

Dr. Anthony T. Atkins
English 388: Rhetorical Theory
Exploration Essay

In class, we have discussed the Sophists, Gorgias, Protagoras, and Isocrates. Each of these figures has a profound influence on English, philosophy, education, and rhetoric. They each have their own idea of what a “good rhetorician” ought to be. The nature of rhetoric for each figure is sometimes slightly different (subtle) and at other times extremely different. Issues like virtue, good vs. evil, temperance, wisdom, gymnastics, education, persuasion, and technai, represent some aspects that occur as subjects of debate between rhetoricians.

For this essay choose any aspect of these rhetoricians and explore the nature of rhetoric. For example, in what texts does virtue appear and in what context and how is it defined or used? Which rhetoricians debate virtue and for what cause or purpose? Is it taught or innate and what are the implications for each? Another example could be gymnastics. How does gymnastics figure into rhetoric? In what contexts does it occur? Or, define rhetoric. What is rhetoric for each rhetorician? Where do they seem to differ and where do they seem to be parallel? Use the texts I have provided and your textbook to outline your major points/ideas. You will want to quote and cite the texts I’ve provided. Outside research is not necessary.

Arrangement or organization will be keys here. Defining your terms will also be important. Be sure to have a complete introduction that explains what you will be talking about and that outlines the rest of your essay. This will help the reader understand what points you are trying to make. Be sure to introduce your quotes and use MLA properly. Use quotes only when you need them. Try not to use overly long quotes (notice that many sentences in our texts are very long). Paraphrase or summarize when warranted.

(note). The internet is helpful, but please cite any online text/s you use. Again, citing the texts I have provided should be sufficient for this assignment.

This paper should be approximately 4-5 pages. No more and no less. Follow MLA guidelines. Maintain a 12 point Times New Roman font.

If you need any help, I’ll be happy to sit and chat with you about our readings, potential paper topics, or to read drafts of your essay. Simply email to make an appointment with me.

150 Points

Submitted on time via email Length (4-5 pages)	10 points
MLA Format (includes headers, page numbers—works cited page is not required unless students cites outside sources. If	10 points

works cited is included, it is subjected to correct MLA format)	
Typos, Misused words, drop quote (no introduction to quote), quotes are too long or inappropriate (no need for it or does not work for what the student is referring to). Sentences that are not clear or poorly written (reader cannot understand sentence). Transitions between ideas/topics to help reader follow the essay and to help the essay flow	50 points
Appropriate topic and well developed. Illustrates an understanding of the idea being explored. The essay should make some point, but does not necessarily have to be argumentative.	30 points
Introduction/Conclusion: Topic should be introduced properly and there should be some kind of conclusion that wraps up the idea/essay	50 points