
RHETORICAL THEORY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

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Ever have trouble explaining to a friend what this “rhetoric” thing is and where it came from?

Ever wonder where the ideas that lie behind technical and professional communication come from?

Technical and professional communication is essential to many of the important things we do in the world, but this practice depends on a long tradition of rhetorical theory that talks explicitly about truth and power, reality and language, race and gender, and about ethical obligations.

In this course we will explore that theoretical tradition by reading article chapters that address the following questions:

What is rhetoric?

How does language connect to reality?

What’s the tradition of African American and feminist rhetoric?

What are a writer’s ethical choices and obligations?

How can citizens participate in democratic deliberations over technical and environmental risks?

