

**CA 522: Rhetorical Theory: The Rhetoric of Identity**

**Dr. Brett Lunceford**

**T/R: 2.00-3.15PM**

**University Commons 1263**

**Office: UCOM 1016**

**Office Hours: T/R 9.15am-12.15pm, and by appointment**

**Phone: 380.2822**

**Email: lunceford@usouthal.edu**

**Course Description**

This course examines the rhetorical construction of identity. We will cover such issues as gender and sexuality, religion, culture, and media influences on identity.

There are three main goals for this course:

- Students will be able to discuss and explain various rhetorical theories of identity.
- Students will be able to apply rhetorical theory to a specific case.
- Students will be able to critique and synthesize rhetorical theories of identity.

Students will gain an understanding of the rhetorical theories of identity through the readings and in-class discussions. Assessment will come through a final paper. The finished paper should be ready for submission to an academic conference.

I expect that each student will come to class prepared to discuss the readings for the day. According to the University of South Alabama's Academic Policies and Procedures, "Each hour of lecture usually requires two hours of outside preparation. Thus, a student carrying sixteen semester hours should be prepared to spend at least 48 hours in class and study per week."

**Required Text**

All readings will be available through the library's online course reserves.

**Class Climate**

The questions that we will grapple with have no easy answers. There will be points where you may disagree with someone else. This is appropriate and, to some degree, desirable. However, respect for others in the class is an essential component of this class. Arguments should be made in a spirit of inquiry rather than as a personal attack.

**Attendance Policy**

This is a graduate level course, so I assume that by now you recognize the value of regular class attendance. This course relies heavily on in-class discussion. Excessive absences will negatively impact your participation grade in this course. If you are not present, you are not able to participate and it is impossible to make up the discussion. You get three absences free—no

questions asked. However, after these absences, each absence will decrease your final grade by 5 points (half a letter grade), so use them wisely. In addition, there may be in-class activities, such as the opportunity to lead the discussion, that are impossible to make up. If you are absent, please do not email me asking, "What did I miss?" You missed 75 minutes of discussion and perhaps an assignment. Make friends with your classmates and get the notes from them and/or come to my office hours.

### **Academic Honesty**

From the Student Academic Conduct Policies: "Any dishonesty related to academic work or records constitutes academic misconduct including, but not limited to, activities such as giving or receiving unauthorized aid in tests and examinations, improperly obtaining a copy of an examination, plagiarism, misrepresentation of information, or altering transcripts or university records. . . . Penalties may range from the loss of credit for a particular assignment to dismissal from the University" (*The Lowdown*, p. 249). In short, don't do it. I don't like to bust students for plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty but I will. It isn't fair to others and it isn't fair to you.

Here is the policy set forth by the Department of Communication:

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the Student Academic Conduct Policy. By registering at the university, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Conduct Policy, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the code. Please see *The Lowdown* for the complete **Student Academic Conduct Policy**.

Each instance of academic dishonesty will be reported to the chair of the department. The student involved will receive written notification describing the alleged violation and the recommended penalty, along with a copy of the policy. The written notification will inform the student that if it is determined that previous incident(s) of Academic Misconduct have occurred, an additional or higher level charge may be brought.

The student involved has ten (10) Class days from receipt of the written notification to submit a written response to the instructor and request a conference with the department chair and the instructor.

### **Assignments**

**Paper Proposal:** In a brief 2-3 page paper, explain the theoretical construct that you wish to examine and how you plan to examine this. If you will be looking at a specific case that illustrates this issue, provide some background for the case as well. Discuss what theoretical touchstones you plan to use. **This paper will be due on Friday, September 4, by email.**

**Context / Literature Review:** In approximately 4-7 pages, discuss the existing literature surrounding the rhetorical construct you wish to examine. **This paper will be due on Friday, September 28, by email.**

**Final Paper:** Because you are taking a rhetorical theory course, I assume that you have at least some interest in integrating rhetorical methods into your scholarship. Each student will meet with me early on to consider how rhetorical theory can inform your research agenda and agree on an appropriate topic for the final paper. We will meet throughout the semester to discuss your research project and identify relevant outside sources. The in-class readings should serve mainly as a starting point. The final paper should be between 15-25 pages in length and of suitable quality for submission to a scholarly convention. **This paper is due December 6.**

**Participation:** Participation is more than simply showing up. I expect that students will come to class prepared to discuss the readings and actively do so. Each student will lead a discussion on one of the scheduled topics.

**Final Exam:** Because we no longer have comprehensive exams, you will have a comprehensive exam-like question that you will answer that stands in for that assessment. The exam is scheduled for 1:00pm-3:00pm, Tuesday, December 11, but we will likely schedule it for a different time that works best for the students in the class.

### **Grading Scale**

Paper Proposal: 10

Context / Literature Review: 20

Final Paper: 35

Comprehensive Exam Question: 15

Participation: 20

A=90-100; B=80-89.99; C=70-79.99; D=60-69.99; F=below 60

### **Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with bona fide disabilities will be afforded reasonable accommodation. The Office of Special Student Services will certify a disability and advise faculty members of reasonable accommodations.

If you have a specific disability that qualifies you for academic accommodations, please notify the instructor/professor and provide certification from Special Student Services. (OSSS is located at 5828 Old Shell Rd. and can be reached at 460-7212).

Keep in mind that OSSS prohibits me from making any retroactive accommodations, so if you will need special accommodations please talk to me as soon as possible. Moreover, I can make no accommodations unless you are registered with OSSS.

### **Statement on Diversity**

The Department of Communication is committed to preparing students to work in a diverse society. As such, our classes will include lectures and activities which promote an awareness of and sensitivity towards differences of race, ethnicity, national origin, culture, sexual orientation,

religion, age and disabilities. Such an environment will contribute to the growth and development of each member of the class, as it will encourage students to embrace diversity as a positive aspect of learning and scholarship.

### **A Note on my Teaching Philosophy**

I believe that every student in my class has the ability to succeed in this course. My goal is to create a comfortable environment in which you can explore and improve your ability to think critically and skillfully present your ideas to an audience. I do not “give” grades; students earn grades—no one is entitled to get an “A” in a class unless they earn it. I cannot grade on effort—I must grade what you actually do. My job is to push students to do their best and to then exceed that standard. I recognize that this is futile unless I also provide the support and assistance that each student needs to excel. Therefore, I provide office hours and expect students to use them and am generally available through email. I assume that attaining a university degree is your first priority. If this is not the case, it is less likely that you will excel. Some of you are here because you want to get a better job. I believe that education should do much more than job training, but if you see it as job training, at least take it seriously. Recognize that you will probably be required to work 40 hours a week (or more) from 8am until 5pm. If you are chronically late, they fire you. If you do not do your work, they fire you. If you drop the ball, you probably will not get a raise, they may fire you, and in some cases legal action may be taken against you. Bottom line—you do your part to excel and I will be there to help you reach that goal.

### **Course Schedule**

#### **Week 1      Constructing Identity**

8/21            Introduction to the course: What is rhetoric?

8/23            Burke, Kenneth. “Definition of Man.” In *Language as Symbolic Action*, 3-24. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966.  
Hauser, Gerard, Rosa Eberly, Meredith A. Cargill, Erik Doxtader, Carlita P. Greene, Marouf Hasian Jr., James Jasinski, William Keith, Lenore Langsdorf, Kathryn Northcut, Michael Phillips, Anne Pym, and Philippe-Joseph Salazar. “What Does Rhetorical Theory Do? And Is That a Stupid Question?” *Review of Communication* 3, no. 3 (2003): 311-47.

#### **Week 2      Identity and Identification**

8/28            Burke, Kenneth. “Identification.” In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, 19-46. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1950.  
Crabbe, Bryan. “Rhetoric, Anxiety, and Character Armor: Burke’s Interactional Rhetoric of Identity.” *Western Journal of Communication* 70, no. 1 (2006): 1-22.

- 8/30 Bruner, M. Lane. "Rhetorical Theory and the Critique of National Identity Construction." *National Identities* 7, no. 3 (2005): 309-27.  
 Charland, Maurice. "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Quebecois*." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73, no. 2 (1987): 133-50.  
 McGee, Michael Calvin. "In Search of 'the People': A Rhetorical Alternative." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 61 (1975): 235-49.

**Week 3 Identity and Culture**

- 9/4 Gross, Alan G. "Rhetoric, Narrative, and the Lifeworld: The Construction of Collective Identity." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 43, no. 2 (2010): 118-38.  
 Philipsen, Gerry. "Places for Speaking in Teamsterville." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 62, no. 1 (1976): 15-25.

**Proposal due 9/4 by email.**

- 9/6 Engels, Jeremy. "Friend or Foe?: Naming the Enemy." *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 12, no. 1 (2009): 37-64.  
 Gorringer, Hugo. "'Banal Violence'? The Everyday Underpinnings of Collective Violence." *Identities* 13, no. 2 (2006): 237-60.  
 Sinnreich, Helene. "Reading the Writing on the Wall: A Textual Analysis of Łódź Graffiti." *Religion, State & Society* 32, no. 1 (2004): 53-58.

**Week 4 Identity and Memory**

- 9/11 Griffin, Larry J., and Kenneth A. Bollen. "What Do These Memories Do? Civil Rights Remembrance and Racial Attitudes." *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 4 (2009): 594-614.  
 Mandziuk, Roseann M. "Commemorating Sojourner Truth: Negotiating the Spaces of Public Memory." *Western Journal of Communication* 67, no. 3 (2003): 271-91.
- 9/13 Dickinson, Greg. "Memories for Sale: Nostalgia and the Construction of Identity in Old Pasadena." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 83, no. 1 (1997): 1-27.  
 Fisher, Walter R. "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument." *Communication Monographs* 51, no. 1 (1984): 1-22.

**Week 5 Queer Identities**

- 9/18 Morris III, Charles. E. "Pink Herring & the Fourth Persona: J. Edgar Hoover's Sex Crime Panic." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 2 (2002): 228-244.  
 Rand, E. J. "A Disunited Nation and a Legacy of Contradiction: Queer Nation's Construction of Identity." *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 28, no. 4 (2004): 288-306.

- 9/20 Sloop, John M. "Disciplining the Transgendered: Brandon Teena, Public Representation, and Normativity." *Western Journal of Communication* 64, no. 2 (2000): 165-89.
- Tate, Helen. "The Ideological Effects of a Failed Constitutive Rhetoric: The Co-Option of the Rhetoric of White Lesbian Feminism." *Women's Studies in Communication* 28, no. 1 (2005): 1-31.

**Week 6 Digital Identities**

- 9/25 Bostdorff, Denise M. "The Internet Rhetoric of the Ku Klux Klan: A Case Study in Web Site Community Building Run Amok." *Communication Studies* 55, no. 2 (2004): 340-61.
- Lunceford, Brett. "Building Hacker Collective Identity One Text Phile at a Time: Reading *Phrack*." *Media History Monographs* 11, no. 2 (2009): 1-26.  
**Context / Literature Review due 9/28 by email.**
- 9/27 Reading, Anna. "Digital Interactivity in Public Memory Institutions: The Uses of New Technologies in Holocaust Museums." *Media, Culture & Society* 25, no. 1 (2003): 67-85.
- Vrooman, Steven S. "The Art of Invective: Performing Identity in Cyberspace." *New Media & Society* 4, no. 1 (2002): 51-70.

**Week 7 Music and Identity**

- 10/2 Conrad, Charles. "Work Songs, Hegemony, and Illusions of Self." *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 5, no. 3 (1988): 179-201.
- King, Stephen A. "The Co-Optation of a 'Revolution': Rastafari, Reggae, and the Rhetoric of Social Control." *Howard Journal of Communications* 10, no. 2 (1999): 77-95.
- 10/4 Francesconi, Robert. "Free Jazz and Black Nationalism: A Rhetoric of Musical Style." *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 3, no. 1 (1986): 36-49.
- Hurner, Sheryl. "Discursive Identity Formation of Suffrage Women: Reframing the 'Cult of True Womanhood' through Song." *Western Journal of Communication* 70, no. 3 (2006): 234-60.

**Week 8 Race and Identity**

- 10/9 **Fall Break: No Class**
- 10/11 Hess, Mickey. "Hip-Hop Realness and the White Performer." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 22, no. 5 (2005): 372-89.
- Jackson II, Ronald L. "Negotiating and Mediating Constructions of Racial Identities." *Review of Communication* 4, no. 1/2 (2004): 6-15.

**Week 9 Gender and Identity**

- 10/16 Bennett, Jeffrey A. "Love Me Gender: Normative Homosexuality And "Ex-Gay" Performativity in Reparative Therapy Narratives." *Text & Performance Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2003): 331-52.
- Cloud, Dana L. "Foiling the Intellectuals: Gender, Identity Framing, and the Rhetoric of the Kill in Conservative Hate Mail." *Communication, Culture & Critique* 2, no. 4 (2009): 457-79.
- 10/18 Galewski, Elizabeth. "'Playing up Being a Woman': Femme Performance and the Potential for Ironic Representation." *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 11, no. 2 (2008): 279-302.

**Week 10 Identity and Religion**

- 10/23 Lundberg, Christian O. "Dueling Fundamentalisms." *Communication & Critical/Cultural Studies* 4, no. 1 (2007): 106-10.
- Reid, Robert Stephen. "Being Baptist." *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 7, no. 4 (2004): 587-601.
- 10/25 Droogsma, Rachel Anderson. "Redefining Hijab: American Muslim Women's Standpoints on Veiling." *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 35, no. 3 (2007): 294-319.
- Whitney Keltling, M. "Candanbālā's Hair: Fasting, Beauty, and the Materialization of Jain Wives." *Religion* 39, no. 1 (2009): 1-10.

**Week 11 Evolving Identities**

- 10/30 Heyse, Amy L. "Reconstituting the Next Generation: An Analysis of the United Daughters of the Confederacy's Catechisms for Children." *Southern Communication Journal* 76, no. 1 (2011): 55-75.
- Zaeske, Susan. "Signatures of Citizenship: The Rhetoric of Women's Antislavery Petitions." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 2 (2002): 147-68.
- 11/1 Hoban Jr., James L. "Rhetorical Rituals of Rebirth." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66, no. 3 (1980): 275-88.
- Sweet, Derek, and Margret McCue-Enser. "Constituting 'the People' as Rhetorical Interruption: Barack Obama and the Unfinished Hopes of an Imperfect People." *Communication Studies* 61, no. 5 (2010): 602-22.

**Week 12 Identity and the Body**

- 11/6 Lunceford, Brett. "Weaponizing the Breast: Lactivism and Public Breastfeeding." In *Naked Politics: Nudity, Political Action, and the Rhetoric of the Body*, 35-79. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012.

- 11/8 Cixous, Hélène. "The Laugh of the Medusa." In *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*, edited by Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg, 1524-36. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001.
- Jordan, John W. "(Ad)Dressing the Body in Online Shopping Sites." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20, no. 3 (2003): 248-68.

**Week 13**

- 11/13 Dillon, Lisette. "Writing the Self: The Emergence of a Dialogic Space." *Narrative Inquiry* 21, no. 2 (2011): 213-37.

11/15 **NCA Convention: Peer Review Workshop**

**Week 14**

- 11/20 Sloop, John M. "Riding in Cars between Men." *Communication & Critical/Cultural Studies* 2, no. 3 (2005): 191-213.
- King, Stephen A. "Memory, Mythmaking, and Museums: Constructive Authenticity and the Primitive Blues Subject." *Southern Communication Journal* 71, no. 3 (2006): 235-50.

11/22 **No Class: Thanksgiving Break**

**Week 15 Identity and Agency**

- 11/27 Lundberg, Christian, and Joshua Gunn. "'Ouija Board, Are There Any Communications?': Agency, Ontotheology, and the Death of the Humanist Subject, or, Continuing the ARS Conversation." *RSQ: Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2005): 83-105.
- 11/29 Welsh, Scott. "Coming to Terms with the Antagonism between Rhetorical Reflection and Political Agency." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 45, no. 1 (2012): 1-23.

**Week 16**

- 12/4 Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." In *Image, Music, Text*, 142-48. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977.
- McGee, Michael Calvin. "Text, Context, and the Fragmentation of Contemporary Culture." *Western Journal of Communication* 54, no. 3 (1990): 274-89.
- 12/6 **Paper Presentations**  
**Final Papers Due**



**Regarding Changes in Course Requirements**

Since all classes do not progress at the same rate, the instructor may wish to modify the above requirements or their timing as circumstances dictate. For example, the instructor may wish to change the number and frequency of exams, or the number and sequence of assignments. However, the students must be given adequate notification. Moreover, there may be non-typical classes for which these requirements are not strictly applicable in each instance and may need modification. If such modification is needed, it must be in writing and conform to the spirit of this policy statement.