**Rhetoric and Civic Controversy**

Communication 3001

**Course Description**

This course, which is divided into ten (10) modules, introduces you to rhetoric study. We dedicate each module to learning key terms in rhetoric. Then, drawing from different cases in civic controversy, we explore how to use these terms to think through the complexities and ambiguities of real world argument. Taking various paths, we strive to answer a single question: In the midst of controversy, how do people use rhetoric to invent ways for audiences to think, feel, and act about the choices before them? The course aims to sharpen and balance your existing rhetorical skills, and thus to empower you for civic judgment in a world of conflicting claims and provisional resolutions.

**Intellectual Integrity**

I expect that no one will cheat, plagiarize, or fabricate. I report instances of cheating to the administration. Please see the University’s statement on academic dishonesty.

<http://libguides.memphis.edu/content.php?pid=453733&sid=3717893>

**Expectations**

I expect you to treat each other and me with respect. We will discuss these expectations further as the class progresses. Of note: Use of electronic devices, including laptops, is prohibited in our classroom without written permission from the instructor.

**Deadlines**

Each assignment has a deadline. You get a zero – that is, no points at all – if a deadline passes, and you have not submitted the assignment. You do, however, have one (1) chance to make up the points on one (1) assignment but only after email consultation with the instructor.

**Attendance and Breaks**

Attendance is mandatory. Absences lower your grade significantly. You must be in attendance when class officially starts to qualify as present. Class officially starts after 10:20am when the classroom door is closed. If you exceed two (2) absences, I drop your final grade two (2) points per additional absence. If you have perfect attendance, I add two (2) bonus points to your final grade. Any absence, regardless of your reason, disqualifies you from this incentive. Students who are not in the classroom once the door is closed, who leave before class is over, or who leave class repeatedly will be counted as absent.

**Course Content**

All of our readings, as well as links to web viewings, can be accessed via the “Content” section of our eCourseware site. Please print out and compile all of the readings for the entire course in advance and place them into a binder or other container. Bring the assigned readings to every session, or else you may be asked to leave.

**Course Design**

There are ten (10) modules in this course. Starting on Monday 1/26, and with only a few exceptions, the basic pattern for each module is the same.

* **Monday:** We meet in ACB 247 at 10:20am to wrap up the previous module and introduce the new module.
* **Wednesday:** We meet in ACB at 10:20am to finish discussion of the new module and to review for the coming quiz.
* **Friday:** We meet in ACB 303 computer lab at 10:20am and take the quiz during the hour.

**Points**

You start with zero (0) points. Throughout the term, you accumulate points toward your final grade. Each assignment has a maximum number of total points. Quizzes can earn you a maximum of seven (7) points per module. The tests will be scored at a max of fifteen (15) points each. Here's how that breaks down overall and totals 100pts:

* Quizzes – 70pts
* Test one – 15pts
* Test two – 15pts

**Course Schedule**

**Warming Up**

Wed 1/21 What rhetors want, how words get it

Fri 1/23 Introductions/the Syllabus (meet in ACB 247)

Sat 1/24 Short response due (ungraded)

**Mod. 1: What is Rhetoric?**

Mon 1/26 What is Rhetoric?

Wed 1/28 Teaching for Democracy

Fri 1/30 QUIZ #1

**Mod. 2: Rhetorical Appeals/Close Reading**

**Method**

Mon 2/2 Rhetorical Appeals

Wed 2/4 The Close Reading Method

Fri 2/6 QUIZ #2

**Mod. 3: Contexts of Rhetoric/Civic Controversy**

Mon 2/9 Contexts of Rhetoric

Wed 2/11 The Mixed Space of Civic Controversy

Fri 2/13 QUIZ #3

**Mod. 4: Character, Logic, and Emotion in the “Stop and Frisk” Debate**

Mon 2/16 Layering With Appeal

Wed 2/18 Fitting proof to issue and situation

Fri 2/20 QUIZ #4

**Mod. 5: Identification and Division – Competing Responses to the Killing of Abdulrahman al-Awlaki**

Mon 2/23 No Identification without Division

Wed 2/25 What Goes With What

Fri 2/27 QUIZ #5

**Test One**

Mon 3/2 Test Prep

Wed 3/4 TEST ONE – 2PM DEADLINE

Fri 3/6 Review Test

Mon 3/9 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

Wed 3/11 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

Fri 3/13 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

**Mod. 6: Five Ways to Make an Appeal**

Mon 3/16 Definition, Analogy, Authority, Principle,

Consequence

Wed 3/18 The Politics of Definition

Fri 3/20 QUIZ #6

**Mod. 7: Rhetoric and the Dilemma of Representation – Watching *The Help***

Mon 3/23 Representing Reality, Creating Reality,

Contesting Reality

Wed 3/25 Discussion of The Help (continued)

Fri 3/27 QUIZ #7

**Mod. 8: Staying on the (Stasis) Level**

Mon 3/30 NO CLASS – I will be attending the Research Forum

Wed 4/1 History and Uses of Stasis Method

Fri 4/3 Stasis (continued) (meet in ACB 247)

Tu 4/6 Stasis (continued)

Wed 4/8 QUIZ #8 (meet in ACB 303)

Fri 4/10 NO CLASS – I will be attending Southern States Communication Association Conference (http://www.ssca.net/

convention-information)

**Mod. 9: What do rhetors “Owe” Themselves and Their Audiences?**

Mon 4/13 Duties of Rhetoric

Wed 4/15 The Politics of Good (and bad) Rhetoric

Fri 4/17 QUIZ #9

**Mod. 10: Eloquence in the Crucible of Controversy – Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech**

Mon 4/20 The Art and Ethics of Eloquence

Wed 4/22 Eloquence continued

Fri 4/24 QUIZ #10

**Test Two**

Mon 4/27 Discuss King’s Speech (continued)

Wed 4/29 Review

Fri 5/5 TEST TWO – 10PM DEADLINE