

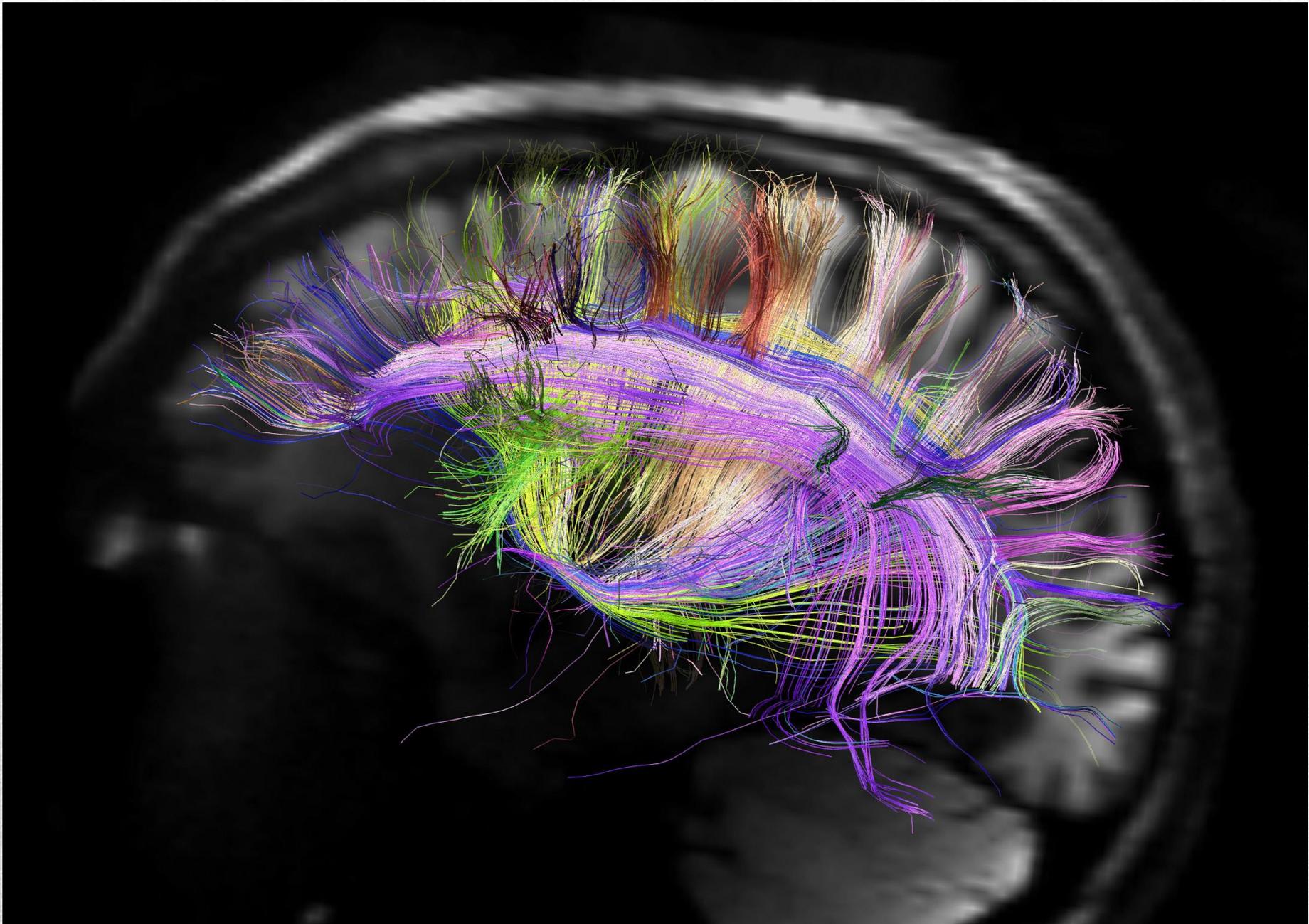
# **Rhetoric: Thinking, Feeling, and Perspectives**

*Beyond the practical demands*

READ M. DIKET, Ph.D.

William Carey University NAEA Fort Worth 2013

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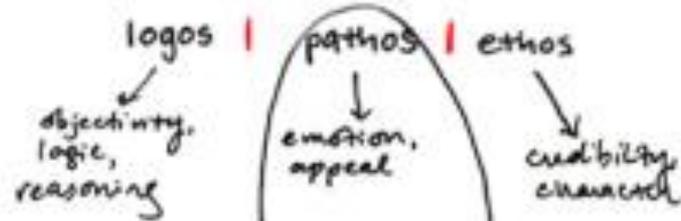
Making rhetoric transparent draws students into a fuller participation in the process of learning, encouraging their active rather than passive participation.

Understanding brain anatomy and functionality, coupled with artistic knowledge and with input from the learning sciences, enables humans to cognate more deeply and maximize usage of the simultaneous processing capabilities of the brain.

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- “The arts were an inadequate compensation for human suffering, for unattained happiness, for lost innocence, they [the arts] were and are compensation nonetheless, an offset to natural calamities and to the evil that men do.”
  - “And what is the ultimate gift of consciousness to humanity: Perhaps the ability to navigate the future in the seas of our imagination, guiding the self craft into a safe and productive harbor.”
  - This greatest of gifts depends...on the intersection of self and memory. Memory, interpreted by personal feeling is what allows humans to imagine both individual well-being and the compounded well-being of a whole society, and to invent the ways and means of achieving and magnifying that well-being.”
  - The future pulls us forward, from a distant vanishing point, and gives us the will to continue the voyage in the present.”  
(Antonio Damasio, Self comes to mind, 2012, p. 314-315)
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# RHETORIC



\* 5 CANONS: arrangement, style, delivery, memory, invention

Figures of speech  
Schemes tropes

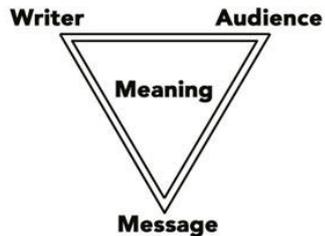
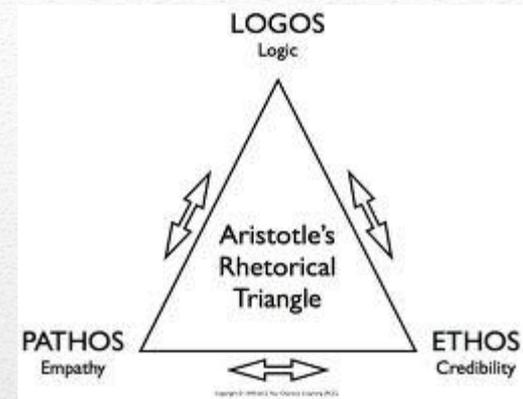
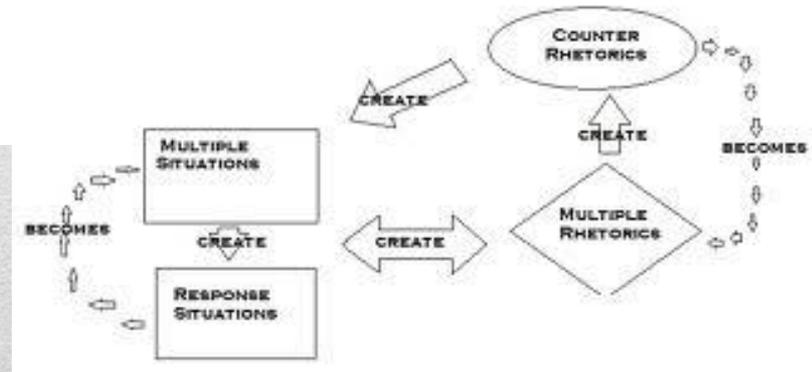


Figure 1: The Rhetorical Triangle



# What is rhetoric?

- This presentation is about the intersections of articulated artistic experiences which cross thinking strategies, feeling, and perspectives in pursuit of shared understanding. While shared understanding is not always the goal of art education, communication and consensus actively embraces learners who have the skill sets necessary to interpret the personal within local cultures and, then, society.
- Explores the notion that practical success is not enough; nor is an inward and personal experience enough; without competence in language (interpretation and facility) people fumble in a “twilight world” of ideas, facts, and feelings.

***Thought shades off into feeling, and  
feeling shades off into thought*** (Brooks  
and Warren, *Modern Rhetoric*, 1949, 1958, 1970)

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- A KWL (what we know, want to know, and have learned) chart applies to pedagogy and to research, but does not go far enough in establishing an active perspective and use in life.
- Look twice at “grand, high-sounding...general subjects, such as patriotism, democracy, religion, justice, and education....because [these] have accumulated...a body of generally accepted and conventionally approved interpretations and arguments, and a set of respectable and pious attitudes” (Brooks & Warren, p. 15).

**Start with the medium of words, proceed to define sentences and clarifying paragraphs. Focus on a subject or occasion, aiming for the thematic organization necessary to make a beginning.**

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- Who makes up the audience?
- Are they already interested in the subject, or must attention be attracted?
- How much information does the audience already know about the subject?
- What is the purpose of the rhetoric? Is it to clarify, convince, or change perspectives?
- The body of the presentation should live up to the promise of the title and introduction.

**Good discourse positions an audience to consider a subject, frames a proposition, discusses points fully and concludes based on evidence.**

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# Example from college studio art teaching

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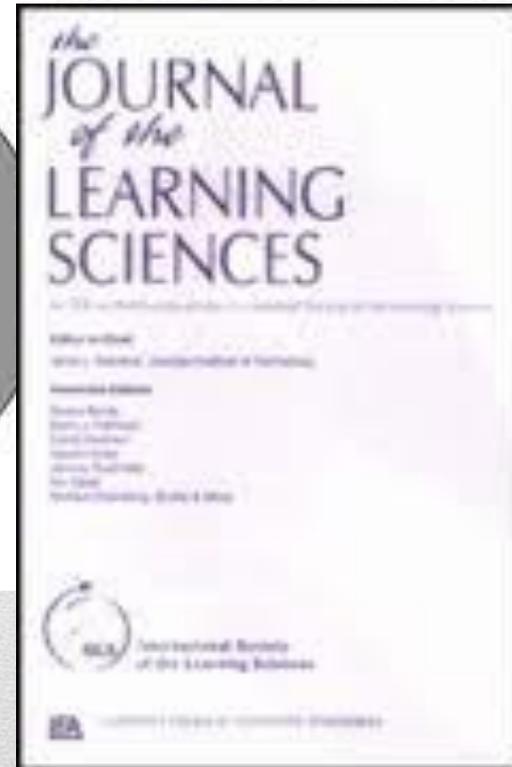
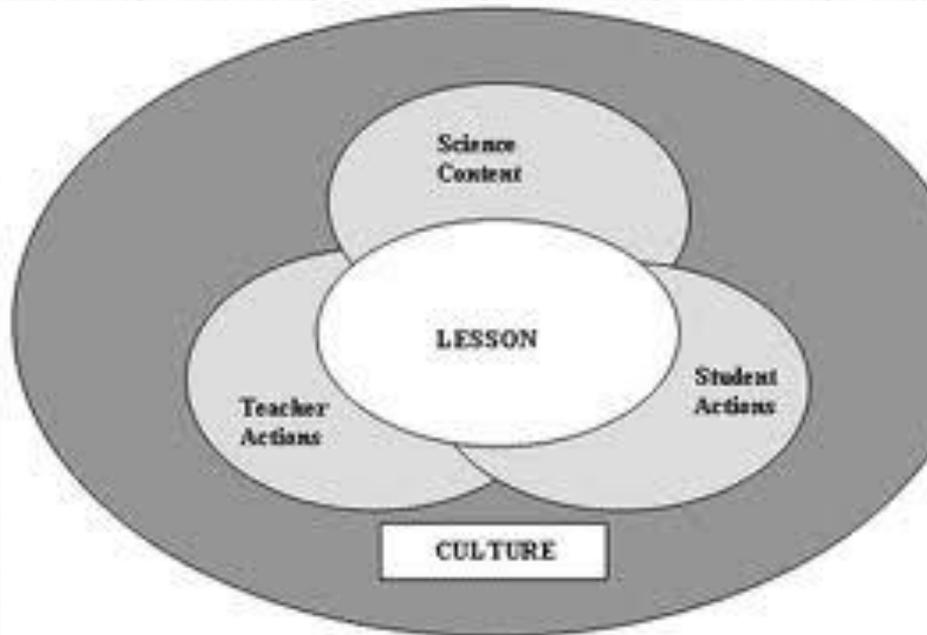
- “I have seen postmodern exercises intended to demonstrate how little can be understood about art: that’s certainly a post-Bauhaus mentality. The Bauhaus that exists today has itself adopted a post-Bauhaus curriculum; students design ‘sociological experiments’—essentially public installations and performances—and take courses to build up whatever skills they may need. Any first-year program that stresses ideology and politics over media and skills is certainly post-Bauhaus. But any introductory course that focuses on seeing, on visuality, on textures, colors, motions, value, weight, emotion, assembly and composition, or sensitivity, is working in the shadow of the Bauhaus. Contemporary art instruction has moved far beyond the Baroque academy model, without even noticing it. At the same time we have moved only baby steps away from the Bauhaus” (James Elkins, *Why art cannot be taught; a handbook for art students*, 2001, p. 39).
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**Example from college art criticism, the artist's statement & self-critique**

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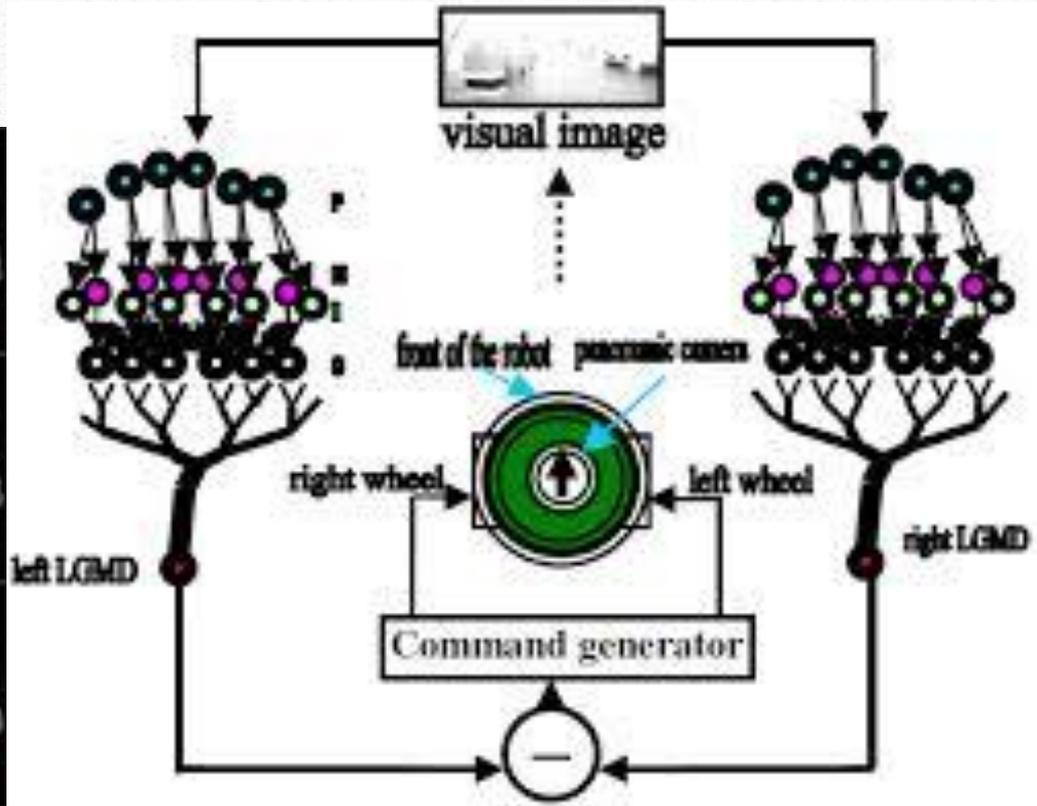
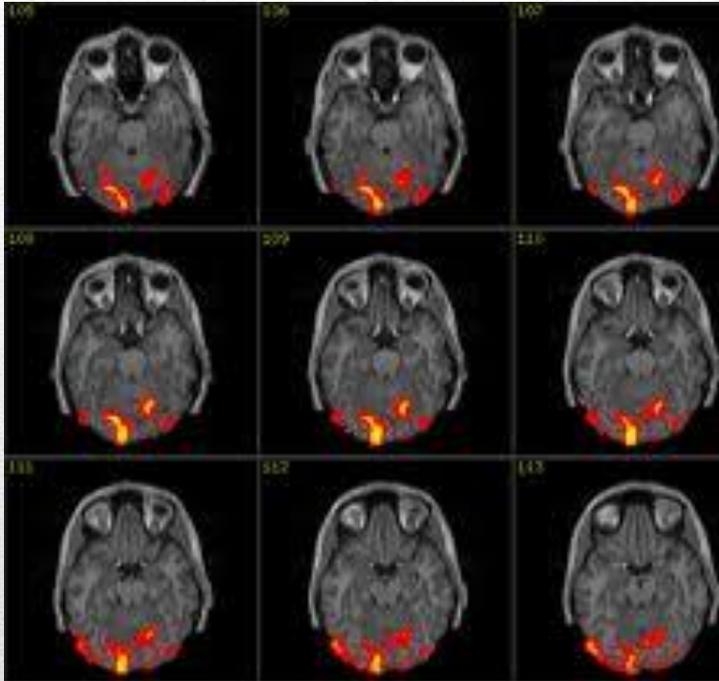
- “Instructors, fellow artists, potential employers, granting agencies, jurors of competitive shows, and gallery directors....often request an artist’s statement—a written introduction from your point of view to help the viewer understand and appreciate your work. Artists’ statements often accompany exhibitions as signs on a wall near the entrance to the show or next to the artist’s work. You need not use pretentious language or jargon when writing about your work; clarity and simplicity will be much more helpful to viewers. **Preparing an artist’s statement can help you clarify what you hoped to accomplish in your work. Such statements...give [viewers] a point of entry into your work, while not explaining every piece or denying viewers opportunities to form their own interpretations of your work”** (Terry Barrett, *Making art; form and meaning*, pg. 30-31).
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# Example from education learning sciences

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- “Good performance, of the kind attainable by a good student, can not be expected to be similar to that of a proficient expert. This is because actual experts have, through long experience, acquired large amounts of knowledge that they can use to recognize familiar situations and to apply without conscious effort. Inexperienced students (novices) can not reach such a level of proficiency in a limited time and most often perform deliberately tasks that experts perform subconsciously. **Novice students may thus become quite competent, but without attaining expert-like proficiency**” (Frederick Reif, *Applying cognitive science to education; thinking and learning in scientific and other complex domains*, 2008, p. 24).
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# Example from neuroscience of vision

- “Basic neurological changes provided the platform upon which actions and learning denied to previous generations could be built....[;] these changes were partly brought about by dietary changes...[with profound psychological consequences; including the increased capacity to learn from experience and from the production of art” (Robert Solso, *The psychology of art and the evolution of the conscious brain*, 2003, p. 60).
  - “These profound changes....[included] specialized modules whose processing efficacy is tremendously capacitated by the way information is processed” (p. 61).
  - “Our conscious awareness engages only a tiny fraction of the psychological activity that may be found just below the level of conscious thought” (p. 62).
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