ENGL 5369.001: Topics - Genres in Rhetoric and Composition

CHICANA/O RHETORIC: WRITING BEYOND BORDERS

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Spring 2016
Office: FC 275
Office Hours:
- MW 10:00 am – 11:00 am
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Course Description
Cultural differences, says Thomas R. West, are “supremely rhetorical” because differences are “defined in language and have real consequences.” How does Chicana/o operate in the world rhetorically? As a people in particular contexts, this course examines Chicana/o rhetoric as an embodied discourse that represents (and re-presents) lived aspects of local conditions, social practices or injustices, and cultural customs or traditions. For the purposes of this course, rhetoric will be understood as both a study and “strategic use” of written, spoken, and visual language. Students apply rhetorical theory to Chicana/o Rhetoric in order to understand the ways Chicana/o rhetoric organizes and maintains social groups, constructs meaning and negotiates identities, mediates power relations, produces change, and creates new knowledge.

Essential Questions
1) What exactly does the word Chicana/o mean?
2) What are characteristics and uses of Chicana/o rhetoric?
3) For Chicana/o rhetoricians, what are modes of thinking?
4) How does sociocultural context effect Chicana/o rhetorical actions?
5) Why is print media significant for Chicana/o movements?
6) How does Chicana/o operate in the world rhetorically?

Course Objectives
1) Gain factual knowledge about how Chicanas and Chicanos have been defined and named in the United States, as well as learn about the contributions Chicanas and Chicanos have made to the larger U.S. culture;
2) Gain basic knowledge of Chicana/o history and activism;
3) Gain basic understanding of core concepts, theories, and methods in Chicana feminist theory;
4) Discuss and learn the ways in which historical events, social and economic change, and social movements shape and are reflected not only in personal identity, but also rhetorical actions;
5) Examine Chicana and Chicoano rhetorical actions as a situated literacy practice to understand how those actions exemplify discourse as embodied and oppositional;
Develop rhetorical skills in creatively expressing oneself – constructing and exhibiting a *cajita* (rhetorical box) that studies and demonstrates the subjectivity of “bordered” people in the United States.

Develop rhetorical skills in expressing oneself orally and in writing – compiling and exhibiting a portfolio of work that studies and demonstrates critical engagement with Chicano/a rhetoric.

**Required Texts**


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*Light in the Dark / Luz en lo Oscuro: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality.*


- Additional Selected Readings: Posted on Blackboard (BB)

**Course Requirements / Assignments**

For this graduate course (seminar), students will participate in all course discussions, oral presentations, perform at least one seminar facilitation, write position papers, construct a *cajita*, write a seminar paper in two installments, and compile a portfolio at the end of the year.

In a graduate seminar, students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings and to share their thoughts and responses to the texts in class discussions. Please, bring the book or essays we are scheduled to discuss for that particular day. The assignments in this course are interconnected. Major assignments will be submitted into Blackboard via SafeAssign. A complete course calendar will be provided during the first week of class.

**Course Evaluation**

*Cañita* 10%

Facilitation 10%

Position Papers: 30%

Seminar Paper: 40% (total)

- First Draft 6-8 pages 15%
- Final Draft 15-20 pages 25%

Portfolio – Artifact 10%
Assignment Descriptions

Cajita – Total 10% of the course grade.
Due on March 31st. Each student will construct, exhibit, and present a cajita (box) to the class. This cajita is a rhetorical box, so to speak, that studies and demonstrates the subjectivity of “bordered” people in the United States. An explanation sheet will be provided in the first week of class. Your cajita write-up and photo will be included in the end of the year portfolio.

Seminar Facilitation – Total 10% of the course grade.
Each student will facilitate at least one seminar, which includes a synopsis of the text, an outline or bibliography, to bring up issues for further exploration by the class. You may use PowerPoint if you wish. The facilitator is primarily responsible for initiating and leading class discussion on the particular text(s) under consideration for that particular day. A sign up sheet will be provided in the first week of class. Your work for leading the seminar will be included in the end of the year portfolio.

Position Papers – Total 30% of the course grade.
Due Weekly. Each student will write a two-page (double-spaced) position paper, where he or she critiques, observes, synthesizes, and/or contextualizes the reading. Use the position paper to critically engage the reading, raise questions, make interconnections, etc. The position papers are argumentative, synthesizing content to make a claim. Position papers should not summarize the reading material. These position papers should engage your processes of composing small argumentative claims and can be beginning drafts of the writing to come for the seminar paper / portfolio. Please note, reframe from block quoting in the position papers, and submit your work during class only - hardcopy (no late position papers accepted). These position papers will be included in the end of the year portfolio.

Seminar Paper – Total 40% of the course grade.
Each student will produce a seminar paper in two installments. A preliminary draft is due at mid-term (15%) on March 10th and the final extended draft (revised) is due at the end of the semester (25%) on May 3rd. An explanation of the seminar paper will be provided in the third week of class, once you have a few position papers to draw from. You may write your seminar paper in the style preferred by your discipline, or in MLA, with a 10 scholarly source integration minimum standard. This seminar paper will be included in the end of the year portfolio.

Portfolio – Total 10% of the course grade.
Each student will submit a portfolio at the end for our final exam. This portfolio should demonstrate how your work in the course meets or exceeds course objectives. You will present the portfolio as an artifact that informs readers about your work and about how you understand Chicana/o operates in the world rhetorically. Due on the day of the Final: Tuesday, May 10th @ 7:00
Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a grade of F for the course.

Dropping a Class

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with the instructor before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 8th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Statement of Civility

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.
**Academic Advising**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. The Department Chair and the Office of the Dean must approve any amendment. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Disability Services**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Grade Appeals Process**
Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.