ENGL 206 A: RHETORIC IN EVERYDAY LIFE

EVERYDAY SCIENTIFIC RHETORIC

- Winter 2015

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Meeting Time: MW 2:30pm - 4:20pm
Location: LOW 113
SLN: 13921
Instructor: Lillian V Campbell

ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

We don't usually think of “Rhetoric” and “Science” as two words that belong in the same sentence. “Rhetoric” is often used to describe language practices that are showy but intentionally deceptive (as in “empty rhetoric”). Meanwhile, scientific argument is all about the transparent communication of facts. So, there's no rhetoric in science... right? Right? This course will introduce you to a scholarly field that believes otherwise: the “Rhetoric of Science.” We will learn some basics about rhetoric, which we will define as any strategic use of language and symbols to get things done in the world. Then each week, we will use a different rhetorical strategy to look at a contemporary scientific issue, including topics such as genetics and global warming.

Class projects will require students to identify, explore, and respond to the rhetorical aspects of a scientific topic of their choosing. We will consider both the consequences of scientific rhetoric, as well as how rhetoric might be deployed as a tool for social action and intervention. This course meets the University's W-credit requirement and will include an in-class presentation, a 7-10 page final paper, and informal weekly writing.

No background in rhetoric or in science is necessary to take this course. This course will be particularly beneficial to individuals interested in professions in the sciences as well as law, education, business, public relations, and journalism.

Catalog Description:
Introductory rhetoric course that examines the strategic use of and situated means through which images, texts, objects, and symbols inform, persuade, and shape social practices in various contexts. Topics focus on education, public policy, politics, law, journalism, media, digital cultural, globalization, popular culture, and the arts.

GE Requirements:
Visual, Literary, and Performing Arts (VLPA)
Writing (W)

Other Requirements Met:
Status: Active
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