

Marshall University

Course Title/Number	Political Communication: CMM 307
Semester/Year	Fall 2014
Days/Time	Tuesday/Thursday: 2:00-3:15pm
Location	Smith Hall 261
Instructor	Dr. Stephen M. Underhill
Office	Smith Hall 248
Phone	(304) 696-3020
E-Mail	underhills@marshall.edu
Office Hours	Tuesday 8:00-9:30; 11:00-2:00; 3:15-4:15 Wednesday 2:30-5:30 Thursday 8:00-9:30; 11:00-2:00
University Policies	By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy by going to www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs and clicking on "Marshall University Policies." Or, you can access the policies directly by going to http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802 Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ Sexual Harassment

Course Description: From Catalog

Investigation of the functions, ethics, responsibilities and social impact of oral communication in periods of social unrest and/or political change.

General Education Program Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the core curriculum at Marshall University, students will be able to master the following core domains of critical thinking:

1. Aesthetic/Artistic
2. Communication (oral, written, visual)
3. Information Literacy: Exploring; Questioning; Searching; Evaluating; Synthesizing; Creating; Communicating; Assessing.
4. Mathematical and Abstract
5. Multicultural/International
6. Scientific
7. Social/Ethical/Historical

Relationships among Course, Program, and Degree Profile Outcomes

Course Student Learning Outcomes	How students will practice each outcome in this Course	How student achievement of each outcome will be assessed in this Course	Program Outcomes	Degree Profile Outcomes
Students will develop a basic understanding of narrative theory.	Course readings and in-class group exercises will be combined to help students develop their information literacy skills.	Tests, Quizzes, Speeches	1, 2, 3, 7	Specialized knowledge; Applied learning; Broad, Integrative Knowledge; Intellectual skills; Civic learning
Students will develop a basic understanding of metaphor theory.	Course readings and in-class group exercises will be combined to help students develop their information literacy skills.	Tests, Quizzes, Speeches	1, 2, 3, 7	Specialized knowledge; Applied learning; Broad, Integrative Knowledge; Intellectual skills; Civic learning
Students will develop a basic understanding of the rhetorical situation.	Course readings and in-class group exercises will be combined to help students develop their information literacy skills.	Tests, Quizzes, Speeches	1, 2, 3, 7	Specialized knowledge; Applied learning; Broad, Integrative Knowledge; Intellectual skills; Civic learning
Students will understand the traditional concepts, values, and contexts of political rhetoric.	Course readings and in-class group exercises will be combined to help students develop their information literacy skills.	Tests, Quizzes, Speeches	7	Specialized knowledge; Applied learning; Broad, Integrative Knowledge; Intellectual skills; Civic learning
Students will evaluate specific discursive texts by determining the technical strategies, rhetorical theories, and discursive concepts at play.	Course readings and in-class group exercises will be combined to help students develop their information literacy skills.	Tests, Quizzes, Speeches	1, 2, 3, 7	Specialized knowledge; Applied learning; Broad, Integrative Knowledge; Intellectual skills; Civic learning

Required Texts, Additional Reading, and Other Materials

Nelson, John S. and G.R. Boynton. *Video Rhetorics: Televised Advertising in American Politics*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1997.

Course Requirements

Topic Selection and Background Check. September 5, 2013	20 Points
Weekly Applications	100 Points
Midterm Exam	100 Points
Final Exam	100 Points
Total	320 Points

Grading Policy

A+	310 - 320
A	299 - 309
A-	288 - 298
B+	277 - 287
B	267 - 276
B-	256 - 266
C+	245 - 255
C	234 - 244
C-	223 - 233
D+	212 - 222
D	201 - 211
D-	190 - 200
F	0 - 189

Attendance Policy

Attendance is not required for this course. PLEASE NOTE, I DO NOT RESPOND TO E-MAIL REQUESTS ASKING ME TO COVER WHAT YOU MISSED IN CLASS. You may visit me during my office hours to catch up on missed material.

Electronics Policy

This course encourages students to bring laptop computers, tablets, smart phones, and any other devices for accessing the internet. Students without such devices will be paired in groups with these devices. In practically every class we will be applying communication theory to the daily news. For this to work, students must balance digital connectivity with class participation. Students who choose to be distracted and not participate will fall behind in skill development, which will become evident.

Document Policy

All documents must be typed, size 12 font, 1 inch margins, double spaced and submitted to Dropbox.

SEMESTER PROJECT

We will examine how political cognition is political communication is political community. Moreover, we will look to see how political community depends on political myths, styles, and symbols. In do so doing, we will learn how these dimensions of politics are multimediated. Each reading illustrates broader rhetorical principles that are applicable to the 2014 election cycle.

Step One: Topics Selection and Background Checks

20 Points

You will select **THREE (3)** political campaigns that will be decided by the November election. We will listen to each other's ideas and develop Interest Group themes. Each theme will be represented by an Interest Group that will work as a unit for a few weeks throughout the semester. Interest Groups will informally present their on-going conversation to the class on days specified in the syllabus, at which time students may create new groups based on the flow of interests. If your **THREE** campaigns are more related, Interest Groups will be more cohesive. If your campaigns are less related, Interest Groups will be less cohesive.

Once your **THREE** campaigns are selected, you will conduct a "Google News" search for at least fifteen news stories that were written in the past two weeks. You **MUST** locate and cite at least five stories per campaign. One campaign **MUST** be for the House of Representatives (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives_elections,_2014) . One campaign **MUST** be for the US Senate (http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2014/senate/2014_elections_senate_map.html) . One campaign **Must** be for a ballot measure (http://ballotpedia.org/2014_ballot_measures) . *HINT: campaigns for hotly contested seats and hotly controversial topics will certainly have more buzz than will campaigns for safe seats in Congress and mundane political issues.*

You will write a one-two page synopsis covering **ALL THREE** Campaigns. Address 1) who are the characters involved? 2) What key events have happened? 3) Where key events have happened? 4) When did key events happen? 5) How is action being deployed in **ALL THREE TOPICS**? 6) For what purpose is action being deployed in **ALL THREE CAMPAIGNS**? This assignment will provide you with the requisite background material for the rest of the semester. You should do it well. You must turn in a citation page, using the Chicago style guide. Last name, First name. Title. Source. Date. Page number. For example:

Underhill, Stephen. "Example Fake News Story Title." *New York Times*. August 10, 2013: 10.
If you do not cite at least fifteen stories between all three topics, you will get a zero for this assignment!

Topics Selection & Background Checks Rubric		
Vector	Value	Score
Proposition of three Campaigns.	10	
Synopsis: Who is involved? What is the clash over? Where is the clash occurring? When did this clash arise? 5) How is action being deployed? For what purpose is action being deployed?	5	
Citation Page	5	
Total		

Step Two: Weekly Applications.

100 Points

Each week, Interest Groups will examine one reading and apply its principles to its selected campaigns and themes. On each Tuesday, we will conduct learning exercises to decode the meaning and rhetorical principles of the assigned reading. On each Thursday, students will meet with their Interest Groups and discuss the application of principles to their campaigns and themes.

Each student will turn in a 1½ page think-piece that applies the principle(s) to your selected campaign and/or theme. This process will require you to locate articles and campaign ads that help clarify various connections. Sometimes, connections will be obvious and you will simply explain how the principle connects to your campaign and/or theme. Other times, connections will not be so clear and you will have to imagine how connections might be made. **SUBMIT ALL PAPERS TO DROPBOX BY 11:59 PM MONDAY NIGHT.** Title each paper “Last name, Think Piece #” (# represents the appropriate week number).

Weekly Application Rubric		
Vector	Value	Score
Clear connections between principle and campaign/ theme.	5	
Writing illustrates command of topic.	5	
Total		

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1	Reading/Assignment Due	Discussion
8/26		Class Introduction
8/28		Locating the Rhetorical Realm
Week 2		
9/2	Hahn, Ch. 1	The On-Going Argument
9/4	Hahn, Ch. 2	Ideological Argumentation
Week 3		
9/8	DUE: Campaign Selection and Background Check	
9/9	Beeson, Ch. 6	Political Communication: Meditated Constructions
9/11		Interest Group Applications
Week 4		
9/15	DUE: Think Piece 1 (10 pts)	
9/16	Nelson & Boynton (Ch.1)	Political Spots
9/18		Interest Group Applications
Week 5		
9/23	DUE: Think Piece 2 (10 pts)	
9/24	Nelson & Boynton (Ch.2)	Political Advertising and Popular Genre
9/25		Informal Presentations /Interest Group Application
Week 6		
9/29	DUE: Think Piece 3 (10 pts)	
9/30	Nelson & Boynton (Ch.3)	Popular genre and Public Style
10/2		Interest Group Application
Week 7		
10/6	DUE: Think Piece 4 (10 pts)	
10/7	Brummett, Ch. 1	Style and Popular Culture
10/9	Interest Group Applications	Midterm Review
Week 8		
10/14		Midterm
10/16	DUE: Think Piece 5 (10 pts)	No Class: Public Address Conference
Week 9		
10/21	Brummett Ch. 3	Political Consequences of Style
10/23		Interest Group Applications
Week 10		

10/27	DUE: Think Piece 6 (10 pts)	
10/28	Nelson & Boynton (Ch.4)	Music, Moving Images, and Argument
10/30		Informal Presentations/Interest Group Applications
Week 11		
11/3	DUE: Think Piece 7 (10 pts)	
11/4	Nelson & Boynton (Ch.5)	Music, TV Spots, and Feeling Leadership
11/6		Interest Group Applications
Week 12		
11/10	DUE: Think Piece 8 (10 pts)	
11/11	Nelson & Boynton (Ch.6)	Genre, Music, Campaign Spots
11/13		Interest Group Applications
Week 13		
11/17	DUE: Think Piece 9 (10 pts)	
11/18	Nelson & Boynton (Ch.7)	Myth, Music, Politics
11/20		No Class: NCA
Week 14		
11/25	Fall Break	
11/27	Thanksgiving	No Class
Week 15		
12/1	DUE: Think Piece 10 (10 pts)	
12/2	Slotkin on Myth	Frontier Myth in US Politics
12/4	Brummett, Ch. 4	Gun-Culture Style
Week 16		
12/11	Final Exam 12:45-2:45	