

**COMM / ENGL 7/8815**

**Seminar in the History of Rhetoric**

**M 5:30-8:30**

**Brad McAdon**

In this cross-listed seminar we are going to trace the developments of rhetoric and the teaching and practice of writing and speaking from the Renaissance to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The course is equally divided into three units: The Renaissance, British-Scottish, and early American.

For the first unit, we will read Peter Mack's *Renaissance Rhetoric: 1380-1620* as our guide while also reading excerpts from Desiderius Erasmus (*De Copia* and *Ciceronianus*) and Peter Ramus (*Arguments Against Quintilian*), and conclude the unit with Don Paul Abbot's "Reading, Writing, and Rhetoric in the Renaissance". We will then move on to the Scots and Brits beginning with John Ward's *System of Oratory* (1759) and Thomas Sheridan's *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* (1762), followed by George Campbell's *Elements of Rhetoric* (1776), Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783), Richard Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric* (1826), and we will conclude this unit with Linda Ferreira-Buckley's "Writing Instruction in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Great Britain: Continuity and Change, Transitions and Shifts". We will begin the third unit with a rhetorical analysis of the Declaration of Independence, informed by excerpts from, among others, Wilbur S. Howell's *Eighteenth Century British Logic and Rhetoric*. Next is John Q. Adams's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory* (1810), which we will read along with Ronald Reid's "The Boylston Professorship of Rhetoric and Oratory, 1806-1904." We will also read and analyze excerpts from Adams's *Amistad* defense before the Supreme Court. After Sarah Grimke's *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman* (1837), we will engage rhetorics that more specifically concern themselves with the teaching of composition, including selected readings from Alexander Bain's *English Composition and Rhetoric* (1866), Henry Day's *Art of Discourse* (1867), David J. Hill's *The Science of Rhetoric* (1877), and Adams Sherman Hill's *The Principles of Rhetoric* (1895). We will conclude the semester with Herbert Wicheln's "The Literary Criticism of Oratory" and Thomas P. Miller's *The Evolution of College English: Literacy Studies from the Puritans to the Postmoderns*.

As for assignments, students will write a 4-5 page summary / response for each unit, offer a class presentation on one of the texts / authors (or on a topic relevant to one of the units), and write a substantial semester research paper (that includes an annotated bibliography) on a topic that is relevant to one of the units.

Texts to be purchased:

Desiderius Erasmus, *On Copia of Words and Ideas*, Marquette UP, 1963 (978-0874622126)

Lynn Gaillet, ed., *Scottish Rhetoric and Its Influences*, Routledge, 1997 (978-1880393277)

Golden and Corbett, eds., *The Rhetoric of Blair, Campbell, and Whately*, SIUP, 1990 (978-0809316021)

Peter Mack, *Renaissance Rhetoric 1380-1620*, Oxford UP, 2013 (978-0199679997)

Thomas P. Miller, *The Evolution of College English: Literacy Studies from the Puritans to the Postmoderns*, U of Pittsburgh Press, 2011 (978-0822956235)

Walter Ong, *Ramus, Method, and Decay of Dialogue*, U of Chicago Press, 2005 (978-0226629766)

Peter Ramus, *Arguments in Rhetoric Against Quintilian*, James Murphy, ed., SIUP, 2010 (978-0809330140)