



SYLLABUS

GREECE: THE BIRTHPLACE OF PERSUASION

Dr. Alena Amato Ruggerio

Contact Hrs: 45

Language of Instruction: English

ATHENS, GREECE

I. Course content

Regardless of academic major or career, the abilities to communicate persuasively and to guard against manipulation are keys to success. The most influential persuasion handbook in Western history, *On Rhetoric*, was written by the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. In this course, students will explore Aristotle's persuasion tools: selecting content, organizing arguments, language style, verbal and nonverbal delivery, and retaining persuasive messages. Students will choose a controversial issue in Greece, take a position, and create persuasive messages targeted to an audience that could address the situation. The timeless communication skills students gain will be useful in all of future life.

II. Course Objectives

Students will be able to

- A. describe the key concepts of classical Greek rhetoric
- B. analyze a current Greek issue for its exigency, audience, and arguments
- C. create persuasive messages to address the topic issue using rhetorical concepts
- D. communicate arguments and findings to target audiences

III. Excursions

- A. The Greek Animal Welfare Fund or the Hellenic Animal Welfare Society in central Athens, or the Society for the Protection of Stray Animals in the southern Glyfada area of Athens.
- B. The site of the devastating June 2007 forest fire at Mount Parnitha National Park or the September 2007 fire at the ancient site of Olympia
- C. The Roman Forum and the Tower of the Winds

IV. Assignments

Each brief paper assignment of the persuasion project builds on the one before, until at the end of the course, students will put it all together to create a comprehensive persuasion analysis.

A. Topic Proposal: Two pressing issues of modern Greece are forest fires and the overpopulation of stray cats and dogs. Choose one of these controversies, or propose one of your own that affects Greek society (it must be a controversy with valid arguments on at least two sides). Identify which aspect of the issue you wish to explore for your term persuasion project, and tentatively identify the position you will take on the issue.

B. Rhetorical Situation Analysis: Now that you have taken excursions to observe your chosen issue in Greece, read newspaper articles, and explored website sources to research your topic, write a brief paper explaining the situation. What is the issue? What caused this situation? What do you believe is the best way to address the issue?

C. Target Audience Analysis: Identify a target audience that would be best equipped to address your persuasion topic. Based on what you have learned in class about demographic and psychographic analysis, describe that target audience and what persuasive appeals they might find most compelling. What Greek values, assumptions, and perspectives must be taken into consideration when communicating in this culture? What is the status of your credibility with this audience?

D. Opposing Arguments Brief: There is no reason for persuasion or debate when everyone agrees. In this short paper, pinpoint the bones of contention in your issue. In neutral language, articulate the arguments on the other side, and provide well-reasoned responses to them using the skills of logos you have learned in class.

E. Persuasion Concepts Review: Now it is time to begin building your case for the best solution. What are the persuasion concepts that would best persuade your target audience to act on your issue? Identify at least two rhetorical skills from the course, and write one or two pages paraphrasing the definitions of these skills.

F. Persuasive Artifact: Use the persuasion concepts you identified in the previous paper to design a tangible trace of persuasion – a letter, a website, a billboard, a button, a t-shirt, a speech, etc. – targeted to the audience you identified. Carefully craft your persuasive message to move your audience to address the issue affecting modern Greece.

G. Symposium Paper: Put it all together! Connect your revised rhetorical situation description (2 pgs), target audience analysis (2 pgs), answers to opposing arguments (2 pgs), and review of persuasion concepts (2 pgs). Now add a brief section (2 new pages) where you describe your persuasion artifact and how it uses your persuasion concepts to persuade your target audience to overcome their opposing arguments and address your contemporary Greek issue. Look back upon each step and see how it has brought you to a comprehensive persuasion case using the lessons of Aristotle.

H. Symposium Presentation: Share your work with your classmates. A symposium, originating from the dinner party conversations of ancient Greece, is a gathering where scholars present their academic research to their peers. Talk us through each step of your work, and be prepared to answer questions after your presentation.

I. Dialectic Questions: Practice the classical Greek art of arriving at truth through asking deep, investigative questions. As an audience member at the Symposium, ask at least one question on the lower order and one question on the higher order of Bloom's Taxonomy to each presenter.

V. Method of Evaluation

- A. Topic Proposal: 5 points
- B. Rhetorical Situation Analysis: 20 points
- C. Target Audience Analysis: 20 points
- D. Opposing Arguments Brief: 20 points
- E. Persuasion Concepts Review: 20 points
- F. Persuasive Artifact: 10 points
- G. Symposium Paper: 50 points
- H. Symposium Presentation: 50 points
- I. Dialectic Questions: 5 points

Grading Scale:

200-190 A	179-174 B+	159-154 C+	139-134 D+
189-180 A-	173-170 B	153-150 C	133-130 D
	169-160 B-	149-140 C-	129-120 D-

119 and below F

VI. Course Readings

The custom course reader will include:

Excerpts from Kennedy, George. Aristotle On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse. Oxford: 2007.

Excerpts from Murphy, James J., Richard A. Katula, Forbes I. Hill, and Donovan J. Ochs. A Synoptic History of Classical Rhetoric. Hermagoras Press, 2003.

Excerpts from Gass, Robert H. and John S. Seiter. Persuasion, Social Influence, and Compliance Gaining. Allyn and Bacon, 2006.

Excerpts from Simons, Herbert W. Persuasion in Society. Sage, 2001.

Excerpts from Sloane, Thomas. Encyclopedia of Rhetoric. Oxford University Press 2001.

VII. Schedule.

Wk 1 Day 1	Course Introduction: Classical Greek Skills of Persuasion	
Wk 1 Day 2	Aristotle and <i>On Rhetoric</i>	
Wk 2 Day 1	Using <i>heuresis</i> to select topics	
Wk 2 Day 2	Persuasion Symposium assignment introduced	
Wk 3 Day 1	Using <i>kairos</i> to determine the occasion: deliberative, forensic, or epideictic	Topic proposal
Wk 3 Day 2	Using <i>demos</i> for audience analysis and adaptation	
Wk 4 Day 1	Using <i>ethos</i> to establish credibility	
Wk 4 Day 2	Using <i>topoi</i> to articulate persuasive goals: claims	
Wk 5 Day 1	Using <i>atechnoi pisteis</i> to support claims	
Wk 5 Day 2	Using <i>logos</i> to craft strong reasoning	Rhetorical situation analysis
Wk 6 Day 1	Using <i>logos</i> to avoid faulty arguments	
Wk 6 Day 2	Using <i>antithesis</i> to address opposing positions	
Wk 7 Day 1	Using <i>arete</i> to communicate ethically	Target audience analysis
Wk 7 Day 2	Using <i>taxis</i> to organize persuasion: sequence and structure	
Wk 8 Day 1	Using <i>pathos</i> to touch the audience emotionally: motivational appeals	
Wk 8 Day 2	Using <i>lexis</i> to express persuasive messages: linguistic relativity	Opposing arguments brief
Wk 9 Day 1	Using <i>lexis</i> to express persuasive messages: clarity, accuracy, vividness	
Wk 9 Day 2	Using <i>schemata</i> to express persuasive messages: rhetorical tropes	
Wk 10 Day 1	Using <i>hypokrisis</i> to convey your persuasive message verbally	Persuasion concepts review
Wk 10 Day 2	Using <i>hypokrisis</i> to convey your persuasive message nonverbally	
Wk 11 Day 1	Using <i>dialektike</i> as a listener at the Symposium: Bloom's Taxonomy	
Wk 11 Day 2	Persuasion Symposium presentations	Dialectic questions
Wk 12 Day 1	Persuasion Symposium presentations	Dialectic questions
Wk 12 Day 2	Using <i>mneme</i> to retain persuasion skills	Symposium papers and artifacts