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### WRIT 201.50F: College Writing II

Kelly Renee Schirmann

*University of Montana, Missoula*, [kelly.schirmann@umontana.edu](mailto:kelly.schirmann@umontana.edu)

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# WRIT 201 College Writing II: Advertising as Argument

**Instructor:** Kelly Schirmann

**Office hours:** Zoom, by request

**Email:** kelly.schirmann@umontana.edu

**Pre-session #1:** May 11<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>

“Rhetoric is the faculty of discovering... the available means of persuasion.” – Aristotle

“Rhetoric is the art of communicating thought from one mind to another.” – Sister Miriam Joseph

“Advertising is only evil when it advertises evil things.” – David Ogilvy

“What you call ‘love’ was invented by guys like me... to sell nylons.” – Don Draper, *Mad Men*

## About Compressed Courses

Since this course is a compressed section **the pace will be fast**. We will swiftly, but thoughtfully, work through 15 weeks of material in 3 weeks. With that said, please rest assured that this goal is feasible! You will find all of the readings, assignments, and guidelines organized on our course Moodle homepage, and should find that the syllabus has staggered your workload pretty generously. Please familiarize yourself with how to submit work and participate in forum discussions right away. If you are communicative and stay on top of your deadlines, there’s no reason you shouldn’t be successful 😊

## Course Description

“When Americans hear the word ‘rhetoric’ they tend to think of politicians’ attempts to deceive them...as though words had no connection to action” (Crowley). In this class you will learn that words *are* action, and that the more control you have over them, the more power they can give you. Our study will focus on the way traditional rhetorical concepts manifest in contemporary American culture, especially as related to advertising. You will have the opportunity to study arguments as a reader and enact those practices as a writer. By the end of this class you should be able to accurately assess a given rhetorical situation and make effective rhetorical choices based on your assessment in order to write a graceful, convincing, beautifully written argument.

Although the exact number is difficult to pin down, some estimates claim that the average American is exposed to 5,000 arguments ever day (*New York Times*, “Anywhere the Eye Can See, It’s Likely to See an Ad”). How could this be possible? Well, with advertising appearing

on TV, Facebook, Instagram, radio, highway billboards, beer coasters, subway turnstiles, bus tickets, flyers, magazines, airport security trays, in spam emails, direct mailings, and trailers for other films that appear before you can watch the film you paid to see, it's no wonder that we're bombarded by hundreds or even thousands of advertisements each day. And as anyone who has ever seen an advertisement or watched an episode of *Mad Men* could tell you, it's to sell us something.

Most significantly, advertisers want to persuade us to do or believe a certain thing—they want to convince us that Verizon has better coverage than Sprint, that we need to upgrade to an iPhone X this year, that Allstate will protect us in case of “mayhem,” that Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups are delicious. Advertisers’ end goal is to cause us to view an item, person, or idea as cool, funny, beautiful, stylish, necessary, or desirable. Advertisers are in the business of persuasion, and you and I are typically the ones who are being persuaded, often without us even recognizing it. In this class, however, we’ll turn the tables: you’ll learn to recognize the ways in which advertisements try to persuade you, and you will learn how to use advertisers’ skills of persuasion to write argumentatively and convincingly, to make your case no matter the topic.

This course (College Writing II: Advertising as Argument) is designed to challenge you to learn the skills you’ll need to become a stronger writer, and throughout the semester you will learn to read, examine, and discuss writing and advertisements in ways that will ensure you become more confident in your ability to read critically, analyze texts carefully, and write persuasively. We will focus on revealing the skills, processes, and techniques essential to the persuasive essay, which we will explore by closely examining the way advertisements function in our lives. We will look advertisements that appear in numerous mediums (e.g., video, online, print, radio), and we will become expert readers, ever-improving literary analysts, and more advanced writers. Together we will learn more about how to read critically and write persuasively.

## Respect

Keeping an open mind will be vital in this class, so the expectation is that we will all receive each other’s questions and ideas with curiosity and respect. In this course we will be exploring socially debated and, sometimes, conflict-laden issues. We will work as a class to create an environment that allows each member to share their ideas, without discrimination or judgment. This does not mean we have to agree with other’s perspectives. Part of your educational experience is learning that you will disagree, sometimes radically, with people and that honest discussion is a way to learn to respect and value those disagreements. Please feel free to speak with me if you have any questions regarding this policy.

## Required Course Texts:

*College Writing II: Rhetoric and American Cultures*

(For students who are not in Missoula or don't have access to the UM bookstore, there is a digital copy of this textbook on Moodle.)

## General Class Expectations

- Participate actively and constructively in discussion forums
- Thoroughly read all assigned texts
- Provide evidence of close reading in discussion forums, brainstorming, major assignments, etc.
- Conduct various types of research
- Draft and revise essays of various lengths and purposes
- Submit all work on time (see Late Policy)
- Follow the guidelines for all major assignments: documents should be double-spaced, use 12 point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins on all sides, and use MLA 8<sup>th</sup> edition for in-text citations and works cited page

## University Learning Outcomes for WRIT 201

- Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts
- Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing
- Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience of purpose
- Revise written work based on constructive feedback
- Find, evaluate, and use information effectively
- Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions
- Demonstrate appropriate English language usage

## Grading

- Participation: 20% (posting in threaded discussions by responding or beginning a conversation topic with your peers, logging in 3x/week)
- Major Assignment #1: 25%
- Major Assignment #2: 25%
- Major Assignment #3: 30%

WRIT 201 students are graded by traditional letter grades A, B, C, D, F. You must earn a C- in this class to be awarded credit.

## Attendance Policies

Success in WRIT 201 online is dependent on your active participation and engagement throughout the course. As such, students are required to complete all assignments by the due date, demonstrate a close reading of assigned texts, actively participate in discussion forums, and thoughtfully complete writing assignments. Failure to participate in the aforementioned ways may result in a penalty to your overall grade or failure of the course.

Students will not be marked present for the course in a particular week if they have not posted on the discussion forum and/or submitted assignments/essays if administered in that week. Since this class is being offered in a compressed format, being marked absent for (1) week will result in automatic failure of the course. With that said, I understand that sometimes life happens and unexpected circumstances can impact your ability to stay current with class. If this happens please email me so we may discuss your options.

Additionally, students are expected to:

- Log on at least three times a week – on different days – in order to complete weekly assignments, assessments, discussions and/or other weekly deliverables
- Participate in the weekly threaded discussions, meaning that in addition to posting a response to the thread topic presented, students are expected to respond and comment to each other, and/or answer questions posed from the instructor and/or other students

To comply with federal mandates for universities' handling of student aid, certain kinds of student activity may or may not count as participation sufficient to qualify as "attendance" in online courses. Specifically, as stated in the Federal Student Aid Handbook (see link below), documenting that a student has logged into an online class or website is not sufficient, by itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. **For example, if a student simply logs into an online course and then logs out, without any further activity, the student did not attend the online class on that day.**

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and complete all assignments for courses in which they are enrolled. I may excuse brief and occasional absences for reasons of illness, injury, family emergency, religious observance, cultural or ceremonial events, or participation in a University sponsored activity. (University sponsored activities include for example, field trips, ASUM service, music or drama performances, and intercollegiate athletics.) I will excuse absences for reasons of military service or mandatory public service; please provide appropriate documentation.

Students in the National Guard or Reserves are permitted excused absences due to military training. Students must submit their military training schedule to their instructor at the beginning of the semester. Students must also make arrangements with the instructor to make up course work for missed days due to military service.

Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student's customs and traditions or to participate in related activities. To receive an authorized absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event the student or their advisor (proxy) must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and the importance of the student's attendance or participation. Authorization for the absence is subject to approval by the instructor. Appeals may be

made to the Chair, Dean or Provost. The excused absence or leave may not exceed five academic calendar days (not including weekends or holidays). Students remain responsible for completion or make-up of assignments as defined in the syllabus, at the discretion of the instructor.

## Late Policy

- Discussion thread / forum posts submitted late will not receive credit
- Major Assignments submitted late may not receive revision/comments from instructor
- Major Assignments that are submitted late will be docked on letter grade per day that they are late, unless the student gets instructor approval for an extension **before the due date**. Because of the compressed format, timely submissions will be crucial.
- If you have attendance conflicts on the day a Major Assignment is due you must contact me to discuss your options before hand
- You are always welcome to complete assignments early if you know in advance you have a conflicting schedule.

## Academic Conduct

You must abide by the rules for academic conduct described in the Student Conduct Code. If you have any questions about when and how to avoid academic dishonesty, particularly plagiarism, please review the Conduct Code and talk with your instructor. Academic honesty is highly valued in the University community and acts of plagiarism will not be tolerated.

## Composition Program Plagiarism Policy for WRIT 201

According to the University of Montana Student Conduct Code, plagiarism is “representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one’s own.” The Composition program recognizes that plagiarism is a serious academic offense, but also understands that some misuse of information can occur in the process of learning information literacy skills. Therefore, if student writing appears to have been plagiarized, in full or in part, intentionally or unintentionally, or due to poor citation, the following will procedure will take place:

- The student will be made aware of areas in the text that are not properly integrated or cited
- The student will receive no credit on the paper; it is up to them to prove that they turned in original work
- The student will be asked to provide the teacher with copies of the research they used in writing the paper
- The student and teacher will meet to discuss research integration

- If the student cannot provide documentation of their research, further disciplinary action will be taken

In the case that the student is unable to provide evidence of his/her original work or in the case that the teacher has evidence that the student has repeatedly plagiarized his/her work, the teacher will consult with the Director of Composition for direction with further disciplinary action.

In the case of blatant or egregious offenses, or in the case of repeated plagiarism, the Director of Composition will work with the Dean of Students to determine further disciplinary action.

Students should review the Student Conduct Code so that they understand their rights in academic disciplinary situations. The Student Conduct Code can be found here:  
[http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student\\_conduct.php](http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php)

### Students with Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator. DSS at UM encourages "...students to request modifications early in the semester. Students are also advised by Disability Services to make an appointment with the instructor in advance...Retroactive modification requests do not have to be honored."  
[https://www.umt.edu/dss/Faculty/Frequently\\_Asked\\_Questions.php](https://www.umt.edu/dss/Faculty/Frequently_Asked_Questions.php)

### The Writing and Public Speaking Center

The Writing and Public Speaking Center provides one-on-one tutoring to students at all levels and at any time in the writing process. Visit now. Visit often. We're ready when you are. [www.umt.edu/writingcenter](http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter).

### Major Assignments

Expect to write and revise three different major assignments over the course of this class. Detailed instructions are posted on Moodle in the folder labeled "Writing Assignments." All major writing assignments should be double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins on all sides as per MLA 8th edition formatting.

- Major Assignment #1: Case Study: A Close Reading and Analysis of a Notable Print Advertisement
- Major Assignment #2: For Sale by Owner Essay
- Major Assignment #3: "Sex, Drugs, and Rock & Roll" Advertising Vice Essay

## WRIT 201 Daily Schedule

Note about the syllabus: The date listed, for example 7/10 (W), is the date that the reading and/or writing assignments are due by 11:59p.m. Each week the due dates will be Monday (M), Wednesday (W), and Friday (F) with the exception of the first week. Since class begins on a Monday and you will not have access to course materials prior to class starting, for this one date assignments will be due Tuesday (T) 7/9. More about that below.

Also, unless explicitly stated, **you are not expected to complete the various activities listed in GCW** (i.e. activity 4.1, etc.). You should read these sections for important content, but you do not need to actually do the activities. However, you will note some of them will appear in the discussion forums so you will have the chance to actively engage with the material presented therein.

### Text Abbreviations

RAC: *College Writing II: Rhetoric and American Cultures* (digital version on Moodle)

M: Reading available on Moodle (located in the "Assigned Readings" folder)

### Week 1

#### Monday, 5/11

**Review:** Course syllabus; Guidelines for Major Assignment #1

**Read:** "The Power of Advertising" **M**

#### Tuesday, 5/12

**Read:** Chapter 1 RAC; "How Powerful is Advertising?" **M**

**Write:** Post one comment (~75-100 words) in **each** sub-topic in Discussion Forum #1 (three comments total) by 11:59pm

#### Wednesday, 5/13

**Read:** Chapter 2 RAC

**Write:** Post one response (~75-100 words) to a classmate in one of the sub-topics of your choice in Discussion Forum #1 (one is the minimum, but more is great too) by 11:59pm

**Draft:** Attempt to finish your rough draft of Major Assignment #1 (due Friday). You do not need to post your rough draft, but use this "soft due date" to help you manage your time.

#### Thursday, 5/14

**Read:** Chapter 3 RAC

**Draft:** Continue drafting Major Assignment #1

#### Friday, 5/15

**Read:** Guidelines for Major Assignment #2

**Revise:** Read your final draft of MA #1 OUT LOUD before you submit—this is the best way to catch typos, awkward sentences, grammar issues, etc.

**Write: Major Assignment #1 Final Draft due by 11:59pm**



## Week 2

### Monday, 5/18

**Review:** Guidelines for MA #2

**Read:** “For Sale by Owner Advertisements from Across America” **M**

**Write:** Follow the instructions on Discussion Forum #2 to research, locate, and revise a “For Sale by Owner” ad. Post the original and your revision to the forum by 11:59pm.

### Tuesday, 5/19

**Read:** Chapter 5 *RAC*

**Write:** Post ONE response (~75-100 words) to one of your classmate’s “For Sale by Owner” revisions in Discussion Forum #2, in which you identify specific examples of their use of the three rhetorical appeals. See forum for details. Post your response by 11:59pm.

### Wednesday, 5/20

**Read:** Chapter 6 *RAC*

**Draft:** Attempt to finish your rough draft of Major Assignment #2 (due Friday). You do not need to post your rough draft, but use this “soft due date” to help you manage your time.

\*\* Deadline to request an extension to Monday 6/1 for MA #2 is 11:59pm \*\*

### Thursday, 5/21

**Read:** No reading due

**Draft:** Continue drafting Major Assignment #2

### Friday, 5/22

**Read:** Guidelines for Major Assignment #3

**Revise:** Read your final draft of MA #2 OUT LOUD before you submit—this is the best way to catch typos, awkward sentences, grammar issues, etc.

**Write: Major Assignment #2 Final Draft due by 11:59pm**

## Week 3

### Monday, 5/25

**Review:** Guidelines for MA #3

**Read:** “Smoking Among Children is Linked to Cartoon Camel in Ad” **M**; “Study Ties Women’s Brands to Smoking Increase for Girls” **M**

**Write:** Begin finding sources for MA #3. You do not need to submit a preliminary list of sources, but use this “soft due date” to help you manage your time.

### Tuesday, 5/26

**Read:** “Ethics in Advertising” **M**; “Rules and Regulations About Marketing Alcohol” **M**

### Wednesday, 5/27

**Read:** “Ethical Judgments of Sexual Appeals in Advertising Image-Based Products to Teens”  
**M;** “Debate: Marketing Campaigns Use Sex Appeal to Sell Products” **M**  
**Write:** Attempt to finish your rough draft of Major Assignment #3 (due Friday). You do not need to post your rough draft, but use this “soft due date” to help you manage your time.  
**\*\* Deadline to request an extension to Monday 6/1 for MA #3 is 11:59pm \*\***

Thursday, 5/28

**Read:** No reading due

**Draft:** Continue drafting Major Assignment #3

Friday, 5/29

**Revise:** Read your final draft of MA #3 OUT LOUD before you submit—this is the best way to catch typos, awkward sentences, grammar issues, etc.

**Write: Major Assignment #3 Final Draft due by 11:59pm**

## **Major Assignment Grade Descriptors for WRIT 201**

**A** Superior writing will demonstrate initiative and rhetorical sophistication that go beyond the requirements. Writing at this level is composed of well-edited texts representing different writing situations and genres that consistently show a clear, connected sense of audience, purpose and development. The writer is able to analyze their own writing, reflect on it, and revise accordingly. The writing takes risks that work.

**B** Strong writing meets rhetorical goals in terms of purpose, genre, and writing situation without need for further major revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or style/mechanics. The writer is able to reflect on their own writing and make some choices about revision. The writer takes risks, although they may not all be successful.

**C** Consistent writing meets the basic requirements, yet the writing would benefit from further revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or writing style/mechanics (or some combination) and a stronger understanding of rhetorical decision-making involved in different writing situations and genres. The writer composes across tasks at varying levels of success with some superficial revision. The writer has taken some risks in writing and exhibits some style.

**D** Weak writing does not fully meet the basic evaluative standards. Most texts are brief and underdeveloped. These texts show a composing process that is not yet elaborated or reflective of rhetorical understanding related to composing in different genres and for a range of writing situations. Texts generally require extensive revisions to purpose, development, audience, and/ or style and mechanics.

**F** Unacceptable writing exhibits pervasive problems with purpose, development, audience, or style/mechanics that interfere with meaning and readers' understanding. Unacceptable writing assignments are often incomplete. An assignment will also earn an F if it does not represent the writer's original work.