

LIT 4483: PUBLIC CULTURE, WRITING, AND (VIRAL) CIRCULATION

Spring 2015, Section 06EF -- T 8,9 R 9 ---Tuesdays: 3PM - 4:55PM, Thursdays: 4:05am-4:55pm

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Office/Hours: Turlington 4332: Thursdays, 1:45 – 3:45, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to accomplish three goals:

- a.) study why circulation matters in what Henry Jenkins calls a participatory culture
- b.) learn how discourse circulates, transforms, and constructs public life
- b.) learn how to design and distribute your own discourse with the hope of it "going viral" and affecting consequences in localized settings.

Throughout this course, we will read a number of theoretical perspectives concerning why circulation matters to both publics and a functioning democracy. We will also develop a theoretical and practical understanding of how to compose materials for social campaigns intended to construct a specific public. As we engage with such scholarship, we will consider contemporary debates over intellectual property, copyright, and fair use, especially in relation to remix.

During the course, we will also focus on putting discourse into circulation to attract a public and presenting our work to the public. We will specifically explore how discourse can be distributed in physical spaces to increase chances for viral circulation. You will also learn how social networking sites such as Flickr, Facebook, and Twitter and other digital technologies can be used to accelerate circulation. Putting this knowledge into practice, you will work collaboratively on team to produce your own media campaign and attempt to make it go "viral" on the UF campus.

Through such studies and activities, students can expect to become more informed producers and distributors of their own discourse.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Writing

Strengthen students' writing process by focusing on invention in relation to production, distribution and circulation and offering students opportunities to:

- Design discourse with distribution and circulation in mind
- Plan, practice, and implement distribution strategies
- Consider issues of copyright and intellectual property in design plans
- Write for authentic audiences
- Deliver their ideas in multiple genres: campaign reports, lesson plans, and multimedia slide presentations

Theory

Strengthen student's theoretical knowledge of writing for a public by providing students opportunities to:

- Investigate different marketing strategies to learn about innovate and effective distribution strategies
- Study how metaculture accelerates and decelerates the circulation of discourse
- Study how rhetorical design creates potential for distribution and circulation
- Explore how digital technologies and social networking sites afford potentials for distribution and circulation

Project Design, Management, and Delivery

Gain experience designing and implement research projects from a rhetorical perspective by providing students opportunities to:

- Understand and implement design principles of format, layout, and presentation
- Interpret and argue with design
- Draft, research, testing, and revise visual designs and information architecture
- Consider copyright issues relevant to particular designs
- Develop and deploy various strategies for planning, producing, and distributing discourse in viral campaigns
- Select and use appropriate technologies to produce, distribute, and circulate discourse
- Work on team to develop and implement viral campaign
- Build professional ethos through documentation and accountability

Peer Review

Learn and apply strategies for successful peer review, such as

- Responding constructively to peers' work
- Eliciting and using peer feedback effectively

Technology

Use appropriate technologies for individual and collaborative projects:

- Use digital technologies to produce writing and collaborate on a course blog
- Use digital technologies to design, distribute, and circulate discourse in a variety of settings
- Use digital technologies to manage projects

COURSE TEXTS

Course Packet Available at Xerographics

Presentation Zen by Garr Reynolds

Memes in a Digital Culture by Limor Shifman

Literature Circle book to be determined

COURSE STRUCTURE -- Team-Based Learning

Throughout the semester, you will participate in team-based learning (TBL) class, meaning that in this class, you will become learning professionals by working collaboratively with others throughout the entire semester. The purpose of the team-based learning method is to a.) take advantage of individuals' multiple ways of learning to create collective knowledge; b.) approach class material in the spirit of inquiry (rather than asking you to ingest and regurgitate knowledge); c.) build and strengthen your collaborative skills; d.) give you authority and to endow you with a tangible responsibility for yourself, your education, and your team projects; e.) generate a productive hivemind in which students are constructing archives of knowledge via class participation and blog work.

Team Responsibilities

The success of this course requires your active presence and your commitment to work as a team both in and out of class.

Throughout the semester, you will work as part of a team in four ways:

1. **Work in Literature Circles.** Midway through the semester, you will be expected to participate in a literature circle and present a book lesson to the class. A literature circle is a group of students who read the same book, meet to discuss the book, and work collaboratively to increase their own as well as others' understanding of that book.
2. **Work on Social Campaigns.** A significant amount of your time both in and out of class this semester will be spent working on permanent teams to create a social campaign. Students will specifically work collaboratively to design, produce, publish, and market your team's social campaign and attempt to make it go viral on the UF Campus or in the Gainesville area.
3. **Campaign Reports.** Twice during the semester, you will work on a team to design and present a campaign report in which you and your team members will inform and update the class about your campaign. Students are expected to collaborate both in terms of designing and delivering your reports and are encouraged to be creative and dynamic with your delivery. These reports will help prepare your TED TALK due at semester's end and offer opportunities to receive feedback from the class on your campaign ideas.
4. **TED Talks.** The final assignment in this class asks you to create a team-presentation in the genre of a TED TALK, which you will deliver during a student showcase at the semester's end. For this team project, you will work both in and out of class to deliver a 20 minute multi-media, slide presentation adapting principles of design and presentation from *Presentation Zen*. The design, distribution, and consequences of your social campaign will serve as the content of this presentation. Your purpose will be both to inform and inspire.

To Intervene, or Not to Intervene...

Because team-based learning is a pedagogical approach committed to creating autonomy and authority for you, I do my best not to intervene in a heavy-handed way in team dynamics. I prefer only to intervene if I am asked to do so. If you, at any point, have concerns about how your team is functioning, you should be proactive EARLY and come to me. I can then help you decide how best to approach the problem, or I can intervene myself if we decide together that that's the best thing to do. Coming to me late in the semester about members not contributing their fair share to your campaign will not help you—or me—to formulate an effective intervention strategy. While I do not want to undermine your independence, team-based learning is meant to create a positive and productive classroom experience for everyone. So, if I notice an egregious abuse of the process (i.e. one team member obviously doing all the work while others chat amongst themselves, teams sitting silently, teams talking about last night's tv shows or sporting event rather than the task at hand), I will intervene.

**Note: This description of course structure is slightly adapted from Jodi Schorb's syllabi and Shelly Manis' Rhetoric of Performance Syllabus.

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Final grades in this course are determined by a student's performance in all course activities. Students are assessed both in terms of their professionalism and production. Students who produce high quality work yet do not meet professional standards outlined below or vice versa should not expect to receive a high grade in this course. High grades in this course are reserved for those students who act professionally in class every day throughout the semester and who are highly productive in their course work.

Grading Policy:

Final grades in this course are determined by a student's performance in all course activities. Students are assessed both in terms of their professionalism and production. Students who produce high quality work yet do not meet professional standards outlined below or vice versa should not expect to receive a high grade in this course. High grades in this course are reserved for those students who act professionally in class every day throughout the semester and who are highly productive in their course work.

Grading Policy:

Your final grade for this course will be determined by the grades you receive in five specific areas described below.

1. Hivemind: (15% of final grade)

While I should not have to delineate what it means to be professional, below you will find a list of expected choices that will result in an "A" grade for Professionalism:

A range participants complete all assignments and tasks in efficient and timely manner; are present during class activities rather than being on computers or phones at inappropriate times or in unrelated ways (checking email, facebook, texting); bring course texts to class on days readings will be discussed; actively participate in class discussions--listen when others are talking, consider others' perspectives, make connections from the readings to stimulate co-inquiry, and respond thoughtfully to others and/or by asking questions that help build useful group understanding. They also offer constructive feedback to peers (giving praise as well as constructive criticism); abide by attendance policy; are aware of daily activity expectations and working hard to contribute to our collective efforts to construct knowledge by preparing for class. They also create excellent work to contribute to our archive of knowledge, i.e. journaling and contributing to concept page on Course Blog. Essentially, if this person was not a member of our hivemind, the quality of the discussions and blog would diminish.

B range participants mostly meet the above criteria but are not fully active in hivemind as they could have been better prepared for class, attended more classes; generated more critically engaged blog posts and turned them in on time, contributed more regularly to concept page. Essentially, this person was important to the hivemind but could have made stronger contributions.

C range participants occasionally meet the above criteria and offer little contribution to hivemind as they may have been unprepared for class several times; missed more than three classes; neglected to turn in more than two blog posts or did not generate critically engaged blog posts; and/or did not actively contribute to class discussions or concept page. Essentially this person played an average role in the hivemind.

D range participants rarely meet the above and have an insignificant role in hivemind, as they likely missed many classes, contributed little to discussion and blog, and neglected to prepare for class or contribute to class discussions. Essentially, this person played a less than average role in the hivemind.

NOTE: Total possible points for professionalism/hivemind participation is 100 points. Attendance weighs heavily into final hivemind grade, which is based on criteria above. All students are allowed three unexcused classes with no penalties. Unless special accommodations have been made (See Note Below), a fourth absence will automatically result in a ten point deduction from final hivemind grade, making the highest possible grade for hivemind participation a 90. Fifth, sixth, seventh absences automatically trigger deductions from final hivemind grade in 10 point increments. Students who accrue eight absences will thus earn no higher than 50 points for hivemind participation. Because hivemind participation counts for 15% of your total grade, students who accrue eight absences cannot earn higher than a 82 (B-) in the course even if they receive perfect grades in all areas.

NOTE: Should you have disabilities or experience unexpected illnesses and/or trauma that necessitate you missing more than three classes, please make an appointment to talk to me as early as possible during the semester or after illness/trauma occur

2. First Formal Writing Assignment (25% of final grade)

At the end of the first unit in this course, students will create a visual design for their campaign along with a rhetorical analysis of that visual design. In both visual design and rhetorical analysis of that design, students are expected to use and demonstrate knowledges of semiotics, visual rhetoric, and social campaign design introduced to them throughout first 2 units. The specific expectations and rubric for this assignment are detailed on the DESIGN AND ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT PAGE on our Course Wiki.

3. Literature Circle (10% of final grade)

Mid-way through the semester, students will participate in a literature circle and work collaboratively to design, produce, and deliver a marketing lesson to the class. The specific expectations and rubric for this assignment are detailed on the LIT CIRCLE PAGE on our Course Wiki.

4. Social Campaign Project: (30% of final grade)

Throughout the semester, students will work collaboratively on a team to create and distribute a social campaign crafted with the intention to create a buzz and stimulate change here on the UF campus. Students will work closely with team members during all stages of invention, production, and distribution. The SOCIAL CAMPAIGN PAGE on our Course Wiki details exact expectations and grading rubric for this assignment. In general, as a team, students will decide on content focus of campaign, design campaign materials, and implement distribution strategies. Each student will take a role on team to design, produce, and help put their campaign into action; this role and its responsibilities will be decided by each team. Accompanying their campaign, students will be expected to create and sustain a Project Wiki, assess their team members contributions to the campaign, present 2 formal campaign reports with peers about their campaign, and finally design, produce, and deliver a 20 minute multi-media slide presentation, adhering to Presentation Zen principles of design and delivery, in the genre of a TEDtalk.

5. Individual Campaign Activity and Report (IAR): (20% of final grade)

At semester's end, you will craft an activity report. In this individually-written report (~1250 words), you will identify and describe your assigned role on the team. More specifically, you will draw on theories and discourse from the course readings and discussion to articulate what actions you took to complete your role, what you hoped to accomplish, why you chose these particular actions, and what you learned about circulation and discourse from this project. This report will be weighed against your peer evaluations and evidence on the Project Wiki to determine your overall grade for Individual Campaign Activity and Report (Please see IAR page on Course Wiki for more details on assessment in this area.)

Grading Chart (Letter to Number Conversion):

You'll get a letter grade for each unit, which will include letter grade for formal assignment and cumulative grade for freewrites or mini-assignments. I will then record the corresponding number for portfolios in my gradebook. This chart is used to convert letter grades to numeric grades on all your work. The parentheses include the range of numbers that apply to the corresponding letter. This chart is also used to determine your final grade in the course:

A+ 98 (97-100)
A 95 (93-96)
A- 92 (90-92)
B+ 88 (87-89)
B 85 (83-86)
B- 82 (80-82)
C+ 78 (77-79)
C 75 (73-76)
C- 72 (70-72)
D+ 68 (66-69)
D 65 (64-67)
D- 62 (61-64)
E O

Note: UF has recently instituted minus grades. As a result, letter grades now have different grade point equivalencies. For more information, see: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

Note: You can access your grades throughout the semester through Sakai.

**In the unlikely event that a student wishes to appeal his or her final grade, the student should consult Prof. Stephanie Smith, Director of Undergraduate Studies. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Formal Deadline Dates:

First draft of RHETORICAL DESIGN WITH ANALYSIS: February 24

Final draft of RHETORICAL DESIGN WITH ANALYSIS: no later than March 10

First Campaign Report: March 10

Literature Circle Presentations: March 17 and 19

Second Campaign Report: March 31

TEDTalk Presentations: April 21

Individual Final Report for Viral Campaign: April 29 by 11:59pm

T JAN 6: Course Introduction to Content and Course Structure. Wiki Overview. Major Assignment Overview.

TH JAN 8: Student Introductions. Address Wiki Problems.

T JAN 13: Writing for a Public/Counterpublic via Warner and Convergence Culture and Participatory Culture via Jenkins

TH JAN 15: Image Events via DeLuca and Peeples

T JAN 20: Viral Campaigns. Introduction to Social Campaign Project. In Class Analysis.

TH JAN 22: Social Campaigns via Andrews and Montana Meth Project.

T JAN 27: Semiotics via Andrews and Chandler. In Class Campaign Ad Analysis.

TH JAN 29: Visual Persuasion via Andrews. In Class Analysis

T FEB 3: Memes and Social/Political Participation via Shifman. In Class Analysis

TH FEB 5: Meme Features, Design Strategies, and Genres via Shifman.

T FEB 10: Ethics of Remix via Shepard Fairey vs. AP court case. Discuss First Formal Assignment Expectations.

TH FEB 12: Branding via Airey and Wheeler.

T FEB 17: Rhetorical Velocity via Ridolfo and DeVoss. Literature Circle Assignment and Formation.

TH FEB 19: In class Campaign Logo and Brand Design Studio.

T FEB 24: No Class. Meet in Peer Review Groups with Instructor.

TH FEB 26: Report Prep Studio. In Class Lit Circle Book Group Meeting.

MARCH 3 & 5: NO CLASS. SPRING BREAK!

T MARCH 10: **Campaign Report #1 on Campaign Design. Final Draft of First Formal Writing Assignment Due.**

TH MARCH 12: NO WHOLE CLASS. MEET IN LIT CIRCLE GROUPS.

T MARCH 17: **Lit Circle Reports**

TH MARCH 19: **Lit Circle Reports**

T MARCH 26: Discuss Formal Assignments Due at Semester's End. In Class Campaign Design Studio.

TH MARCH 28: Introduction to TEDTalks. Report Prep Studio.

T MARCH 31: **Campaign Report #2 On Distribution Plan.**

TH APRIL 2: TEDTalk Analysis.

T APRIL 7: TEDTalks and Slideware Design via Reynolds. Chapters 1-4 in *Presentation Zen*.

TH APRIL 9: Slideware Design via Reynolds. Chapters 5-7 in *Presentation Zen*.

T APRIL 14. Storyboarding and TEDTalk Production Studio. End of Semester Logistics.

TH APRIL 16: Optional Class. Meet with Campaign Groups in our out of class to work on TEDTalks.

T APRIL 21: **Student TEDTalk Conference.**

T APRIL 29: **FINAL INDIVIDUAL REPORT DUE**

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

is not only expected but necessary to excel in this course. Because [professionalism and hivemind participation](#) counts toward a significant part of your grade, students are expected to show up every day in class, on time, ready to actively engage, and contribute to course work. I do realize that sometimes absences cannot be avoided. Thus, three unexcused absences are tolerated and left unquestioned even though students should take responsibility for all homework and obtaining class notes from a peer *and* even though those absences will negatively alter your grade in Professionalism.

Upon a fourth absence, you can expect a ten point reduction from your **final professionalism/hivemind participation grade**. When absences do occur, students are required to make up all assignments as outlined on the [course schedule](#). Upon a fourth absence, your grade for **final hivemind participation** will be lowered 10 points. Successive unapproved absences (5th, 6th....) will continue to lower your final grade by ten point increments (See [Assessment Page](#) on this Wiki for more details).

I take roll at the beginning of class every day. Habitual tardiness (i.e. arriving late in class **or** departing class early) is not acceptable because late arrivals and early departures are disruptive. Beyond any excused tardies, your final hivemind grade will be affected by your tardiness (3 tardies = 1 absence). Speak to me in conference if you are facing unusual circumstances that effect your ability to abide by these attendance expectations.

If you miss a class, you are responsible for coming prepared to the next class. Therefore, you should consult the course schedule and/or another student (not me!) before the next class meeting and make arrangements to pick up missed handouts, key announcements, or assignments. (Get notes from a fellow student.)

*If you participate in a university-sponsored event (music, theater, field trip, or athletics), you must provide me with documentation from an appropriate authority.

Accommodations

are available; I am happy to do what I can to make this course as productive for you as possible. For this course, that may mean making our facilities available to you outside of class. Simply let me know if you'd like me to do so. Also realize, if disabilities are at play, appropriate documentation regarding a student's disability is necessary to obtain any reasonable accommodation or support service. See the statement on Student Disability Services below.

Participation

is necessary and expected on multiple levels (See COURSE STRUCTURE PAGE on Course Wiki). I do not structure my courses as lectures; instead collaboration is integral to learning. Also, I try to incorporate material that is new to me so that we have a chance to work through it together, but that places responsibility on each of us to contribute. It should go without saying that I place a high value on constructive participation—as stated clearly on the assessment page, all students are expected to actively engage in classroom discussions and our collective efforts to archive our knowledge on our Course Blog.

Privacy

is an increasingly important issue, and I'm mindful that you may not wish to place unfinished work online. The course supplement page and our course blog are therefore private--only members are allowed to see it, much less edit it. Similarly, while I may not make these options explicit in every case, it is easily possible to submit assignments and to complete this course without doing anything that will compromise your privacy. If you have concerns with regard to privacy, I encourage you to speak with me. No grades will ever be published in public forum.

Relevant University Policies

Writing Requirement (WR)--This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing. For more information, see: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggordon.html>

Statement on Student Disability Services--The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Statement on Harassment--UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>

Statement on Academic Dishonesty--All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/scer/honorcodes/honorcode.php>