



IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

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COMM390.003: Doing Textual Analysis with Dr. Knopf

Contact - Morey248: Wednesdays 2-3, Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30-5:00

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Course Description: Rhetorical methods help people explain the significance and implications of communicative phenomena. This course is designed to familiarize you with the content and application of rhetorical and other textual analysis methods. Through this course, you will 1) be able to recognize multiple approaches of communication criticism and apply them to a wide array of artifacts, 2) be a more critical consumer of communication, and 3) be more aware of your own message creation.

Course Objectives:

- Show knowledge of communication theory
- Engage in analysis of artifacts
- Read & understand contemporary scholarship
- Recognize the place of theory in research

Texts & Course Materials:

- Rhetorical Criticism by Sonja K. Foss
- Syllabus & Assignment Packet (copies on Moodle)
- Moodle access for 5 additional readings

Grading:

- 6 focused tests (lowest dropped) = 25 points
 - personal application logs = 25 points
 - compare & contrast project = 25 points
 - participation = 25 points
- ☆ Full assignment descriptions & instructions are in the "Assignments Packet" Use it. ☆

Final Grades are broken down **in this class** as follows:

- 4.0 = 95-100
- 3.7 = 90-94
- 3.3 = 86-89
- 3.0 = 82-85
- 2.7 = 78-81
- 2.3 = 72-77
- 2.0 = 67-71
- 1.7 = 61-66
- 1.3 = 56-60
- 1.0 = 51-55
- (0.0 = below 51)

☆ A 2.0 is a "satisfactory" grade that indicates the *minimum* has been achieved, or that the work is of an average acceptable quality. A 4.0 is attainable but will require much more than minimal effort. ☆

How to earn a minimum 2.3 in the course, guaranteed:

- Attend 23 class sessions (including the midterm & final)
- Arrive late or leave early no more than 4 times
- Complete all work on schedule

Note: You can still earn up to a 4.0 if you do these things, and if you don't or are unable to do these you can still earn a 2.3 or higher in the course. If, however, you are worried about passing, this is the basic route to success.

Challenging a Grade: If you identify an error in grading, I am always willing to admit to a mistake and correct it.

If you want me to *reconsider* a grade, follow these steps:

- Wait at least 24 hours before deciding to seek reconsideration, but no longer than one week.
- Write a 1-2 page explanation of why the grade should be reconsidered identifying what type of change you seek and providing a reasoned argument and evidence in support of that change. The burden of proof in any disagreement over evaluation of your performance rests with you.
- Resubmit the original work (complete with grade & comments) along with the rationale.
- Allow two weeks for reconsideration. Accept the final decision. *I will reconsider each assignment only once.*

Extra Credit: A way to succeed throughout life, while managing stress, is to be mindful – to focus your attention and your energies and to be aware of the consequences of your actions. To help you to be present mentally and not just physically in class, you will receive 1/3 point of extra credit, added to your total course grade, for every day that you turn off your cell phone, or MP3 player, or tablet, or laptop, and leave it on the front desk for the class session (that can add up to 8+ points of extra credit for the semester!). You will not be penalized if you choose to keep and use your electronic device during class.

Additional extra credit opportunities are listed in the Assignment Packet.

Extra credit will not be available as an end-of-semester option to make-up-for or replace work that you did not do throughout the semester. It will never be given on an individual basis.

Due Dates/Late Work: **LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.** *If you know in advance you will not be in class when an assignment is due, turn it in early. If you wake up sick when something is due, please email it by class time. All due dates are on the course calendar.*

Attendance: This is a live, non-virtual, non-mediated, communication course. Being present on time (and AWAKE) is necessary. **If you cannot consistently be present, on time, for class, you should withdraw.** ☆ You are solely responsible for catching up on work that you miss (always refer to the course calendar and to the potential kindness of classmates). Absences are not an excuse for late work or for being unaware of course expectations. Make-ups for assignments will only be granted in rare instances and usually only with documentation of an unavoidable emergency.

In the case of **college-sanctioned activities or religious observances**, arrangements should be made prior to the absence. [Note: Grades that factor in attendance will be adjusted for such events.]

Absences of two or more straight weeks: If you miss, or will miss, two straight weeks of class (4 consecutive class meetings), you must contact me before or within those two weeks or risk failing the course.

Attendance for the Final Exam/Meeting: Finals week is part of the required number of class meeting hours set by the SUNY system. Final exam times are scheduled by the school to ensure that classes do not overlap. Final exams or activities scheduled during the final exam timeslot, will not be rescheduled unless you have 3 or more exams on a single day. (If that happens, please see the policy online at <http://www.potsdam.edu/offices/registrar/exams.cfm>). **You must make travel/work/childcare arrangements around the final exam.**

Incompletes: Incompletes, or other arrangements for course completion, can be planned only in advance to the semester's end when there is an emergency that makes completing the course otherwise impossible.

Academic Integrity & Dishonesty: A pledge of academic honesty is made by all students at SUNY Potsdam, indicating that you understand & comply with the requirements set forth by instructors the Academic Honor Code. To plagiarize is to pass off ideas or words of someone else as your own without crediting the source, no matter what the source is or if you make some changes to the wording or add in some of your own words/ideas. ***In the event of plagiarism on an assignment in this course you will have 24 hours to correct or authenticate your work or receive a zero on the assignment. Other forms of academic dishonesty, such as cheating on an exam, or attempting to cheat, will result in a 33% lower grade on the work.***

Etiquette: The success of this course is directly related to the sense of community that we develop in the classroom. Any communication or behavior that potentially interferes with the learning environment of other students will not be tolerated. Disruptive behavior - even minor disruptions - may result in your being told to leave class. Repeated offenses may result in course failure.

	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
Wk1	9/1: Introduce class focus & expectations	9/3: Unstructured opening discussions
Wk2	9/8: Chapters 1-2 due	9/10: Chapter 3 due
Wk3	9/15: <u>Test</u> ch. 1-3	9/17: Chapter 4 due & ch. 4 log
Wk4	9/22: Chapter 5 due & ch. 5 log	9/24: Chapter 6 due & ch. 6 log
Wk5	9/29: <u>Test</u> ch. 4-6	10/1: Chapter 7 due & ch. 7 log
Wk6	10/6: Chapter 8 due & ch. 8 log	10/8: Chapter 9 due & ch. 9 log
Wk7	10/13: Fall recess, no classes 😊👉	10/15: <u>Test</u> ch. 7-9
Wk8	10/20: Chapter 10 due & ch. 10 log	10/22: Chapter 11 due & ch. 11 log
Wk9	10/27: <u>Test</u> ch. 10-11	10/29: "Analyzing Word Choice" (Moodle) due
Wk10	11/3: "Analyzing Media" (Moodle) due & log	11/5: "Feminist Criticism" (Moodle) due & log [Last day to Withdraw or S/U]
Wk11	11/10: <u>Test</u> Word Choice, Media, Fem. Project overview	11/12: "Image Functions" (Moodle) due & log
Wk12	11/17: Class Cancelled – <i>Dr. K presenting at the National Communication Association</i>	11/19: Class Cancelled – <i>Dr. K presenting at the National Communication Association</i>
Wk13	11/24: Class Cancelled – <i>Dr. K presenting at the National Communication Association</i>	11/26: Thanksgiving, no classes 😊👉
Wk14	12/1: "Intertextuality" (Moodle) due & log	12/3: <u>Test</u> Image, Intertextuality
Wk15	12/8: project help	12/10: course evaluations & project help
FINALS		12/17, 10:15-12:15 – project due

COMM390.003 Fall 2015:
Doing Textual Analysis Assignment Packet

Participation

This class has been designed to give you various chances to work with the material and to personalize it. Class meetings will be used to not only review the content of the readings but to help explain it, expand on it, and apply it. So being in class regularly, on time, and for the entire periods is important. Your participation grade will be a combination of your attendance and a self-evaluation of your class involvement.

Focused Tests

Psychological research on the science of successful learning has demonstrated that the act of preparing for a test and actually taking the test and retrieving information is a great boost to memory. Exams are not just a measurement instrument, they are also an important learning instrument. Exams are a clinically proven way to help students keep up with classwork – they encourage attendance, preparation and review in ways that less formal or structured means don't, and the use of regular quizzes or tests is likely to promote regular, moderate, work, whereas a few larger assignments tend to produce short bursts of cramming, often at the last minute.

For every 2-3 chapters, you will have a multiple choice and short-answer test. These tests will emphasize the terminology of the critical approaches and analysis practice of the approaches. Questions therefore will not only ask you to know what words means but how to do the different types of textual analysis.

By focusing on the language and application of the methods we cover in the course, these tests will help you to learn the language of the Communication discipline. Each academic discipline has its own language – and like any foreign language, if we want to use it with any accuracy or fluency, we need to memorize and internalize the words. Translation dictionaries only do so much good.

Personal Application Logs

You will be learning 13 basic approaches, or styles, of text-based analysis used in communication research. For each of these we will look at research examples in both your assigned reading and in class, and we will do practice exercises with most, if not all the methods, during class meetings.

To add more depth of understanding and more personal relevance to these approaches, for each method (beginning with chapter 4 in the text and continuing through all 5 Moodle readings) you will write a short application of how you could use the approach, or what you might learn if you applied this approach, to an artifact you are interested in, such as a movie, a television show, or song or music album, a play, a book, a poem, a comic, an advertisement, or a speech. You can use a different artifact example for

These applications only need to be 1-2 paragraphs. You do not need to engage in a complete analysis, all you need to do is identify an appropriate artifact, select a few possible key terms or themes (as appropriate for the method), and formulate a research question. The textbook chapters actually walk you through this process. You will do this assignment when you read the chapter and bring your application to class the same day the chapter is due. This will help you to prepare for class discussions.

You will be given a chance after we've covered the method in class to make additions or corrections to your application before you submit it.

These must be typed. Any in-class changes will be handwritten.

Each log is worth 2 points, adding up to 25% of your course grade.

- Typed = ½ pt
- Spelling & grammar = ½ pt
- Complete (artifact, appropriate terms/themes identified, research question formulated) = ½ pt
- Accurate (including any adjustments made in class) = ½ pt

A sample is provided below.

Method:	Symbolic Convergence Theory
Artifact:	Peanuts comic strips by Charles Schulz
Themes:	baseball, depression, siblings, war
Question:	What is the rhetorical vision of childhood represented by Peanuts?

Compare & Contrast Project

The application logs will help you prepare for your final project.

Cumulative exams cause massive amounts of stress, but a cumulative aspect to the end of the course is the only proven way to help students review and integrate a semester's worth of content (as opposed to memorizing it temporarily for a quiz and then forgetting it), so we are using a cumulative project. You still need to go back over the entire semester and draw from everything you've learned, but you don't have to spit it out on a bubble-sheet or in a blue book.

For the final project you will select a single artifact and 6 appropriate methods (not all methods work for all artifacts) and create an application-log-type chart comparing and contrasting how each critical approach would question artifact.

A (partial) sample is provided below.

Selected Artifact: Obama's Eulogy for the June 2015 Church Shooting in South Carolina

METHOD	QUESTION	TERMS/APPROACH	BENEFITS	LIMITS
Cluster Criticism	What idea(s) are central to the speech?	Key terms = Bible, God, church, black, grace	Works with the text as is.	Difficult to identify what the important terms may be.
Generic Criticism	How does the speech meet, or surpass, epideictic standards for a eulogy?	Assignments of praise or blame, values, essence of culture, community	Offers a pre-set standard by which to measure the text.	May not adequately account for ways in which the speech does not fit classical rhetorical modes.
Ideological Criticism	Whose voices are represented in the speech?	Biblical texts, historical events	Appropriate for a speech on American ideology, diverse voices, and religion.	Need to know about the referenced ideologies.
Metaphor Criticism	What are the implications for the metaphoric construction of reality in the speech?	Key extended metaphor in speech = lyrics to Amazing Grace	Offers different avenues for questioning the speech	Requires some kind of metaphors in use.