

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication and Culture**

**COMS 607 – S01**  
**Socio-Cultural Approaches to Communication:**  
**Rhetoric and public discourse**

Winter 2015

Jan. 13 – April 14 (excluding Feb. 17, April 14)

Tu 17:00-19:45

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Tania S. Smith
<b>Office:</b>	SS 302
<b>Office Phone:</b>	403-220-7774 (with voice mail sent to email)
<b>E-Mail:</b>	smit@ucalgary.ca
<b>Web Page:</b>	D2L available through MyUofC portal
<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment. See appointment calendar at <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/smit/">http://ucalgary.ca/smit/</a> to suggest a time

### **Course Description**

*Calendar description:* Theoretical perspectives on communication as a symbolic process that produces and reproduces shared meanings, social practices, and social structures.

*Winter 2015 course theme:* Rhetorical theory and criticism of public discourse and public engagement. Public discourse includes messages addressed to the broad public on issues that define and influence the "public good" (such as scientific, economic, political, social and cultural issues). Messages may be delivered in a variety of media forums and genres, including blogs, social media, events, architecture, music and film/video.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Objectives of the Course**

- To understand rhetorical and social theories and concepts and understand how they may be used in the analysis and understanding of public discourse
- To engage critically with the political, ethical, and epistemological implications of rhetorical strategies, theories, and forums/situations.
- To explore the relationship between one's research interests and rhetorical studies
- To develop advanced academic skills in rhetorical criticism, and to apply rhetorical skill and insight to academic peer review, oral presentation, and discussion

#### **Textbooks and Readings**

NOTE: price estimates are based on Amazon.ca paperback prices as of November 2014.

- Asen, R., & Brouwer, D. C. (Eds.). (2010). *Public modalities: Rhetoric, culture, media and the shape of public life*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama. (\$28; UofC E-book)
- Fahnestock, J. (2011). *Rhetorical style: The uses of language in persuasion*. New York, NY: Oxford University. (\$37, UofC E-book)
- Haskins, E. V. (2004). *Logos and power in Isocrates and Aristotle*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina. (\$28.)

- Toye, R. (2013). *Rhetoric: A very short introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. (\$12)
- Woodward, G. C. (2003). *The idea of identification*. Albany, NY: State University of New York. (\$25; UofC E-book)
- Additional free online readings and resources
- The instructor's course handbook & assignment guidelines.

### **Internet and electronic communication device information**

During class time, use electronic devices for course related functions only. When a peer is presenting, put away electronic devices and give your peer your undivided attention.

### **Assignments and Evaluation**

<b><i>Book/article review presentation</i></b>	<b><i>As scheduled</i></b>	<b><i>20%</i></b>
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A 15-minute oral review of a self-selected academic book or article relevant to the course's theme and aims, evaluating it by using some required texts already covered in the course. Email the instructor at least 2 weeks before your presentation to obtain approval of your selected item. Post your PowerPoint slides on the D2L discussion forum at least 24 hours before class begins, and bring 2 printed outlines to class for the instructor and peer reviewer to take notes.

<b><i>Rhetorical Analyses (2 x 20%)</i></b>	<b><i>As scheduled</i></b>	<b><i>40%</i></b>
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Each student will submit two 1500-2000 word rhetorical analyses of a brief rhetorical artifact published online. Each paper will cite and apply concepts drawn from at least 2 required readings discussed prior to the analysis and will cite additional sources to explain the artifact's rhetorical situation. Post a full-length draft on the D2L class discussion forum at least 24 hours before class begins on the scheduled day, and bring at least 2 print copies to class. Each analysis will undergo in-class peer & instructor review on its scheduled day. After in-class review, submit the final version for grading 2 days later (due Thursday at 11:59 PM).

<b><i>Participation</i></b>	<b><i>N/A</i></b>	<b><i>6%</i></b>
<b><i>Review/Report Memos (2 x 7% each)</i></b>	<b><i>As scheduled</i></b>	<b><i>14%</i></b>

This component of the course not only enriches class participation but develops scholarly peer review skills and reporting/analysis skills. The quality and regularity of in-class discussion over the term is worth 6%. In addition, each student will sign up to play official roles in class on 2 different dates: 1) once as a Presentation peer-reviewer, 2) once as an Analysis Draft peer-reviewer. If the work to be reviewed is unexpectedly unavailable on the scheduled day, report and analyze class discussion. Post the 300-500-word Memo on the D2L class discussion forum 2 days later (due Thursday at 11:59PM). Each memo is graded for quality and timeliness.

<b><i>Oral Final Exam</i></b>	<b><i>Plan due March 31; Exam held April 14-24</i></b>	<b><i>20%</i></b>
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Each student will participate in a scheduled individual oral examination. In the exam plan, the student will select a minimum number of eligible course readings to focus on, include a copy of their current research proposal, and propose a related online artifact of public discourse for analysis. The exam will take place April 14-24 in the instructor's office or online via Skype. It will consist of a 20-30-minute oral presentation using a PowerPoint file (due 24 hours before the exam) followed by a 20-30 minute Q&A session in interactive dialogue with the instructor. Scoring criteria focus on demonstration of understanding, application of selected readings to the proposal and artifact, thorough and sound reasoning, and further exploration of course concepts in discussion. A confidential digital audio recording of the exam will be retained securely by the instructor and department for 1 year for appeal purposes only.

***Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No***

You do not need to complete all assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

### **Submission of Assignments**

Do NOT email assignments to the instructor. All assignments must be submitted electronically to their designated areas on Desire2Learn.

**File format requirements:** Submit files in .doc, .docx, .ppt, or .pptx file format. Use the following file name formats, with hyphens (-) instead of spaces:

- 469-RhetoricalAnalysis1-LastnameFirstname.docx
- 469-Presentation-LastnameFirstname.pptx
- 469-Memo1-by-LastnameFirstname.docx
- 469-ExamPresentation-LastnameFirstname.pptx

**Privacy:** On any files shared with other students in class and/or on discussion forums on D2L, do NOT include your ID number.

**Presentation slides** should be posted on D2L and ALSO brought to class on a memory stick as a backup. Converting your .ppt a PDF file is highly recommended in case your PowerPoint file is not compatible with the version on the classroom computer (TIP: you can convert files to PDF online at <http://www.freepdfconvert.com/>). Ensure that all media you rely on is available even without an Internet connection, and make backup plans (i.e. verbal summaries and descriptions of videos or audio) in case the technology does not work as desired.

### **Emergency submission methods**

- **Option 1:** If it is not possible to access D2L due to technical difficulties, email your file as an attachment to [upload.COMS\\_46.ru6ssfs9oh@u.box.com](mailto:upload.COMS_46.ru6ssfs9oh@u.box.com) (a secure folder on the instructor's Box.com account). Email your instructor to inform her you have sent it there. As soon as possible, submit it normally on Desire2Learn with a comment explaining your earlier submission method.
- **Option 2:** If Internet access is unavailable, print your assignment and submit it in paper. A daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox. As soon as possible, submit it normally on Desire2Learn with a comment explaining your earlier submission method.

**Note:** It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

**Assignment Length:** Assignments may be up to 10% longer than the maximum or 10% shorter than the minimum. An excellent assignment contains all content required by the assignment instructions, but does not wander off topic, and is not wordy or repetitive.

On all written assignments, students will be asked to include a total word count of the body text from the introduction to the conclusion (*Do NOT count words in long quotations over 40 words,*

*title pages/headers, table of contents, tables & figures, captions, footnotes, references, appendices, page numbers, or running heads*). To calculate word count in Microsoft Word, select the text to calculate and use Review > Word Count. Alternatively, paste eligible text into an online counter such as <http://www.textfixer.com/tools/online-word-counter.php>

## Policy for Late Assignments

- Final Rhetorical Analyses and Memos are due online on Desire2Learn by 11:59 PM on their deadline date. A 24-hour grace period for late submission is permitted in case of unexpected difficulties. After the grade period ends, late assignments may be penalized with the loss of up to 1 grade level (e.g. A- to B+) for each day late. Late penalties are calculated from the assignment's original deadline, including weekend days.
- Presentation materials and Rhetorical Analysis drafts must be posted on D2L at least 24 hours before class begins on your scheduled day. If materials/drafts are late or incomplete, up to one grade level may be deducted from the final assignment's score.
- A minimum of 1 week's advance notice is required to reschedule a "scheduled" item such as a Presentation, a Rhetorical Analysis draft, Memo, or Final Oral Exam. Without sufficient notice or excuse, the rescheduled assignment may be penalized with the loss of a grade (A- to B+) for each *available day* it has been delayed. If rescheduling occurs without sufficient notice, a documented excuse must be provided (i.e. doctor's note) to excuse late penalties.

## Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of the course.

## Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

## Grading System

Assignments in this course will be graded using letter grades and their equivalent percentages as shown below (i.e. A = 93; B = 77.5; B-/C+ = 70). Your final weighted total will then be translated to a final letter grade. The following grade scale equivalents are used in the Faculty of Graduate Studies:

Final Weighted total	Final Grade	Grade Point Value	Faculty of Graduate Studies Description
96-100	A+	4.0	Outstanding
90-95.99	A	4.0	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

85-89.99	A-	3.7	Very good performance
80-84.99	B+	3.3	Good performance
75-79.99	B	3.0	Satisfactory performance
70-74.99	B-	2.7	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
65-69.99	C+	2.3	All grades below "B-" are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. Individual programs may require a higher passing grade.
60-64.99	C	2.0	
55-59.99	C-	1.7	
53-54.99	D+	1.3	
50-52.99	D	1.0	
0-49	F	0	

## Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/node/208> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

## Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

## Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

<http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/research/research-ethics>

## Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
<b>FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES</b>	<a href="http://grad.ucalgary.ca/home">http://grad.ucalgary.ca/home</a> or 403-220-4938
<b>CAMPUS SECURITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calgary Police Service</li> <li>• Emergency Text Messaging</li> <li>• Emergency Evacuation &amp; Assembly</li> <li>• Safewalk Program</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> 403-220-5333 <b>403-266-1234</b> <b>Emergency: call 911</b> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</a> If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort ( <b>403-220-5333</b> ). For more information, see <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a>
<b>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT help line</li> </ul>	<a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</a> 403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Support Services</li> <li>• Student Services Mobile App</li> </ul>	<a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a>
<b>GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Ombudsman</li> </ul>	<a href="http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/">http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/</a> <a href="http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/ombudsperson">http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/ombudsperson</a> (403) 220-6420 or <a href="mailto:ombuds@ucalgary.ca">ombuds@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Arts Reps</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html">http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html</a>
<b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling Services</li> <li>• Health Services</li> <li>• Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</li> <li>• Online resources and tips</li> </ul>	<b>403-210-9355</b> (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a> <b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a> If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.

**Schedule of Lectures and Readings:** A detailed schedule will be linked to D2L.