Communication 311 - Rhetoric and the Public Sphere
Spring 2017

T/Th   3:30 – 4:45 pm   **ANN L105A**

Instructor Information:

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ASC 301F   Office hours: T/Th 2-3 pm, by appointment and through gchat stables@gmail.com

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Course Description: This course is designed to provide a foundation for the humanistic study of communication, starting from the classical notions of rhetoric and civic life in ancient Greece and extending this analysis to our current global community. The course will trace significant contributions in rhetorical theory and understandings of the public sphere. The course is structured to introduce rhetorical concepts, theorists and vocabulary. As a foundational course, we will primarily help to prepare students for the Media, Law and Politics concentration as well as many other communication courses.

Student Objectives:

1. At the conclusion of the course, students will be familiar with prominent theorists and controversies in rhetorical theory.
2. Students will be introduced to a range of perspectives about the public sphere and be able to identify significant features of these constructs.
3. Students will become familiar with constant challenges in rhetorical theory and the influence of changes in social practices, technology and culture.
4. Students will have opportunities to begin practicing rhetorical criticism.

Course Policies:

Academic Integrity - The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's academic integrity code. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the academic integrity code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor. The University presumes that you are familiar with its standards and policies; should you be found to have committed a violation, ignorance of these standards and policies will not be accepted as an excuse. You should be familiar with the following resources:

- "Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism" addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations and citations in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's Writing Program (by Student Judicial Affairs) http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tig.pdf
- "Understanding and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty" addresses more general issues of academic integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration (by Student Judicial Affairs) http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tio.pdf

- The "2016-17 SCampus" (the student handbook) contains the university's Student Conduct Code and other student-related policies. http://www.usc.edu/scampus.
- The USC Code of Ethics is also linked to every blackboard course menu in at the bottom of the left side navigation bar.

Attendance – Students are expected to attend each day and have completed the reading due for that day. Attendance will be taken each day. Discussion sections attendance and participation will be directly factored in your class participation evaluation Any absences for medical or university excused reasons should be coordinated with the instructor at the earliest possible opportunity.

Late & Unfinished Work – Students must complete all assignments in order to earn a grade in the course. Any material turned in late will be reduced one letter grade per calendar day late.

Grievance Procedure - Occasionally, students are dissatisfied with evaluation of their work or some other dimension of a course. For concerns with specific grades, students should first provide a written argument in support of their position to the appropriate grading assistant. All grade appeals on specific assignments must be made within one week of the return of the assignment. The GA will then review that petition and evaluate its merits. Dr. Stables will consider grade appeals only after this processed has been completed. You may, of course, approach any of the instructors with any general concerns.

Special Assistance - Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure that the letter is delivered as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in 120 Grace Ford Salvatori Hal (GFS) (3601 Watt Way). DSP is open from 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and can be reached at (213) 740-0776 or at ability@usc.edu

Assignments:

Exams (24% each, 48% total) – There are two exams, both of which are in-class and writing intensive. The second exam will be set by USC's final exam schedule. Each exam will assume that you have working knowledge of materials from the earlier units, but you will be primarily tested on material from that unit. Each exam will be drawn from both the lectures and readings.

Papers (14% each, 42% total) - There are three writing assignments, each asking for 5-7 pages of analysis. The specific prompts for each paper are included in the syllabus. Additional information and the submission link for each is available on blackboard.

Participation/Discussion – (10%) – Each student is expected to prepare for class, attend class and contribute to a robust learning environment in both the lecture and discussion sections. This grade will be primarily determined by preparation and participation in the discussions sections.

We will be using the Top Hat (www.tophat.com) classroom response system in class. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message. You can visit the Top Hat Overview (https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide) within the Top Hat Success Center which outlines how you will register for a Top Hat account, as well as providing a brief overview to get you up and running on the system. An email invitation

will be sent to you by email, but if don't receive this email, you can register by simply visiting our course website: https://app.tophat.com/e/926525   Note: our Course Join Code is 926525 Top Hat will require a paid subscription, and a full breakdown of all subscription options available can be found here: www.tophat.com/pricing. Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, due to the fact that they require specific user information to troubleshoot these issues, please contact their Support Team directly by way of email (support@tophat.com), the in app support button, or by calling 1-888-663-5491.

Quizzes – There are no quizzes scheduled, but the instructor retains the prerogative to give unscheduled quizzes if student engagement with the course materials is lagging. Each quiz would be worth 1% of the overall grade (and all other assignments would be correspondingly reduced in value).

Common Standards for All Course Papers

In addition to providing a quality response to the prompt, each paper should be a high-quality product and consistent with the expectations for submission in a university environment. In introducing students to the discipline it is important to appreciate the norms of written culture. Failure to adhere to these standards will result in a lower grade. The expectations include:

- All papers should all utilize common font and margin settings (such as Times New Roman 12 point fonts and 1 inch margins).
- Papers must be submitted using blackboard (to allow use of Turnitin). Do not print copies of the paper.
- **Use of a style manual** - Papers should feature consistent use of a style manual. All papers in the course should be submitted using APA style. A PowerPoint resource is available on blackboard to help you. You should also consult a formal style manual for additional questions
- **Structure** - Quality papers should demonstrate a clear writing plan and basic structure. A clear thesis should be evident early on the first page to preview the fundamental elements of the essay. This section should also preview the organizational structure of the project. Each section should reflect an organizing principle which utilizes previews, summaries, and transitions. You shouldn't be trying to build suspense in these essays. If you don't provide a sense of your final direction in the first two to three paragraphs, you are too weakening the focus of the essay. Good essays also should include a quality conclusion that draws together the basic details. Simply finishing your last point doesn't accomplish this task.
- **Focus on specific arguments** - Your essays are all designed to analyze specific political contexts so it is important that you closely detail the relevant articles and texts, including properly citing them, and provide specific analysis. You are free to use your own perspectives to accent these essays, but ultimately they need to provide analysis of the specific artifacts in question as their primary task.
- **Writing Style** - In any essay, the medium of your language is the technique that you will use to make your arguments. Even in our visual culture, the ability to make a professional argument in writing is an essential skill, especially in an argumentation course. When your language begins resembles the spoken word it loses its authority and it distracts from your contentions. These essays are intentionally short to provide you with time to edit and revise your work. Junior level college writing should be free of:
    - (Thinking out loud comments in parenthesis)
    - Misspelled words or words that are poorly spell-checked and come back as different words. There is a huge credibility problem for your writing when these errors appear.
    - Conversational or sarcastic tones. This is a formal essay and it should be treated as such. Individuals should be cited with their appropriate, such as President Obama (not Obama).

- **Use of qualified sources** – In cases where you need or want to make an authoritative claim, you should utilize a well-qualified source. Suggestions involve experts in the field, scholarly journals, and other professional sources, including our texts. The easiest Google results, especially including Wikipedia, should be treated as starting points for reference and not stand-alone references. When essay topics refer to specific concepts covered in the readings, it is important that these essays display a competent grasp of the material.
- **Evidence matters** - Evidence should be carefully analyzed before usage. Materials cited as proof of your claims should be timely, relevant, and well scrutinized. Materials should reflect your awareness of the ideological foundations of all evidence (i.e., using materials from a traditional print publication arguing that digital media is inherently limited is acceptable; however, the use of that material should reflect your awareness that this source is highly partisan).
- **Bibliography & Citations** - Citations must be provided for all researched information. Any use of additional material, even as background, must be cited within the body of the paper and then again in a works cited or bibliography. The format for these citations should consistently reflect a style manual.

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Evaluation Criteria

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Each assignment will receive a numerical grade. Students should understand that the following scale is used to govern grades, with the understanding that pluses and minuses are qualifications on the general scale.

- 'A' work signifies excellence in both design and implementation of work. This material can be considered outstanding and should be understood as far superior to the average effort. Simply completing the assignment prompt does not automatically constitute A quality work.
- 'B' work signifies above average work. Strong effort is involved and visible through clear organizational planning and attention to detail.
- 'C' work signifies average and adequate work. This grade is earned when material completes the minimum threshold of an assignment, even though conceptual, organizational or writing problems may exist.
- 'D' work signifies below average work. This is usually the product of either a substantial problem adhering to the nature of the assignment or a substantially problematic effort.
- 'F' work signifies an unacceptable level of work. This is usually the product of an incomplete assignment or a fundamental failure to engage the nature of the assignment.

Final course grades are assigned on the following scale

94-100 % = A	90-93 % = A-	87-89 % = B+	84-86 % = B	80-83 % = B-	77-79 % = C+
74-76 % = C	70-73 % = C-	67-69 % = D+	64-66 % = D	60-63 % = D-	59 % & below = F

Required Readings:

1. Catherine Helen Palczewski, Richard Ice, John Fritch, Rhetoric in Civic Life, 2012. Strata Publishing. (This listed in the daily schedule as RCL)
2. Aristotle. (2006). On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse. George A. Kennedy (Translator). Oxford University Press or http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/rhetoric.html
3. The Course Blackboard site contains a virtual library of other readings listed on the daily schedule

Daily Schedule:

Date	Topic	Readings
		Unit 1 - Introduction to Rhetoric and Public Sphere
10-Jan	Course Introduction	What's the Value of a Liberal Arts Education in Our 21st Century Digital Economy?
12-Jan	Overview to Rhetoric as Symbolic Action	RCL 1
17-Jan	Introduction to the Public Sphere	Calhoun, "Civil society and the public sphere"
19-Jan	Democracy: Rhetoric as Governance	Gutman, "Deliberative Democracy"
24-Jan	Language: Uses and Misuse	RCL 2, Orwell, "Politics and the English Language"
26-Jan	The Debate - Plato vs. the Sophists	
31-Jan	**Paper 1 Due**	
2-Feb	Aristotle	Aristotle, "On Rhetoric"
7-Feb	Argument	RCL 4
9-Feb	Narrative	RCL 5
14-Feb	Argumentative Controversies	Goodnight, "Public Discourse"
		Unit 2 - Modern Public Spheres: Dimensions and Boundaries
16-Feb	Modern Public Spheres - Networks	Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance"
21-Feb		Unit Summary & Exam Preview
23-Feb		**Midterm Exam**
28-Feb	Economic Markets: Public & Private	McCloskey, "How to Do a Rhetorical Analysis of Economics and Why"
2-Mar	Power, Ideology, and Hegemony	Foucault, "Discourse, Knowledge, and Power"
7-Mar	Gender & Agency: Classics & Today	Gorgias, "Encomium of Helen" (in the Rhetoric) & Desmond-Harris, "Yes means yes: California's new sexual assault law, explained"
9-Mar	Public and Counterpublics	RCL 9
	Paper 2 Due	
14-Mar		Spring Break
16-Mar		
21-Mar	Privacy: Boundary between Public and Private Spheres	Greenwald "Why Privacy Matters"
23-Mar	Family: Boundary between Public and Private Spheres	Coates, "The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration"
		Unit 3 - Components of Symbolic Action
28-Mar	Rhetors	RCL 6 & Coates "Barack Obama, Ferguson, and the Evidence of Things Unsaid"
30-	Audiences / Public Opinion	RCL 7, Hauser, "Reading Public Opinion from Vernacular Rhetoric"

Mar		
4-Apr	Rhetorical Situations	RCL 8
6-Apr	Rhetoric as Civic Engagement	Hikins & Cherwitz, "The Engaged University: Where Rhetorical Theory Matters"
11-Apr	Visual Rhetoric: Televised Sport	RCL 3, Kellner, "Sports, Spectacle and Jordan"
13-Apr	Bodies as Visual Rhetoric	Bordo, "Selections from "Unbearable Weight"
18-Apr	Science and Symbols	Condit, "Studying the Symbolizing Animal"
20-Apr	Monuments, Memorials, and Museums	Blair, "Public Memorializing in Postmodernity"
25-Apr	Rhetoric as Conflict	Payne, "Waging Communication War"
27-Apr	Unit Summary & Exam Preview	
	Paper 3 Due	
9-May	Final Exam - 2-4 pm in ANN L105A	

Essay Assignments

Paper # 1 – Rhetoric And You – The USC admissions process

For your first paper, we would like you to consider the role of public rhetoric in your decision to apply to and attend USC. The broad subject is how did rhetoric and the public sphere influence your college admissions process. To help answer that question we provide two primary dimensions. This prompt is currently available on blackboard.

Paper #2 - Aristotle and Modes of Persuasion

Aristotle is recognized as essential to helping us understand the foundations of persuasion. In particular his work helps to explain how three primary modes of persuasion function (ethos, pathos, and logos). By emphasizing on these artistic proofs, Aristotle provided us with a lens to assess the nuances of persuasion. For your second essay you are will apply these concepts to a specific speech and provide your analysis of how the speech met its persuasive goals.

Paper #3 – Universities and the Boundaries between Public and Private Spheres

Your final essay calls for an examination of boundaries between what communities consider public and private spheres. Throughout the course we explore how communities determine what are public matters of concern. For your final essay you will explore how these boundaries are developed and altered in the context of modern universities.