

COMM 3300.001 Reading Media Critically

Course Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Janet Johnson

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30-1. By appointment and virtually.

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Class Hashtag: #COMM3300

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Rhetoric 1302

Course Description

The media we use is filled with signs and meanings that influence us every day. We read, watch TV, surf the 'Net, listen to music, and watch movies. This semester's goal is for you to learn how to become an active audience member who can critically analyze the media you use. You will learn rhetorical and communication theories that will help you analyze media. This class should change the way you watch TV, watch a movie, look at advertisements, and read a Web site.

Reading Media Critically is an upper-level writing course. This class is an intensive reading and writing course whose goal is to teach you how to critically think, analyze, and write about the media. We will learn rhetorical and communication theory and concepts as well as research skills. You will then take these theories and concepts and apply them to various research/analysis projects.

Your progress in this class depends on: 1. Your demonstrated ability to respond and apply readings. 2. To understand and apply scholarship and theoretical frameworks to activities for analysis. 3. Proofreading/Revision skills for spelling, grammar, and mechanical errors. 4. Submitting your assignments ON-TIME!

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon successful completion of COMM 3300, students should be able to:

- Students will be able to practice and apply different approaches to and modes of written exposition as appropriate to a variety of theses and subjects.
- Students will be able to write using effective technical requirements, including organization, mechanics, and thesis development.
- Students will develop sensitivity to written language by being able to employ and apply effective and appropriate rhetorical devices directed at

- a defined audience.
- Students will be able to demonstrate an ability to conduct research, apply source material, discuss general information, and apply logical process when writing.

Textbook

Media Analysis Techniques
 by Arthur Asa Berger
 ISBN: 978-1-4129-8776-9

Other readings will be provided to you on the wiki.

Suggested Course Materials

APA Style Guide/MLA Style Guide
 A Grammar/Style book of your choice.

A working knowledge of technology is required. Please double check that all your work is posted to the right web sites. Make sure you know how to post and save your work to the appropriate web sites we use in class. **Also, a working knowledge of the online library site is mandatory.**

Research is an important part to this class. I expect you to familiarize yourself with our library’s databases as well as how to download and obtain scholarly articles. You **MUST** know how to cite sources correctly. **I have a no TOLERANCE policy for plagiarism** and poorly cited sources. You will be turned into Judicial Affairs. Learn to CITE your sources correctly. I assume you know how since you took Rhet 1302.

Note: I reserve the right to modify this syllabus at any time during the course to suit the needs of the students and the course objectives. Any modifications shall be given to you in writing.

Graded Course Components

Assignment	Weight
Professional Communication Grade	10%
Semiotic Critical Essay	10%
Marxist Critical Essay	10%
Psychoanalytic Critical Essay	10%
Major Critical Research Paper	40%
Group or individual Project	10%
Wiki entries	10%

Critical Essay Papers:

You will write three mini analysis papers.

Check Calendar for due dates:

Paper #1: Semiotic Analysis: Choose a print advertisement and use the chapter and the tools in Chapter 1 of your text to analyze your artifact.

Paper #2: Marxist Analysis: Choose a television show and use the chapter and the tools in Chapter 2 of your text to analyze your artifact.

Paper #3: Psychoanalytic Analysis: Choose a movie and use the chapter and the tools in Chapter 3 of your text to analyze your artifact.

Criteria:

- Each paper should be 2-3 pages
- One outside academic source
- Single-spaced

Each chapter we read, you will practice a mini analysis. You will create a page in the required folder on the wiki. Each week will have instructions and details of the assignment. You will find the assignment for the Practice Analysis on the weekly schedule that will be posted every Saturday night in anticipation for the next week.

Media Analysis Paper

The media analysis paper is your major paper, where you will incorporate major theoretical perspectives from your book and incorporate outside academic research into your paper.

The media analysis assignment sheet is [here](#).

Wiki Entries

You will post small entries each week about your media observations that reflect our readings. This will serve as your media journal. Create a page under the folder Journal entries. Label each entry 1, 2, 3, etc.

Group or Individual Media Project

You will create a culture jam. For more information on what a culture jam is: <http://depts.washington.edu/ccce/polcommcampaigns/CultureJamming.htm> You may work in groups of two or individually. You must use a theoretical approach to the assignment.

Professional Communication Grade

This grade is a performance grade. If you participated, communicated effectively, then there should be no reason not to get full credit. If you did not

participate in discussions, do not expect to get full credit. This grade is based on your "job performance."

Make Up Work and Late Work

I do not accept late work. The end!
Technological problems are not an excuse.

Extra Credit

Extra credit is NOT an option. Do not ask if you can earn extra credit. Instead, strive for excellence in the assigned work.
If you're having trouble with any assignments, please let me know BEFORE the end of the semester. It's hard to help someone who does not ask.

References, Copyright, and Plagiarism

UTD has a no-tolerance policy for plagiarism. If you do not cite your sources you will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs for investigations. It is up to you to learn and study the APA Study Guide. I will also use Turnitin.com. This site checks for plagiarism.

Attendance

*Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude. **Thomas Jefferson***

I make no distinction between "excused" and "unexcused" absences.

You will receive TWO absences with no penalty. Excessive absences will decrease your grade and may lead to failure. I am not interested in your excuses. For example: **WORK is not an excuse**. I'm not interested in learning why you could not attend class.

Excessive lateness can add to your absences and decrease your grade and may lead to failure.

Classroom Citizenship, Technology, and Professional Communication Grade

I'm going to be cheesy and bring up Oprah here. One of my favorite quotes she shared on her show is that "YOU are responsible for the energy that you bring into this space." My motto is that if you respect me, I will respect you.

Each student receives a Professional Communication Grade. You should prepare

for class, and during class, you should cooperate, listen and respect other's opinions. The Professional Communication Grade consists of:

- Adding value to class discussions and being respectful.
- Professionally communicating to me in email, twitter and elearning/wiki
- Silence your electronic devices and do not accept calls while in class (F2F classes)

*You may use electronic devices in the classroom such as a laptop, tablet, cellphone, etc. Please do so discretely. I do reserve the right to ask you to leave if your technology is disrupting the class or me. I reserve the right to block you from discussions or ask you to not post if your online behavior becomes disruptive.

Email Communications

To protect your privacy rights, please use your UTDallas.edu email account when corresponding with me. I will try to answer emails within 24 hours Monday-Thursday and within 48 hours on the weekends or holidays. Email is the fastest and easiest way to contact me.

UTD Policies and Procedures

<http://provost.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/>