

**Special Topics:** Some Rhetoric sections are designated as special topics courses designed to appeal to students in STEM, law, business, or health. These are taught by faculty members, not graduate instructors.

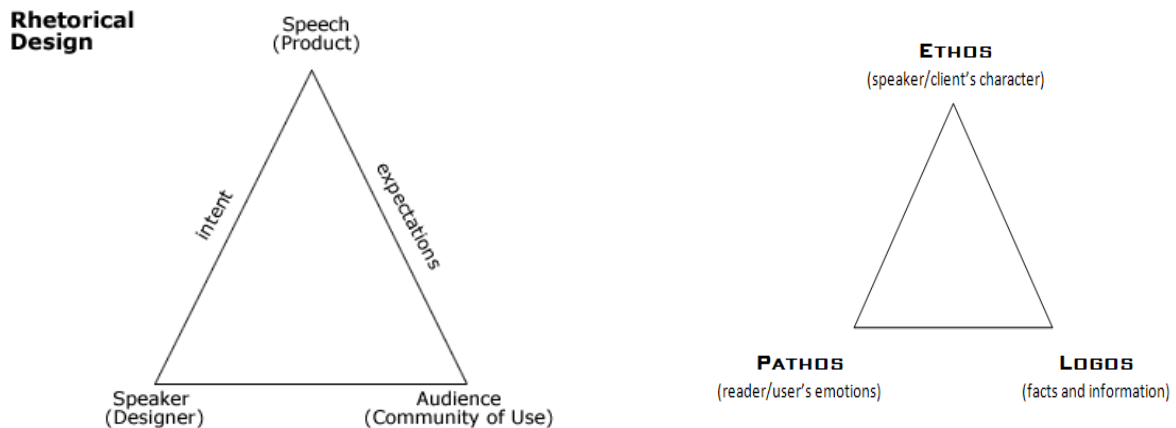
### CURRICULUM SEQUENCE

All Rhetoric courses follow the same sequence over the course of the semester: analyzing and describing a controversy from multiple perspectives, and finally, advocacy. Unlike traditional Composition, which often emphasizes genres and occasions for writing, Rhetoric is interested in the art of persuasion in all forms: essays and speeches, yes, but also film, advertising, products, and even spaces. Rhetoric asks us to consider form or genre as a *function* of persuasion (e.g., to get a toddler to eat broccoli, you don’t write an essay: you craft a game or song that meets the needs of your audience). **Rhetoric is a way of looking at the world so that we can see the mechanisms of persuasion at work, and eventually use them to our own benefit.** Thus, Rhetoric is an essential foundation for the kinds of critical thinking necessary in any discipline, field, career, or personal endeavor. We emphasize to students the universal applicability of Rhetoric and its usefulness not only in school, but also in everyday life (e.g. media awareness, activism, decision-making, etc).

Rhetoric is a **controversy-based curriculum**, meaning that introduction to the aforementioned skills is achieved by examining current issues through primarily non-fiction, contemporary texts. A focus on controversy allows students to analyze multiple perspectives on the same issue; compare and contrast the forms, messages, and appeals used for different audiences, and (ideally) articulate an informed perspective of their own. This is a great opportunity to get students thinking beyond simple binaries of yes/no, pro/con, and black/white: Rhetoric is an entrée into the kind of critical thinking that characterizes college classrooms. It also helps to show students that Rhetoric needs to be understood in the context of their lived experiences: it is about the “real world” as well as the university. For example, a course that focus on consumer culture might explore the way our understanding of adolescent identity and psychology is informed by advertising for products and experiences that become representative of teens and teen culture. This offers students an introduction to media criticism, via rhetoric, and asks them to consider their own experiences with consumption and their own identities as teens.

We begin by helping students understand that just about *everything* can be considered rhetorically: some texts are obviously persuasive (an ad, editorial, or political speech); others are less obviously argumentative but just as rich for rhetorical analysis (spaces like classrooms or museums, fashion, dietary guidelines, comedy routines, musical

preferences). Through **analysis**, we ask students to consider: the rhetor (e.g., writer, designer, artist), audience (e.g. dads, business owners, cheerleaders), message (e.g., buy this, do that, think this way), and context or social world in which the text exists (e.g., era, major events/issues of the time, social conventions, etc). Rhetorical analysis also considers the types of “appeals” or persuasive strategies used: logos or appeal to logic (facts, claims, warrants, evidence), ethos or appeal to character, and pathos (appeal to emotions). Not all Rhetoric instructors use this language, but the concepts are there.



**Describing a controversy** simply asks students to compare and contrast perspectives and rhetorical techniques across the same issue: for example, we might compare and contrast different fad diets and their respective audiences, messages, and appeals. You might closely follow an election to see how the different candidates appeal to the same demographic group. (This is sometimes referred to as “mapping.”) Some Rhetoric instructors treat analyzing and describing as a single unit, while others see them as more distinct stages.

Finally, you put these tools into the hands of your students and ask them to take a stance on an issue and **responsibly advocate** for it.

These are the major *rhetorical* concepts for the course: note that the class isn’t about mastering gender studies, agreeing with the instructor’s perspective on industrialized agriculture, or becoming a libertarian. Rhetoric is about developing skills and strategies. We are teaching students **how** to think, not **what** to think.

Throughout the semester, you also work with students (1) to develop both processes for writing and (2) to improve the clarity and effectiveness of the writt product. The department is committed to **process pedagogy**, a belief that good composition is the result of a complex process of pre-writing, collaboration, feedback, and revision. Thus, you will model these processes for students and give them many opportunities to revise and strengthen their work. Similarly, the Rhetoric course doesn’t exist to punish students for being fearful of public speaking, but rather offers a supportive learning environment in which students can practice and polish their public presentation skills.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR RHETORIC

### RHETORICAL KNOWLEDGE

By the end of Rhetoric, students should be able to:

- Focus on a purpose
- Respond to the needs of different audiences
- Respond appropriately to different kinds of rhetorical situations
- Recognize and employ the primary rhetorical concepts and persuasive strategies.

### CRITICAL THINKING, READING, AND WRITING

By the end of Rhetoric, students should:

- Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating
- Understand a writing assignment as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others
- Practice appropriate means of documenting their work
- Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material collected from many sources.

### PROCESSES

By the end of Rhetoric, students should:

- Be aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text
- Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading
- Understand writing as an open process that permits writers to use later invention and re-thinking to revise their work
- Understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
- Learn to critique their own and others' works
- To review works-in-progress in collaborative peer groups for purposes other than editing

### PUBLIC SPEAKING

By the end of Rhetoric, students should:

- Plan, arrange, and distinguish speeches for different purposes, including speeches that entertain, inform and persuade.
- Develop support, including researched authorities, for their speeches.
- Craft verbal and nonverbal messages to suit particular audiences and purposes.
- Deliver timed speeches before audiences and respond to audience questions.
- Evaluate their own and others' speaking, identifying aspects of preparation, arrangement, critical thinking, and delivery.
- Prepare and use visual aids.

## II. DESIGNING YOUR COURSE

### TEXTS – SYLLABUS TEMPLATE – MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

#### TEXTS FOR THE RHETORIC COURSE

Every Rhetoric class uses approved texts, whether an anthology of articles (“reader”), trade book, or a course pack. Other texts are optional (e.g., guides to argumentation and writing, called “rhetorics”). These texts provide a springboard for class discussion and analysis, and can be supplemented with other texts such as newspaper articles, ads, film, museum exhibitions, speeches/events on campus, etc.

ALL instructors have these options available:

- 1 reader from the approved textbook list (see below).
- 1 reader + 1 trade book from the approved list.
- 2 trade books from the approved list.

After your first semester in the Department, you gain 3 more options:

- Use of single-topic readers from the *Longman Topics Series* (see below).
- Equivalent sets of alternative texts for which you request approval using the Alternative Textbook Application (ask your Teaching Mentor for the form).
- A course pack of texts approved in advance by your Teaching Mentor.

**For a full list of approved readers, trade books, and optional rhetorics, see Appendix A.**

#### SYLLABUS TEMPLATE

CLAS requires teachers to present and discuss a syllabus on the first day of class (either electronically or hard copy). Your syllabus must be based on the Dept. syllabus template, as discussed in your contract letter. The template is available at [clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric](http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric) and includes specific instructions as to which elements are required as is, and which are customizable to reflect your specific course and style as an instructor.

- Syllabi must be approved either by your Teaching Mentor (graduate instructors) or the DEO (faculty) before it may be released to students or posted to ICON.
- A draft must be sent to your Teaching Mentor/DEO *by the Friday before the start of the semester*.
- An approved final copy should be sent to the Teaching Mentor/DEO and Administrative Assistant.

#### MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Major assignments are substantial and challenging projects that meet the following criteria:

- Students receive a written assignment sheet (hard copy or electronic)

- Whether for writing or speaking, their texts undergo more than one revision or draft, with the final version having been prepared over a period of weeks.
- The student receives instructor and peer feedback at one or more draft stages, the earlier the better. Written response is recommended.

These assignments must be distinct from one another: Major Essay 1 cannot be “write the script for Major Speech 1.” It is a contractual obligation that you observe this distinction! Again, every 1030 class must include 2 major speeches and 2 major essays.

Most Rhetoric courses include numerous small-scale assignments in addition to the major essays and speeches. These include reading responses, impromptu speeches, small group exercises and activities, brainstorming, workshopping, etc. These informal assignments are:

- Exploratory and improvised rather than polished and formal.
- Evaluated based on content, discovery, and ideas rather than formal perfection.

Instructors often use informal assignments as steppingstones to major assignments. Building ideas and argumentation over time is not only helpful in developing student skills, it also reduces the likelihood of plagiarism. It is harder to cheat on a distinctive assignment that is closely connected to your course than a more generic and broad one. Sequencing smaller-to-larger assignments also allows you to guide student processes and offer feedback on work in progress.

**Note:** When designing your course calendar, it is a good idea to **distribute the major assignments throughout the semester**, rather than crowding them all in the final half of the semester. Not only is this easier on you as far as grading, it also gives students maximum time to learn and improve, and avoids a surprise grade based on multiple assignments evaluated in a short amount of time.

**Please see the Teaching Commons website for many examples of course and assignment design that have been successful for Rhetoric instructors:**

<http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/for-instructors/the-teaching-commons>



### III. GRADING

METHOD – ASSESSING PARTICIPATION – LATE WORK – GRADE DISTRIBUTION – MIDTERM & FINAL GRADES – INCOMPLETES – ICON

Grading is one of the most important and most challenging aspects of teaching life. You will find that every instructor has his or her own preferences and perspectives on the right way to evaluate and assess students in Rhetoric, and grading policies are often rooted in our beliefs and philosophies about appropriate instruction. Below are some requirements, as well as a few recommendations, related to grading students in Rhetoric. It's always a good idea to consult with your Teaching Mentor on grading issues, as well as peers in the department.

#### METHOD: POINTS, PERCENTAGES, OR PORTFOLIO?

Generally, instructors in Rhetoric use one of these three methods to evaluate student work, each with its benefits and drawbacks. Briefly:

- A points system is based on numerical values for assignments and required components (e.g. 5 points for argumentation, 5 points for grammar, total value 25 points for a speech).
- A percentage system determines the relative weight of categories of assignments (e.g. Major Essay 1 is worth 15% of the overall grade) but may use a points-based or holistic assessment method for individual assignments.
- A portfolio grading system is more descriptive and less quantitative. Portfolio grading relies heavily on rubrics and holistic assessment of student improvement over time.

See **Appendix B** for a breakdown of the relative merits of each and check in with other instructors to learn about their experiences with different grading systems. Whatever method you chose, **your grading policy should be crystal clear** to your students from day one. While you may be able to make minor adjustments to your policy after the start of the semester, you're generally locked in once that syllabus is approved and distributed, so careful planning is crucial right off the bat.

#### ASSESSING PARTICIPATION

You may not reward a student for mere attendance – that is, we don't give students points for just showing up. The Department encourages assessment on the basis of active participation in the course. This means absences *can* impact a grade, because they impact the quality of student participation.

Because “active participation” can mean different things to different people, you should consider and then articulate what it means in the context of your course. It is also wise to track the participation grade in some way so that it isn't left completely up to your memory, and is defensible. Your Teaching Mentor and department peers will have many ideas for this.

If a student is **repeatedly absent or misses more than two weeks in a row**, you are encouraged (but not required) to discuss this with your Teaching Mentor and/or the DEO. They can arrange for inquiries to be made to support the student, if necessary.

Students cannot be penalized for **excused absences** (see below).

### LATE WORK

**“No late work” is not an acceptable policy** in the Rhetoric Dept. The CLAS recommends that we accommodate excused absences, which in Rhetoric generally means allowing students to make up a reasonable amount of work without penalty if circumstances allow. Each instructor has his or her own take on late work policies: ask around and consult your Teaching Mentor.

Excused absences are allowed by such unavoidable circumstances as:

- Illness
- Family emergency
- Mandatory religious obligations
- Authorized University activities, which includes athletics, marching band, etc.

Absences that can be predicted in advance (University activities, religious observations) should be documented and arranged in advance. For other excuses, teachers may ask students to complete the “Explanatory Statement for Absences from Class” form available from Student Health services, the Registration Center, or [registrar.uiowa.edu/forms/absence.pdf](http://registrar.uiowa.edu/forms/absence.pdf)

For further info, including advice from Student Health Services, see the CLAS website for faculty: [clas.uiowa.edu/faculty](http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty)

CLAS also directs teachers to **excuse students from content or activities that, for reasons of “intellectual freedom,” they find objectionable**. Please see the UI Operations Manual III.15.2f for more information on this. If your course includes material that some may find offensive or objectionable, you are obligated to warn students and if they chose to use this option, you may (but need not) require an alternative assignment or activity.

**Students sometimes skip an evening Rhetoric section to take a test for another class.** These are not excused absences. Scheduled classes always take precedence over exams given outside of class time, so **the OTHER teacher is required to accommodate your students’ schedules**. See the CLAS website’s policy on night exams.

### GRADE DISTRIBUTION

- Major assignments must make up at least 60% of the overall course grade.

- Participation cannot exceed 20% of the overall course grade (typically 10% -- see below).
- Most teachers have an “informal work” category that acts as a catch-all for smaller, miscellaneous assignments that make up much of the daily work in class.

The Rhetoric Dept. does not mandate a grade distribution or curve; however, the CLAS does suggest guidelines, noting: “Fairness to students... implies reasonably consistent grading among courses of the same level, all things being equal.” For introductory courses, the CLAS recommends this distribution:

A	B	C	D	F	Average
15%	34%	40%	8%	3%	2.5

That being said, Rhetoric is committed to **process pedagogy** and understands that students are given ample feedback from peers and instructors, and multiple opportunities to improve their performance. At times, this may result in a distribution that skews up a bit. PDP and midterm folder conversations with your Teaching Mentor offer ample opportunity to discuss, reflect on, and revise your grading process.

For more information, see  
[clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching/grading/grade\\_distributions.shtml](http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching/grading/grade_distributions.shtml)

### MIDTERM AND FINAL GRADES

Regardless of your grading method, no student should be surprised by a final grade.

At midterm, you must:

- Determine a current grade for all students and **report the distribution** to your Teaching Mentor before submitting grades to the Registrar.
- **Give every student a written grade and report any grade below a C-** via MAUI (you will receive departmental reminders for this).
- **Collect student portfolios/folders** and present a sample of them to your Teaching Mentor (typically one high performing example, one satisfactory, and one subpar). (see below for more information)

At finals, you must:

- Determine a current grade for all students and **report the distribution** to your Teaching Mentor before submitting grades. **DO NOT PRESS:** “SUBMIT TO REGISTRAR”
- **File grades** on MAUI by the Departmental deadline. **NOTE: ALL RHETORIC GRADES MUST BE APPROVED BY OUR DEO.** For this reason, **we have to turn our grades in earlier than the rest of the University.** You will receive departmental reminders for this.

You may occasionally receive forms called “**Performance Reports**” from the Academic Advising Center via campus mail. They ask you to evaluate the performance of specific

students at the 5<sup>th</sup> week, 10<sup>th</sup> week, and end of the semester. These are students who participate in various University programs through which they receive extra monitoring and support through the Advising Center. **These forms are OPTIONAL** and only University officials review them to obtain information that may help them better enable student success.

### INCOMPLETES

A grade of “I” or Incomplete may be given to a student at your discretion if the unfinished portion of the student’s work is small, the rest of the work satisfactory, and the reason for not finishing is legitimate (e.g. illness).

- You should consult your Teaching Mentor before assigning an “I.”
- You must fill out a Departmental form for every Incomplete you assign.
- Typically, you and the student must arrange and report a new due date by which the Incomplete work must be turned in.
- After six months, any “I” automatically becomes an F.

### ICON

ICON is a course management system utilized by the University of Iowa with a full range of customizable options that can enhance your Rhetoric teaching. Most relevant to Rhetoric instructors, ICON includes:

- An area for you to post course materials, e.g. the syllabus and assignment sheets, etc
- Secure and private discussion boards
- A “drop box” for electronic submission of assignments
- Group email to all members of the class
- A **very simple to use gradebook** that allows you to set weights for categories and even track more holistic evaluation measures (check/check plus, etc). One benefit of using the ICON gradebook is that the student can access grades at any time and has no excuse or reason to be surprised at the end of the semester.

Support and training for ICON is available through ITS. Go to [icon.uiowa.edu](http://icon.uiowa.edu) to find links for training sessions, online support, and contacts. They can also meet with you individually to walk you through the process.

## IV. POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ADMINISTRATIVE HOME – OFFICE HOURS – REGISTRATION – ABSENCES FROM TEACHING – FERPA – DIVERSITY – RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS – EVALUATIONS – RESEARCH STUDIES – SALE OF MATERIALS

### ADMINISTRATIVE HOME

Rhetoric is a mainstay of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and is governed by their policies. Learn more at [clas.uiowa.edu](http://clas.uiowa.edu)

### OFFICE HOURS

- All instructors are required to hold **3 office hours per week** in your designated departmental office (no off campus meetings).
- You must post your office hours on your door each semester and actually be in your office, available for student drop-ins.
- You must also indicate your availability for meetings by appointment if a student has a conflict with your designated office hours.

### COURSE REGISTRATION

**Never sign an add/drop slip for Rhetoric.** It's as simple as that! Only the DEO can sign for add/drops. If a student shows up with an add slip signed by the DEO, add them to your roster. If a student shows up who is NOT on your roster, send them to the Main Office immediately (171 EPB).

### ABSENCES FROM TEACHING

According to the Operations Manual, teachers must “meet classes as scheduled and, when circumstances prevent this, they must arrange equivalent alternate instruction” (III.15.2b).

- “As scheduled” means at the assigned time and place for every session. Occasional exceptions may be made for field trips or visits to the library for specific course purposes.
- Classes **cannot** be canceled for conferences with students.<sup>1</sup>

If you know **in advance** that you will be missing class:

- You must notify the main office (Kris and Phyllis), DEO, and your Teaching Mentor.
- You should arrange for a sub as quickly as possible by asking around or emailing the rhet-instructors listserv. Often, several instructors are in need of subs in advance (e.g. to attend conferences) and can arrange to swap courses.

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<sup>1</sup> The **only** exception to this is the Academic Seminar course in the Iowa Link program, which is allowed one week of class cancelation for one-on-one meetings with students.

- Graduate employees with questions about **maternity leave or other more long-term leave issues** should consult the graduate employee contract at the COGS website (cogs.org) and be in touch with the main office, DEO, and your Teaching Mentor as soon as possible.

If you must **miss class unexpectedly**, you must notify the Dept Office and Administrative Assistant and **make a “good faith” effort to arrange for a substitute.**

- Email or call Kris and Phyllis ASAP, and CC Katie on the email.
- Email the rhet-instructors listserv requesting a sub. Be sure to include the date, time, and meeting place of your class, and it helps if you have a description of the activity that day (e.g. “Lead the class through a workshop of their speech drafts – I will email you the handout.”).
- While instructors often offer incentives for substituting (baked goods, etc), **this is not required** and you aren’t expected to compensate other people for covering your class.

If you unexpectedly need to miss class	Email or call Kris Bevelacqua, Phyllis Huston, and Katie McCullough	<a href="mailto:Kris-bevelacqua@uiowa.edu">Kris-bevelacqua@uiowa.edu</a> <a href="mailto:Phyllis-huston@uiowa.edu">Phyllis-huston@uiowa.edu</a> Katherine-mccullough@uiowa.edu 319-335-0178 <b>* email Kris and Phyllis and CC Katie. NO EXCEPTIONS.</b>
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These are contractual obligations. Unreported absences may result in financial or other penalties, up to and including withholding of pay and loss of position.

FERPA

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) grants students certain rights and places certain obligations on the University. **The most important thing to remember is that student records are highly confidential.**

- **Never** post grades, even with names removed.
- **Never** leave student work in halls, the mailroom, or the Dept. office.
- **Never** discuss a student’s performance with anyone: parent, roommate, classmate, etc. If a parent contacts you, direct them to the DEO and alert the DEO immediately. Politely decline to discuss the matter.

The exception to the rule is that **you may share confidential information with a University officer who needs it to perform their job** (e.g., an academic adviser or your Teaching Mentor).

Student folders are also confidential. If you do not return student folders at the end of the semester, **the College requires that you keep them for the next full semester and maintain grade records for five years** (ICON makes this less daunting).

**Do not talk about students and grades publicly.** Thanks to the magic of Google, it is easy for students to find out if you've mentioned their performance on Facebook, for example. Consider ways you can protect your own privacy and **never** use names or identifying information. Be discreet.

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY

The Department affirms the University's belief that the diversity in our classes contributes to the quality of education in our institution. The Rhetoric course offers students a fantastic opportunity to learn with peers of all kinds, and we are especially mindful of establishing for first-year students the importance of respect and open-mindedness in the college classroom.

Familiarize yourself with the wide range of policies and procedures that protect our rights to equal access and opportunity at our institution. Your classroom must not become a place where discrimination or harassment are acceptable: that means you can't discriminate, and it means you can't tolerate this behavior in your students, either. In a nutshell, individuals shall not be treated differently on the basis of:

- Race
- Creed
- Color
- National origin
- Age
- Sex
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Associational preference (i.e. who this person likes to hang out with, e.g. a frat or the NRA or goths)

These policies are built into the syllabus template, and you can read more at [uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/index.html](http://uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/index.html) – if you have questions or concerns, talk to your Teaching Mentor (graduate instructors) or the DEO (faculty).

### CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

**Do NOT date your students** while they are your students. It creates too many conflicts of interest and potential abuses of power. According to the Operations Manual, *any* romantic and/or sexual relationship between an instructor and a student in an instructional context is *prohibited* at The University of Iowa.

For more information, see the training module you are required to complete as an employee of the institution, or review policies at [uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/ii/05.htm](http://uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/ii/05.htm)

## COURSE EVALUATIONS

- **Evaluations at the end of the course are mandatory**, but you have the *option* of giving students an opportunity to write a midterm evaluation of your course using your own prompts. Assure students that these are optional and make sure they stay anonymous in their feedback (CLAS policy: Optional Mid-term Evaluations: “*Some instructors find it beneficial to have a mid-term or earlier evaluation for their own use. Instructors may devise their own evaluation instruments or may work with EES. Instructors who choose to do such evaluations should assure students that these evaluations are optional and must develop ways to preserve the anonymity of the responses.*”)
- During the **final few weeks of the semester, you are required** to set aside at least 20 minutes of class for students to complete the required and standardized ACE forms provided by the Department. You **may not be present in the room** during evaluation completion. Students need #2 pencils to complete evals. You can get little bundles of golf pencils from the Main Office for this purpose, but you **MUST** return these! Otherwise, your pencil privileges may be revoked 😊.
- **Course evals will be returned to you a few weeks after the end of the term and are delivered to your Dept. mailbox.** While the Dept. maintains copies of the *quantitative* data, they **do not keep copies of the formative comments** your students write. Be sure to hang on to these so you can use examples of positive student feedback on applications, etc, as well as use constructive criticism to improve future courses.

## RESEARCH STUDIES

A researcher must receive permission from the Department before approaching teachers about using a class in the study. The DEO reviews initial requests to ensure that the project is relevant to the Department, does not demand excessive time, and allows students to give informed consent. Participation is always voluntary.

If you want to conduct research or collect data on your own instruction in the Rhetoric department, talk to your Teaching Mentor and then the DEO. You will have to obtain the appropriate Human Subjects Research approval through the University’s IRB (Institutional Review Board) and, depending on the project, may be required to obtain consent forms from students. Learn more at [research.uiowa.edu/hso](http://research.uiowa.edu/hso)

## SALE OF MATERIALS

University policy forbids teachers to collect money from students for any reason, including the sale of educational materials (e.g. supplies, etc).



## V. RIGHTS, RESOURCES & OBLIGATIONS AS MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT

HIRING – GRADUATE EMPLOYEES – PDP – MENTORING – GAC – WRITING & SPEAKING CENTERS

### HIRING

Reappointment should never be taken for granted. To be eligible, first-year instructors must make adequate progress towards a degree and satisfactorily fulfill their teaching obligations as explained in the letter of appointment (e.g., attending the August PDP workshop), in this Handbook (e.g., grading policies), and in occasional memoranda (e.g., completing course evaluations in a timely manner).

- Appointments beyond the second year are less common, but may occur, depending on the needs of the Department.
- Only ½ time assistantships (3 sections per year) are generally available.

When **extra sections are available** (e.g. summer session courses), the DEO typically gives preference to experienced graduate instructors with an outstanding record for teaching and service, who have made progress in their degrees, and have not previously benefitted from extra assignments. For summer sections, strong preference is given to TAs scheduled to teach in the Dept. the following year.

### GRADUATE EMPLOYEES

The general contract for *all* graduate employees is negotiated by the graduate student employee union, COGS (Committee to Organize Graduate Students). You can view the contract; your rights as a graduate employee; information about grievance procedures; and other issues that affect you as a grad employee (health insurance, etc) at [cogs.org](http://cogs.org)

Because Iowa is a “right to work” state, you are not automatically made a member of the graduate student union. For more information, contact COGS.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PDP)

Rhetoric’s Professional Development Program (PDP) has the specific goal of supporting all graduate instructors and faculty during their first semester of teaching, along with the general goal of promoting your long-term growth as an educator. PDP has an outstanding reputation both as a model program for initiating graduate students into the teaching aspects of the academic profession. It is not a “training” program, but a dialogue among expert and novice teachers.

PDP starts with a mandatory, three-day workshop in August, the week before classes begin. Advisory groups of 10-12 new teachers are team-taught by experienced graduate instructors and faculty leaders. During this workshop, you will begin developing a general plan for the semester and a detailed plan for the opening weeks of class.

These discussions continue through the Fall semester in the required PDP Colloquium, RHET:5350, which meets 3:30-5:20 on Thursday afternoons.

- All new graduate instructors must enroll in their assigned section of RHET:5350 Colloquium (you determine if you want it to bear credit hours).
- The colloquium is graded S/U.
- You cannot enroll in any courses that conflict with the Colloquium, including courses that meet from 2:30-3:45.

PDP is designed to balance discussions of larger issues in pedagogy and instruction, while also providing practical support in developing teaching materials and troubleshooting issues. Style, activities, and instruction can vary from section to section. Once you are done with PDP, the Department offers graduate-level courses that provide opportunities for professional development (e.g. courses on service learning, advanced pedagogy, teaching with multimodal texts, etc).

**Attendance and satisfactory performance in the August workshop and Thursday afternoon Colloquium are conditions of your employment.**

### MENTORING

Every graduate instructor has an assigned faculty Teaching Mentor who is the “go to” person for issues related to teaching, from questions about course design to grading to dealing with student concerns. The Teaching Mentors also act as designated “course supervisors,” giving them some administrative purview over mentees and their courses. During your first year, your Teaching Mentor is your PDP Leader, but this may change during subsequent semesters.

Teaching Mentors are charged with fostering your development as a graduate instructor, approving your course materials and your four major assignments and monitoring your progress.

You are required to provide the following materials to your Teaching Mentor **on time**:

- Draft of syllabus by the Friday before the start of the semester.
- Final copy of syllabus (CC the Administrative Assistant).
- Midterm student portfolio examples.

Teaching Mentors may recommend improvements or changes to your materials, and you may not distribute these materials to students without Mentor approval. Prompt submission of required materials ensures that Teaching Mentors can get back to you in a timely manner. Some Teaching Mentors may request additional materials, ask for face-to-face meetings, or ask to observe and offer feedback on your teaching.

**Midterm “Folders”** or portfolios are collected with the intent of providing instructors with holistic feedback on assignments, grading, and commentary on student work. These samples of student work open the door to conversations about any number of pedagogical

and classroom topics and are intended to aid your development as a teacher, fine tune your instruction and grading, prevent problems before they arise, and troubleshoot concerns specific to your class and needs.

Note:

- **Beginning in 2012** first-semester Rhetoric instructors have the opportunity to pilot an electronic teaching portfolio project using the iFolio service of the University. For these graduate instructors, all required materials will be sent to the Teaching Mentor via iFolio, including midterm and final student “folders” (in electronic form).
- **Beginning in Spring 2013**, graduate instructors will be required to enroll in mentoring hours each semester, with their Teaching Mentor as “instructor.” Thanks to the tuition remittance gained in the new graduate employee contract (see above), this will be free to you. These mentoring hours benefit you because they (a) compensate your Mentor with a release from classroom instruction duties so that they can fully serve your needs and development as a new college instructor and (b) account for your professional development as a college instructor.

Ideally, the relationship between Teaching Mentor and graduate instructor is a mutually beneficial apprenticeship that productively contributes to your growth as a college-level instructor and your success as a Rhetoric teacher. If at any time you’d like to discuss issues about teaching or the Department with someone other than your Teaching Mentor, contact the DEO.

### GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GAC)

The GAC represents graduate instructors in departmental discussions. The GAC meets regularly with the DEO, and a member sits in on faculty meetings to represent the graduate instructor perspective on policy, curriculum, etc. Often, the GAC communicates with instructors via the listserv to respond to issues, provide information, and solicit feedback. The GAC is made up of a small group of volunteer members who typically serve two years (so that every year there are a few folks who’ve done it before). You must be available for regular meetings and participate in discussions via email (in other words, you must be an *active* participant or else let someone else take your place!).

GAC is a fantastic professional development opportunity that allows you to serve the department, and influence and understand Departmental policy. An email about GAC is circulated via the listserv early in the Fall semester: respond if you are interested.

### THE WRITING & SPEAKING CENTERS

We are fortunate to have two fantastic resources for students and instructors housed in our Department.

**The Writing Center** (110 EPB) supports any student at the University needing assistance with writing. They have enrollment, appointments, and on-line tutoring. Check out their website for a complete description of their services, including a section devoted entirely to support for instructors: [www.uiowa.edu/~writingc/](http://www.uiowa.edu/~writingc/)

- At the start of the semester, pick up some brochures for your students. New TAs may request that a representative of the Center visit your class and explain the Center's services. These services are free and Rhetoric students get top priority. That being said, **you may not require students to visit the Writing Center for help on papers**. Encourage, cajole, strenuously request, but do not require. The sooner students sign up, the better.
- **If you're interested in tutoring** in the Writing Center, you must take the RHET:5375 Teaching in a Writing Center course, which is offered ONLY in the Fall. The course offers instruction in one-on-one tutoring, working with second-language students, and struggling writers and readers. Contact Carol Severino at [carol-severino@uiowa.edu](mailto:carol-severino@uiowa.edu) if you are interested.

**The Speaking Center** (410,412, 414 EPB) offers support for any student at the University seeking to improve their oral communication. They have a library of example videos and resources for instructors needing assistance with teaching speech. The Speaking Center also offers instructor consultations on **any pedagogical issue**. Please see the Speaking Center website for more info: <http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/for-students/speaking-center>

- **If you are interested in tutoring** in the Speaking Center, contact the Director, Cinda Coggins-Mosher, at [sarah-coggins@uiowa.edu](mailto:sarah-coggins@uiowa.edu)

## VI. TROUBLESHOOTING

DEPARTMENTAL PROCEDURE FOR PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS – PLAGIARISM – PREVENTING PLAGIARISM – DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR – STUDENT COMPLAINTS – GRADUATE INSTRUCTOR DISMISSAL

### DEPT. PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS

Your first point of contact for problems and concerns is your Teaching Mentor (graduate instructors) or the DEO (faculty). Beyond that, it depends on the problem at hand.

- The Dept. has a Designated Reference Officer (DRO) who deals specifically with issues of **suspected plagiarism**. Mary Trachsel is our DRO: [mary-trachsel@uiowa.edu](mailto:mary-trachsel@uiowa.edu)
- Our TA Officer deals with **other complaints**: Carol Severino is the TA Officer ([carol-severino@uiowa.edu](mailto:carol-severino@uiowa.edu))
- Ultimately, the DEO will handle any unresolved problems at the Departmental level: Our DEO is Steve Duck ([steve-duck@uiowa.edu](mailto:steve-duck@uiowa.edu))

The **Office of the Ombudsperson** is a resource for any member of the university community - including students, faculty, and staff – with a problem or concern. They provide informal conflict resolution, mediation services and advocacy for fair treatment and fair process. Their services are confidential, neutral, informal, and independent. For more info, see <http://www.uiowa.edu/~ombud/>

### PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism poses special problems for Rhetoric teachers: while learning to use sources properly, students often misuse them by paraphrasing too closely, inaccurately citing, etc. Plagiarism should never be ignored, but you must use your best judgment to determine if a case is **intentional plagiarism** or not. If unintentional, it can be dealt with through criticism and revision. Intentional plagiarism is a different matter, governed by College and University policies regarding academic misconduct. **The CLAS has new academic fraud policies as of 2012.**

1. Document suspected plagiarism carefully:
  - Scan or download a copy of the student's assignment. (You can ask the Main Office to scan a hard copy.)
  - If you are able to locate the plagiarized sources, download or scan them.
2. Graduate instructors should contact their Teaching Mentors immediately, **before** contacting the student or responding to the assignment. You may also consult with the Designated Reference Officer, Mary Trachsel. The Mentor/DRO will likely ask you to share your documentation.
  - **If you determine that the plagiarism was intentional, CLAS dictates that the assignment be given a grade of F.**

- If you **cannot** adequately document the plagiarism, grade the assignment according to its success in responding to the prompt and address your concerns about proper attribution, etc, in your feedback or comments in a conference **without** accusing them of plagiarism. *Do not accuse someone of plagiarism without documentation.*
3. Send **the student an email** from your uiowa address to their uiowa address asking them to discuss the situation in person. Guidelines for the email can be found online at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-academic-fraud>  
*You must adhere to these guidelines!*
  4. **Discuss** the situation with the student face-to-face.
  5. After the student responds and/or you are able to discuss it with them, **complete the online reporting form for academic fraud**, which can be found at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/report-academic-fraud>  
The form automatically copies the DEO, Associate Dean, and the student.

### **Consequences:**

- Any assignment showing evidence of intentional academic fraud must be graded as F. (You have the option of failing a student for the entire course, but in order to do so, you must consult with your Mentor, the DEO, and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum at the CLAS.)
- For the first offense of fraud, students are typically placed on disciplinary probation.
- For a second offense, the student is suspended for a semester.
- For a third offense, the student is expelled.

Thus, it is crucial that ***all*** instances of intentional plagiarism be documented and reported, otherwise a student may repeatedly cheat without consequence.

### **PREVENTING PLAGIARISM**

Like a forest fire, it is best to prevent plagiarism before it starts:

- Design distinctive assignments connected closely to your course's topic.
- Break the assignment down into stages and include checkpoints so that by the time a final draft is turned in, you are familiar with the student's writing and have had ample opportunity to provide feedback and support in proper citation and attribution.
- Include a workshop that focuses on citations and use of resources.
- Ask students to turn in copies of their sources.

### DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

From time to time, every teacher encounters **mild misbehavior** in class, and these incidents can usually be handled as a matter of the normal conduct of the class. If you notice a pattern of misbehavior emerging, you may need to meet individually with the student to discuss it. You are invited to discuss any behavior problems as early as possible with your Teaching Mentor.

In the unusual instance that **a student is a major disruption in class and refuses to stop**, you should tell them to leave. Immediately report such an instance to your Teaching Mentor (graduate instructors) or the DEO (faculty).

In **exceptional cases of dangerous disruption**, you should call the UI Dept. of Public Safety and request that the student be removed from class: **319-335-5022** (program that into your phone!) *This option should not be used lightly and is very seldom necessary.* Obviously, if you call the cops on a student, you should immediately report the incident to the DEO (everyone) and the TA Officer and your Teaching Mentor (graduate instructors).

### STUDENT COMPLAINTS

The syllabus explains to students the proper recourse for complaints.

1. First, they should talk to you.
2. If necessary, they can approach your Teaching Mentor or the TA Officer (for graduate instructors), or the DEO (faculty).
3. As a last resort, they can contact the College.

These steps are important and shouldn't be skipped, although some students and parents may attempt to go straight to the top. **Emphasize step one** and make it as easy as possible for them to approach you with concerns.

Should a student escalate a complaint with the Dept, this is what happens:

- The TA Officer handles concerns for courses taught by graduate instructors. The DEO handles concerns for full-time faculty members.
- She establishes that the student has spoken with you or has a valid reason for feeling uncomfortable approaching you.
- She then decides how to proceed based on the nature of the complaint.
- When appropriate, students are invited to write up his or her concerns.
- You have an opportunity to write a response.

Most complaints are resolved at the Department level; students seldom file appeals with the College and our policies of managing ourselves internally respect the many kinds of issues that arise. Time and low-level intervention resolve most issues before escalation.

Complaints must remain confidential unless the TA Officer needs to consult with another official. Documents related to complaints are rarely placed in teachers' personnel files and never without them being informed.

### GRADUATE INSTRUCTOR DISMISSAL

According to the Operations Manual, grounds for dismissal include:

1. Loss of student status: A TA may be dismissed by the Dean of his or her college during the term of appointment if the TA's status as a student or degree candidate is suspended or terminated.
2. Other grounds – an assistant may be dismissed by the Dean of his or her College during the term of appointment(s) for any reason sufficient to dismiss a faculty member, or for failure to follow or implement properly and adequately reasonable instructions of his or her supervisor when such instructions are within the proper scope of the supervisor's duties.

For that and more bureaucratic speak on this issue, consult the Operations Manual on the UIowa website.

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## APPENDIX A

### APPROVED TEXTS FOR 2012-2013

#### READERS

- Envision in Depth** (Alfana & O'Brien; Pearson/Longman; 9780205758463) \$73
- They Say/I Say with Readings*** (Graff & Birkenstein; W.W. Norton; 9780393912753) \$49
- Everything's an Argument with Readings*** (Lunsford & Ruskiewicz; Bedford/St. Martin's; 9780312538613) \$71
- Conversations*** (Selzer; Pearson/Longman; 9780205835119) \$78
- The Longman Topics Series***. This is a new reader option now approved for experienced instructors: <http://www.pearsonhighered.com/topics/>. These books offer 30-40 individual readings on a single topic and cost approximately \$25 per volume. We strongly recommend adoption of more than one volume or one volume with a trade book. Please provide the title, ISBN, and the specifics of what volume you want.

#### TRADE BOOKS

- Zeitoun*** (Dave Eggers; Vintage Books, 9780307387943 ) \$16
- The Shallows*** (Nicholas Carr; Norton, 9780393339758 ) \$16
- Eating Animals*** (Jonathan Safran Foer; Back Bay Books, 9780316069885) \$18
- Outliers: The Story of Success*** (Malcolm Gladwell; Little, Brown & Co., 9780316017390) \$20
- Field Notes from a Catastrophe*** (Elizabeth Kolbert; Bloomsbury, 9781596911307) \$15
- Freakonomics*** (Levitt & Dubner; Harper Perennial, 9780060731335) \$16
- Methland*** (Nick Reding; Bloomsbury, 9781609192076 ) \$16
- The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*** (Rebecca Skloot; Broadway, 9781400052189) \$16
- All That We Share*** (Jay Walljasper; New Press, 9781595584991) \$19
- Persepolis*** (Marjane Satrapi; Pantheon, 9780375714573) \$14
- Generation Me*** (Jean Twenge; Free Press, 9780743276986) \$13

#### RHETORICS (OPTIONAL SUPPLEMENTS)

- They Say/I Say (without readings)*** (Graff & Birkenstein; W.W. Norton; 9780393933611) \$24
- The Nuts & Bolts of College Writing*** (Harvey; Hackett; 9780872205734) \$9
- Thank You for Arguing*** (Heinrichs; Random House; 9780307341440) \$14
- Everything's An Argument (without readings)*** (Lunsford & Ruskiewicz; Bedford/St. Martin's; 9780312538620) \$46
- A Pocket Guide to Public Speaking*** (O'Hair, Rubenstein & Stewart; Bedford/St. Martin's; 9780312554040) \$29
- Envision: Writing & Researching Arguments*** (Alfano & O'Brien; Pearson/Longman, 9780205758470) \$46

For alternative or custom book orders, please attach a completed "Alternative Textbook/Course Pack Application" form.

## APPENDIX B

### GRADING METHODS

Method	Some Benefits	Some Drawbacks
<b>Points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple and straightforward.</li> <li>• Importance of assignment reflected in its total point value.</li> <li>• Makes it clear where quality of work was present and where it fell short.</li> <li>• Easily calculable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to unintentionally inflate grades by having many small assignments for which students get full (or nearly full) credit.</li> <li>• Little wiggle room: sometimes a student may earn a grade based on points that doesn't line up with your judgment about the quality of work.</li> <li>• Students can obsess over points instead of focusing on the aspects of their work that need development.</li> </ul>
<b>Percentages or "Weighted" Grades</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No matter how many assignments are in a category, you can control how much they count toward the overall grade by determining the category's weight.</li> <li>• Points on individual grades makes it clear where quality of work was present and where it fell short.</li> <li>• Easily calculable (especially using ICON).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may be confused when dozens of 10/10 on small assignments don't yield an A because the category is weighted less than major assignments.</li> <li>• You have to predetermine a category for every assignment you will ever use.</li> <li>• Because individual assignments are typically graded by points, you still have some of the above drawbacks.</li> </ul>
<b>Holistic or Portfolio-Based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grading is based on meeting objectives, not "getting points:" <b>totally different conversations</b> with students.</li> <li>• Grading is based on individual student growth and improvement over time.</li> <li>• A portfolio method can attend to diversity in background and ability in a way that benefits students.</li> <li>• You have more control over grading and may feel that students are more accurately assessed for their abilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires a strong rubric and firm conviction so that you can explain exactly why students earned the grade they did.</li> <li>• Requires intensive feedback.</li> <li>• You'll need a good system for recording your evaluations and assessments. ICON can be configured for holistic grading, but it can't calculate final grades for you based on +/-, etc.</li> </ul>