

SPCM 3300- Rhetorical Criticism

Instructor: Nicole E. Hurt

Course Info: M/T/W/Th/F, 10:30 a.m.—12:45 p.m.; Terrell 214

Office address: 222 Terrell Hall

Office hours: T/Th, 9:15 a.m.-10:15 a.m. and by appointment

E-mail address: nhurt@uga.edu *preferred contact*

WebCT: SPCM 3300- Hurt

Required Texts:

1. Sonja K. Foss, *Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice*, 4th ed. 2009.
2. *SPCM 3300-Hurt Electronic Course Pack*: You will find this on WebCT. Either download each of the readings or print them out for class.

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the critical analysis of rhetoric and is designed to enhance the ability of students to function as effective critics *and* everyday consumers of public discourse. Specifically, students will learn to describe, interpret, and evaluate rhetorical artifacts (ranging from famous U.S. political speeches to iconic news images and television shows to public memorials). In doing so, students will interrogate rhetorical situations and identify argumentative structures, language choice, tone, form, and various other rhetorical practices. By the end of the course, students will complete a rhetorical criticism, successfully arguing the case for an important rhetorical artifact in U.S. history. This course is reading and writing intensive as well as it is heavy in discussion. This course requires *significant* preparation for each session.

Course Requirements:

1. Completion of assigned readings
2. Significant participation in class discussions
3. Completion of all quizzes and exams
4. Successful completion of three papers

Course Policies:

Registration: Only students who are officially enrolled in the class may attend. If you are not officially enrolled and wish to add the class, please see me.

Classroom Decorum: Please come to class willing and able to participate in your own learning process. I find it is hard to be engaged in the lecture, discussion, and activities when you are preoccupied with your cell phone or other device. Therefore, I ask that you **turn off your phone when entering my classroom**. Better yet, leave it at home! If you find yourself in a situation that requires constant communication with someone outside of our classroom, it is best to stay home and attend to that situation. To be frank, texting is obnoxious and will not be tolerated. You will be asked to leave the classroom if I see you texting or fiddling with your phone. Same goes for non-classroom related activities on your laptop.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at every class. You are allowed **one** unexcused absence for the summer short session. Each subsequent absence will result in a 40 point deduction from your final grade.

The attendance record not only helps me determine participation points at the end of the semester (how can you participate when you are absent?), but it also helps me track student progress. Your regular attendance is necessary as examinations and paper assignments not only cover material from the book and course pack, but also material that is only covered in lectures. In addition, since much of the material for this class is difficult and confusing on the first read, you will be much better prepared for all papers and exams if you come to class prepared with questions. I realize, however, that some absences cannot be avoided and those will not be counted against the student's participation grade. Absences due to university activities (e. g., debate, sports, etc.) must be discussed with the instructor no **later than one week before** the relevant class period(s). Arrangements concerning absences are at the instructor's discretion.

Tardiness is not appropriate and will not be tolerated. Ensure that you allow yourself enough time to be in class before it begins. Additionally, leaving class early is strongly discouraged. Tardiness and leaving early will also count against your participation grade. Moral of the story—if you decide to come to class, make sure you are on time and expect to stay throughout the period.

Excused Absences: Occasionally, a student may miss an exam or assignment due date and not receive punishment. There are five standards by which I determine if an absence is excused. Before asking me for an exemption, however, be certain that your situation conforms to *every one* of the following criteria:

- a. The absence must be unexpected. There was no way you could prepare for it or plan ahead.
- b. The circumstances of your absence must be beyond your control.
- c. The nature of your excuse must be serious: a death or medical crisis in your immediate family; onset of an incapacitating illness; or severe accident.
- d. If you are physically able, you *must* contact your instructor or leave a message prior to the time that you are expected to give a speech or complete an assignment.
- e. You must be able to document your excuse in writing. A note from the Health Center that says that you were seen does not count. You will need a note that says you are unable to attend class.

Assignments: For the most part, your assignments will be collected via WebCT. On WebCT, I will open a drop box for your assignment with a specific time/date requirement. Once the drop box closes, you will not be allowed to upload your document. If you have trouble uploading your assignment before the drop box has closed, make sure you email me **BEFORE** the due date so I can work out the kinks. Any assignments emailed to me after the drop box time has closed will be considered late—regardless of “good” excuses. If an assignment is late, you will receive ½ credit for your work.

If an assignment is due in paper form during class, please note that I collect all assignments at the beginning of the class period. Any assignments handed-in after I initially collect them will be considered late. If an assignment is late, you will receive ½ credit for your work. If you are sick the day an assignment is due, please have a friend or roommate drop the assignment off in my mailbox at the Speech Communication Main Office (110 Terrell Hall). If you do not come to class on the due date, please make sure the administrative assistant in the Speech Communication Main Office puts the time and date the assignment was received on your assignment before she puts it in my mailbox. If you are sick and do not turn in the assignment, it will be considered late.

Exams: A final exam is scheduled on the syllabus. Per University protocol, students are expected to take the exams on the dates assigned. (See also the *Final Exam Policy*).

Make up exams are allowed for full credit for excused absences with proper documentation. Students may make up their exam when they are absent due to a university sanctioned activity where prior notice has been provided, an emergency which has been documented through their advisor or Student Affairs, or an illness which has been verified in writing from your private physician or the Student Health Center. In the case of illness, you must get a note from either your private physician or from the Student Health Center signed by a clinician (Not a Health Center Nurse) that says something to the effect: “In my opinion, this student should be in classes today and/or tomorrow (specify the particular date[s] involved).” Typically, a private physician or clinician will write a note for an illness for one or two days. However, if your illness lingers, you will need to recheck with the private physician or clinician and request an additional note to document your absence. The note does not have to indicate the specifics of your illness, but that the physician or clinician does not think you are well enough to attend class.

Make up exams are not allowed without proper documentation. Make-up exams are not allowed for any type of unexcused absences, including missing class to study for a test, oversleeping, not being ready to take the exam, or having to work at an outside job. You will receive a **ZERO** for that exam.

Learning Accommodations: Any students who need special accommodations for learning or who have particular needs are invited to share these concerns or requests with me as soon as possible. The Disability Resource Center (542-8719, Clark Howell Hall) provides written documentation that specifies the needed modifications (i.e., note taker, extra time for tests) to the instructor. If you have not contacted The Disability Resource Center to request a letter be sent to your instructor, please do so.

Final Exam Policy: The final exam will be given at the assigned time per the official University schedule. The final exam will NOT be given early or at a different time unless changed by the University. There are no exceptions to this policy. Please mark your calendars and make your travel plans based on the final exam times noted below:

The final exam will be held on Thursday, July 3 from 10:30 a.m. –12:45 p.m.

Academic Honesty: “Academic honesty is – defined broadly and simply – the performance of all academic work without cheating, lying, stealing, or receiving assistance from any other person or using any source of information not appropriately authorized or attributed” (From the Preamble to “A Culture of Honesty”). The University, the Department of Speech Communication, and I personally take academic honesty very seriously. Every student at the University of Georgia should be familiar with the booklet, “A Culture of Honesty: Policies and Procedures on Academic Dishonesty.” If you are not, please obtain one of these booklets and read it carefully. This document has a thorough presentation of four types of academic dishonesty including plagiarism, unauthorized assistance, lying/tampering, and theft, as well as the procedures that are in place to adjudicate alleged incidents of academic dishonesty. The policies and procedures described in “A Culture of Honesty” will be strictly followed.

Emergencies: If an emergency arises and you know that you will not be able to get to class on an exam or assignment due date, please let me know ahead of time by sending me an email or leaving a message with the department secretary.

Grievance Procedure: Occasionally, students are unsatisfied with some dimension of the course. If you have a concern at any time during the course, please come speak with me directly either during office hours, by appointment, or via email.

If you want to appeal a grade, the department policy is that you *must* make the grade appeal in writing to me. Prepare and submit a typed argument indicating what your specific appeal is and what grade you believe you deserved. Turn in the appeal before or after class, during office hours, or at a scheduled appointment within one week of the grade being returned. If you have employed these measures and are still dissatisfied, or feel that an appropriate resolution may not be reached by working with me, then I encourage you to contact the SPCM Department chair, Dr. Hale, at jhale@uga.edu . He will also need a written grade appeal in order to help you.

Course Assignments and Grading:

Assignments	Due	Points
<i>Papers (45%)</i>		
Descriptive Analysis (1)	Monday, 6/15	50
Historical Contextual Analysis (2)	Monday, 6/22	150
Final Rhetorical Criticism (3)	Wednesday, 7/1	250
<i>Quizzes/Exams (40%)</i>		
10 quizzes (20 pts each)	Every session	200
Final Exam	Thursday, 7/3	200
<i>Participation (15%)</i>		
Discussion questions	10 sessions	50
Individual contribution	Every session	100
Total		1000

Papers: Throughout the course of the semester you will not only learn about rhetorical criticism, but you will complete a rhetorical critique of your own. This means that you will write three papers about the rhetorical text/artifact/event of your choosing. Texts must be approved before your first paper is due. Specific information about each paper will be posted on WebCT when the paper is assigned. Information regarding grading standards will also be posted.

1. Artifact Selection: (1-2 pages) In this brief essay, you will make the case for your artifact. Why did you select this artifact? What do you find interesting about it? Is it the context? Language? Rhetor? What do you hope to find out about this artifact. What might be your research question? Based on this paper, I will either approve or reject your project. You must turn in a new artifact selection essay if you change your artifact from the one I originally approve.
2. Descriptive Analysis: (5 pages) A detailed textual analysis of the rhetorical artifact you have chosen, using the tools of descriptive analysis. This is an evidence gathering stage in which you are trying to discover symbolic patterns in the text in order to understand and characterize it as accurately as possible. Due: 6/15
3. Contextual/Historical Analysis: (5-8 pages) This paper attempts to place the body of rhetoric (your artifact) in context, in terms of historical events, prior or subsequent rhetorical action that affect it, the source of the rhetoric, and the critical perspective you intend to use. Due: 6/22
4. Rhetorical Criticism: (10-15 pages) This is a full-blown work of criticism that integrates all prior stages/papers. Relevant portions of papers will be combined, the chosen critical method will be applied, and you will draw conclusions about what can be learned from the text. Due: 7/01

Quizzes/Exams:

1. Reading quizzes: You will have a reading quiz every day of the semester. I will give 13 quizzes throughout the semester. Since I only count 10, you will be able to drop three quiz scores at the end of the term. These daily quizzes ensure that you are doing the reading and coming to class prepared each and everyday. The quizzes are given during the first 10 minutes of class. As such, if you are tardy, you will not be able to take the quiz. No make-up quizzes are permitted.
2. Final Exam: The final exam will test your ability to think critically about rhetorical criticism and theory. This exam will cover material from the entire semester and it will ask you to put that knowledge to use. Be prepared for multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. More information will be provided on WebCT.

Participation:

1. Discussion Questions: For ten class sessions, you must bring 2-4 discussion questions. They must be typed and handed in at the beginning of class to receive full credit. We will talk throughout the semester about what good discussion questions look like. For example, “What does ‘epideictic’ mean?” is not a good discussion question. Instead, “where do we find epideictic rhetoric” or “Is epideictic rhetoric an archaic term?” are better. Your questions should show me that a.) you have read the reading and b.) you

have thought critically about it before coming to class. Your questions will be our prompts for class discussion each day.

2. Individual Contribution: I believe the best learning occurs in an engaging and engaged classroom. That said, I will do my best to make the material engaging. As such, I ask that you do your best to be engaged during each class session. In order to be an engaged participant in learning, you *must* come to class prepared each and everyday. If you have trouble with the reading, bring specific questions. If you disliked the reading, bring points you would like to raise. In other words, come to class each session with something intelligent and thoughtful to say about the reading. I take participation very seriously, so you will have to work for this grade. In order to receive all or most of the points, you must have an excellent record of attendance, have turned in all assignments on time, and, most importantly, made an exceptional attempt to add your voice to class discussions and participated in activities. Be sure to bring *all* required readings (including the ones of WebCT) to class the day we cover them.

Grading Rubric:

A	930-1000
A-	900-929
B+	870-899
B	830-869
B-	800-829
C+	770-799
C	730-769
C-	700-729
D	600-699
F	<599

Tentative Schedule

Tentative Schedule: This schedule is tentative and may change due to the needs of the class. Students should be prepared to discuss assigned readings in class. Students will also bring assigned readings to class each day.

Unit		Date	Subject	Due
Intro to the course	F	5-Jun	What is rhetoric?	
Rhet Crit Basics	M	8-Jun	What is rhet crit?	Ch. 1
	T	9-Jun	Doing rhet crit	Ch. 2
Critical Approaches	W	10-Jun	Neo-Aristotelian crit	Ch. 3, Artifact selection essay
Cluster	Th	11-Jun	Cluster crit	Ch. 4
Fantasy-Theme	F	12-Jun	Fantasy theme crit	Ch. 5
Generic	M	15-Jun	Generic crit	Ch. 6, Paper 1
Ideological	T	16-Jun	Ideological criticism	Ch. 7
Metaphoric	W	17-Jun	Metaphoric criticism	Ch. 8
	Th	18-Jun	Metaphoric criticism	Web packet: Condit et al
Narrative	F	19-Jun	Narrative criticism	Ch. 9
	M	22-Jun	Narrative criticism	Paper 2
Pentadic	T	23-Jun	Pentadic criticism	Ch. 10; web packet: Ott and Aoki
Generative	W	24-Jun	Generative criticism	Ch. 11
Visual	Th	25-Jun	Visual criticism	Web packet: Finnegan et al
	F	26-Jun	Visual criticism	Web packet: DeLuca and Demo
Material	M	29-Jun	Material criticism	Web packet: Dickinson, Harold
	T	30-Jun	Paper Workshop	Draft of paper 3
	W	1-Jul	Final Review	Paper 3
	Th	2-Jul	Final Exam	10:30 a.m. --12:45 p.m.