

Communication Studies 555
Seminar in Rhetorical Criticism
Fall 2009
Wednesdays and Fridays, 1:10 – 2:30 pm

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Office Hours: MWF, 10:10 am – 11:00 pm and by appointment

Course Description

The study of rhetorical criticism and theory begins with the understanding that as human beings, we use language and other symbols to shape the world in which we live. Rhetorical theory allows us to begin to understand how symbols function and rhetorical criticism is one of the processes through which we assess specific symbolic acts. In this course we will explore issues and current trends in rhetorical criticism and theory. Specific areas to be covered include Dramatistic, Narrative, Metaphoric, Ideographic, Social Movement, Ideological, and Feminist Criticisms.

Required Reading

Burgchardt, C. R. (Ed.) (2005). Readings in Rhetorical Criticism, (3rd Ed.). State College: Strata.

Facpac available at the UC Bookstore

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarizing, and deliberately interfering with the work of others. Plagiarizing means representing the work of someone else (such as another student or an author of a book or an article) as your own. If you use the ideas or words of someone else on an exam or in a paper, you must cite the source of the original information. Following university regulations, cheating and plagiarism will be penalized with a failing grade in this course

Grades

Grades will be based on evaluation of student performance on the following assignments:

Exam One:	100 points
Exam Two:	100 points
Paper:	100 points
Participation:	50 points

Grades will be assessed on the following scale:

92% and above =A; 91-90=A-, 89-88= B+; 87-82=B; 81-80=B-; 79-78=C+; 77-72=C; 71-70=C- and so forth.

Exams

You will complete two take-home exams during the course of the semester. I will provide you with exam questions the week before the exam is due; questions will be based on readings and discussions. Exams must be submitted to me during our regular class periods, weeks six and fifteen.

Paper

You will write a rhetorical criticism of an artifact of your choice. Your essay must be theoretically grounded and reflect a close reading of your chosen artifact. Your paper is due by 5:00pm on Wednesday, December 16.

Participation

Seminars work best when student questions and insights direct group discussions. To be good participants it is essential that you read the assigned material critically and actively. To ensure that this is occurring and to promote good classroom discussions, each student will be required to hand in typed questions that stem from the day's readings. Questions must not be answerable from probing the reading carefully (e.g., do not ask what a theorist means by a term if that term is defined in the essay or the dictionary). Instead, questions should be designed to clarify underlying assumptions, to bring up tensions or contradictions, or to make evident links to other theorists or theories. Please make two copies of your questions – one to hand in and one to keep. Then, as we discuss the different readings, use your questions to help determine the direction of our conversation. Finally, because participation is a major element of the course, regular attendance is required.

Schedule

Week One: Introduction to the course

September 2:

Introductory Discussion

September 4:

Nothstine, Blair, and Copeland, "Invention in Media and Rhetorical Criticism: A General Orientation" (P)

Foss, Foss and Trapp, "Perspectives on the Study of Rhetoric" (P)

Week Two: Purpose of Rhetorical Criticism

September 9:

Black, "Excerpts from *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method*" (B)

Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," (B)

Vatz, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," (P)

September 11:

Hill, "Conventional Wisdom – Traditional Form – the President's Message of November 3, 1969" (B)

Campbell, "An Exercise in the Rhetoric of Mythical America" (P)

Hill and Campbell, "The Forum" (P)

Week Three: Dramatistic Criticism

September 16:

Burke, *The Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle* (B)

September 18:

Tonn, Endress, and Diamond, "Hunting and Heritage on Trial in Maine: A Dramatistic Debate over Tragedy, Tradition, and Territory" (B)

Ott and Aoki, "The Politics of Negotiating Public Tragedy: Media Framing of the Mathew Shepard Murder" (B)

Week Four: Narrative Criticism

September 23:

Fisher, "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument" (B)

September 25:

Lewis, "Telling America's Story: Narrative Form and the Reagan Presidency" (B)

West and Carey, "(Re)Enacting Frontier Justice: The Bush Administration's Tactical Narration of the Old West Fantasy after September 11" (P)

Stroud, "Multivalent Narratives: Extending the Narrative Paradigm with Insights from Ancient Indian Philosophical Texts" (P)

Week Five: Metaphoric Criticism

September 30:

Osborn, "Archetypal Metaphor in Rhetoric: The Light-Dark Family" (B)

Ivie, "Metaphor and the Rhetorical Invention of Cold War 'Idealists'" (B)

Wood, "Balancing Innocence and Guilt: A Metaphorical Analysis of the US Supreme Court's Rulings on Victim Impact Statements" (P)

October 2:

Kuusisto, "Heroic Talk, Game, and Business Deal? Western Metaphors in Action in Kosovo" (B)

Hayden, "Family Metaphors and the Nation: Promoting a Politics of Care through the Million Mom March" (P)

Week Six: Midterms

October 7:

Exam One due by beginning of class period

October 9:

Discuss exams and papers

Week Seven: Ideological Criticism

October 14:

Wander, "The Ideological Turn in Modern Criticism" (B)

Condit, "Hegemony in a Mass-mediated Society: Concordance about Reproductive Technologies" (P)

October 16:

Cloud, "Hegemony or Concordance? The Rhetoric of Tokenism in 'Oprah' Winfrey's Rags-to-Riches Biography" (B)

Condit, "Hegemony, Concordance and Capitalism: Reply to Cloud" (P)

Cloud and Condit, "Colloquy" (P)

Week Eight: Ideographic Criticism

October 21:

McGee, 'The Ideograph': A Link between Rhetoric and Ideology (B)

Lucaites and Condit, "Restructuring <Equality>: Culturetypal and Counter-Culture Rhetorics in the Martyred Black Vision," (B)

October 23:

Edwards and Winkler, "Representative Form and the Visual Ideograph: The Iwo Jima Image in Editorial Cartoons" (B)

Cloud, "To Veil the Threat of Terror": Afghan Women and the <Clash of Civilizations> in the Imagery of the U.S. War on Terrorism" (P)

Hayden, "Revitalizing the Debate Between <Life> and <Choice>: The 2004 March for Women's Lives"

Week Nine: Social Movement Criticism

October 28:

Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movement" (B)

Cathcart, "Movements, Confrontation as Rhetorical Form" (P)

October 30:

DeLuca, *Image Politics*, Chapter Two (P)

Pezzullo, "Resisting National Breast Cancer Awareness Month: The Rhetoric of Counterpublics and their Cultural Performances (P)

Week Ten: Feminist Criticism

November 4:

Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron" (B)

Maddux, "The *da Vinci Code* and the Regressive Gender Politics of Celebrating Women" (P)

Hasinoff, "Fashioning Race for the Free Market on *America's Next Top Model*" (P)

Palmer-Mehta, "Aung San Suu Kyi and the Rhetoric of Social Protest in Burma" (P)

November 6:

Foss and Griffin, "Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric" (P)

Lozano-Reich and Cloud, "The Uncivil Tongue: Invitational Rhetoric and the Problem of Inequality"

Dow, "Feminism, Difference(s), and Rhetorical Studies" (P)

Week Eleven: NCA Conference

Week Twelve: The Influence of Michel Foucault

November 18:

McKerrow, "Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis" (B)

Blair and Cooper, "The Humanist Turn in Foucault's Rhetoric of Inquiry" (P)

November 20:

Dow, "Ellen, Television, and the Politics of Gay and Lesbian Visibility" (P)

Hayden, "Teenage Bodies, Teenage Selves: Tracing the Implications of Bio-Power in Contemporary Sexuality Education Texts" (P)

Week Thirteen: Thanksgiving Break

Week Fourteen: Wrapping Up

December 2: Receive Exam, Discuss Papers

December 4: Open Office Hours

Week Fifteen: Wrapping Up

December 9: Exam Two Due

December 11: Discuss Exam and Papers

Finals Week – Rhetorical Criticism Papers Due Wednesday, December 16, 5:00