**Instructor:** Jill Coste  
**Email:** jill.coste@gmail.com  
**Class meets:** in LSS 246, T/Th 12:30 - 1:45 p.m.  
**Office hours:** in AL 218, T/Th 2 - 3 p.m., and by appointment  
**Office Mailbox:** in RWS main office, AH 3138

**Required texts and materials:**

1)  *RWS 100 Course Reader*. Listed under “Rhetoric & Writing Studies” or “Chris Werry,” available at SDSU bookstore.  
4)  Writing journal – a spiral-bound notebook for in-class assignments with a pocket folder to store portfolio work.

* Please bring the course reader, notebook, and appropriate texts to every class.

**Course Description**

What is rhetoric? Rhetoric is the ability to determine the best methods of persuasion in any given situation. It is the ability to introduce ideas effectively, so that the intended audience is moved to think differently, to agree or disagree with an idea, or to change a course of action. This semester, we will collectively engage in using our critical thinking skills to employ the art of rhetoric in writing. With emphasis on argument, these skills apply to all areas of academic study and professional fields.

This course is designed to prepare you to successfully undertake university-level writing projects across the disciplines. More importantly, rhetoric and rhetorical techniques are used everywhere, and this course will help you to evaluate rhetorical techniques used to persuade YOU to think a certain way and respond a certain way. Finally, no matter what profession you pursue, the ability to use rhetorical strategies—in other words, to communicate effectively—will help you succeed in that field.

**Course Requirements**

**Essays:** You will be required to write three essays of four to eight pages in length for this course. Each essay will require at least one rough draft and a peer review, which will be graded on a credit/no-credit basis. All pre-writing, rough drafts, and final drafts are due in class on the date specified. Additionally, final drafts are due electronically to Turn-it-In on the date specified. Specific criteria for each essay will be distributed along with the prompt. All essays must adhere to current MLA formatting standards and must be stapled.

I do not accept late work. If you have an extreme or extenuating circumstance, please make an appointment with me to discuss your particular situation, and be prepared to provide appropriate written documentation.
Conferencing: You must conference with me about your first major project. Time has been set aside in our schedule for this, and there will be additional times available. Failure to meet with me will result in the lowering of one letter grade for that particular project.

Class Participation: You are expected to participate. Active participators will arrive prepared, pay attention, and get involved in class activities. We will engage in both small group and large class discussion activities, as well as peer review, workshops and conferencing. Your participation in class, peer review, and at scheduled conferences is important and 10% of your grade.

Writing Journal/Portfolio: You will be required to keep a notebook throughout the course that you must bring to each class. This journal will contain entries where you will respond to and analyze the material we read this semester and/or use rhetorical strategies learned to assess and reflect upon current issues. Most entries will be written in-class, with some short assignments to be done as homework. This work should assist you in developing the three major essay assignments. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to catch up on any missed journal assignments (check with a peer, if needed). The journal will be collected twice during the semester to assess your progress.

Workshops: One or more drafts will be required for each writing assignment. You will “workshop” the essay with your peers, both gaining and giving feedback. You will complete feedback forms in peer review and be evaluated based on evidence of engagement in the activity.

Policies

Respect: The best classroom experience comes from students respecting each other and the instructor. This includes everything from coming to class on time, refraining from private conversations during class, to texting during a lecture. You are encouraged to join in class discussions, and varying views are welcomed, but please refrain from using obscene or offensive language and interrupting others.

Attendance: There is no substitute for attending class. Students are expected to attend all classes, and attendance will be taken. You are allowed three absences without penalty. After the third absence, your grade will lower. Please also note that arriving significantly late or leaving early without prior permission will count as an absence. **If you are absent you are still responsible for knowing what was covered in class, what the homework is, and when it is due.** I suggest you exchange phone numbers and/or emails with at least two of your classmates. In addition, check Blackboard regularly. You will not be allowed to make up any quizzes given on the day of your absence.

Electronics: Your active participation is required in this course. As such, all forms of electronics, including but not limited to laptops, cell phones, iPods, and iPads, are **not allowed for use in this class.** Calling, texting, surfing the web, or listening to music in class is not acceptable and is simply disrespectful. The only exception is if you have a written, medical excuse to use a laptop, and then you must sit in the back row. Be forewarned that I reserve the right to confiscate any devices should they prove to be a distraction to the class, or to your classmates, in any way.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism includes copying the ideas or writings of someone else and claiming it as your own work, collaborating with someone else on an assignment, and/or resubmitting work that you have done for another class. **DON’T DO IT.** Anyone caught plagiarizing will not only fail that assignment, but is likely to fail the class and will also face disciplinary action in accordance with the San Diego State University policy. CSU requires that all instances of academic dishonesty **must** be reported to the Office
of Student Rights and Responsibilities. You are responsible for reviewing SDSU’s policy on academic dishonesty at http://csrr.sdsu.edu.

**Essays:** All essays are due as a hard copy in class on the date specified. All essays must be typed, adhere to MLA format (12 point font, double space, times new roman, proper heading) and be stapled. You will find more information on MLA starting on page 93 of *The Little Seagull Handbook*. Essay pre-writing and drafts will not be graded as a final draft, but will receive points for completion. Late assignments will not be accepted.

**Turn-It-In Policy:** Turnitin.com (integrated within Blackboard) will be used in this course for many assignments. Students in this course agree that papers are subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Students may submit their papers in such a way that no identifying information about them is included in the database. Another option is that a student may request, in writing, that his/her papers not be submitted to Turnitin.com. However, this option requires the student to provide documentation to substantiate that the papers are the original work of the student and do not include any plagiarized material.

**Course Assistance Services**

**Office Hours:** I encourage all students to attend office hours, but especially if you have any questions or concerns about reading, writing, the course, or college in general. If you are coming to talk about an assignment, please bring all of your pre-writing, drafts, and final drafts with you. It will assist me in answering any questions you may have.

**Course Tutoring:** I welcome all students to attend office hours with questions on writing or the RWS 100 course. If you would like additional assistance and encouragement, SDSU has an excellent staff of tutors to assist students in all courses. Students who need assistance with course concepts or writing assignments in English or ESL are encouraged to contact the department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies at (619) 594-6515 for more information on drop-in tutoring hours.

**Disabled Students:** Every attempt will be made to offer reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities in this course. Students with disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor privately and to contact Student Disability Services (SDS) as soon as possible. All discussion of disabilities will take place privately to protect student confidentiality. SDS staff are available in the Capulli Center in Suite 3101 or by phone at (619) 594-6473 (voice) or (619) 594-2929 (TTD/TTY).

**Student Athletes:** Student athletes have very demanding, dynamic schedules which place additional hardship on excelling in both arenas. As an instructor, I am committed to helping you succeed in the course. To do so, regular and effective communication is needed. While no exceptions will be made for attendance, assignment deadlines, or exams, I would be happy to work with all student-athletes in conjunction with Student-Athlete Support Services (SASS) to help you excel in this course. For more information on SASS’ academic advising and tutoring services, call (619) 594-4743.
Grading Breakdown

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<tr>
<td>Essay #1 (4 - 6 pages)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay #2 (6 - 8 pages)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay #3 (4 - 6 pages)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Journal</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classwork/Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final – Writing Reflection</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Grading Rubric

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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-80%</td>
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Overview of Major Assignments

1) Describe and analyze an author’s argument, claims, project, support, and rhetorical strategies. (Unit 1: Mandelbaum)

2) Construct an account of an author’s project and argument and carry out research tasks to find information that helps clarify, illustrate, extend, or complicate that argument. Use appropriate reference materials in order to clarify your understanding of an argument. (Unit 2: Pinker)

3) Construct an account of one or more authors’ projects and arguments and explain rhetorical strategies that these authors—and by extension other writers—use to engage readers in thinking about their arguments. (Unit 3: Food, Inc.)

Final: We will use our final block for a graded, in-class reflection writing assignment on Tuesday, December 11 from 10:30 – 12:30.

Course Outline and Reading Schedule

Please note that the following schedule is approximate, as dates and topics may shift as the semester continues. All readings are expected to be completed outside of class by the discussion date.

Week 1
Aug. 28: Intro to course, discuss syllabus, key terms & concepts
Aug. 30: Applying key concepts to visual/written arguments

Week 2
Sept. 4: Pre-reading and reading strategies/short texts
Sept. 6: Rhetorical strategies/short texts

Week 3
[Note: Last day to drop classes is Sept. 10th]
Sept. 11: Introduction to 1st paper, begin discussion of Mandelbaum
[Note: Last day to add classes is by Sept. 12th]
Sept. 13: Mandelbaum
Week 4  
  Sept. 18: Mandelbaum  
  Sept. 20: Mandelbaum

Week 5  
  Sept. 25: **Paper #1 rough draft due** (bring 3 copies), peer-editing workshop  
  Sept. 27: Mandatory one-on-one conferencing (appointment times TBD)

Week 6  
  Oct. 2: Mandatory one-on-one conferencing (appointment times TBD)  
  Oct. 4: **Paper #1 and writing journals due in class**, intro to Unit 2 / Paper #2

Week 7  
  Oct. 9: Begin discussion of Pinker  
  Oct. 11: Pinker

Week 8  
  Oct. 16: Library orientation to research (date subject to change)  
  Oct. 18: Pinker

Week 9  
  Oct. 23: Pinker  
  Oct. 25: Pinker

Week 10  
  Oct. 30: Pinker  
  Nov. 1: **Paper #2 rough draft due** (bring 3 copies to workshop)

Week 11  
  Nov. 6: **Paper #2 due in class**, introduction to Unit 3 / Paper #3  
  Nov. 8: NO CLASS (Veteran’s Day)

Week 12  
  Nov. 13: Food, Inc.  
  Nov. 15: Food, Inc.

Week 13  
  Nov. 20: Food, Inc.  
  Nov. 22: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

Week 14  
  Nov. 27: Food, Inc.  
  Nov. 29: Food, Inc., **writing journals due**

Week 15  
  Dec. 4: **Paper #3 rough draft due** (bring 3 copies to workshop)  
  Dec. 6: Wrap up

Final  
  Tuesday, December 11, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. – details to be shared closer to the date  
  **Paper #3 due at this time**
General Education Capacities/Goals & RWS Learning Outcomes

Our “Learning Outcomes” reflect the goals and capacities of the General Education Program. RWS 100 is one of several courses in the area of general education defined as “Communication and Critical Thinking.” Focusing particularly on argument, this course emphasizes four essential general education capacities: the ability to:

- construct, analyze and communicate argument
- contextualize phenomena
- negotiate differences
- apply theoretical models to the real world

This course advances general education by helping students understand the general function of writing, speaking, visual texts, and thinking within the context of the university at large, rather than within specific disciplines. In addition to featuring the basic rules and conventions governing composition and presentation, RWS 100 establishes intellectual frameworks and analytical tools that help students explore, construct, critique, and integrate sophisticated texts.

Within this framework of four general capacities, the course realizes four closely related subsidiary goals. These goals focus on helping students do the following:

- craft well-reasoned arguments for specific audiences
- analyze a variety of texts commonly encountered in the academic setting
- situate discourse within social, generic, cultural, and historic contexts
- assess the relative strengths of arguments and supporting evidence

Our student learning outcomes for RWS 100 are closely aligned with these goals and capacities, and they reflect the program’s overall objective of helping students attain “essential skills that underlie all university education.”

Course Objectives

Throughout the semester, you will engage in reading and writing assignments and discussions, which will encourage mastery of the following learning outcomes. In addition to the three learning outcomes specific to the three assignments (“Overview of Major Assignments” on page 4 of this syllabus), by the completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Describe elements of an argument—claims, methods of development, kinds of evidence, persuasive appeals—and to annotate the work that is done by each section of a written argument.
2. Use all aspects of the writing process—including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.
3. Choose effective structures for your writing, acknowledging that different purposes, contexts and audiences call for different structures; understand the relationship between a text's ideas and its structure.
4. Identify devices an author has used to create cohesion or to carry the reader through the text; use metadiscourse to signal the project of a paper, and guide a reader from one idea to the next.
5. Effectively select material from written arguments, contextualize it, and comment on it in your writing.
6. Determine when and where a source was published, who wrote it and whether it was reprinted or edited; understand that texts are written in and respond to particular contexts, communities or cultures; examine the vocabulary choices a writer makes and how they are related to context, community or culture, audience or purpose.

7. Respond in writing to ideas drawn from various cultures and disciplines, using the activity of writing to clarify and improve your understanding of an argument.

8. Analyze and assess the relative strengths of arguments and supporting evidence.

9. Analyze and assess arguments made by visual texts; incorporate visual images into your documents.

10. Craft well-reasoned arguments for specific audiences.

11. Edit your writing for the grammar and usage conventions appropriate to each writing situation.

12. Assign significance to the arguments that they read.

13. Reflect on how you wrote papers, and revise arguments and findings based on critical reflection.
Agreement on Plagiarism

Policy statements and tutorials on plagiarism are provided by SDSU on these web pages:
  http://infotutor.sdsu.edu/plagiarism/consequences.cfm?p=graphic
  http://infotutor.sdsu.edu/plagiarism/index.cfm?p=graphic
  http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/conduct1.html

I understand that teachers are required by SDSU policy to report cases of plagiarism. I understand that I must clearly mark other people's ideas and words within my paper. I understand it is unacceptable to do any of the following:

• Submit an essay written in whole or part by another person, and to present this as if it were my own.
• Download an essay from the internet, then quote or paraphrase from it, in whole or in part, without acknowledging the original source.
• Reproduce the substance of another writer's argument without acknowledging the source.
• Copy another student/person’s homework and submit this as the product of my own work.

I understand that the consequences for committing any of the above acts can include failure in the class, a note on my permanent record, and even expulsion from the university. I will not plagiarize or cheat.

Name (Print Legibly): ______________________________
Date ______________
Signature ______________________________

Use of Student Work

Your teacher may occasionally wish to share sample student writing in class. She may also wish to share sample student writing as part of her teacher training. For example, your teacher may wish to show an example of a strong introduction, or discuss ways of revising a conclusion. Student writing will be made anonymous (student names will be removed). Is it OK to use your writing in this way?

YES ☐  NO ☐

Name: ______________________________