

## SPC 321 Rhetorical Criticism

### Credit Hours: 3

In-Class Instructional Hours: 3

Labs: 0

Field Work: 0

### Catalog Description:

Prerequisite. Junior or Senior Standing

Critical analysis of persuasive messages and strategies used by public persuaders; focus on social/political speeches, commercial advertising, music lyrics, and other forms of purposeful communication.

### Reasons for Revision:

(Fall 2005) This course (formerly COM 321) was last revised in 1992. This new proposal is part of a general program review, through which Communication seeks to update its courses in light of departmental experience with the previous program version, evolving departmental needs, and expanding scholarship in the field. Additionally, the department is undertaking this revision to position itself for accreditation by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Note: As part of this overall revision, speech and criticism courses are being re-labeled as SPC rather than COM to distinguish between the humanistic base of the new SPC courses and the applied nature of the courses that will retain the COM prefix.

<b>Student Learning Outcomes:</b> Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:	<b>Course Content References:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>
1. Recognize and describe the essential components of a persuasive interaction	I, II	1. Exams, papers, presentations, class discussions
2. Analyze the persuasive strategies at work in rhetorical communication	I, II	2. Exams, papers, presentations, class discussions
3. Evaluate rhetorical communication	I, II, IV, V	3. Exams, papers, presentations, class discussions
4. Show results of being discerning and analytical listeners	I, IV, VI, VII	4. Exams, papers, presentations, class discussions
5. Analyze ethical aspect of rhetorical communication	V, VIII, VIII	5. Exams, papers, presentations, class discussions
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the development of rhetorical analytical styles	III	6. Exams, papers, presentations, class discussions

**Course Content:**

- I. Nature of persuasion and rhetoric
- II. Nature of criticism
  - A. Description
  - B. Analysis
  - C. Evaluation
- III. Historical development of rhetoric
  - A. Classical
  - B. Medieval
  - C. Renaissance
  - D. Non-Western
  - E. Contemporary
- IV. Rhetorical perspective and critical styles
  - A. Aristotelian approach
  - B. Rationalist/Neo-Aristotelian
  - C. Ethical criticism
  - D. Psychosocial criticism
  - E. Dramatistic analysis
  - F. Metaphoric analysis
  - G. Social movement criticism
  - H. Ideological analysis
  - I. Feminist analysis
  - J. Post-modern criticism
- V. Rhetorical content
  - A. Explicit meaning
  - B. Values
  - C. Audience perception of the source
  - D. Language choices
- VI. Rhetorical form
  - A. Structure
  - B. Message of the medium
- VII. Rhetorical delivery
  - A. Verbal
  - B. Nonverbal
- VIII. Setting criteria for evaluation
  - A. Persuasive effect
  - B. Social significance
  - C. Ethics
  - D. "Fitting response"

## **Resources:**

### Classic Scholarship in the Field.

Aristotle (H. Lawson-Tancred, trans). (1992). *The art of rhetoric*. London: Penguin Classic.

### Current Scholarship in the Field.

Burghardt, C.R. (2000). *Readings in rhetorical criticism* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). State College PA: Strata.

Burghardt, C.R. (2005). *Readings in rhetorical criticism*. State College PA: Strata.

Foss, S.K. (2004). *Rhetorical criticism: Exploration and practice*. Prospect Heights IL: Waveland.

Foss, K. A., Foss, S. K. and Trapp, R. (2002). *Readings in contemporary rhetoric*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Foss, S. K. Foss, K. A., Trapp, R. (2002). *Contemporary perspectives on rhetoric* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press. Hart, R.P., & Daughton, S.M. (2004). *Modern rhetorical criticism* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Heric, J.A. (2004). *The history and theory of rhetoric: An introduction* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Jensen, G.H. (2000). *Storytelling in Alcoholics Anonymous: A rhetorical analysis*. Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Johnson, N. (2002). *Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life, 1866-1910*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois.

Kuypers, J.A. (2004). *The art of rhetorical criticism*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

McGroskey, J.C. (2005). *Introduction to rhetorical communication*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Pierce, D.L. (2003). *Rhetorical criticism and theory in practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Van Eermeren, F.H., & Houtlosser, P. (eds.). (2002). *Dialectic and rhetoric: The warp and woof of argumentation analysis*. New York: Springer.

West, R.L., & Turner, L.H. (2000). *Introducing communication theory: Analysis and application*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Winkleman, C.L. (2003). *The language of battered women: A rhetorical method of personal theologies*. Albany: SUNY Press.

### Periodicals:

Argumentation and Advocacy

Communication Monographs

Communication Quarterly

Communication Studies

Discourse: Berkeley Journal of theoretical Studies

Journal of Advertising Research

Journal of Applied Communication Research

Journal of Communication

Journal of Popular Culture  
Journal of Public Relations Research  
Language and Communication  
Language and Speech  
Quarterly Journal of Speech