

IDS 2935: Story, Rhetoric, and Culture

Quest 1: Identities

I. General Information

Class Meetings

- Fall 2023
- In-Person Instruction 35 Students
- MWF 5

Instructor

- Victor Del Hierro
- 4340 Turlington
- MW 2:00pm – 3:30pm
- vdelhierro@ufl.edu

Course Description

In his book, *The Truth About Stories*, Thomas King claims, “the truth about stories is that they are all that we are.” He means that narrative underpins everything we know about ourselves, our cultures, and our places. Stories *reflect*, but they also help *create*, our individual and our collective identities. In a similar way, contemporary perspectives on the ancient art of rhetoric argue that our individual and cultural identities are shaped—that is, are both *reflected* and *created*—by what we communicate and how we communicate it. By studying these contemporary perspectives, we can begin to understand *how* stories work as King claims they do. This course will introduce you to some of those perspectives.

In the context of this course, the terms *story* and *narrative* refer not just to works of literature, art, or entertainment. They refer to anything “composed” by humans, individually or collectively, whether at given point in time or across long stretches of time. They refer to ancient, current, and ongoing accounts of events in the natural, social, and artistic world. These accounts may be scientific, cultural, aesthetic or—often—some combination of these. Such multi-disciplinarity is a hallmark of the study of *rhetoric*, which has always examined verbal, visual, and aural communication across many fields, including politics, art, religion, and science.

By examining communication and its impact on individual and cultural identities from a range of perspectives, all of which can be described as *rhetorical*, this course meets Quest 1's objective “to ask essential questions about the human condition.” In doing so, it aligns with

Quest 1's mission to help students prepare to "grapple with the kinds of open-ended and complex intellectual challenges they will face as critical, creative, and self-reflective adults navigating a complex and interconnected world," a world in which relations between forms and modes of communication—on the one hand—and individual and cultural identities—on the other—continue to develop, change, and intensify in often unpredictable ways. Such an entwined world demands "clear and effective analysis and evaluation" from its citizens, and this course aims to start students on that path.

Quest and General Education Credit

- Quest 1
- Humanities

This course accomplishes the [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) objectives of the subject areas listed above. A minimum grade of C is required for Quest and General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy Quest and General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.

Required Readings and Works

Books

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*

King, Thomas. *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative*

Plato, *Phaedrus*

Plato, *Symposium*

Other readings available via Canvas

Materials and Supplies Fees: n/a

II. Graded Work

Description of Graded Work

	Description	Points
Critical Reading Responses	In response to class readings, students will submit critical reading responses of 200 words each. There will be 11 reading responses throughout the semester, each worth up to 15 points. Students will be allowed to miss one without penalty.	150
Critical Reflection Essay	Drawing on the discussion of Thomas King's <i>The Truth About Stories</i> , students will write a 500-word essay drawing on their own experience, focusing on an event that shaped them in some way. The essay will include critical <i>reflection</i> on differences between the event itself and the student's telling of it.	200
Group Discussions Participation	Each week, students will discuss the readings in groups. Discussions will be based on questions written by students before class. Each student will complete 10 group discussions during the semester (15 points each).	150
Experiential Learning Activity (Researched Essay)	Students will visit a historical marker on campus, in Gainesville, or in their hometown and write a brief (500-word) researched essay on the story told by the marker and the story of the marker itself.	200
Individual Meetings	Three times during the semester, students will schedule one-on-one meetings with the instructor: before the Critical Reflection, the Researched Essay, and the Final Essay. Each meeting is worth 1/3 of the 100 possible points. Students will earn full credit by attending each meeting.	100
Final Essay + "Lightning" Talk	Students will write a 1000-word essay that summarizes and analyzes what they have learned about rhetoric during the semester. Then, in the final week, they will present a brief, 5-minute talk on the subject to the class.	200

Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	94 – 100%		C	74 – 76%
A-	90 – 93%		C-	70 – 73%
B+	87 – 89%		D+	67 – 69%
B	84 – 86%		D	64 – 66%

B-	80 – 83%		D-	60 – 63%
C+	77 – 79%		E	<60

Grading Rubric(s)

Critical Reading Response Rubric

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Reflects a basic understanding of the sources; begins to critically evaluate and synthesize the sources.	Omitted key ideas; strayed off topic; minimally or inadequately discussed ideas. Lacks sufficient or appropriate sources.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Makes claims that draw substantially upon the text; clearly and accurately articulates the text's argument.	Makes weak generalizations; provides little or no support.
STYLE	Consciously (and somewhat successfully) adopts an academic, conversational, dialogic, creative, or multimodal style based on consultation with—and feedback from—the instructor.	Shows little or no evidence of having consciously adopted a particular style.
MECHANICS	Contains very few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors; contains minor errors that do not inhibit readability.	Contains enough spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors to inhibit readability.

Group Discussion Participation Rubric

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement
Knowledgeable: Shows evidence of having read assigned reading.	5	4	3
Engaged: Brings carefully constructed discussion questions to group discussions	5	4	3
Considerate: Listens intently to their groupmates and works together to facilitate discussions.	5	4	3
Total	15	12	9

III. Annotated Weekly Schedule

Note: On a MWF schedule, Mondays will be reserved for lectures, Wednesdays for class discussion to analyze the reading assignments, and Fridays for applying concepts learned from the week's lecture and reading assignments. Workshop weeks (6, 11, 14) will vary from this pattern. Critical Reading Responses will be due by Saturday at 11:59pm, after the previous week's class sessions.

Week	Topics, Homework, and Assignments
Week 1 Classes start on Wed 8/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Introduction to the Quest program, Story, and Rhetoric • Summary: Introduction to the Quest program and to key terms and concepts for the course, including: <i>story/narrative, rhetoric, culture, rhetorical sovereignty.</i> • Required Readings/Works: None • Assignment: None
Week 2 8/28-9/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Stories—All that We Are • Summary: Monday—lecture on <i>story</i> as a theoretical concept. Wednesday—discussion of Indigenous approaches to stories and storytelling. Friday—comparison of students' personal/cultural understanding of story to those presented in the reading assignments. • Required Readings/Works: Thomas King, <i>The Truth about Stories</i> (1-90) • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 1
Week 3 9/4-9/8 (No class 9/4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Stories—All that We Are, continued • Summary: Monday—lecture on the history of American Indians in the USA. Wednesday—discussion of the lineages of the various stories King's book weaves together. Friday—comparison of King's description of Indigenous rhetorical strategies for storytelling to those with which students are already familiar. (Note: this is an extension of the previous Friday's session, undertaken in light of King's full argument.) • Required Readings/Works: Thomas King, <i>The Truth about Stories</i> (91-168) • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 2
Week 4 9/11-9/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Rhetoric as Story • Summary: Monday—lecture on the rhetoric as a field of study. Wednesday—discussion of relationship between <i>rhetoric</i> and <i>story/narrative</i>, as articulated in the Arzu Carmichael text. Friday—connection of students' experiences those described and analyzed by Arzu Carmichael. • Required Readings/Works: https://constell8cr.com/issue-4/wanaragua-performance-of-resistance-recognition-and-resilience/ • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 3

Week	Topics, Homework, and Assignments
Week 5 9/18-9/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Write or Be Written • Summary: Monday—lecture on how to read academic articles. Wednesday—discussion of the key concept of <i>rhetorical sovereignty</i>, i.e., the ability of a group to control its own <i>stories/narratives</i>. Friday—discussion of present-day examples of rhetorical sovereignty: who has it? who does not? • Required Readings/Works: Scott Richard Lyons, "Rhetorical Sovereignty: What Do American Indians Want from Writing?" (447-468) • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 4
Week 6 9/25-9/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Draft workshops. • Summary: Monday—lecture on how to give constructive feedback to peers in workshop settings. Wednesday—in-class workshop for drafts of Critical Reflection assignment, with emphasis on conceptual and thematic issues. Friday—in-class workshop for drafts of Critical Reflection assignment, with emphasis on stylistic and usage issues. • Required Readings/Works: Peers' drafts of Critical Reflection assignment. • Assignment: Draft of Critical Reflection assignment.
Week 7 10/2-10/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Rhetoric Across Cultures • Summary: Monday—lecture on <i>rhetoric</i> as a feature of <i>culture</i>. Wednesday—discussion of <i>comparative rhetoric</i> as a methodology for analysis of communication and culture. Friday—application of Mao's theory of <i>comparative rhetoric</i> to contemporary examples of communication. • Required Readings/Works: LuMing Mao, "Reflective Encounters: Illustrating Comparative Rhetoric" (401-425) • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 5
Week 8 10/9-10/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Comparative Rhetoric + Story/Narrative • Summary: Monday—lecture on connections among King, Villanueva, Mao, and Hum & Lyon. Wednesday—discussion of how <i>comparative rhetoric</i> reveals stories but also relates new stories about rhetoric and culture. Friday—continued application of <i>comparative rhetoric</i> to contemporary examples of communication. • Required Readings/Works: Sue Hum and Arabella Lyon, "Recent Advances in Comparative Rhetoric" (153-166) • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 6
Week 9 10/16-10/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Cultural Rhetorics • Summary: Monday—lecture on <i>cultural rhetorics</i> as subfield of Rhetorical Studies. Wednesday—discussion of how culture influences rhetoric <u>and</u> vice versa. Friday—application of cultural rhetorics methodology to student-generated examples from contemporary media.

Week	Topics, Homework, and Assignments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required Readings/Works: Gabriela Raquel Ríos, "Cultivating Land-Based Literacies and Rhetorics" (60-70) • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 7
Week 10 10/23- 10/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Everyday Rhetorics • Summary: Monday—lecture on cultural rhetorics as everyday intra-cultural and cross-cultural practice. Wednesday—discussion of connections among rhetoric, culture, and everyday practice, and their impact on identity formation. Friday—application of everyday cultural rhetorics to students' own everyday practices. • Required Readings/Works: Qwo-Li Driskill, "Decolonial Skillshares: Indigenous Rhetorics as Radical Practice" (57-78)...Jay Dolmage, "Metis, Mêtis, <i>Mestiza</i>, Medusa: Rhetorical Bodies across Rhetorical Traditions" (1-28) • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 8
Week 11 10/30- 11/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Draft workshops. • Summary: Monday—lecture on library research. Wednesday—in-class workshop for drafts of Experiential Learning Activity assignment, with emphasis on conceptual and thematic issues. Friday—in-class workshop for drafts of Experiential Learning Activity assignment, with emphasis on stylistic and usage issues. • Required Readings/Works: Peers' drafts of Experiential Learning Activity assignment. • Assignment: Draft of Experiential Learning Activity assignment.
Week 12 11/6- 11/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Stories of Western Rhetoric, Part 1 • Summary: Monday—lecture on how Western rhetoric became Rhetoric. Wednesday—discussion of Plato's distrust of rhetoric. Friday—comparison of Plato's views on rhetoric to those of comparative rhetoric and cultural rhetoric. • Required Readings/Works: Plato, <i>Phaedrus</i>...Plato, <i>Symposium</i> • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 9
Week 13 11/13- 11/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Stories of Western Rhetoric, Part 2 • Summary: Monday—lecture on Aristotle <i>Rhetoric</i> as the first theory of Western rhetoric. Wednesday—discussion of Aristotle's <i>topoi</i> and his analysis of style. Friday—discussion of Aristotelian rhetoric's suitability to contemporary communication. • Required Readings/Works: Aristotle, <i>Rhetoric</i> • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 10
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Draft workshops.

Week	Topics, Homework, and Assignments
11/20-11/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary: Monday—lecture on "lightning talks." Wednesday—in-class workshop for drafts of Final Essay assignment, with emphasis on conceptual and thematic issues. Friday—in-class workshop for drafts of Final Essay assignment, with emphasis on stylistic and usage issues. • Required Readings/Works: Peers' drafts of Final Essay assignment. • Assignment: Draft of Final Essay assignment.
Weeks 15 11/27-12/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Rhetorical Sovereignty in Mass Media • Summary: Monday discussion of PBS documentary. Wednesday—discussion of connections among previous readings (King, Arzu-Carmichael, Rios, Lyons, Arola, and Driskill). Friday—discussion of how concepts such as rhetorical sovereignty, comparative rhetorics, and cultural rhetorics emerge in the various stories/narratives related in the PBS documentary. Friday—analysis of PBS documentary and rhetorical identity. • Required Readings/Works: PBS Documentary • Assignment: Critical Reading Response 11
Week 16 12/4-12/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Class Presentations • Summary: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday—5-minute presentations on students' Final Essays. • Assignment: "Lightning" Talk

IV. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) learning outcomes as follows:

Content: *Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline(s).*

- Identify, describe, and explain how theories of rhetoric approach questions about narrative and knowledge. (H)
- Identify, describe, and explain how rhetoric is defined in contemporary, cross-cultural, and multi-disciplinary contexts. (D, H)
- Identify, describe, and explain how story and rhetoric both reflect and create cultural and individual identities. (Q1)

Critical Thinking: *Students carefully and logically analyze information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the discipline(s).*

- Analyze the contemporary comparative study of rhetoric deepens and expands upon the Greco-Roman tradition of rhetoric that Western societies claim as their heritage. (D, H)

- Analyze and evaluate different rhetorical contexts and traditions to understand how cultures and identities have developed across diverse communities. (D, Q1)
- Analyze and evaluate the rhetorical and narrative affordances of various communicative modes. (Q1)

Communication: *Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline(s).*

- Develop and present multiple genres of writing. (H)
- Analyze and evaluate on the diverse ways that different people and cultures develop rhetorical tools and stories through discussions and written assignments while communicating clear thoughts and well-supported claims. (D, Q1)

Connection: *Students connect course content with meaningful critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond.*

- Connect course content with histories on the UF campus. (Q1)
- Reflect on their own stories and truths and connecting them to their classmates stories and truths. (Q1)

V. Quest Learning Experiences

1. Details of Critical Reflection Essay

Students will write about a formative event in their own lives, and they will reflect on how they have converted that event into a *story* about the event. Then, they will consider the role this story plays in their current lives.

2. Details of Experiential Learning Component (Researched Essay)

Students will visit a historical marker on campus, in the Gainesville area, or in their hometown. They will describe the relate the *story* told by the marker, and they will research the *story* of the marker itself. Students unable to physically visit their chosen markers may use the online versions available at <https://explore.research.ufl.edu/historical-markers/>.

VI. Required Policies

Attendance Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

In-Class Recordings

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.