

WR 496 Kenneth Burke and Writing Postmodern Identity

Western Oregon University

Dr. Jason Waite

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Office Hours: MW 2-4; T 2-3

Email is the best way to contact me; If you call me on the telephone, I'll likely respond via email anyway. When emailing, please put "WR 496 FA 2011" and your last name in the subject line. E.g., "WR 496 FA 2011 Waite." If you don't there's a chance I'll miss your email. Monday-Thursday, If I don't respond to an email within 24 hours, please resend. If you send an email on Friday or Saturday and don't hear from me by Monday, please resend.

Texts:

Biesecker, Barbara. *Addressing Postmodernity*. Alabama:1997.

Blakesley, David. *The Elements of Dramatism*. Longman: 2002.

Books by Kenneth Burke on reserve in the library:

Permanence and Change

The Philosophy of Literary Form

A Grammar of Motives

A Rhetoric of Motives

Language as Symbolic Action

Overview

This course offers a broad introduction to Kenneth Burke. Kenneth Burke's work in rhetoric is likely the most influential of our time. But he wasn't just a rhetorician. His work extended into literary criticism, creative writing (he wrote both fiction and poetry), journalism (as a music critic), and arguably, philosophy.

In WR 496, we will explore Burke's ideas through his own writing and that of secondary scholars who have worked to extend and apply his ideas to practical matters. Through our reading, we will start to see how our identities often take shape through our writing (whether it be academic, creative, professional, or technical).

DISABILITY STATEMENT

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations at Western Oregon University, you are required to have your accommodations coordinated through the Office of Disability Services (ODS). ODS is located in APSC, Rm. 405. Phone: 503-838-8250 VTTY. Email: ODS@wou.edu

Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Code of Student Responsibility

574-031-0030 Specific Standards and Policies

The following list of prohibited forms of conduct is not all inclusive since it is not possible to list all potential violations. The University requires that all students behave in a manner congruent with established community standards and in a manner conducive to the development of the individual. Actions detrimental to the mission of the University and the legitimate activities of the academic community which constitute the University are in violation of this Code and may be subject to judicial procedures.

1) Academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to:

(a) Cheating- intentional use or attempted use of artifice, deception, fraud, and/or misrepresentations of one's academic work;

(b) Fabrication- unauthorized falsification and/or invention of any information of citation in any academic exercise;

(c) Facilitating dishonesty – helping or attempting to help another person commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes students who substitute for other persons in examinations or represent as their own papers, reports, or any other academic work of others;

(d) Plagiarism- representing without giving credit the words, data, or ideas of another person as one's own work in any academic exercise. This includes submitting, in whole or in part, prewritten term papers of another of research of another, including but not limited product of commercial vendor who sell or distribute such materials. And the appropriation of and/or use of electronic data of another person or persons as one's own, or using such data without giving proper credit for it; or

(e) Any use or attempted use of electronic devices in gaining an illegal advantage in academic work in which use of these devices is prohibited, and such devices include but are not limited to cell phones, pdas, laptops, programmable calculators, etc.

Assignments

Assignments can be turned in via email, but you must send the document as an MS Word document (".doc" or ".docx.") or as an Apple Pages document.

Discussion/Presentation Groups: For each day that a reading is assigned, you will meet with your assigned discussion group to talk about the reading assigned for that day. To prepare for the group work you should take notes while you are doing the

assigned readings that engage, question, and otherwise address the material. Class-wide discussion will follow.

Each group will have an opportunity to lead the class-wide discussion of one of the readings. Leading the class discussion will require you to prepare your notes more formally than is necessary for regular group discussion. It will also require you to prepare a formal plan for leading the discussion. The plan should include a summary of the reading, a list of at least ten questions derived from the reading, potential answers to your posed questions, and commentary (e.g., what do you think the value of the reading is? Are there potential problems with the reading? And so on). You will be turning both your individual notes and the group's plan in to me.

20% of Final Grade

Midterm Exam: The midterm will be a take home, open-book exam and will consist of three questions. Everyone will have to respond to the first question and then will choose two others from a list. Including all questions, the exam should be about 8-10 pages.

35% of Final Grade

Final Exam: The final exam will follow the same form as the midterm but will be longer (about 10-15 pages) and include an additional, fourth, question. The added length gives you an opportunity to develop a more sophisticated argument.

45% of Final Grade

Note: The maximum page lengths given above are not set in stone. Longer pieces are always welcome. Pieces that are shorter than the minimum mentioned above generally do not present arguments that are developed well enough for this course. If you are having trouble developing your argument(s), you should come see me as soon as possible.

Late Papers

Papers are due in class on the date given in our schedule. Without a written request (email preferred) for an extension that explains why you can't turn in the paper on the due date, I will not accept late papers. With the exception of extreme circumstances, the request will not be considered unless I receive it before the day the paper is due. Please note (this is important), I do not normally check email between 8pm and 8am. That means that last-minute emails might not do the trick. Based upon the details in your request I will decide whether or not to grant an extension. If you are sick, please don't go into too much detail (I'd rather not hear about vomiting, etc.), just say that you are sick and that you would like an extension. Bottom line: Without an approved request for an extension, submitted before the deadline, you're paper/exam will count as a zero if it's late.