

Communication 311 - Rhetoric and the Public Sphere

Spring 2019

T/Th 11:00 am – 12:20 pm ANN G26

Instructor Information

Professor Gordon Stables stables@usc.edu 213-740-2759 (office) (213) 915-8201 (text)
ASC 303 Office hours: T/Th 930 – 11 am, by appointment

Graduate teaching assistants:

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Course Description: This course is designed to provide a foundation for the humanistic study of communication focusing on the role of rhetoric, 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 "2018-19 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. 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 GTA will then review that petition and evaluate its merits. Dr. Stables will consider grade appeals only after this process 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 Hall (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 – (10%) – Each student is expected to prepare for class, attend class and contribute to a robust learning environment. This grade will be determined by reviewing a wide range of information about student engagement with the course.

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.

Evaluation Criteria

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, 2016. (2nd edition) 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:

Unit 1 - Introduction to Rhetoric and Public Sphere

Tuesday, January 8 - Course Introduction

Reading: Wladawsky-Berger, “What's the Value of a Liberal Arts Education in Our 21st Century Digital Economy?” (BB)

Thursday, January 10 - Overview to Rhetoric as Symbolic Action

Reading: RCL 1 (BB)

Tuesday, January 15 - Introduction to the Public Sphere

Reading: Calhoun, "Civil society and the public sphere" (BB)

Thursday, January 17 - Modern Public Spheres - Networks

Reading: Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance" (BB)

Tuesday, January 22 – The Debate – Rhetoric and Knowledge - Plato vs. the Sophists

Reading: Selections from Plato's Republic (BB)

Reading: Crain "The Case Against Democracy." (BB)

Thursday, January 24 - Language: Uses and Misuse

Reading: RCL 2 (BB)

Reading: Orwell, "Politics and the English Language" (BB)

Tuesday, January 29 - Aristotle

Reading: Aristotle, "On Rhetoric" (BB)

Thursday, January 31 - Democracy: Rhetoric as Governance

Reading: Gutman, "Deliberative Democracy" (BB)

Tuesday, February 5 - Argument

Reading: RCL 4

Thursday, February 7 - Narrative

Reading: RCL 5

Tuesday, February 12 - Argumentative Controversies

Reading: Goodnight, "Public Discourse" (BB)

Thursday, February 14 - Unit Summary & Exam Preview

Tuesday, February 19 - Midterm Exam

Unit 2 - Modern Public Spheres: Dimensions and Boundaries

Thursday, February 21 - Redefining the Public Sphere

Reading: Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy"

Reading: Reading: Banet-Weiser, "Popular Feminism: #MeToo" (BB)

Tuesday, February 26 - Economic Markets: Public & Private

Reading: McCloskey, "How to Do a Rhetorical Analysis of Economics and Why" (BB)

Reading: Zalom, "What Does 'Middle Class' Really Mean?" (BB)

Thursday, February 28 – Power, Ideology, and Hegemony

Reading: Foucault, "Discourse, Knowledge, and Power" (BB)

Tuesday, March 5 – Gender & Agency: Classics & Today

Reading: Gorgias, "Encomium of Helen" (in the Rhetoric) (BB)

Reading: North, "Les Moonves and the myth of uncontrollable male desire" (BB)

Thursday March 7 - Public and Counterpublics

Reading: RCL 9

Reading: Bell "Facebook is Eating the World" (BB)

Spring Break – March 10-17

Tuesday, March 19 - Privacy: Boundary between Public and Private Spheres

Video: Greenwald "Why Privacy Matters" (BB)

Reading: Fussell, "The Next Data Mine Is Your Bedroom"

Thursday, March 21 - Family: Boundary between Public and Private Spheres

Reading: Green, "The Rebirth of America's Pro-Natalist Movement" (BB)

Reading: Miller "How did Marriage Become a Mark of Privilege?" (BB)

Unit 3 - Components of Symbolic Action

Tuesday, March 26 - Rhetors & Rhetorical Situations

Readings: RCL 6 & RCL 8

Thursday, March 28 - Audiences and Public Opinion

Readings: RCL 7

Reading: Hauser, "Reading Public Opinion from Vernacular Rhetoric" (BB)

Tuesday, April 2 - Free Expression and Public Spheres

Reading: Post, "There is no 1st Amendment Right to speak on a college campus." (BB)

Reading: Chemerinsky "Hate Speech is protected free speech, even on college campuses." (BB)

Thursday, April 4 – Rhetoric as Civic Engagement

Reading: Hikins & Cherwitz, "The Engaged University: Where Rhetorical Theory Matters" (BB)

Tuesday, April 9 - Visual Rhetoric: Televised Sport

Reading: RCL 3

Reading: Kellner, "Sports, Spectacle and Jordan" (BB)

Thursday, April 11 – Bodies as Visual Rhetoric

Reading: Bordo, "Selections from “Unbearable Weight” (BB)

Tuesday, April 16 - Science and Symbols

Reading: Condit, "Studying the Symbolizing Animal" (BB)

Thursday, April 18 – Monuments, Memorials, and Museums

Reading: Blair, “Public Memorializing in Postmodernity" (BB)

Reading: Landrieu, 'We Can't Walk Away From This Truth' (BB)

Tuesday, April 23 – Rhetoric as Propaganda and Conflict

Reading: Payne, "Waging Communication War" (BB)

Reading: How Russia exploited racial tensions in America during the 2016 elections (BB)

Thursday, April 25 – Unit Summary & Exam Preview

Essay Summaries

(These are the assignment summaries. For each assignment we will also share a full set of information on blackboard).

Paper # 1 – Rhetoric and You – Communicating Yourself

For your first paper, we would like you to consider how you have navigated the process of communicating about yourself as part of an application process. It could be part of an applications process for an internship, job, school or other opportunity. The essay should explore how you went about the process of explaining how you described yourself as a great fit for that public (that community, group or organization). You should explore the process of exploring the symbolic and linguistic choices that you engaged as part of that application process. What did you include? What did you exclude? What values did you emphasize? What experiences? These are the kinds of choices you should consider as part of the “process of invention.”

Paper #2 – Utilizing Aristotle’s 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 will apply these concepts to a specific artifact 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.