1891COMM 202 – Methods in Rhetorical Criticism

Course Syllabus and Schedule | Fall 2022

## Contact Information and Virtual Office Hours

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Office Hours - Tuesday/Thursday 1pm-2pm or by appointment

Louise Pound Hall 371

https://unl.zoom.us/j/2537322032

## ****Required Texts****

Kuypers, J.A. (2021). *Rhetorical Criticism: Perspectives in Action*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishing, 978-1-5381-3814-4

Supplemental readings provided on Canvas

## ****Mission of the Department of Communication Studies****

The mission of the faculty and students of the Department of Communication Studies is to examine human symbolic activity as it shapes and is shaped by relationships, institutions, technology, and culture.  This work concerns the creation, analysis, and critique of messages ranging from face-to-face to digital media contexts.  The department’s research and teaching devote particular attention to scholarly initiatives aimed at understanding and explaining the role of communication in (a) facilitating civic engagement, mediating public controversies, and organizing for social change, (b) constituting individual and family health, promoting healthy behaviors, and helping persons navigate relational challenges, and (c) creating, maintaining, and challenging personal, social, and community identity in a complex and diverse world.

## Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Department of Communication Studies is committed to achieving inclusive excellence as outlined by the university’s [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](https://diversity.unl.edu/diversity-home). As communication scholars and teachers, we believe communities and relationships are enriched when we give voice and value to diverse perspectives based on  “group and social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, indigeneity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, and [(dis)ability](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.accessiblesociety.org_topics_demographics-2Didentity_dkaplanpaper.htm&d=DwMGaQ&c=Cu5g146wZdoqVuKpTNsYHeFX_rg6kWhlkLF8Eft-wwo&r=RFKwJPdq0RWaz8f8toQHZAA0nQqJS1atEtkKU2O4lFHjP8ofiztzf_y03_3kVD7A&m=XK1RFliLFYX8hVpFqsUpYheC0p4jq7gsKrfLNk2Hzlg&s=JPTf5c5CKJStzrDm8Vy7-xvHyOk99aU6xm1KLh2Vbww&e=)), historically underrepresented populations, and cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations.” We are committed to continual reflection and refinement of curriculum, scholarly endeavors, and community engagement to achieve goals of inclusiveness and equal opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to discuss these with your instructors, the Chair of the department ([Dr. Jody Koenig Kellas](https://comm.unl.edu/jody-koenig-kellas)), members of the department’s [Committee on Diversity and Inclusion](https://comm.unl.edu/committees), or the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

## Course Description

This course is designed as a survey course of a variety of applicable rhetorical research and criticism methods. The primary goal of this course is to ensure students in the Communication Studies major have the necessary methods for research and analysis required for upper division courses in the department.

## ****Course Objectives****

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

* Distinguish between rhetorical criticism and other methods of criticism in the academy.
* Identify and distinguish between basic rhetorical criticism methods
* Evaluate and judge appropriate rhetorical methods for use in analysis.
* Examine a rhetorical artifact using the principles, methods, and tools of the discipline

## Course Expectations, Policies, & Procedures

## Readings, Participation, and Classroom Etiquette

As a student, your responsibility is to read the assigned material prior to class, completed the assigned quiz, outline, or reading reflection prior to attending class. Classroom experiences contribute positively to the university learning environment and so you are expected to participate in discussion in a way that is respectful of others’ perspectives and experiences. This course is designed to deal with difficult and often problematic material. As adults and students in a university environment, I expect every student to approach the material in a critical, scholarly, and responsible manner. The purpose of the class is to provide you with the tools necessary to examine and analyze a brutal, violent, and often extremely anxiety-inducing world. We will not shy away from difficult discussions, rather we will seek them out and as your instructor, I need your assistance to take this journey. Understanding that the content can be difficult to confront at times, I will do my best to provide trigger warnings and content warnings for any material deemed sensitive or violent. If I do not meet your expectations in this regard, please let me know directly so that I can remedy the situation.

## Attendance/Engagement

Attendance, engagement, and participation in class are essential to success in this course. You are expected to attend every class period. Lectures will not be recorded but Power Points of the lectures will be posted on Canvas prior to the start of class. If you are unable to attend class due to illness or other conflict, reach out as soon as you are able and provide me with documentation supporting your inability to attend the class. If the absence is excused, you will be allowed to make up the work within seven days of the original due date. Remember that while health and safety are priorities for me in the classroom, University policy supersedes any desire on my part to provide extenuating flexibility outside of specifically designated exceptions. If you feel that either the course or University policy prevents you from succeeding in this course, please contact me directly and we can work to find an accommodation.

## Netiquette: Communication Courtesy Code

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, discussions, and chats. If I deem any of them to be inappropriate or offensive, I will first schedule a time to meet with the student to discuss the issue, then if the issue is not resolved I forward the message to the Chair of the department and appropriate action will be taken. The same rules apply online as they do in person. Be respectful of other students. Foul discourse will not be tolerated.

## Office Hours/Appointments

As an instructor, I have always enjoyed helping my students succeed in my courses. To do this the best I can, I require that all students email me prior to attending my office hours with information regarding the time in which they will be coming in and the information/questions that they are wanting to discuss. With these two pieces of information I will be better able to prepare for our meeting, which subsequently will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of it. While office hours are maintained weekly, I am also available for appointments that are outside of the stated office hours. Should you want to schedule an appointment with me, email me and provide me with the information/questions you are wanting to discuss. Please remember that my time, like yours, is very important so please show up on time and prepared.

## Student Concerns and Feedback

Your experience with remote learning in this course is important to me. If you have questions, concerns, or positive feedback, please contact me at [jkirk11@unl.edu](mailto:jkirk11@unl.edu). If I am unable to respond, or you feel I've not adequately addressed your concerns, you can contact my direct supervisor, Department Chair Jody Kellas at [jkellas2@unl.edu](mailto:jkellas2@unl.edu). If your concern is still not resolved, please contact[june.griffin@unl.edu](mailto:june.griffin@unl.edu).

## Assignment Turn In

All assignments must be submitted through Canvas as explained in each assignment description. Assignments will not be accepted via email or any other format. All assignments will automatically be run through TurnItIn to be screened for plagiarism. It is your responsibility to use Canvas effectively to turn in your assignments and to ensure that your assignment is properly submitted before the assignment due date according to course specifications. **PLEASE NOTE: Your assignments MUST be Microsoft Word documents or PDFs.** If you are saving your assignments on your MAC, you must add the .doc or .docx file extension to your document in order for it to be accepted.

## Late Assignments

All assignments are due prior to class on the day assigned unless otherwise specified. Please check canvas regularly for changes to any assignment requirements, including due dates. Due to the nature of this course, falling behind on assignments will make it difficult for you to succeed in the class. If you turn in an assignment late, you will receive a 20% penalty on the final score (For example, if you scored an 80 on the assignment worth 100 points, you would receive a 20% reduction, or 16 points, resulting in a 64 final grade.) Any assignments not received by 7 days after the initial due date will not be accepted.

## Accommodations

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

## Course Credit

Please note that Communication Studies majors must earn a grade of ‘C’ or better to receive credit for the course. All assignments and exams must be completed in order to earn a ‘C’ or better in the course. The Department of Communication Studies “Grading and Grade Appeals” policy document is linked to the department’s website: https://comm.unl.edu/forms-andpolicies. Students are encouraged to discuss their progress with me anytime throughout the semester. Please visit me during my office hours or make an appointment for discussing grades rather than before or after class.

## Incompletes

Incomplete grades are rarely assigned in this class. Please plan to complete all work for the course within the semester you are taking it. In the event, you experience circumstances that you see as potentially warranting an incomplete, please note that you must have completed at least 75% of the work in the course and you must approach me before the last week of classes with a proposal for completion of the work.

## 24/7 Rule

Given the role of grading in the teaching and learning process, it is vital that students actively review their feedback and stay engaged in the process throughout the semester. If you have a question or concern about feedback and/or the grade on a particular assignment, you are expected to take 24 hours from the time of receiving the feedback to consider it and determine how you can incorporate it into your understanding moving forward. If, after considering the feedback in depth, you have continued questions about the assessment, you should address those questions with me within 7 days of receiving the feedback to ensure a productive conversation and the opportunity to learn from the feedback and assessment as they move forward in the class.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and grounds for university action. According to the University’s Undergraduate Bulletin (2013-2014), plagiarism is considered an act of Academic Dishonesty and is defined as, but not limited to “Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting examinations, theses, reports, speeches, drawings, laboratory notes or other academic work in whole or in part as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person.” Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given an “F” grade and may be grounds for failing the course. It is the policy of the Department of Communication Studies to file a report with the Dean of Students for any infraction (no matter how minor it may seem). It is your responsibility as a student to familiarize yourself with and adhere to these guidelines (see http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code for the university policies and descriptions of all academic dishonesty and http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/integrity#plagiarism for helpful tips on avoiding plagiarism). It is my responsibility to report any cases of cheating or plagiarism to the administration. All assignments must be your own original work and must be prepared specifically for this course. For all written assignments, I expect you to cite your sources according to the 6th edition of the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Style Manual. More importantly, be very clear when you are quoting vs. paraphrasing sources. *The use of any uncited sources, using someone else’s words or ideas without quoting, using falsified sources, or turning in work that is not yours and/or is not original for this course will result in immediate failure of the course and a referral to the appropriate campus authorities.* Claiming academic ignorance about standards for writing is not an acceptable excuse for plagiarism committed.

## Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same accountability and the same support applied to offenses against other protected categories; such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, UNL offers several resources for reporting and support (https://www.unl.edu/equity/title-ix). Located in Canfield Administration 128, Tami Strickman is UNL's Title IX coordinator. Her contact number is 402- 472-3417. In the Student Union, Jan Deeds runs the Women's Center and is supervisor of PREVENT (the on campus student organization aimed toward sexual assault awareness and bystander intervention). Her contact information is jdeeds1@unl.edu, and 402-472-2598. Also located in the Student Union, Voices of Hope provides support in answering questions and guidance in reporting options. Please find the many resources offered by Voices of Hope at http://involved.unl.edu/gender/advocate. Additional support is offered through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) located in the University Health Center on the second floor. The contact number for CAPS is 402-472-7450. In addition, be aware that as the director of the debate program at the University, I am a mandatory Title IX reporter and will report any incidents I am made aware of that rise to the level of a reportable incident.

## Resources for International Students

[ESL Support Lab](https://www.unl.edu/piesl/esl-support-lab)

[Intensive English Program](https://global.unl.edu/english/)

[Academic Success Program](https://www.unl.edu/piesl/academic-support)

[OASIS](https://www.unl.edu/oasis/academic-success-and-intercultural-services)

[Academic Mentoring/Coaching for International Students: First Year Experience Team](http://success.unl.edu/international)

[International Peer Mentors](http://success.unl.edu/international#mentors)

[Writing Center](http://www.unl.edu/writing/home)

# ****Assignments, Grading, and Schedule****

## ****Assignments****

**Reading** - All course readings will be from the Sheckels textbook and readings provided on canvas. The supplemental readings are primary source material from the rhetorical tradition and are thus much more difficult and dense than a typical textbook chapter. Please be sure to read these carefully.

**Analysis** – You will complete 10 rhetorical analysis assignments during the course of the semester. These are designed to familiarize you with the application of rhetorical analysis strategies to particular texts.

**Exam** – You will take one final exam in this course that will ask you to synthesize the materials covered in the course. The exam will be a mix of short answer and essay questions.

**Analysis paper** – you will turn in one papers over the course of the semester. You will select a rhetorical artifact and provide a 7-10 page criticism using one of the methods discussed in class. Rubric will be provided on canvas.

## ****Grading****

12 Analysis outlines – 10 points each – 120 total points

Term Paper – 200 points

Exam – 100 points

Attendance and Participation – 100 points

## ****Letter Grade Equivalence****

486-500 = A+

451-485 = A

436-450 = B+

401-435 = B

386-400 = C+

351-385 = C

<351 = F

# Course Schedule

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|  |  | Topic | Readings | Due |
| UNIT 1 | 23-Aug | Syllabus Day Introduction to Rhetoric and its Methods |  |  |
| 25-Aug | What is Rhetoric? | Kuypers - Chs 1 &2 |  |
| 30-Aug | What is Rhetorical Criticism? | Kuypers - Ch 3 |  |
| 1-Sep | Rhetorical Criticism in Practice (Jen Mercieca) | Kuypers - Appendix D | Analysis #1 |
| 6-Sep | Understanding Rhetorical Situations | Kuypers - Ch 4 |  |
| 8-Sep | Barriers and Advantages in Situational Rhetoric |  | Analysis #2 |
| 13-Sep | Generic Approaches to Criticism | Kuypers - Ch 5 |  |
| 15-Sep | Pros and Cons of Genre Criticism | Kuypers - Appendix A | Analysis #3 |
| UNIT 2 | 20-Sep | Traditional Rhetorical Criticism | Kuypers - Ch 6 | Term Paper - Artifacts for Study Due |
| 22-Sep | Close Textual Analysis | Kuypers - Ch 7 | Analysis #4 |
| 27-Sep | Metaphoric Criticism | Kuypers - Ch 8 |  |
| 29-Sep | Narrative Criticism | Kuypers - Ch 9 | Analysis #5 |
| 4-Oct | Dramatism and the Pentad | Kuypers - Ch 10 |  |
| 6-Oct | Kenneth Burke and Symbol-making creatures | Burke - Canvas | Analysis #6 |
| 11-Oct | **No Class - Personal** | | Term Paper - Descriptive Analysis Due |
| 13-Oct | Feminist Criticism | Kuypers - Ch 11 |  |
| 18-Oct | **Fall Break - No Class** | | |
| 20-Oct | Queer Criticism | Manning - Canvas | Analysis #7 |
| 25-Oct | Ideographic Criticism | Kuypers - Ch 12 |  |
| 27-Oct | Post-Colonial Criticism | Hasian - Canvas | Term Paper - Annotated Bibliography Due |
| 1-Nov | Criticism of Race and Racism | Royster - Canvas | Analysis #8 |
| 3-Nov | Psychoanalytic Criticism | Frosh - Canvas |  |
| 8-Nov | Affect Criticism | Mateus - Canvas | Analysis #9 |
| UNIT 3 | 10-Nov | Eclectic Criticism | Kuypers - Ch 13 |  |
| 15-Nov | Visual Rhetoric | Kuypers - Ch 14 | Term Paper - Outline Due |
| 17-Nov | Pop Culture and Social Media Criticism | Kuypers - Ch 15 | Exam Distributed |
| 22-Nov | **No Class - Personal** | | Analysis #10 |
| 24-Nov | **Thanksgiving** | |  |
| 29-Nov | Digital Rhetorics | Kuypers - Ch 16 | Analysis #11 |
| 1-Dec | Critical Rhetorics | Kuypers - Ch 17 |  |
| 6-Dec | Paper Workshop |  | Analysis #12 |
| 8-Dec | Paper Workshop |  | **Exam and Final Paper Due** |