

Intercultural Rhetoric in the Virtual College Composition Classroom



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Learning Outcomes

- Describe Linda Flower's theory of intercultural rhetoric
- Demonstrate how this theory is applied practically in a virtual classroom

What is the purpose of CM 220?

- Cultivate writing and communication skills through process
- Learn effective and ethical persuasion techniques
- Develop research and citation capabilities
- Create engaging presentations
- Enhance teamwork skills



Indirect Goals

- Deepen critical thinking skills
- Develop confidence in analyzing and challenging personal beliefs
- Develop an attitude of collaboration and partnership when digging into difficult questions with a diverse group of stakeholders
- Cultivate community literacy skills

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Driving Question:

“The fundamental question to ask about one’s composition paradigm is, what is it actually teaching students to do?”

--Linda Flower (2008, ch. 3)



Answer: We want students to be empowered to engage in difficult, complex inquiry with an open-mind and develop feasible solutions that can be expressed and supported in a variety of contexts with a variety of stakeholders.

What is Intercultural Rhetoric

- Linda Flower's (2008) theory of intercultural rhetoric is grounded in the local community and in exploring with the community a local issue.

Philadelphia curfew law:

- College students worked with local youth as partners in inquiry
- The youth (underrepresented stakeholders) wrote texts, to share with local decision makers
 - law enforcement, city officials, the Department of Human Services, voters, etc.
- Community becomes partners in inquiry to solve the local issue



Challenge:
How do we
empower
students with
these skills in
a virtual
context?



Provide the theoretical framework



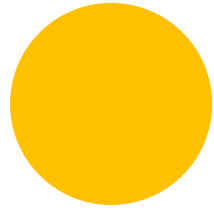
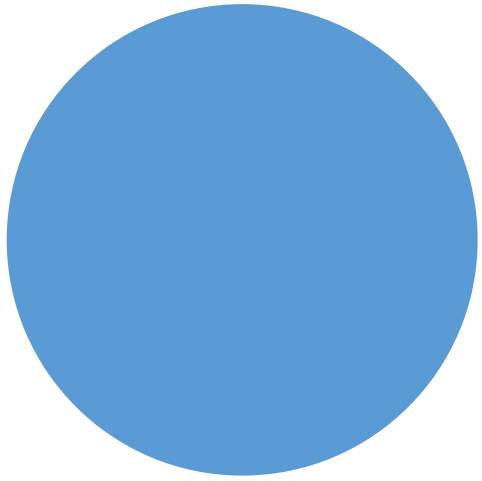
Establish the classroom as a virtual
community space



Encourage students to select personally
relevant and meaningful topics for
change



Guide students through a series of
personal and collective inquiry tasks



Theoretical Framework



The goal of intercultural rhetoric is to bring forth all voices in the community, regardless of education or training in persuasive communication, so that each has a place at the table in the effort to solve a problem.

Intercultural rhetors are not easily satisfied with the surface understanding of an issue. Instead, they are actively engaged in uncovering the missing, unrepresented voices in an issue and creating a negotiated understanding of the problem along with potential solutions.

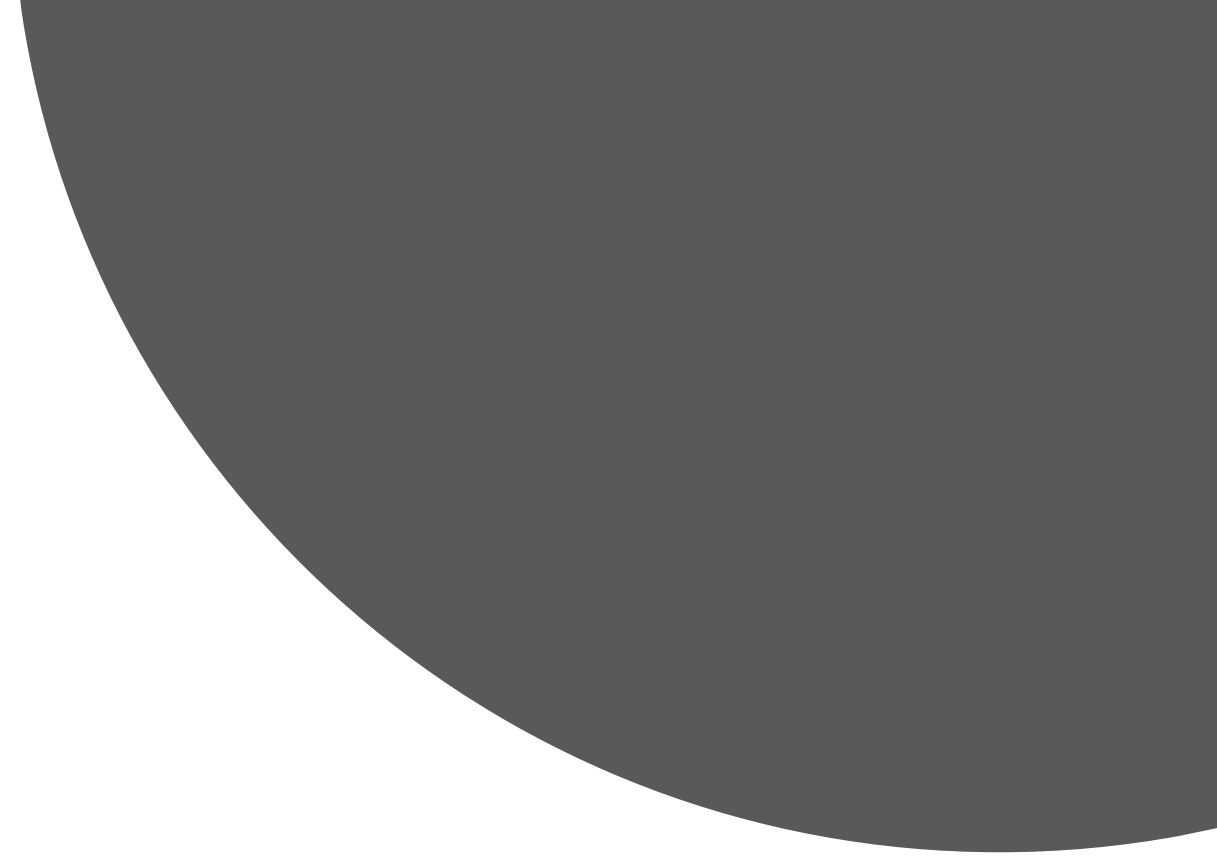
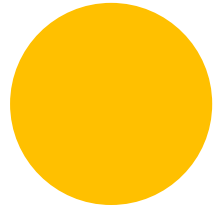
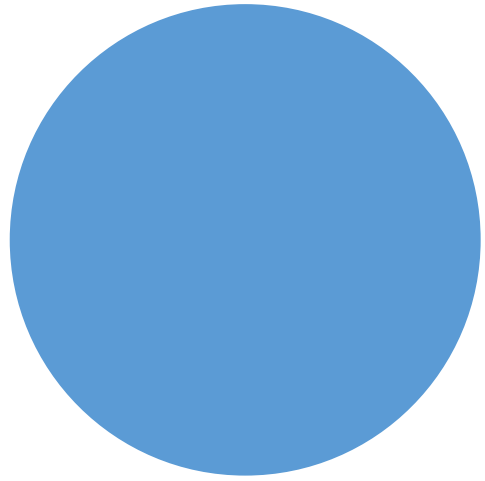
(Purdue University Global Composition Department, 2018)

Establishing a Common Goal With Our Students:

Three Key Processes

- Identifying stakeholders
 - Who can make the change?
 - Who are the stakeholders?
- Seeking the story-behind-the-story
- Proposing rival hypotheses
- Exploring and evaluating options and outcomes (Flower, 2003)





Establishing a Community of Inquiry



Community Literacy

Community literacy is a form of literate action that allows:

Everyday people within the urban community to take agency in their lives and for their community;

Everyday people from places of privilege to participate in this struggle for understanding social justice.

Community literacy depends on the social ethic and strategic practice of intercultural rhetoric to:

Draw out the voices of the silenced and the expertise of marginalized people;

Draw people normally separated by difference into new roles as partners in inquiry;

Recognize and use difference in the service of discovery and change, transforming rather than erasing its conflicts and contradictions.

Community literacy is, in short, a working hypothesis about how we might construct a community that supports dialogue across difference.

--Linda Flower (2008).



Draw students into collective process of listening, offering a story-behind-the-story, and proposing rival viewpoints via the collaborative discussion space.

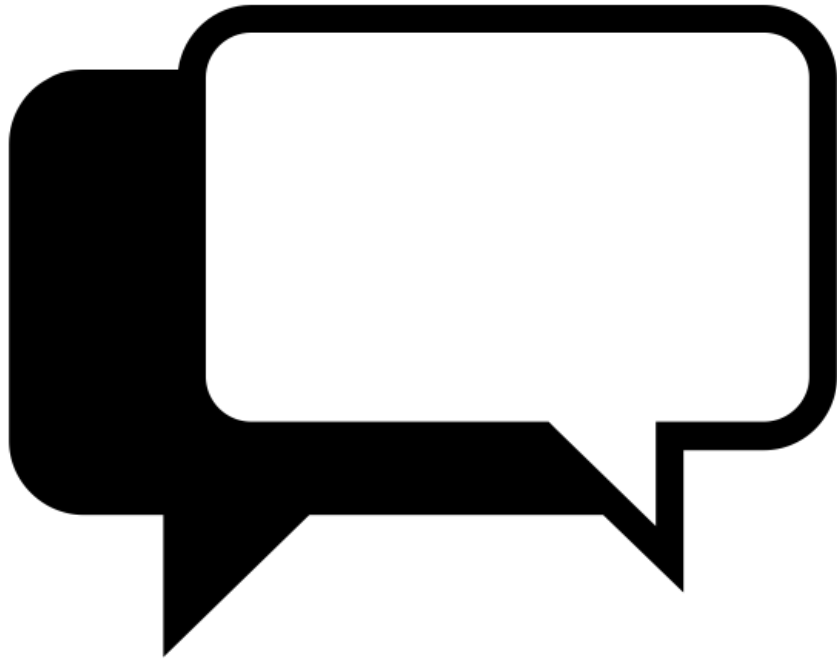


Pose early hypotheses of problem and solution arguments.



Emphasize the intention to seek rival perspectives and consider ideas as constantly evolving based on what is learned.

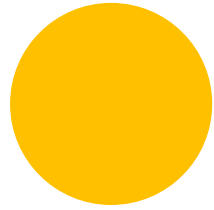
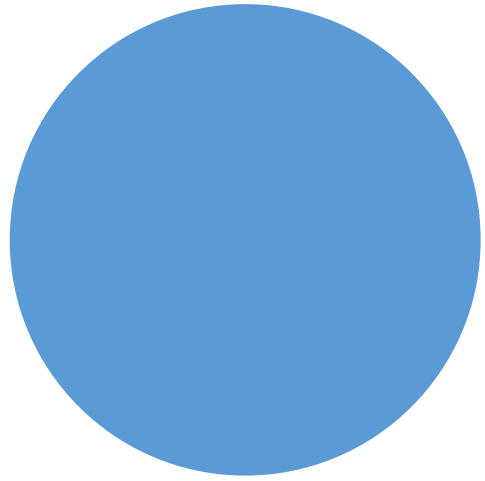
Classroom Application - Partners in Inquiry



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Dialogue


- “Dialogue *with* culturally different others must start in inquiry. It takes an active search for diversely situated knowledges and experiential meanings to understand not only one another but also the social problems we face together. In the spirit of Paulo Freire, the purpose of dialogue is not to achieve a *warm* feeling of mutuality. It is a search for understandings that can transform reality (Flower, 2003).



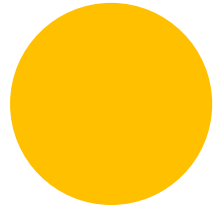
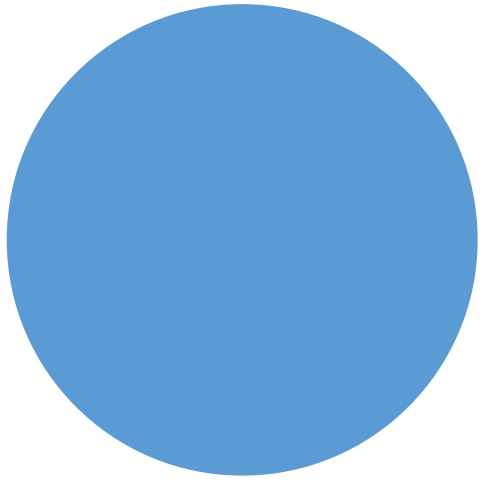
Personal Relevance |

The “Idea for Change”

- Proposal to solve problem in community or workplace
- Must be debatable and feasible

A black Eames-style chair is shown in a close-up, angled view. A white sign with blue text is placed on the seat of the chair. The sign reads "THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX" in three lines. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

THINK
OUTSIDE
THE BOX



Guiding Inquiry



Timeline

Units 1-2

- Identify and evaluate examples of effective persuasion.

Unit 3

- Choose a topic, narrow the focus, and draft a preliminary thesis statement.

Unit 4

- Create a thesis statement, consider different stakeholders, and find one scholarly source.

Unit 5

- Develop a research strategy to help pull together sources related to your idea for change.

Unit 6

- Gather relevant research for your annotated bibliography Assignment, evaluate the sources for credibility and relevancy, and construct APA citations for each source.

Unit 7


- Develop an organization plan for your persuasive essay Assignment and get feedback about how to present your argument effectively.

Unit 8

- Draft an introduction and body paragraph on the Discussion Board, review feedback from Units 7 and 8, write and revise your persuasive essay.

Unit 9

- Complete a slide or video presentation reflecting the argument for change Assignment.



Unit 3 Learning Activity - Drafting an Enthymeme

For this class, you will be using the enthymeme structure to create a problem-solution thesis. Remember from our readings, the enthymeme has three critical components: the claim clause, reason clause, and connector word like because or therefore. Answer the questions below to create your first draft of your problem-solution thesis.

Enter your preferred email address below to get a copy of your answers sent to your inbox for future reference.

* Required

Email address *

Your email _____

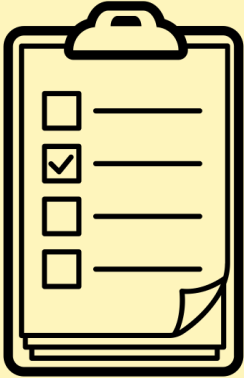
Identify your topic for change

Example. A student wants to write about improving academic performance in the San Antonio School District (SAISD).

Issue: Low academic performance in SAISD.
Research Question: What is causing low performance in SAISD high schools?
Problem Statement: Students in the San Antonio School District high schools are struggling to show mastery and college readiness.

What is an issue that you could write about this term?

Your answer _____



Created by Mani Cheng
from Noun Project

- CM220-2: Construct logical arguments
- Unit 4 assignment asks them to analyze their thesis statement based on the logical appeals and the rhetorical situation.

Critiquing the thesis

Pathos = Audience Assumptions, Situated Knowledge

Though pathos is known as the appeal to emotions, it is also much more than that. **Pathos is the appeal to the values, priorities, and ethics of the audience.** When we use pathos in a personal, professional, academic, or community-based argument, we need to **pay close attention to the values of our stakeholders.** When we actively seek understanding of their priorities, their concerns, the limitations they must work within, and their situated knowledge about an issue, we can develop an argument that addresses those issues effectively and motivates them to agree with us and take action. **In a community argument**, we can **seek the story-behind-the-story** to get a better sense of the **underlying beliefs and assumptions** that we need to consider as we figure out a solution. Using **pathos**, a speaker can **test the validity** of an argument and revise it to **make sure it is feasible given who he or she needs to convince.**

Evolving Ideas: Thesis Revision in Action

Draft 1: Children should be taught a second language as early as possible, because people are best able to learn a second language when they are young and being bilingual or polylingual gives said person multiple mental benefits.

Draft 2: Cottonwood Creek Elementary School should teach a second language, like Spanish or French, starting from pre-kindergarten, because people are best able to learn a second language when they are young and being bilingual or polylingual gives said person multiple mental benefits.

Draft 3: Cottonwood Creek Elementary School should teach a second language starting from pre-kindergarten since people are best able to learn a second language when they are younger (Smith, D. G., 2018), and the school district has a mission to “positively impact our world” (“Mission Statement / Mission and Values”, n.d.) and on a global scale Chinese and Spanish are the two most spoken languages(Lane, J., 2016).

Draft 4: Cottonwood Creek Elementary School should teach Chinese or Spanish starting from pre-kindergarten since people are best able to learn a second language when they are younger, the school district values authentic relationships which can be formed by engaging with someone in their own language, and Chinese and Spanish are the two most spoken languages in the world.



[ons](#)

Research to support the thesis

- CM220-3: Conduct research to support assertions made in academic and professional situations.
- Unit 6 assignment asks them to find sources that support and challenge their argument as well as a visual source.

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The essay

- CM220-4: Synthesize data and research into a written argument
- Unit 8 assignment asks them to write a 3-4 page formal, academic essay that incorporates research from at least 4 sources


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Graphic Organizers to Reinforce Intercultural Rhetoric

IV. Counter arguments		
Audiences that may have reservations or negative results from the proposed solution:		
Concerns to address:		
Rebuttal to those concerns:		
V. Conclusion		
What key points do you want to reinforce as you wrap up the argument?		
Final considerations for the audience:		

Bringing it to the Community:

The presentation





The presentation

- CM220-5: Develop strategies for effective problem-solving using digital media
- Unit 9 assignment requires that they create a digital media presentation based on their idea for change.

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Intercultural Rhetoric in Peer Review: Preparing Students for Community Dialogue

“Dialogue *with* culturally different others must start in inquiry. It takes an active search for diversely situated knowledges and experiential meanings to understand not only one another but also the social problems we face together. In the spirit of Paulo Freire, the purpose of dialogue is not to achieve a *warm* feeling of mutuality. It is a search for understandings that can transform reality (Flower, 2003).

Florida should ban the use of disposable plastics to help decrease the amount of sea turtle deaths because the decrease in population is often caused by consumption of plastics bottles, plastic straws, and plastic bags.

- Every year at least 100 million marine animals are negatively affected by pollution and habitat destruction (Palis, 2015).

The Problem

75% SHOT AND KILLED HAD MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

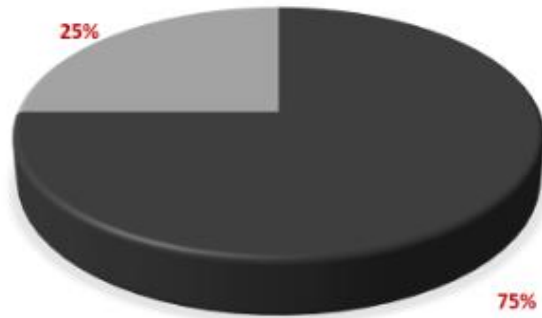


Figure 2.

In 2012, research from the *Portland Press Herald* found that more than half of the projected 375-500 people shot and killed each year in this country had mental health problems (as cited in Honberg, 2015).

Officer Involvement

Emergency Situations

Police Training

Student testimonials

- How have students taken their ideas from the classroom and brought them to a wider audience in their communities?



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Questions



References

Flower, L. (2003). Talking across difference: Intercultural rhetoric and the search for situated knowledge. *College Composition and Communication*, 55(1), 38-68.
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Flower, L. (2008). *Community literacy and the rhetoric of public engagement*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

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