

CMST 7966

Rhetoric of Science and Medicine

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Office Hours: Wed. 12pm-2pm

While it is sometimes assumed that science grants us unmediated access to reality, this view is incomplete. Science is a symbolic process with profound political and social ramifications. In the case of medicine, it has generated particular ways of seeing the world that have a profound impact on how we interact with our bodies, including through the mediating qualities of modern technologies. Most importantly, the rise of science-based models has revolutionized the way that people understand social behaviors and the world around us. As the aesthetics of science continue to expand and evolve, our understanding of ourselves as extensions of this discourse also changes. In this class you will engage the nexus of science, medicine, culture, and identity to accomplish the following:

- Explore the history of science, medicine and technology as a discursive practice
- Identify ways that expert discourse shapes public and private practice
- Explore the aesthetic dimension of truth claims
- Read and discuss research in the field of rhetoric of science and medicine
- Participate in original research designed to expand our understanding of the discourses of science and medicine
- Extrapolate how scientific discourse will change in the future

Course Readings:

- 1) Bynum, *The History of Medicine: A Very Short Introduction*
- 2) Ceccarelli, *Shaping Science with Rhetoric: The Cases of Dobzhansky, Schrodinger, and Wilson*
- 3) Gross, *Starring the Text: The Place of Rhetoric in Science Studies*
- 4) Keranen, *Scientific Characters: Rhetoric, Politics, and Trust in Breast Cancer Research*
- 5) Leach and Dysart-Gale, *Rhetorical Questions of Health and Medicine*
- 6) Okasha, *Philosophy of Science: A Very Short Introduction*
- 7) Stark, *Rhetoric, Science and Magic in Seventeenth-Century England*

Assignments

- 1) Reading Response. Write a brief outline and response paper on reading for the week. 25 points each. 175 points total.
- 2) Project Proposal. 1 paragraph research project proposal. 25 points.
- 3) Literature Review. 3-4 page literature review for research paper. Should include 3-5 "theory" sources and 5-8 "case" sources. 100 points.
- 4) Draft One of Research Project: 12-15 pages. Coherent, please. You should include material from the literature review. 200 points.
- 5) Draft Two of Research Project: 17-20 pages, please. 200 points.
- 6) Presentation: 10 minute convention-style presentation. 100 points.
- 7) Final Research Paper: 23-27 page paper including bibliography. 200 points.

Grading Scale

1000-900 = A; etc.

Attendance Policy

You are allowed 1 free absence. More costs you 25 pts. each

Policies

Disability:

"The University is committed to making reasonable efforts to assist individuals with disabilities in their efforts to avail themselves of services and programs offered by the University. To this end, Louisiana State University will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with documented qualifying disabilities. If you have a disability and feel you need accommodations in this course, you must present a letter to me from Disability Services 115 Johnston Hall, indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations." LSU Disability Office <http://disability.lsu.edu/sample-syllabus-statements>

Plagiarism:

"The *Code of Student Conduct* defines plagiarism as "the unacknowledged inclusion, in work submitted for credit, of someone else's words, ideas, or data." (8.1-C.6)" LSU Student Advocacy and Accountability Office <http://saa.lsu.edu/lsu-moodle-module-academic-integrity>

Student Rights and Responsibilities:

"The LSU Commitment to Community is a document used help guide the ethos of the University community. Students are expected to exemplify the Commitment to Community in their daily lives." Office of the Chancellor, LSU <http://saa.lsu.edu/code-student-conduct>

Tentative Schedule

1/15 Week One. Introduction to the course.

1/22 Week Two. The Concerns of Rhetoric of Science. Introduction to scholarly practice.

1/29 Week Three. Philosophy of Science.

2/5 Week Four. History of Medicine

2/12 Week Five. Writing Workshop. **Paper Proposal Due.**

2/19 Week Six. Shaping Science with Rhetoric

2/26 Week Seven. Starring the Text

3/5 Week Eight. **Literature Review Due.** **Mardi Gras.**

3/12 Week Nine Rhetoric, Science and Magic

3/19 Week Ten. Rhetorical Questions of Health and Medicine

3/26 Week Eleven. **Draft 1 Due.**

4/2 Week Twelve. Overflow week. **SSCA.**

4/9 Week Thirteen Scientific Characters

4/16 Week Fourteen. **Spring Break.**

4/23 Week Fifteen. Rhetoric of Psychology and Trauma

4/30 Week Sixteen **Presentation of Papers.** **Draft Two Due.**

Finals Week. **Research Paper Due.**