

# Rhetoric and Multimedia

## Definitions—

“...rhetoric might be understood as the study and practice of shaping content” (Covino and Jolliffe 4)

“Rhetoric is a primarily verbal, situationally contingent, epistemic art that is both philosophical and practical and gives rise to potentially active texts” (Covino and Jolliffe 5).

Rhetoric includes not only oral and written text, but also visual images, graphics, videos, and sounds—essentially all of the components of multimedia. Since each of those components shape content and often incorporate oral or written discourse, we can use rhetorical terms and concepts to understand how various forms of media operate individually and collectively to present a certain view, perspective, or story.

## Key Concepts—

### ***Kairos***

Sensitivity to the timeliness and suitability of the production; timing

### ***Rhetorical Situation***

Exigence—the motivation for the production

Text—the production or product

Writer—the composer or team of composers

Audience—the intended recipient, user, or consumer (must have some kind of vested interest)

Constraints—the beliefs that lead the audience to accept the writer’s ideas (and vice versa)

### ***Audience***

Primary or immediate

Subsidiary or mediated

### ***Proofs, or means of persuasion***

Logos—appeals to systems of reasoning that the rhetor and audience share

Ethos—appeals to the authority of the rhetor

Pathos—appeals to the emotions of the audience

### ***Canons of Rhetoric***

Invention—generating effective material for the rhetorical situation

Arrangement—ordering the material so it is most appropriate for the audience and purpose

Modes of Discourse:   Exposition  
                                  Description  
                                  Narration  
                                  Argumentation

Style—constructing the composition so as to make a favorable impression

Memory—remembering the composition

Delivery—presenting or displaying the composition