

SPCM 2200:
Rhetoric and Society: American Identity

Dr. John Murphy
129 Terrell Hall
OH: 1:00-2:00 T/TH; 10:00-2:00 W; by appointment
OP: 542-3250; e-mail: jmmurphy@uga.edu

Courtney Caudle
220 Terrell Hall
OP: 542-3270
E-mail: ccaudle@uga.edu

Text: Ronald F. Reid and James F. Klumpp, *American Rhetorical Discourse*. 3rd edition. (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2005). Available at bookstore.

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to American public address. We explore the ways in which prominent Americans have sought to define our nation and address major political controversies over the course of our history. On one level, we examine the efforts of advocates in historical contexts, as they develop responses to specific rhetorical problems. On another level, we examine the ways in which those responses construct persistent trends in U. S. rhetoric, themes that have provided the nation with enduring identities and arguments for better than 200 years. On both levels, we seek to understand what it means to be an American.

Course Requirements:

Completion of assigned homework questions. You will have five opportunities to answer three questions, such as “How does FDR define the people in his first Inaugural?”. You will answer only three. Each short paper should be 2-3 pages. 60 points

Three examinations consisting of multiple choice, matching and fill in the blank questions. Each exam is worth 100 points

Grading Scale (non-negotiable):

Total points possible—360

324-360 = A

288-323 = B

252-287 = C

216-251 = D

0-215 = F

Course Policies: Read the following policies carefully. Enrollment in the class constitutes agreement and understanding of these policies. **Your ignorance of these policies will not be an acceptable excuse for violating them.**

Grading:

In-class exercises/quizzes and homework cannot be made up for any reason. No exams will be given after the due date except by prior arrangement or in the case of authentic, verifiable emergency. All requests to extend a due date will be handled on a case by case basis, and the instructor has final say about any such arrangement. If a student does not turn in an assignment on the due date and has not made arrangements with the instructor beforehand, the student will

receive a “0” (zero) on that assignment. After a grade is returned, students have one week to resolve questions about the grade with the instructor. Questions about a grade *must* be submitted first in writing. After one week, the grade is final.

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 the instructor take academic honesty very seriously. Every student at the University of Georgia should make him- or herself familiar with the booklet, "A Culture of Honesty: Policies and Procedures on academic dishonesty." If you have not, please obtain one of these booklets and read it carefully. This document has a thorough presentation of the different types of academic dishonesty, as well as the procedures which are in place to adjudicate alleged incidents of academic dishonesty. The policies and procedures described in "A Culture of Honesty" will be strictly followed.

Attendance:

Success in this course depends on attendance. Material will be covered that is not available in your book and the analysis of texts that will take place in class cannot be recreated from another student's notes. When I explain assignments, review for exams, distribute handouts, or show video, I assume that all students are present. If you are not present, that is your problem. Students are responsible for all information in the class, regardless of their personal attendance. If a student is absent, it is his or her responsibility to inquire about what they have missed. Absences due to university activities (e.g., sports, debate, etc.) must be discussed with the instructor **before** the relevant class period(s). An official notice must be shown to the instructor. *Simply telling the instructor that you will be absent **does not** constitute an official excuse.* Arrangements concerning absences are entirely at the instructor's discretion. Any absences due to illness or authentic emergencies must be documented through the Office of Student Affairs. The final decision on **all** absences is the instructor's. **Each absence over three (3) will cost the student ten (10) points.** Any student who needs special accommodations for learning or who has special needs should share these concerns with the instructor as soon as possible.

Withdrawals/Incompletes:

Students wishing to file a “W” grades must meet with their instructor prior to taking any action. All requests will be handled on a case by case basis, and the instructor has final say on whether any such grade will be assigned. **NOTE:** The instructor is opposed to assigning such a grade except under the most dire of circumstances. There will be no incompletes.

Tentative Schedule

All readings come from the only textbook for the course. You must do the reading by the time class starts. You should always read the introductions to each speech. We have included the authors, titles, and the first page number for each reading assignment. Read to the end.

1/8 Introduction to the course/The elements of rhetorical action

READ: Reid and Klumpp, "Introduction," p. 1.

One Nation: American Development and Power

1/10-17 Making One Nation

READ: Jefferson/Hamilton, "National Bank," p. 179; Washington, "Farewell," p. 186

1/22-24 Using One Nation

READ: TR, "Muckraker," p. 586; JFK, "Inaugural," p. 787.

The Rights of the Citizenry

1/29-31 Liberal Government and Natural Rights

READ: Henry/Madison, "Ratification," p. 148; Jefferson, "Inaugural," p. 203.

2/5-7 Extending those rights

READ: Stanton, "Solitude," p. 647; Anthony, "Vote," p. 637.

2/12 **Examination #1**

2/14 Protecting those rights

READ: LaFollette, "Free Speech," p. 812.

A People's Nation

2/19-21 The Wisdom of the People

READ: Paine, "Common Sense," p. 112; Bryan, "Cross of Gold," p. 577

2/26-28 The Labor of the People

READ: Debs, "Working Class," p. 614; Jones, "Charleston," p. 619

3/4-6 The People Lead

READ: FDR, "Inaugural," p. 747; FDR, "Banking," p. 752

3/11-13 The People Tan: Spring Break

A Country Made By War

3/18-20 The Rise to Power

READ: Wilson, "War Message," 690; FDR, "Arsenal," p. 713.

3/25 Examination #2

3/27-4/8 The Use of Power

READ: Reagan, "Evil Empire," p. 796; Bush, "Joint Session," 804.

The American Mission

4/10-17 Interpreting the Mission

READ: Danforth, "Errand," p. 37; Lincoln, "Second Inaugural," p. 460; Lincoln, "Gettysburg," p. 456.

4/22-24 Extending the Mission

READ: Lincoln, "Cooper Union," p. 426; Douglass, "Fourth of July," p. 338.

5/6 Final Examination 9:00 am