English 104: Rhetoric in Popular Culture:  DWE -1515 TTH 2:30-3:50pm

Instructor: Josh Henry (george.henry@uwaterloo.ca) Office: PAS 2224, Office Hours: TTH 4:00-4:30pm

Course Description:

This course examines the role of persuasion in contemporary society by focusing on one or more topic areas including (but not necessarily limited to) movies, television, music videos, and fashion. We will explore the topic areas in as much depth as possible using a variety of rhetorical theories and methods.

Learning Objectives and Goals:

The goals of this course are to both understand the rhetorical methods needed for analysis as well as to begin to apply those methods in order to understand how pop-culture functions rhetorically. Throughout the course, students will be expected to demonstrate what they are learning through class discussions, exams, and essays. By the end of the course, students will be expected to successfully demonstrate the following skills:

- To define and explain basic concepts involving rhetoric, rhetorical analysis, and popular culture
- To apply these definitions in a close reading of a pop culture artifact for the purpose of critical discussion and debate
- To analyze how a particular artifact operates rhetorically through its ideas, structure, arguments, style, content, and context
- To articulate a rhetorical analysis of a particular artifact in terms of the rhetorical methods discussed in class, integrating research to justify and support an argument

Course Materials:


Assignments and Evaluation:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short Writing Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>(4 at 5% each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Feb 14th (in-class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Due last day of class (Apr 4th)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Date TBD (2.5 hrs- exam week)</td>
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Short Writing Assignments: Worth 5% each, (Three) 2-3 page typed or hand written responses to any class material (readings, artifacts, or class discussions). Essay format is not required. These three SWAs should be thought of and approached as journal entries in which the student responds to class content in such a way as to generate ideas for the term paper. Prompts will be provided but may be ignored. For full credit, no more than one may be done per week and all three must be turned in by the end of week 10. Due by the end of week 11 (March 28th), SWA #4 is a 2-page term paper proposal to include your chosen cultural artifacts, a research question, potential thesis, and a bibliography.
Term Paper: (7-9 pages, 12 point, Double-spaced, Times New Roman, MLA format) Referencing the theories discussed and applying the tools acquired during the course of the term, each student shall write an in-depth critical analysis of one or a small group of pop-culture artifacts. More specific details will come forth and be discussed as the term progresses.

Schedule:

Week 1: (Jan 8-10) General Introduction
Week 2: (Jan 15-17) Brummett Chapter 1
Week 3: (Jan 22-24) Brummett Chapters 1 & 2
Week 4: (Jan 29-31) Brummett Chapter 2 & 3
Week 5: (Feb 5-7) Brummett Chapter 3
Week 6: (Feb 12-14) Finish Brummett Chapters 1-3 & Review; (Mid-Term Feb 14th)
Week 7: (Feb 26-28) The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy
Week 8: (March 5-7) Singin’ in the Rain; Media-Centered Criticism—Brummett Chapter 5
Week 9: (March 12-14) Marxist & Feminist Criticism—Brummett Chapters 4 & 5
Week 10: (March 19-21) Visual & Culture-Centered Criticism—Brummett Chapter 4
Week 11: (March 26-28) Psychoanalytic & Dramatistic/Narrative Crit.—Brummett Chapters 4 & 5
Week 12: (April 2-4) Review (Term Papers due April 4th)

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71. Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70. In addition, consult http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes for the Faculty of Arts’ grievance processes. Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Appeals, http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72.