**WRT 104**

**Rhetorical Appeals Information**

As we begin to talk through the ways in which we “persuade” within a “rhetorical situation,” we’ll practice trying to determine how we (ourselves) use what’s called “rhetorical appeals.” Conversely, we’ll also analyze how other writers (of both written and visual texts) – or other speakers – use those same appeals to persuade their audiences (which may include us!).

**Here is a breakdown of how we approach thinking about logos, ethos, and pathos:**

**LOGOS:** This relates to a writer or speaker’s “**logical appeal**.” The person who is persuading (called a “rhetor”) uses logic or reasoning, most of the time related to the issue itself. Using logic, a writer or speaker will:

* Appeal to the mind/intellect
* Use facts, figures or statistics, definitions
* Use “if…then” statements [“**If** you do the work and show up to class, **then** you will do well in this course” – just as an example you’ve all heard.]
* Explain cause and effect examples

**PATHOS:** This relates to a writer or speaker’s “**emotional appeal**.” The person who is persuading uses an audience’s emotions to influence or persuade. Using the emotional appeal, a writer or speaker will:

* Appeal to the heart or emotions
* If appropriate, draw from religious traditions
* Use personal connections, stories or anecdotes to connect to audience [“If you’re scared or unsure of how you can proceed with the assignment, I’m happy to meet with you.” – again, an example you’ve all heard.]
* Perhaps use imagery or figurative language to provoke emotion
* Attempt to inspire compassion
* Purposefully use powerful words or phrases to shock or jolt

**ETHOS:** This relates to a writer or speaker’s “**ethical appeal**.” Ethos is a writer or speaker’s credibility or reputation. Ethos relates to building trust. The person who is persuading uses ethos in the way he or she choose to represent him- or herself. Using the “ethical appeal,” a writer or speaker will:

* Portray an aspect of nobility, trustworthiness, and/or honesty
* Appeal, also, to the character of the particular audience
* Use credible and reliable sources to make an argument
* Display knowledge and experience of the context (topic/issue) of the argument [“I’ve been working with students for nearly 15 years, and one of my primary goals to help build a community so we can all connect.” – again, an example from class.]
* Use language and/or terminology that is appropriate for that rhetorical situation/opportunity
* Uses appropriate tone for the given situation/audience
* Display an expertise in an area, but not be arrogant or pompous