

RHETORICS OF THE BODY

ENG 690: Seminar in Composition
Mon & Wed 3–4:15pm | Robert Bell 290



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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Because rhetoric is constructed within and performed through the body, it is always embodied. However, to acknowledge rhetoric as embodied is to recognize that historically people have constructed both idealized and Othered manners of embodiment, placing value on the body and its role in rhetorical processes.

In this course, we will pay close attention to the body in order to understand rhetorical theory, history, and methodology. Specifically, we will explore the ways bodies have been rhetorically constructed and how different theories inform our understandings of contemporary rhetorical meaning making. There are many areas of rhetoric dedicated to issues related to the body and embodiment. This semester, we will follow this route:

- We will begin with disability rhetoric as a framework that pushes against normative constructions of the body; offers us different ways to move through academic spaces; and intersects with many identities and embodied theories.
- Next, we will move to current discussions within embodied rhetorics.
- Then, we will focus on scholarship from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) scholars who share their experiences navigating higher education.
- Finally, we will conclude with a selection of articles, webtexts, and videos that address multimodality and mediated bodies.

Some questions we will consider together:

- What role has the material body played in rhetorical history? How does knowledge of embodied rhetorics inform our disciplinary understandings of rhetorical theory, methodology, and history?
- How do intersections of disability, gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity affect experiences of embodiment, and how do we account for these experiences without reifying normalized conceptions of the rhetorical tradition?
- How do embodied practices and rhetorics influence pedagogical approaches?

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COURSE GOALS

In ENG 690, students will learn to do the following:

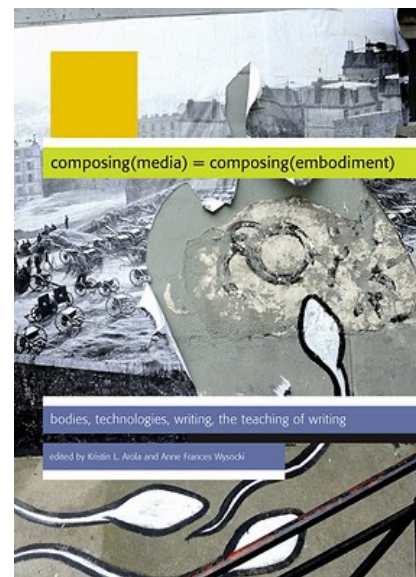
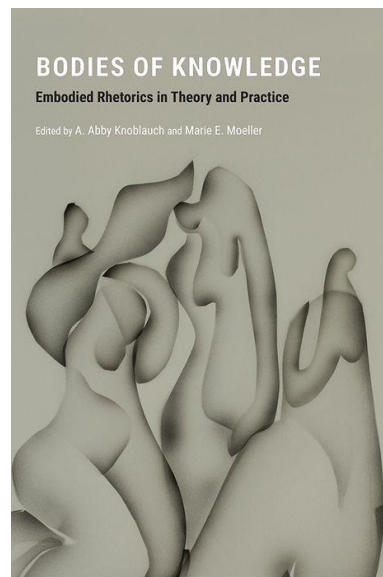
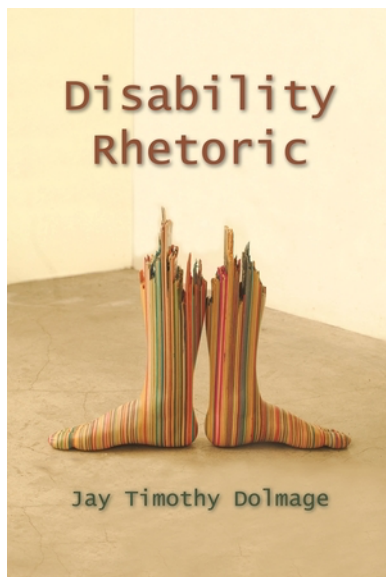
- Articulate influential rhetorical theories and composition pedagogies that attend to the importance of bodies and/or embodiment
- Synthesize complex readings and ideas through written response and multimodal presentations
- Apply rhetorical theory to classroom pedagogy, from reflecting on ideas to designing classroom materials
- Research a specific rhetorical area/discipline focused on issues related to the body and/or embodiment
- Design accessible multimodal documents

REQUIRED TEXTS

Dolmage, Jay Timothy. *Disability Rhetoric*. Syracuse UP, 2014.
press.syr.edu/supressbooks/408/disability-rhetoric/

Knoblauch, A. Abby, and Marie E. Moller, editors. *Bodies of Knowledge: Embodied Rhetorics in Theory and Practice*. Utah State UP, 2022.
upcolorado.com/utah-state-university-press/item/4152-bodies-of-knowledge

Arola, Kristin L., and Anne Frances Wysocki, editors. *composing (media) = composing (embodiment): bodies, technologies, writing, and the teaching of writing*. Utah State UP, 2012.
upcolorado.com/utah-state-university-press/item/2342-composing-media-composing-embodiment



All additional readings will be made available through Canvas as PDFs.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Reading Responses (250 pts)**
Throughout the semester, you will be asked to respond critically to course readings, synthesizing and reflecting on key theoretical concepts. 1-page, single-spaced essays (10 total)
2. **Presentations (100 pts)**
Twice this semester, you will deliver a 7–10-minute presentation on a chapter from *Bodies of Knowledge* and *composing (media) = composing (embodiment)*. Your presentation should contextualize the reading and important concepts, offering a couple key quotations and takeaways. You will create a visual aid to supplement your discussion, such as a handout or slide deck.
3. **Multimodal Definition of Rhetoric (200 pts)**
After our shared readings, you will compose a presentation that represents your understanding(s) of rhetoric. This might take the form of a visual/digital presentation, an infographic or visualization, a research poster, etc.
4. **Annotated Bibliography (250 pts)**
For the final project, you will choose an area of rhetorical theory that you want to learn more about, finding and annotating articles and chapters that help you understand different theoretical perspectives and nuances. You will write a 4–5-page essay that maps your understandings of, interest in, and questions about this area of the field based on the research you completed. (10 total)
5. **Engagement (100 pts)**
Engagement in course material and each other’s ideas is crucial for a graduate class. Participating in class discussions verbally is important, but engagement also includes coming to class sessions prepared, responding thoughtfully to each others’ ideas and work, developing discussion questions, and contributing notes to the shared Google Doc.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
93-100%	90-92%	87-89%	83-86%	80-82%	77-79%	73-76%	70-72%	67-69%	63-66%	60-62%	59% & below
837-900	810-836	783-809	747-782	720-746	693-719	657-692	630-656	603-629	567-602	540-566	539 & below

Reading responses will be assessed on whether they are complete: they are 1-page single-spaced, synthesize two or more readings, and provide specific discussion and reflection. Major projects will be assessed on rhetorical choices: making solid claims, finding relevant and quality sources, adhering to genre conventions, organizing ideas effectively, and presenting your work in an accessible style. Each assignment will be accompanied by its own instructions and evaluation criteria.

COURSE POLICIES

Accessibility

I am committed to creating a classroom environment that is respectful of and inclusive to different learning and writing processes—whether that is in person, through Zoom, or on Canvas. All the multimodal materials I share will be made accessible: videos will be captioned, audio will have transcripts, and images will be described. If we can work together to make the class more accessible, let me know.

Basic Needs Security

I encourage anyone who lacks access to sufficient food to eat or a safe and stable place to live to contact the folks at Student Affairs and/or visit the Basic Needs Security Hub: <https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/dean-of-students/basic-needs-hub>. The hub offers information about food insecurity, housing support, financial resources, wellness, and homelessness.

COVID-19 Safety

Based on current CDC guidance recommending the wearing of face masks for all people—regardless of vaccination status—in public indoor settings in communities where the rate of coronavirus transmission is substantial, all employees, students, and campus visitors are required to wear a mask while inside any University building. If you choose not to wear a mask during class (or refuse to wear a mask in a way that complies with CDC guidance), you will be asked to leave. These safety guidelines are nonnegotiable: I care about my students' health, my health, and my family's health.

Diversity & Inclusion

Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as expressed in our Beneficence Pledge and through university resources that you can access through The Multicultural Center's website: <https://www.bsu.edu/campuslife/multicultural-center/resources>

Late Work & Feedback

Submitting work on time allows me to provide you with timely feedback on your work. However, sometimes we need more time. *You can request a one-week extension for*

any assignment excluding the final project by emailing me. If you get sick this semester, we will work together to develop with a catch-up plan.

OTHER IMPORTANT RESOURCES

Accommodations

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. The [Office of Disability Services](#) coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Bracken Library

[The library](#) is one of the most important resources for graduate students. The interlibrary loan (ILL) program is especially useful for gaining access to books and articles that our local library doesn't have.

Counseling Center

Grad school is hard, even when we aren't in a pandemic. Please plan ahead and take care of your mental health needs. Every year, hundreds of students, faculty, and staff members use the services of the [Counseling Center](#). This comprehensive services office provides free and confidential psychological and career resources to students. The primary mission of the agency is to assist students in reaching their educational goals, as well as to improve their quality of life. To make your first appointment with the Counseling Center, call 765-285-1736 or stop into Lucina Hall, Room 320.

Health Center

The Health Center is covered in your student fees and located at 1500 W. Neely Avenue. To make an appointment, please call the Health Center at 765-285-8431.

Writing Center

All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295, Bracken Library, or online) to get additional feedback on your writing. To schedule a free appointment to discuss your writing, go to www.bsu.edu/writingcenter.

COURSE SCHEDULE

In the schedule below, the left column indicates the topic we will discuss in class that day and what is due. The right column indicates what homework you need to complete for the following class. Reading responses are due by class, and major projects are due by the end of the day (11:59pm). Once folks sign up for chapter presentations, I will fill in the schedule with specific information about what chapters to read from *Bodies of Knowledge* and *composing (media) = composing (embodiment)*.

WEEK 1	
Mon, 1/10: Introduction to ENG 690, the course, and each other	Read PDFs “Who Is the Built World Built for?” (excerpt from <i>What Can a Body Do?</i>), “Habeas Corpus” (Selzer), and “Embodiment: Embodying Feminist Rhetorics” (Johnson et al.).
Wed, 1/12: The potential of bodies as rhetorical agents	Read PDFs “Representing Disability Rhetorically” (Morse et al.), “Disability, Rhetoric, and the Body” (Wilson & Lewiecki-Wilson), “Constructing Normalcy: The Bell Curve, The Novel, and the Invention of the Disabled Body in the Nineteenth Century” (Davis), and “Embodiment” (Wilkerson). Write a reading response. Post to Canvas and be prepared to share in class.
WEEK 2	
Mon, 1/17: NO CLASS – MLK Day	
Wed, 1/19: Introduction to disability studies and disability rhetoric due today: reading response	Read pp. 1–61 in <i>Disability Rhetoric</i> . Write a response and post to Canvas.
WEEK 3	
Mon, 1/24: Begin discussing <i>Disability Rhetoric</i> due today: reading response	Read pp. 63–148 in <i>Disability Rhetoric</i> . Write a response and post to Canvas.

<p>Wed, 1/26: Rhetorical histories of disability</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Read pp. 149-224 in <i>Disability Rhetoric</i> and PDF “Sophistic Mētis: An Intelligence of the Body” (Hawhee).</p> <p>Write a response and post to Canvas.</p>
WEEK 4	
<p>Mon, 1/31: Mētis</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Read pp. 225-91 in <i>Disability Rhetoric</i> and “Performing a Metis Pedagogy in the Rhetoric and Writing Studies Classroom” (Selznick).</p> <p>Write a response and post to Canvas.</p>
<p>Wed, 2/2: Takeaways from <i>Disability Rhetoric</i></p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Read PDFs “Listening to the Subject of Mental Disability: Intersections in Academic and Medical Discourses” and “Ways to Move: Presence, Participation, and Resistance in Kairotic Space” (Price), then read “Performing Mētis Rhetorics in Rhetoric and Composition Scholarship” (Holladay).</p> <p>Write a response and post to Canvas.</p>
WEEK 5	
<p>Mon, 2/7: Rhetorics of mental disability, the bodymind, <i>kairos</i> and crip time</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Read PDFs “Introduction” (excerpt from Academic Ableism) and “Teaching and Researching with a Mental Health Diagnosis: Practices and Perspectives on Academic Ableism” (Green et al.).</p> <p>Write a response and post to Canvas.</p>
<p>Wed, 2/9: Academic ableism</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Read Preface “The Body’s Turn in Rhetorical Studies” and Chapter 1 “Introduction: Bodies, Embodiments, and Embodied Rhetorics” in <i>Bodies of Knowledge</i>.</p>

WEEK 6	
Mon, 2/14: Begin discussing <i>Bodies of Knowledge</i>	Read selected chapters from Part I in <i>Bodies of Knowledge</i> . If applicable, prepare your chapter presentation.
Wed, 2/16: Affect, sense/s, permeability due today: chapter presentations	Read selected chapters from Part II in <i>Bodies of Knowledge</i> . If applicable, prepare your chapter presentation.
WEEK 7	
Mon, 2/21: Advocacy, policy, citizenship due today: chapter presentations	Read selected chapters from Part III in <i>Bodies of Knowledge</i> . If applicable, prepare your chapter presentation.
Wed, 2/23: Textuality, multimodality, digitality due today: chapter presentations	Read PDFs “When the First Voice You Hear Is Not Your Own” (Royster) and “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” (Anzaldúa). Write a response and post to Canvas.
WEEK 8	
Mon, 2/28: Making space for multiple voices and languages due today: reading response	Read “Decolonial Skillshares: Indigenous Rhetorics as Radical Practice” (Driskill).
Wed, 3/2: Indigenous knowledge and meaning-making Self-care check-in	Read Victor Villanueva’s Bootstraps: From an American Academic of Color and “Academic #BlackLivesMatter: Black Faculty and Graduate Students Tell Their Stories” (Botex et al.). Write a response and post to Canvas.
WEEK 9	
Mon, 3/7–Fri, 3/11: NO CLASS — Spring Break	

WEEK 10:	
<p>Mon, 3/14: Developing theory from embodied experiences</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Read PDF “What Does It Mean to Move?: Race, Disability, and Critical Embodiment Pedagogy” (Cedillo).</p> <p>Write a response and post to Canvas.</p>
<p>Wed, 3/16: Embodied pedagogy</p> <p>Sign up for chapter presentations.</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Read Introduction and Chapter 1 “Drawn Together: Possibilities for Bodies in Words and Pictures” in <i>composing (media) = composing (embodiment)</i></p>
WEEK 11	
<p>Mon, 3/21: Begin discussing <i>composing (media) = composing (embodiment)</i></p>	<p>Read Chapters 7 “Writing against Normal: Navigating a Corporeal Turn” and Chapter 8 “Crafting New Approaches to Composition” in <i>composing (media)</i>.</p>
<p>Wed, 3/23: Bodily pedagogies</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Read Chapters 11 “Queerness, Multimodality, and the Possibilities of Re/Orientation” and 12 “It’s My Revolution: Learning to See the Mixedblood” in <i>composing (media)</i>.</p>
WEEK 12	
<p>Mon, 3/28: Identity (queerness & indigeneity)</p>	<p>Prepare presentations. Post to Canvas.</p>
<p>Wed, 3/30: Chapter presentations</p> <p>due today: 7–10-minute presentations</p>	<p>Read selections from JOMR special issue: “Editor’s Introduction” (Manthey), “Negotiating Crip Comfort: Dispatches from My (Involuntarily) Subversive Wardrobe” (Hubrig), and “Dressed but not Tryin’ to Impress: Black Women Deconstructing ‘Professional’ Dress” (Hull, Shelton, & McKoy).</p> <p>If you have time, choose an additional article from the special issue to read.</p>

WEEK 13	
<p>Mon, 4/4: Dress practices as embodied multimodal practices</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Read PDF “Integral Captions and Subtitles: Designing a Space for Embodied Rhetorics and Visual Access” (Butler).</p> <p>If you have time, read “Multimodality in Motion: Disability and Kairotic Space” (Yergeau et al.).</p>
<p>Wed, 4/6: Accessibility</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Begin reading Techne: Queer Meditations on Writing the Self (Introduction, Orientations, & Rhizomes).</p>
WEEK 14	
<p>Mon, 4/11: Mediated subjectivities</p> <p>due today: reading response</p>	<p>Finish reading <i>Techne</i> (Genealogies, Mobilities, & Coda). Brainstorm ideas for the multimodal definition of rhetoric. Be prepared to discuss your ideas for both content and form in class.</p>
<p>Wed, 4/13: Multimodal scholarship</p> <p>Share ideas for multimodal definition of rhetoric</p> <p>due today: project idea</p>	<p>Develop your definitions and schedule a time for a Zoom conference to share your drafts with me before the final submission.</p>
WEEK 15	
<p>Mon, 4/18: NO CLASS – Zoom conferences to discuss projects</p>	<p>Finalize multimodal definitions for submission to Canvas by the end of the day Wednesday, 4/20. Be prepared to share your definitions in class on Wednesday. Note: You will have time to make minor revisions after you present your project in class.</p>
<p>Wed, 4/20: Informal presentations</p> <p>due by the end of the day: multimodal definition of rhetoric</p>	<p>Begin working in earnest on your annotated bibliography. Review the assignment sheet if necessary.</p>

WEEK 16	
Mon, 4/25: Annotated bib drafting	Bring a draft (print or digital) of your annotated bib to peer review in class on Wednesday. Post to Canvas.
Wed, 4/27: Annotated bib workshopping due today: annotated bib draft	
WEEK 17 - FINALS WEEK	
Mon, 5/2: NO CLASS – optional Zoom conferences to discuss final project	
The final examination period for this class is Wednesday, May 4 from 2:15–4:15pm. We will <i>not</i> meet during our exam period. Instead, you will submit your annotated bibliographies to Canvas by the end of the day (11:59pm).	