

## COM 607: Contemporary Rhetorical Methods

Tuesdays, 6-845p, Zoom

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they/she, never he

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Student hours: By appointment



*[W]e all know very well our field's canon. We all teach the same primary texts and anthologies in our courses, and we frame anything that is not Eurocentric as "marginal." But what if we could reframe our relationship to our disciplinary history and to the canon altogether by acknowledging the narratives that predominate as well as what that dominance implies? How might such a reframing work to challenge the manner in which projects of inclusion both preoccupy rhetorical scholars and characterize the way we try to account for that which has been excluded?*

—Karma Chávez paraphrasing Malea Powell

### Materials

Clare, Eli. *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*. Duke University Press, 2017.

Corrigan, Lisa M. *Black Feelings: Race and Affect in the Long Sixties*. University Press of Mississippi, 2020.

"Journal" for writing (medium is arbitrary—play to your writing strengths).

Additional readings are available as PDFs.

### Description

In communication studies, the scholarly endeavor of rhetorical criticism has transformed from (primarily) the study of public address—analyses of 'virtuous people (read: white cis het men with citizenship) speaking well'—to the study of the myriad ways that multiple publics are addressed and constituted through multiple modalities. In this seminar, we note these disciplinary transformations while focusing our energies on state-of-the-art methods of rhetorical criticism. Through engagement with specific methods and approaches of criticism (i.e., ideological criticism, (trans)feminist criticism, queer of color critique, decolonial criticism, and rhetorical field methods) and through engagement with key concepts and analytics used to assess cultural phenomena including social movements, visual rhetorics, affect and embodiment, digital rhetorics, and local cultural productions and economies, we will strive to: assess the value of different methods and approaches; clarify the relations among rhetorical theories, methods, and criticism; identify recurrent topoi (such as context, audience, and modes of address) in the theory and practice of rhetorical criticism; practice and refine our skills as rhetorical critics; and position ourselves in relation to ongoing scholarly conversations about criticism. Our explorations will be framed by key questions: What constitutes a rhetorical text? What do rhetorical texts do? What constitutes a rhetorical critic? What do critics do? What does rhetorical criticism produce? What should be the outcomes of rhetorical criticism?

*\*\*This course includes readings (and possibly performances) that may contain content considered sensitive for some. You should decide if you are comfortable with this. Your continued enrollment in the course indicates that you have done so. Practice self-care—reach out with questions, guidance, and support.\*\**

### Assignments

**Discussion Facilitation.** Everyone is asked to facilitate a 30-45-minute discussion of one article featured on the Facilitation Sheet (a shortened version of the reading schedule). In addition to facilitating discussion, you are asked

to create and submit a handout detailing key takeaways from the article with particular attention given to the treatment of rhetorical method. The handout should not exceed 1 double-sided sheet of paper. Alternatively, you can think creatively about what counts as a handout (e.g., using online platforms to create info-graphics, etc.).

**Proposal:** The culminating experience for this course is a rhetorical criticism. You are asked to complete this assignment in four steps. In the first step, you will submit a project proposal outlining your intended project and goals. It is expected that your choices at this stage will change throughout the semester. Still, start to think early about your interests and how you might envision a rhetorical criticism.

**Advanced Draft:** The culminating experience for this course is a rhetorical criticism. You are asked to complete this assignment in four steps. In the second step, you are asked to construct an advanced draft of your rhetorical criticism. This paper should be between 12-15 pages, include 10-15 sources of support, and be formatted for submission to a rhetoric journal of your choosing (research potential publication outlets early on). This assignment includes 3 elements: (1) a letter to the editor (pretend as if you are submitting to the editor of your desired journal), (2) a title page featuring the essay title, your contact information, an abstract of no more than 150 words, and 5 keywords, and (3) an anonymized version of your essay (there should be NO information identifying you as the author).

**Review:** The culminating experience for this course is a rhetorical criticism. You are asked to complete this assignment in four steps. In the third step, we perform the role of anonymous reviewer. I will assign a paper to each of you. You are asked to read and write a critical review that serves pedagogical and humanizing ends. Said differently, you are asked to help develop a peer's ideas from your vantage offering suggestions and asking questions rather than demanding a particular final form (i.e., this is their paper and not yours). You are asked to submit a written review (anonymized; do not include your identifying information) that will be shared with the respective author along with instructor feedback. This way each author will receive at least two sets of reviews. Focus on quality over quantity when crafting your review as there is no limit for this assignment in terms of length.

**Final Paper:** The culminating experience for this course is a rhetorical criticism. You are asked to complete this assignment in four steps. In the fourth and final step, you are asked to construct a final draft of your rhetorical criticism. This paper should meet the submission criteria particular to your selected journal. For instance,

- *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*: No more than 9000 words; this limit includes tables, references, figure captions, footnotes, and endnotes. This journal requires Chicago endnote style.
- *Women's Studies in Communication*: Should be between 8,000 and 11,000 words; this limit includes abstract, references, and endnotes. This journal allows you to use either MLA or APA style.
- *Quarterly Journal of Speech*: Should be between 9000 and 12,000 words; this limit includes tables, references, figure captions, and endnotes. This journal requires Chicago endnote *and* bibliography style.

This assignment includes 3 elements: (1) A letter to the editor. This letter should detail both the history of your essay *and* respond to the points highlighted in your review. That is, how did you respond to the review points? What changes were and were not made and what is your reasoning? This is your opportunity to articulate your intellectual choices and make a case for your reasoning. (2) A title page featuring the essay title, your contact information, an abstract of no more than 150 words, and 5 keywords. (3) An anonymized final version of your essay (there should be NO information identifying you as the author).

#### Grading

Discussion Facilitation	50 points
Proposal	50 points
Advanced Draft	100 points
Review	100 points
Final Essay	100 points
Total	500 points

#### Student Compartment

Familiarize yourself with the *Student Code of Conduct* (<https://eoss.asu.edu/dos/srr/codeofconduct>) and comport yourself accordingly; this includes, specifically, refraining from threatening behavior per the *Student Services Manual* (<https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm104-02.html>). To be certain, ASU is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation. In particular, ASU prohibits discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation based on any protected status: race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetic information as outlined in the *Academic Affairs Manual* (<https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd401.html>). This is a critically-oriented class, and discussion/speech concerning issues of race, class, size, gender, nation, citizenship, religion, age, and so forth are encouraged and will certainly be addressed as communication is a key component to the construction and maintenance of our culture(s). Come to class with an open mind and due expect to be challenged on your/our communicative conventions; I expect to be held equally accountable for my communicative choices.

#### **Title IX**

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. You can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>, is available if you wish discuss any concerns confidentially and privately.

#### **Academic Integrity**

Honesty is expected of all students. The possible sanctions for academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

#### **Accessibility**

If you have any need for accommodations, please notify me as you are able so that we might make the appropriate arrangements. Formal accommodations can be made through the Disability Resource Center (DRC). For additional information, visit: [www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc](http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc).

#### **Intellectual Property**

As outlined in the Academic Affairs Manual course content, including lectures, are copyrighted materials. Students may not share outside the class, upload, sell, or distribute course content or notes taken during the conduct of the course. For more information, see <https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-06.html>.

#### **Canvas and Technology Support**

Students can navigate directly to the course Canvas website via myASU or <http://canvas.asu.edu>. If you need technical assistance, it is available via the Canvas "Help" icon located on the left-hand navigation menu and phone and live chat support are available 24/7 at <http://contact.asu.edu>. ASU Tech Studios provide a variety of walk-in support services on all ASU campuses: <https://uto.asu.edu/services/campus-it-resources/techstudio>. To learn the basics, refer to the Student Guide: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> and the Canvas Glossary: <http://links.asu.edu/student-canvas-glossary>.

