Course description:

The relationship between rhetoric and logic is fraught with tension, in spite of their once companionable places (along with grammar) in the trivium of the mediaeval university. Rhetoric is often dismissed as mere adornment to the substance of logic. In the early stages of the revolution in logic that gave birth to informal logic a similar disregard of rhetoric persisted. But that attitude has more recently been revised as informal logicians have entered into fruitful dialogues with contemporary rhetoricians. Still, there is a sense that rhetorical concerns can remain an afterthought for the logician, and the serious question needs still to be asked about the role that rhetoric can and should play in the development of informal modes of reasoning. In this course, we will ask that question, exploring the nature of ancient and contemporary rhetoric, the emergence of informal logic, and the ways in which the interests of the two can be seen to converge.

Course Structure:

The course will be conducted as a seminar/discussion. Members of the class will be expected to have read the material each week and be prepared to engage in discussion.

Required Texts:

All readings are listed week by week in the syllabus, and will be made available in the department, online, or through the reserve desk at the library.

Requirements:

1. Two short papers responding to specific questions that arise in the first half of the term, worth 20% in each case, for a total of 40%. Questions are provided from September 21 to October 19. Choose two.

2. Class-preparedness and participation: 10%. Students should be prepared to engage in discussions.

3. A major paper will be due by November 30 (3:30). This can be written in drafts throughout the latter part of the course. Length and nature of the paper will depend on the topic chosen, which will arise from discussions with the instructor. The paper is worth 50% of the course grade.
Class Schedule:

September:
14: Introduction to the course: What is Rhetoric?

21: Aristotle’s Gaze
Reading: Aristotle, Rhetoric Book One, Chapters 2-15 (Kennedy translation) Library Reserve; Myles Burnyeat “Enthymeme: Aristotle on the Rationality of Rhetoric”
Question: To what degree do logos, pathos, and ethos capture important features of the rhetorical situation?

28: Rhetoric Now
Reading: Chaim Perelman, Realm of Rhetoric, Chapters 1-4, Library Reserve; Jeanne Fahnestock, “Rhetoric in the Age of Cognitive Science”
Question: Does Perelman’s attention to the importance of audience involve a substantial shift from the treatment provided by Aristotle?

October:
5: Rhetoric as a Humanistic Endeavor
Question(s): Aristotle judged dialectic and rhetoric to be complementary. How does Leff understand this relationship? Is his understanding of rhetoric consistent with those of people like Perelman and Bitzer?

12: THANKSGIVING

19: The Varieties of Informal Logic
Question: Drawing on the accounts provided by Blair and Johnson, what do you judge to be the crucial, distinguishing features of informal logic, and why?

26: The Nature of Argument
Reading: Terence Parsons, “What is an Argument?” Geoff Goddu, “Is ‘Argument’ Subject to the Product/Process Ambiguity?”

November:
2: The Problem of Argumentation Schemes
**Reading:** Doug Walton and Chris Reed, “Argumentation Schemes and Defeasible Inferences”; Tony Blair, “Walton’s Argumentation Schemes for Presumptive Reasoning: A Critique and Development.”

9: Informal Logic and the Role of Rhetoric: The Critical Reaction


16: The Problem of Standards: Where do they arise?


23: Rhetorical themes: Ambiguities (the nature of language).

**Reading:** Wayne Booth, “Metaphor as Rhetoric”; William Irwin, “What is an Illusion?”

30: Images and Narratives

**Reading:** Georges Roque, “Should Visual Arguments be Propositional in Order to be Arguments?”; Paula Olmos, “Narration as Argument.”

[Course Evaluations]

December

7: Extending Evaluation

**Select Bibliography**


Roque, G. “Should Visual Arguments be Propositional in Order to be Arguments?”, Argumentation
Walton, D., and C. Reed, “Argumentation Schemes and Defeasible Inferences”