

Communications Studies COMS 369 – LEC/LAB 20
Rhetorical Communication
Spring 2013
T/R 12:00 – 13:45 / Tutorial T/R 14:00 – 15:45

Instructor: W. Mark Giles PhD

Office Location: 307

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00 – 11:45 or by appointment

Course Description

An introduction to the basic principles of rhetorical theory, criticism and practice. Students will learn rhetorical perspectives on elements of communication such as argumentation, persuasion, audience, situation, genre, and ethics. Tutorial sections will apply rhetorical theory to the criticism of samples of public communication. Students will exercise their rhetorical skills through in-class activities and assigned writing and oral presentations.

Additional Information

Rhetoric – whether through speech, writing, visual communication or performance – is a way of making meaning, or at least of expressing the potentiality of meaning. The course stresses the understanding and use of rhetoric in public and private discourse as a means of persuasion. Readings will introduce students to examples of different uses of rhetoric-as-persuasion: functional, literary, polemical.

Objectives of the Course

- To understand the basic principles and terms of classical and modern rhetorical theory
- To apply rhetorical theory to the criticism of a variety of public communication topics, media, and genres
- To engage students in applying rhetorical theory to the development of their own writing and speech
- To understand the range of (and limits to) language as a tool of expression, and how such range and limits can contribute to, support, and engage with the critical and creative practice(s) of persuasive discourse.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Cellular phones are to be off during class. Feel free to use laptops for note-taking or for class-related research (be warned: if your laptop is open I will ask you to look things up). I have no interest in being a laptop cop – I expect you to respect your peers’ attention by refraining from using email, social media, gaming, or other distraction-inducing sites during class time. I will do the same.

Textbooks and Readings:

Longaker, Mark and Jeffrey Walker. *Rhetorical Analysis: A Brief Guide for Writers*. New York: Longman, 2010.

Other readings will be provided on-line and through links on BlackBoard.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment 1: Short essay: Rhetorical Situation (1000 words): 10% May 23

Assignment 2: Presentation to inform (5-7 minutes): 5% May 28

Assignment 3: Mid-term quiz: 10% May 30

Assignment 4: PechaKucha (6 minutes 40 seconds): 15% June 13

Assignment 5: Persuasive blog post (500-750 words): 15% June 20

Assignment 6: Final quiz: 10% June 25

Assignment 7: Rhetorical Analysis term paper (2000 words): 25% June 27

Assignment 8: Participation and professionalism: 10%

Details about assignments (full assignment details will be handed out on the first day of class)

Assignment 1: Short essay: Rhetorical Situation (1000 words): 10% May 23

A short essay comparing the rhetorical situations of a text and a speech (David Foster Wallace’s “Consider the Lobster,” and MLK’s “A Christmas Sermon on Peace”), using the terminology and examples from Longaker & Walker. I will supply a suggested template.

Assignment 2: Presentation to inform (5-7 minutes): 5% May 28

A short presentation by each student designed to inform others. The presentation will follow a template that I will supply.

Assignment 3: Mid-term quiz: 10% May 30

On the first day students will receive a list of terms and concepts relating to rhetoric, communication, and language use. While many of these terms will be covered during lecture and tutorial, it will be the student's responsibility to ensure that he or she can identify and understand these terms. The quiz will take the form of multiple choice, T/F, fill-in-the-blank and short answer.

Assignment 4: PechaKucha: 15% June 13

PechaKucha is a presentation format developed in Japan by two expatriate architects; it consists of a talk accompanied by 20 slides, each of which slide is projected for exactly 20 seconds. Hence each presentation is exactly 6 minutes and 40 seconds long. While some PechaKucha presentations are little more than drunken stand-up routines or rambling "how-I-spent-my-summer-holidays" monologues, used effectively they can be a way to deliver a focused and engaging talk. While the date of presentation is June 13, there will be a "deliverable" of the idea and the images that is due June 6, and which will comprise 5/15 marks for the whole assignment.

Assignment 5: Persuasive blog post (500-750 words): 15% June 20

Each student will contribute a blog post intended to present a persuasive argument at the blog "Have I Convinced You Yet": <http://irhetor.wordpress.com/>. We will have class time to develop the writing for the post, to consult with peers, to shape the argument, to fix grammar. While the date of posting is June 20, there will be a "deliverable" of the idea and at least a first paragraph that is due June 11, and which will comprise 5/15 marks for the whole assignment.

Assignment 6: Final quiz: 10% June 25

We will revisit the list of terms and concepts handed out the first day of class, and tested at the mid-term. The quiz will take the form of multiple choice, T/F, fill-in-the-blank and short answer.

Assignment 7: Rhetorical Analysis term paper (1500-2000 words): 25% June 27

Each student will write a rhetorical analysis of a text to be provided, which will explore one or more elements of rhetoric as they apply to the piece under consideration. Must be handed in in-person in my office SS307 on June 27, 2013 between 12:00 noon and 1:45 PM.

Assignment 8: Participation and professionalism: 10%

Participation and professionalism includes attendance at class, participation in class discussion and exercises, willingness to work with others in class work, timeliness, preparedness, active listening, self-evaluation, and peer response,

All assignments must be completed or a grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for

your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

Policy for Late Assignments

Late assignments will not be accepted without prior written permission of the instructor. There is just not enough time to accommodate late assignments in a Spring session class; and presentations **MUST** be done when scheduled. Assignments submitted with permission after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late; and they may be subject to fewer marginal or summary comments (i.e., given a grade only).

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99

B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:
<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

#	Day	Date	What	Read before class	Assignment Due
1	T	14-May-13	Introduction; Who are you?; Who am I? Class norms; syllabus; What is rhetoric? Three examples: Richard Nixon's "Checkers" speech, MLK's "I Have a Dream," Alison Redford's "Bitumen Bubble" speech.		
2	R	16-May-13	The Rhetorical Situation; Kairos; classical canons; ladder of discourse (instructor to provide notes);	Longaker: Chapter 1 & 2; Longaker: Appendices (note: lots of useful "Birmingham Jail" resources on net); David Foster Wallace: "Consider the Lobster"	
3	T	21-May-13	Ehtos, Logos, and Pathos; Effective informative presentations; tutorial time to work on analyzing the rhetorical situation in "Consider the Lobster"	Longaker: Chapter 3; David Foster Wallace: "Consider the Lobster" (you should have read this thoroughly and bring a copy with	

				your notes on the rhetorical situation)	
4	R	23-May-13	Effective informative presentations vs. PechaKucha presentations; class time to work on presentation	Longaker: Chapter 5	Short essay: Rhetorical Situation (1000 words): 10%
5	T	28-May-13	Presentations		Presentation to inform (5-7 minutes): 5%
6	R	30-May-13	In-class quiz; watch film Food Inc.	Longaker: Chapter 4 & 6;	Mid-term quiz: 10% May 30
7	T	04-Jun-13	Discussion of Food Inc.; different kinds of argument; inartistic vs. artistic proofs; literary vs. functional persuasion; PechaKucha check-in	Longaker: Chapter 7 & 8; after viewing the Food Inc., check out the contrary views linked on BlackBoard	
8	R	06-Jun-13	Models of arrangement: classical, expository, narrative, exploratory; reading media rhetoric in the newspaper; is print media dead?; persuasive blog post check-in	Two complete daily newspapers (print version) for June 5, 2013: The Globe & Mail and The Calgary Herald then compare to websites; compare advertising rhetoric in print and on-line; excerpt from Benedict Anderson's Imagined Communities (posted on BlackBoard); media article TBD	PechaKucha deliverables: images and idea
9	T	11-Jun-13	Logical fallacies; style: choosing and executing a style for writing, presentation, or performance; PechaKucha check-in	Browse Robert Thouless's book, Straight & Crooked Thinking (link posted on BlackBoard); essays by Stephen Osborne in Geist Magazine (links on BlackBoard)	Persuasive blog post deliverable: idea and first paragraph
10	R	13-Jun-13	PechaKucha presentations		PechaKucha presentations (6 minutes 40 seconds): 15%
11	T	18-Jun-13	PechaKucha presentations finish; peer editing of blog post	George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language"; other readings TBD	
12	R	20-Jun-13	watch film "Killer of Sheep"; visual rhetoric; peer editing of rhetorical analysis	Readings TBD	Persuasive blog post (500-750 words): 15%
13	T	25-Jun-13	Quiz; discussion, debate, persuasion: peer editing of rhetorical analysis		Final quiz: 10%
		27-Jun-13	No Class: Paper must be handed in in-person, in my office SS307 between 12:00 noon and 1:45 P.M.		Rhetorical Analysis term paper (2000 words): 25%