COURSE OVERVIEW:

New Media is a term used to define all that is related to the Internet and the interplay between technology, images and sound. In fact, the definition of new media changes daily, as it evolves and morphs continuously. However, in order to understand such an extremely complex and amorphous concept, we need a working definition. New media holds out a possibility of on-demand access to content anytime, anywhere, on any digital device, as well as interactive user feedback, creative participation and community formation around the media content. Another important promise of new media is the “democratization” of the creation, publishing, distribution and consumption of media content.

In this course, you will be examining how new media impacts the rhetoric of gender and sexuality in society. Rhetoric is the study of how people communicate and in particular how they persuade and are persuaded, so in this course you will study how topics related to gender and sexuality are presented across a wide range of discourses. You will analyze the effectiveness of those presentations, argue the social and cultural impact of such presentations, and create your own messages for a variety of audiences using contemporary new media genres. The central theme of the course is: what do you know about gender and sexuality and how do you know it? These are big questions that ask you to take a step back and consider what you believe and why you believe it, which can be both challenging and enlightening.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education

Extend Rhetorical Knowledge as a reader. As you increase your awareness of rhetorical strategies as a reader, you will be able to accurately identify the rhetorical situation (audience, author, purpose, genre, occasion, conversation) for messages you encounter as a reader, listener, or viewer and analyze how each element contributes to your understanding of the message. You will increase your ability to identify the rhetorical strategies (appeals to ethos, logos, and pathos) used to support the claims made in the message and critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each strategy. You will analyze the factors that impact the extent to which you allow a message to influence your own beliefs and compare those to established measures of credibility. You will identify the rhetorical moves common to different types of messages, and understand the role those moves play in influencing audiences. You will understand the relationship between content, design, and usability, particularly in light of the changing nature of literacy.

Extend Rhetorical Knowledge as a writer. As you increase your awareness of rhetorical strategies as a writer, you will make decisions about how to compose messages, including what genre and medium to use, what content to cover, and how to format the content for readability, based on the demands of the rhetorical situation for each message. You will employ appropriate rhetorical strategies to connect with real audiences, accomplish a specific purpose, establish credibility, and communicate meaningful messages. You will approach writing as a design art that requires careful attention to the relationship between content, design, and usability, as well as insights gained from research into how readers process messages in the genre and medium you’re using. You will identify and follow the communication customs of the discourse community or communities that serve as your target audience. You will select sources of evidence your target audience will deem trustworthy, and document your sources using the citation style customary to your discipline (or the equivalent for digital compositions). Nearly all of your class activities ask you to address a particular audience, for a particular purpose, using genres and rhetorical appeals appropriate to that rhetorical situation.
**Extend Experience in Writing Processes.** In this course you will be exposed to a variety of research technologies, and you will learn to evaluate sources for accuracy, relevance, credibility, reliability and bias. Through the process of critical reading, writing and revision, you will learn to critique your own work as well as the work of your classmates as you develop multiple drafts of each major assignment. In peer critique sessions you will present early drafts of your projects to other members of the class, which will allow you to see how an audience reacts to your work. As you examine the work of others, you will gain a stronger sense of the needs of the audience, which will influence your writing as you revise your draft. Peer critique will also allow you the opportunity to practice effective approaches to working collaboratively.

**Extend Mastery of Writing Conventions.** The written projects required in this course call for appropriate conventions of academic and professional writing. You will learn how audience determines the conventions you use, whether you are writing an informal response, an outline, or a formal essay. The goal will always be to create clear, dynamic writing that meets the needs of the audience. You will make ongoing use of two nationally recognized rhetoric and composition websites: The Purdue University OWL (on-line writing lab): [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/) and the Colorado State University Writing Center, which offers an array of writing resources pertinent to this course: [http://writing.colostate.edu/](http://writing.colostate.edu/). I also encourage you to take advantage of our Writing Center, which is staffed by professional writing consultants and is located in Norlin library close to the east entrance. The Writing Center offers 50 minute consultations. To make an appointment, go to [www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html](http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html).

**Advance Content Knowledge through Communication Strategies.** In this course you will be exposed to professional writings and images from various genres. You will apply the content knowledge gained to write effectively for various audiences and purposes, adapting your own content and style to respond to the needs of different audiences and rhetorical situations.

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**University of Colorado and Program for Writing and Rhetoric Course Description and Goals**

Open to Juniors and Seniors in the College of Arts and Sciences, WRTG 3020 (Topics in Writing) and WRTG 3007 (Writing in the Visual Arts) sharpen critical thinking and critical writing skills. The courses focus upon rhetorical forms students will use in academia, in the workplace, and in the civic domain, across a full spectrum of persuasive strategies, including analysis and argument. These courses reinforce skills taught in first-year writing classes and build upon them, with a greater emphasis upon the situational quality of writing or upon rhetorical context: the relationship between writer, reader, subject, and purpose in the formation of a text.

Topics in Writing and Writing in the Visual Arts courses focus upon specific subjects, but these courses are not intended to supplement one’s knowledge in a major. Rather, the topic serves as a means to an end—to create a knowledgeable audience and a context for discussion and writing: a discourse community. In a workshop setting, students engage in a dialogue with their audience, working out meaningful theses, testing rhetorical strategies, responding to objections and potential objections, and revising (and revising, and revising!) to meet the needs of their readers. Instructors of 3020 and 3007 courses demand a high level of student participation and emphasize each student’s role as both writer and audience: observant, inquisitive readers of the writings of others. Students should leave a 3020 or 3007 class as more sophisticated writers who understand that the rhetorical situation—rather than a rule book—will invite unique responses based upon their particular goals.

To that end, WRTG 3020 and WRTG 3007 have established goals within four key areas: Critical Thinking and its Written Application; The Writing Process; Rhetorical Situation; and Mechanics and Style.

**Critical Thinking and Its Written Application:** As writers and as readers, students should leave 3020 able to:

- See writing as a form of personal engagement, demanding an awareness of the inherent power of language and its ability to bring about change.
- Pose and shape a question at issue.
- Locate and use resources when necessary to exploring a line of inquiry.
- Critically evaluate information sources for credibility, validity, timeliness, and relevance.
- Draw inferences from a body of evidence.
- Distinguish description from analysis and argument.
- Distinguish flawed from sound reasoning, and be able to respond to and challenge claims.
- Recognize a thesis, and understand the organic relationship between thesis and support in an essay.
- As writers, structure and develop points of argument in a coherent order to build a case; as readers, recognize this structure and development within texts.
- Critique one’s own works in progress and those of others.
- Recognize that academic and public writing is dialogic, addresses an audience, and anticipates the thinking, the questions, and the possible objections of readers.

**The Writing Process:** As writers, students should be able to:

- Understand writing as an ongoing process that requires multiple drafts and various strategies for developing, revising and editing texts.
- Understand that revision is informed by critical dialogue.
- See the critical analysis of others’ work as relevant to one’s own writing.

**Rhetorical Situation:** Students should learn to:

- Exercise rhetorical skills: frame issues, define and defend theses, invent and arrange appeals, answer counterarguments, and contextualize conclusions.
- Value writing as a collaborative dialogue between authors and audiences, critics, and colleagues.
- Make decisions about form, argumentation, and style from the expectations of different audiences.
- Recognize that a voice or style appropriate to one discipline or rhetorical context might be less appropriate for another.
- Develop “topic”-specific language that is appropriate for the defined audience while also intelligible to a non-expert audience.

**Mechanics and Style:** Students in WRTG 3020 should learn to:

- Convey meaning through concise, precise, highly readable language.
- Apply the basics of grammar, sentence-structure, and other mechanics integral to analytical and persuasive writing.
- Develop skills in proofreading.
- Use voice, style and diction appropriate to the discipline or rhetorical context.
- Use paragraph structure and transitional devices to aid the reader in following even a complex train of thought.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**


Readings can be found on the class blog at [http://www.dianezdeabella.com/gender/readings/](http://www.dianezdeabella.com/gender/readings/)

**COURSE WORK:**

**Reading Quizzes:** Each week you will complete a short quiz on the chapters assigned in *Media, Culture and Society: An Introduction.* Be sure that you always have loose leaf paper with you to complete quizzes.

**Critical Reading Responses:** For each of the seventeen specific readings assigned, you will be required to post critical reading responses to the class blog at [http://www.dianezdeabella.com/gender/](http://www.dianezdeabella.com/gender/). These responses will be evaluated based upon your critical reading, critical thinking, and critical writing skills. You will need to register as a user of the blog. It is important that you register using your University of Colorado email account and your full first and last name (ex. dianedebella), so that you can receive proper credit for your posted responses. Each response is the equivalent of one page of graded text (at a minimum). I will provide you with additional details regarding registering on the blog and posting responses. You should refer to both the Critical Analysis handout and the Critical Reading Response handout located on the Handouts page of the class blog for more detailed instructions.

**Peer Critique:** You will provide constructive criticism of your classmates’ work. Peer critique and draft preparation is extremely important, and both will count towards your final grade. You will provide peer critique for both the text based project and the new media project.
**Text Based Project:** You will complete a text based analysis, 8-10 pages in length (typed, double spaced). This is a research project in which you will evaluate and incorporate outside sources to break a larger issue down into its smaller components in order to more fully understand and explain the issue in question. For example, you might examine how various forms of new media have influenced societal views of gender and sexuality. I will provide you with additional details regarding this assignment in class.

**New Media Project/Oral Presentation:** You will create a new media project that will address issues of diversity and inclusion related to gender and sexuality, and you will provide an oral presentation of your new media project to the class. For help with digital projects, visit [http://digitalwriting101.net/](http://digitalwriting101.net/). I will provide you with additional details regarding this assignment in class.

**Class Participation:** Classroom attendance and participation are integral parts of the learning experience. Class participation and regular attendance are expected, and will count toward the determination of your final course grade.

**COURSE GRADE:**

- **Reading Quizzes:** 5%
- **Critical Reading Responses:** 20%
- **Peer Critique:** 10%
- **Text Based Project (Analysis):** 20%
- **New Media Project (Argument):** 20%
- **Oral Presentation:** 15%
- **Class Participation:** 10%

**GRADING SCALE FOR WRITTEN PROJECTS:**

- **A** Exceptional in content, organization, style, and mechanics; illuminates the topic through its depth of analysis or argument.
- **B** Well above average both in development of the thesis and in style; command of mechanics.
- **C** Meets the assignment without major mistakes; mixture of strengths and weaknesses; basically follows form.
- **D** Fails to include all the elements of the form or doesn’t develop them adequately; poorly organized; contains many distracting mechanical errors.
- **F** Incomplete, disastrously flawed, plagiarized or never turned in.

You will be given a more detailed grading rubric before you begin work on your first project.

**GRADING SCALE FOR PARTICIPATION:**

- **A** Always prepared for class; participates without being called on; criticisms of other student papers and projects show insight, close reading; comments are clear, succinct, and helpful; team player in group work.
- **B** Generally prepared for class; occasionally participates without being called on; criticisms of other student papers and projects demonstrate a good grasp of the course goals; comments generally are clear and helpful; participates in group work.
- **C** Adequately prepared for class; only participates when called on; mastery of the course goals generally is evident, but criticisms of student papers and projects, although somewhat helpful, demonstrate a less than thorough reading or understanding of the essay, project, or course goals; does not contribute equally to group work.
- **D** Preparation is less than adequate; never participates unless called on; criticisms of other student papers and projects demonstrate a casual reading, at best; comments demonstrate a failure to master the course goals; does not actively participate in group work.
- **F** Disruptive to class (texting, talking, etc.); unprepared when called on; unable or unwilling to participate in class discussions; does not participate in group work.
COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance: In a writing workshop, classroom attendance and participation are integral parts of the learning experience. Class participation (which may include informal writing assignments) and regular attendance are expected, and will count toward the determination of your final course grade. Three absences (the equivalent of one week of class) are allowed without penalty. Missing nine classes (the equivalent of three weeks of class) will result in a failing grade. You are responsible for all assignments. If you miss a class, you will be expected to ask a classmate about the material covered in class, as well as any assignments given. Please do not arrive late for class. Three late arrivals will count as one absence.

Late Work: It is important to turn your work in on the date it is due. In fairness to all students in the class, late work will be penalized.

Cell phones, iPods, laptops, etc: When you enter class, please turn off or silence your phones and other electronic devices. You will have access to a laptop in this classroom. If you are not using it for work directly related to this class, I will ask you to leave class and you will receive an absence for that class period. Do not text during class.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Disabilities & Medical Conditions
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu. The Disabilities Services office is located in the Center for Community N200. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links at Disability Services website.

Religious Observances
Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. I will make every effort to accommodate your religious obligations provided that you notify me well in advance of the scheduled conflict. Whenever possible, you should notify me at least two weeks in advance of the conflict to request special accommodations. See www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Classroom Behavior
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 www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

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 www.colorado.edu/odh
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; 303-735-2273). 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). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

COURSE CALENDAR (SUBJECT TO CHANGE):

*A detailed assignment calendar for each unit will be posted on the class blog*

MCS = Media, Culture and Society

Unit 1: Analysis/Text Based Project

Week of 8/26: Review syllabus, course overview, student introductions
Review computer protocol, discuss course assignments
MCS ch. 1
Set ground rules for course

Week of 9/2: No class on Labor Day
MCS ch. 2
Discuss gender, sexuality and new media
*Elements of media in socio-cultural context
*Technological determinism
Discuss analysis
Complete reading responses and discuss readings
“Social Media Gender Divide”

Week of 9/9: MCS ch. 4
Discuss gender, sexuality and new media
*Narrative, genre and discourse analysis
Complete reading responses and discuss readings
“In Kids’ Rooms, Pink is for Girls, Blue is for Boys”
“Are iPhones Just for Girls?”

Week of 9/16: MCS ch. 6
Discuss gender, sexuality and new media
*Ideological meanings
Complete reading responses and discuss readings
“Why Dove’s ‘Real Beauty Sketches’ Video Makes Me Uncomfortable”
“Fitspo and Thinspo”

Week of 9/23: MCS ch. 7
Discuss gender, sexuality and new media
*Constructing stories
Complete reading responses and discuss readings
“Twitter Rape Trolls”
“Rape Threats on Twitter Won’t Get Women to Shut Up”
Conduct research
Week of 9/30: 
MCS ch. 8, MCS ch. 9 pp. 186-193
Discuss gender, sexuality and new media
*Digital dilution
Complete reading responses and discuss readings
“Boys are also Harmed by Hookup Culture”
“Sex in the Media”
Conduct research

Week of 10/7:
MCS ch. 11
Discuss gender, sexuality and new media
*Construction of femininities and masculinities
Complete reading responses and discuss readings
“TV’s New Wave of Women: Smart, Strong, Borderline Insane”
“Facebook Shuts Page That Taunted Lawmaker’s Push to Curb Military Rape”
Conduct research

Week of 10/14:
MCS ch. 12 pp. 248-264, MCS ch. 13
Discuss gender, sexuality and new media
*Gender and community
*Identity: fragmentation and fluidity
Conduct research and hold conferences

Week of 10/21:
Peer Critique
Text based analysis projects due
Begin New Media Creation unit

Unit 2: Argument/New Media Project

Week of 10/28:
Discuss New Media Creation
Complete reading responses and discuss readings
“Meet the New X-Men: All Women”
“It’s Time for an End to Women’s Stories”

Week of 11/4:
Discuss New Media Creation
Complete reading responses and discuss readings
“Sex, Lies and Media”
“The Skinny on This is My Body”

Week of 11/11:
Present project proposals
Conduct research and hold conferences

Week of 11/18:
Conduct research and hold conferences

Week of 11/25:
No class

Week of 12/2:
Peer critique
Presentations of new media project

Week of 12/9:
Presentations of new media project