Instructor: Dr. Lisa A. Flores
Office: Hellems 88
E-mail: via CUlearn
Office Hours: Tues & Thurs, 11:00 – 12:00

Required Texts:


Readings, Available on CUlearn.

COURSE GOALS:

Communication is an inescapable part of our everyday lives. By studying and understanding communication, we can improve our awareness of its influences. This course serves as an introduction to the analysis and criticism of public communication. We will study various rhetorical methods, and we will use these rhetorical methods in our assessment of such public texts as speeches, advertisements, television programs, and editorials.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

In this course, you should:

• Become familiar with various rhetorical methods of analysis and the assumptions that are attached to these methods.

• Be able to use these methods to study communication texts.

• Become a more critical consumer of communication.

COURSE POLICIES:

University Messages:

• *Disability Statement* - If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, or http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see guidelines at http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/go.cgi?select=temporary.html

• *Decorum Statement* - Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially
important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html) and at [http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code](http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code)

**Honor Code** - All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Additional information on the Honor Code can be found at [http://www.Colorado.edu/policies/honor.html](http://www.Colorado.edu/policies/honor.html)

**Religious Observance** - Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. If you have a potential class conflict because of religious observance, you must inform me of that conflict by week three of the semester. See policy details at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html)

**Discrimination and Harassment** - The University of Colorado at Boulder Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures, the University of Colorado Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures, and the University of Colorado Conflict of Interest in Cases of Amorous Relationships policy apply to all students, staff, and faculty. Any student, staff, or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of sexual harassment or discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at [http://www.colorado.edu/odh](http://www.colorado.edu/odh)

**Instructor's Messages:**

- **E-mail policy** – I generally check e-mail twice daily between 9 and 3. E-mails sent after 3 pm will be returned the next business day. E-mails sent Friday evening or over the weekend will be returned on Monday morning.

- **Cell phone, laptop, electronics policy** – Electronics of any kind, including laptops, may not be used during class, except with my permission.

- **Readings** - This course requires reading of difficult and often controversial materials. Included in your reading are a number of essays from scholarly journals. Some of these essays are complex and difficult. You should be prepared to dedicate a significant amount
of time outside of class to reading your materials carefully and critically. We will discuss these readings in class, but for our discussions to be effective, you MUST come to class prepared, having read that which is assigned for that day.

• **Attendance** - While attendance in this course is not a formal part of your grade, attendance in this course is expected. This course requires discussion and group work. It also includes lecture and discussion material that is not in your readings. You are responsible for this material. In addition, participation in in-class and out-of-class assignments is part of your learning. Absences make it more difficult for you to learn the material we are discussing. If you are absent, YOU are responsible for obtaining material and information you missed from other class members.

• **Late work** - Late written assignments are penalized ten points (one letter grade) for each calendar day that they are late. NOTE: Application Exercises are not accepted late.

• **Assignments** - All assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and in accord with either MLA or APA style guidelines. Handwritten assignments will be penalized 10 points (one letter grade). Each assignment has specific guidelines that are previewed here and developed further later in the semester. Be sure to abide by these general guidelines as well as those you receive later in the semester.

• **Classroom Pedagogy and Behavior** - In this class, we will have lectures, group discussions, and class presentations. Learning involves more than simply the dissemination of factual information, and this is especially true when we are discussing complex issues and social questions. If we are to engage this material completely, we will need to build a classroom space that is grounded in mutual respect. That entails, at a minimum, that we all come to class ready to engage with each other. Our conversation should be informed; all perspectives are necessary. At the same time, the classroom is not a space of opinion, but of carefully considered thoughtful contributions.

Students at the University of Colorado, Boulder are encouraged to exercise personal responsibility, self discipline and engage in the rigors of discovery and scholarship. Your ideas are very important, respected and valued. As a member of shared community, even as temporary as this class, we must take responsibility for creating a collaborative learning space where we can be open and honest in our discussions. Avoid personal insults and confrontations when you disagree with your instructor, classmates, and/or guest speakers.

Disruptive behaviors, such as talking while others are speaking (particularly during group presentations and guest lectures) reading the newspaper, napping, working on your laptop, wearing headphones, or reading materials from another class, will result in class participation point deductions. Disrespectful behavior towards the instructor and/or any of our guest speakers will also adversely affect your participation grade and can lead to formal disciplinary action.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

• **Quizzes** - There will be five quizzes given during the semester. Quizzes will cover material from the texts, readings, lectures, discussions, and audio/visual material assigned and discussed prior to and including the day of the quiz. Quizzes will be taken at the beginning of class. Students who are absent or late will not be able to make up the quiz.
• **Short Analysis Papers** - You will write two short (paper 1, 4-6 pages, paper 2, 5-7 pages) papers in which you will select from a list of methods and use these methods to complete a critical analysis of some public communication text. Both papers will require that you read and use additional readings (beyond that which we have read together) in the method of analysis that you choose. Additional details will be made available in class. Papers will be submitted and returned electronically, via CULearn.

• **Term Analysis Paper** - You will write one long paper (10-12 pgs.). This essay, like the two short papers, will be your analysis, using one of the methods we discuss in class, of some public communication text. However, as this paper is one you should be working on throughout the semester and should represent your very best efforts, it will require substantially more research. You will need to consult and use in the paper a minimum of three essays on your methodology (beyond those readings we do together). You will also be expected to engage in some research on the particular text you are analyzing. So, if you are looking at the rhetoric of Green Peace, you will need to do some research on the organization, on other environmental groups, and possibly, on opposition to environmental groups such as Green Peace. Additional details will be made available in class. Papers will be submitted and returned electronically, via CULearn.

• **Application Exercises** - Much of what we do in this class requires us to “test” the methods we are discussing. To do this, you will need to complete short written assignments, both in-class and out-of-class. These assignments are designed to enhance your understanding of the course materials and prepare you for completion of papers and quizzes. Further, they will help you develop your overall skill as a critic of communication. The assignments will occur throughout the semester, but will not be announced ahead of time. It is important to be in class when these assignments are given as they CAN NOT be made up. No exceptions. The assignments will receive a 0, 5, or 10.

• **Reading Questions** – On certain days (marked in the syllabus with RQ), you need to submit a question that emerges out of that day’s assigned reading. That question should reflect critical issues about rhetorical criticism. Questions will receive a 0, 5, or 10. Questions are due at the beginning of class. Questions are not accepted late and they cannot be made up. No exceptions. Due dates noted in syllabus as RQ due.

**Assignments:**

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes (5 @ 5% each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Analysis Paper 1</td>
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<td>Short Analysis Paper 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Analysis Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Questions</td>
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**Grading Scale:**

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>94-100</th>
<th>90-93</th>
<th>87-89</th>
<th>83-86</th>
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THE TOOLBOX OF METHODS

It may be helpful to think about the methods that you learn in this class as “tools” that you can put in your communication studies toolbox. The methods that you will study have both humanistic and social science origins, and when you critically approach a particular communication text (a speech, a film, an advertisement, a museum artifact, etc), you can rely on your tools (methods) to analyze those texts.

Like tools, the successful use of rhetorical methods or critical analysis depends upon your knowledge of the tool and your experience with it. While a screwdriver and a wrench are both important tools, they are useful for different purposes in different ways. Methods are similar to tools in this regard. Different goals with different texts require different methods. Therefore, it is to your advantage to know many different methods and how to use them. Hopefully, this course will help you add more tools to your communication studies toolbox. In order to help you organize your tools, you need to read the following guide to reading critical essays.

GUIDE TO SUBSTANTIVE READING OF METHODS ARTICLES

We will be reading a number of essays that come from scholarly books and journals. You should be looking specifically for some aspect of method when you read these essays or critical pieces. There are a few guidelines you might wish to use in going through an article or essay--especially one with a focused purpose and method--in order to understand clearly the way it is put together. I suggest you at least try to answer some of the following questions while reading.

1. PURPOSE: What does the author hope to accomplish in this piece?
   • What is the audience for the essay?
   • Is the author attempting to affect the reader’s body of beliefs (factual knowledge), attitudes (feelings), or ideologies? (philosophical-perceptual structures).
   • Why is this purpose important? Will it alter previous scholarship, add new knowledge, affect the way we perceive the world of communication?

2. PROCEDURE: How does the author hope to accomplish this purpose?
   • Is there a clear “method”—a set of procedures for achieving some purpose?
   • Is that method appropriate for the purpose? (i.e., can the method really arrive at the conclusions the author hopes to support?)
   • Does the method chosen indicate that the author belongs to some "school" or type of scholarship? (i.e., does it indicate a scientific approach, a literary or anthropological interest, an aesthetic, or historical point of view?)

3. MATERIALS: With what is the author working to achieve a purpose?
   • What is the artifact or cluster of ideas that is under consideration?
   • Does the author have enough, the right kind, and/or adequate textual materials, understood broadly, to work with?
   • Are the texts in good shape, or has history/vagaries of recording/human alteration, etc.

4. CONCLUSIONS: Are the conclusions consistent with the purpose, the method, and the materials?
WRITING A STRONG ESSAY

Structures of the papers

Many of you come from different backgrounds and paradigms, so I do not mind if you use either social scientific or rhetorical methods of organizing a paper. There are some basic elements that I expect to see regardless of paradigm. Each paper needs to have a title page, an introductory paragraph (complete with topic sentences, justification, and signposting); clear application of a particular perspective or theory); any necessary footnotes or endnotes, and a work-cited list or bibliography.

In the introduction, you should have:

1) A clear purpose statement
2) Some signposting sentence which clearly outlines what the major parts of the essay are going to say (this was missing from many of the first papers)
3) A justification for your study. What is the importance or significance of your project?
4) If you have subsections in the paper, do they follow the subsections listed in your introduction?

When you finish writing the paper, go back and PROOF AND ASK YOURSELF:
1) Have I set off each section so that it is clear?
2) Have I given everyone credit where credit is due?
3) Do I have transitional sentences that help connect the paragraphs together to advance a theme or argument?
4) By the time I have written the conclusion, have I fulfilled the promises that I made in the introduction?

Remember that you have at your disposal a number of ways of organizing your paper. You will find guidance in both approved publication manuals, the publication manual of the American Psychological Association, or the MLA. If you are still unsure of the format you prefer, look at some of the styles used in some of the articles provided in your suggested reading list on your syllabus or your text.

Substance of the research papers

Each paper should be well argued and supported by the relevant material on the subject. You need to exhibit a familiarity with the most recent literature in the field on a particular subject, including the information that can come from periodicals, newspapers, and books. For example, if you are writing about the spotted owl controversy, have you found all of the leading studies that have looked at this social issue? If you are presenting a case study, you can discuss one or both sides of the controversy.

If you finish your final paper early (at least one week in advance) and would like me to see a rough draft, I will look at it and provide commentary. This needs to be turned in to me in advance so that I can give you meaningful feedback.
**Tentative Daily Schedule – Subject to Change**

**Week 1**  
**Aug 23**  
Introductions, Course Overview

**SECTION ONE: THE NATURE OF COMMUNICATION CRITICISM**

**Aug 25**  
Introduction to criticism  
Read Sillars & Gronbeck, chp. 1

**Week 2**  
**Aug 30**  
Analyzing messages, the process of criticism  
Read Sillars & Gronbeck, chp. 2

**Sep 1**  
Analyzing messages and writing criticism  
Review Sillars & Gronbeck, chp. 2  
Read Sillars & Gronbeck, chp. 3

**SECTION TWO: APPROACHES TO CRITICISM**

**Week 3**  
**Sep 6**  
Method – Neoclassical/NeoAristotelian Criticism, overview and assumptions  
Read Sillars & Gronbeck, chp. 6

**Sep 8**  
Doing Neoclassical/NeoAristotelian Criticism  
Read, in readings, Hill  
**RQ 1 Due**

**Week 4**  
**Sep 13**  
Doing Neoclassical/NeoAristotelian Criticism  
Read TBA

**Sep 15**  
**No formal class meeting. Complete Neoclassical/NeoAristotelian Analysis.**

**Week 5**  
**Sep 20**  
Method—Value Criticism, overview and assumptions  
Read Sillars & Gronbeck, chp. 9

**Sep 22**  
Doing value criticism  
Read, in readings, Trujillo & Ekdom  
**RQ 2 Due**
Comm 3760 Revised Daily Syllabus
Fall 2011 – Flores

Week 7
Oct 6    Doing metaphoric criticism
         Read, in readings, Perry
         RQ 3 Due

Week 8
Oct 11   Doing metaphoric criticism
         Read, no reading

Oct 13   Method—Semiotic criticism, overview and assumptions
         Read Sillars & Gronbeck, chp. 7

Week 9
Oct 18   Doing semiotic criticism
         Read, in readings, Orbe & Hopson
         RQ 4 Due

Oct 20   Doing semiotic criticism
         Read, no reading. Bring at least 3 print advertisements to class

Week 10
Oct 25   Method—Narrative criticism, overview and assumptions
         Read Sillars & Gronbeck, pgs. 211-229; 233-235

Oct 27   Doing narrative criticism
         Read Stoner & Perkins
         Short Analysis Paper Two Due

Week 11
Nov 1    Method—Dramatic criticism, overview and assumptions
         Read Sillars & Gronbeck, pgs. 229-233 and in readings, Ling
         RQ 5 Due

Nov 3    Doing dramatic criticism
         Read, in readings, Solomon
         RQ 6 Due

Week 12
Nov 8    Doing dramatic criticism
         Read, Woods Apology

Nov 10   Method—Psychoanalytic criticism, overview and assumptions
         Read Sillars & Gronbeck, chp. 11

Week 13
Nov 15   Doing psychoanalytic criticism
         Read, in readings, Terrill
         RQ 7 Due
Nov 17   No Formal Class Meeting, at National Communication Association Conference

Week 14
Nov 22   No Class – Fall Break
Nov 24   No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15
Nov 29   Doing psychoanalytic criticism
          Read, in readings, Gunn & Hall
          RQ 8 Due

Dec 1    Method—Ideological criticism, overview and assumptions
          Read Sillars & Gronbeck, chp. 12

Week 16
Dec 6    Doing Ideological Criticism
          Read, in readings, Shugart
          RQ 9 Due

Dec 8    Course wrap-up
          Final Papers Due
Readings


