

RHETORIC OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

IS 399

Winter Session, 2019/20

Faculty:

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Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to examine the rhetoric of Abraham Lincoln. By analyzing the history and the rhetoric of Lincoln's greatest speeches, this class will explore the legacy of America's greatest President while simultaneously learning a variety of classic approaches to rhetorical analysis. Through the examination of the choices of words, structure of arguments, and use of imagery in ten of Lincoln's speeches and letters, the course will analyze Lincoln's rise to national prominence, his management of the secession crisis, his skill as a politician, his position regarding the abolition of slavery, and his attitudes toward African-Americans. In exploring the Rhetoric of Abraham Lincoln, students will learn the basic principles of Rhetoric and Speech Communication as well gain a fundamental insight in a critically significant period in American history.

Evaluation and Grading:

Students will be graded on four (4) discussion boards, three (3) journal entries, and a final exam.

8 discussion boards (5% each)	40%
3 journal entries (10% each)	30%
Final Exam	30%

Discussion Boards: Each discussion board represents 5% of the final grade (total of 40%). Students will be divided into groups of approximately ten. Details can be found on the Blackboard site.

Journal Entries: Each journal entry is worth 10% of your grade (total of 30%). Details can be found on the Blackboard site. Additional guidelines below.

Final Exam: The Final Exam will be essay and will be comprehensive. It is worth 30% of the course grade.

Required Readings:

Students are expected to obtain the required textbook. All the speeches are available on class BlackBoard and on the Library of Congress website:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/alhtml/alhome.html>

Book:

Foss, S. (2004). *Rhetorical criticism: Exploration and practice* (5th ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland.

Speeches:

“The House Divided Speech, 1858”
Selections from the Lincoln-Douglas Debates, 1858
“The Cooper Union Address, 1860”
“The First Inaugural Address, 1861”
Letter to Horace Greeley, August 22, 1862”
“The Gettysburg Address, 1863”
Letter to A.G. Hodges, April 4, 1864 and to James Conkling, Aug. 26, 1863
“The Second Inaugural Address, 1865”

Internet Sources:

<http://lincoln.lib.niu.edu>
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/alhtml/alhome.html>
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/l/lincoln/>

Note on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will result in failure of this course. Plagiarism will also be reported to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, which may result in additional sanctions. SIUE defines plagiarism as: “the act of representing the work of another as one's own.... It may consist of copying, paraphrasing or otherwise using the written or oral work of another without acknowledging the source, or it may consist of presenting oral or written course work prepared by another as one's own.”

Schedule of Assignments:

WEEK 1

Session 1: Lincoln in History and the Problem of Mythology (12/16/2019)

To Read: Syllabus

To Watch: Lecture 1

Session 2: The Structure of Rhetoric (12/17/2019)

To Read: Foss Chapters 1 and 2

To Watch: Lecture 2

To Do: Discussion 1

Session 3: The House Divided (12/18/2019)

To Read: Foss Chapter 9 (Metaphor Criticism)

To Watch: Lecture 3

To Do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zyvLzK1Wi6Y>
Discussion 2

Session 4: Lincoln-Douglas Debates (12/19/2019)

To Read: Foss Chapter 8 (Ideological Criticism)

To Watch: Lecture 4

To Do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UK4YTY9DL4I>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4qKcHZKsM0M>
Discussion 3

To Do: Journal 1

WEEK 2

Session 1: Cooper Union (12/23/2019)

To Read: Foss Chapter 5 (Fantasy-theme Analysis)

To Watch: Lecture 5

To Do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQ2De8VcSLw>
Discussion 4

Session 2: Lincoln's First Inaugural Address (12/26/2019)

To Read: Foss Chapter 4 (Cluster Criticism)

To Watch: Lecture 6

To Do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kn9qUEIXvkc>
Discussion 5

Session 3: Letter to Horace Greeley (12/27/2019)

To Read: Foss Chapter 3 (Neo-Aristotelian Criticism)

To Watch: Lecture 7

To Do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIUGIlrJLvQ>
Discussion 6

Session 4: The Gettysburg Address (12/28/2019)

To Read: Foss Chapter 7 (Generic Criticism)

To Watch: Lecture 8

To Do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2a-S3rjDBw>
Discussion 7

To Do: Journal 2

WEEK 3

Session 1: Letters to A. G. Hodges and James Conkling (12/30/2019)

To Read: Foss Chapter 10 (Narrative Criticism)

To Watch: Lecture 9

To Do: Discussion 8

Session 2: Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address] (1/2/2020)

To Read: Foss Chapter 11 (Pentadic Criticism)

To Watch: Lecture 10

To Do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUSqDOb6wT0>
Journal 3

Session 3: FINAL EXAM opens 5 PM on 1/2/2020

DUE no later than 11:59 PM on 1/4/2020

Additional Guidelines for Journal Entries

1. Journal entries should be focused on an historical or rhetorical aspect of the speech. Keep your entry narrowly focused. For example, write about Lincoln's use of Biblical references in the speech, but not about the speech in general. You may use a Lincoln speech not covered in class.
2. Entries must be 350 to 500 words. Entries may be in either Chicago Style or APA. You may use either footnotes or endnotes, depending on the style you choose. Use proper bibliographic citations.
3. Use primary and secondary sources to support your argument. You may use internet sources but be very careful with these sources. Many internet sources are of dubious quality and value.
4. Do not plagiarize. Inadvertent plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Blatant plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.
5. Examples of topics include:
 - i. Lincoln's use of the "Founding Fathers" in his 1838 Lyceum Speech
 - ii. Lincoln's use of imagery in his 1842 Temperance Speech
 - iii. Lincoln's use of conspiracy theory in the "House Divided" speech
 - iv. Why Lincoln was invited to give the Cooper Union Address
 - v. Lincoln's justification for war in his Address to Congress, 1861
 - vi. Lincoln and the issue of race equality in the Charleston Debate, 1858
 - vii. Lincoln and the question of African-American citizenship in the Hodges letter, 1864.
 - viii. Lincoln and the meaning of the "New Birth of Freedom" in the Gettysburg Address
 - ix. The style of debating in 1858
 - x. Lincoln's use of the "Declaration of Independence" in the Debates with Douglas, 1858.