

**FRPG 187G READING CONTEMPORARY MEDIA
FORD COLLEGE, FALL 2009**

**10:10-11:40 T Th Atwood 003
1:15-2:45 M Hepburn 011 (Exoo)
1:15-2:45 M Richardson 302 (Grant)**

Faculty

Fred Exoo Office Hours:	Government By appointment	Hepburn 103	5219
Kerry Grant Office Hours:	English By appointment	Richardson 203	5176

RC

College Assistants

Amanda Mooney acmoon08@stlawu.edu Lee 366 Tel. 6129
Danielle Roslevich dmros109@stlawu.edu; Lee 267 Tel. 6083.

Mentor

Rachael Snow x6471 cell 315 225 2216 rmsnow06@stlawu.edu

As a mentor, Rachael is trained to assist you in writing, oral communication, and research. She can help you brainstorm about ideas for an assignment, rehearse a presentation, narrow your thesis for a paper, strengthen your argument and organization in an essay, or work on stylistic and grammatical problems. Her job is *to help you learn how to do these things yourself*. She is a tutor, not your personal editor! You are free to consult with Rachael during her office hours and at her convenience. You must schedule tutorials with Rachael in advance: she cannot accommodate last-minute requests before an assignment is due. Every week, we will circulate the appointment sign-up sheet for tutorials. If your seminar leader decides that you would need assistance from Rachael, he will ask you to schedule a conference with her. It is your responsibility to make the appointment with her and to appear at the time you have reserved.

Course Description

We live out our lives immersed in the products of various mass media--advertising, movies, newspapers and news broadcasts--and much of the time we allow the huge volume of information generated by the media to wash over us without critical reflection, often unconsciously adopting the norms and assumptions that shape media products. The aim of this course is to help you to develop a more analytical role in relation to these products. By examining both the economic circumstances that govern media production and the actual content of various kinds of media, you will learn to become a more active consumer of the images and messages that shape the way you live.

Requirements and Grading

Written work (50%)

1. The first formal assignment calls for an analysis of an advertisement, using the theoretical tools developed from the readings and discussions.
2. In the second assignment, you'll analyze a film using concepts from assigned reading, class discussion and library research.
3. In the third piece, you will be comparing mainstream press election coverage with the coverage afforded in the alternative press. This essay will serve to develop library skills and to emphasize some of the formal requirements of academic writing.

Each of these pieces will undergo revision on the basis of feedback from a variety of sources, including faculty, peers, the mentor, and the WORD Studio (see below). Deadlines for the submission of drafts and rewrites are firm, and failure to meet those deadlines will be reflected in the grade for each assignment.

In addition to these formal assignments, you will be asked throughout the semester to write informally in response to the readings and films. These pieces will receive a check, a check plus, or a check minus notation, indicating satisfactory, superior, or unsatisfactory completion of the assignment. Consistently unsatisfactory work will result in a reduction in your final grade.

Presentations (20%)

1. As a member of a small group, you will be asked to identify as a target some aspect of the dominant culture and then to help create an advertisement that satirizes the assumptions behind your target. In your presentation, you will explain the conceptual underpinnings of your advertisement, indicating the mechanisms by which it achieves its satiric effect.
2. As a group, you'll be asked to choose a film and to analyze it, describing for the class both what the film has to say and how it says it. In making your analysis, be sure to employ concepts introduced in the reading and in class.

Each presentation will be rehearsed and critiqued prior to its live performance.

Final Exam (20%)

The final will cover the entire semester's work.

Participation (10%)

We assume that you will do all the reading, that you will be fully engaged in discussions, that you will meet all deadlines, and that you will conduct yourself as a responsible member of the college community. Failure to do so will result in a reduction in this portion of your grade.

Policies

Attendance

You are expected to be present at the beginning of each class session. A total of three absences is allowed for emergencies. **Any** absence beyond this limit will result in a reduction in your final grade.

Academic Honesty

Your signed acknowledgment of the Academic Honor Code will be placed in your permanent student file. The Academic Honor Code cited below was designed by students and approved by the elected student government, the Thelomathesian Society, on February 26, 1992.

All students at St. Lawrence University are bound by honor to maintain the highest level of academic integrity. By virtue of membership in the St. Lawrence community, every student accepts the responsibility to know the rules of academic honesty, to abide by them at all times, and to encourage all others to do the same.

Responsibility for avoiding behavior or situations from which academic dishonesty may be inferred rests entirely with the students. Students should be sure to learn from faculty what is expected as their own work and how the work of other people should be acknowledged.

Academic Dishonesty, according to the *Student Handbook*: includes any dishonest conduct in connection with any academic (including research) course, program, or work.

1. It is assumed that all work submitted for credit is done by the student unless the instructor gives specific permission for collaboration.
2. Cheating on examinations and tests consists of knowingly giving or using, or attempting to use unauthorized assistance during examinations or tests.
3. Dishonesty in work outside of examinations and tests consists of handing in for credit as original work that which is **not** original, where originality is required.
4. Falsifying research methods, data, and/or results constitutes academic dishonesty.

The following constitute examples of academic dishonesty:

a) *Plagiarism*: Presenting as one's own work the work of another person—words, ideas, data, evidence, thoughts, information, organizing principles, or style of presentation — without proper attribution. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without

acknowledgment by quotation marks, footnotes, endnotes, or other indices of reference (cf. Joseph F. Trimmer, *A Guide to MLA Documentation*).

- b) Handing in false data, reports or results in connection with any research project or experiment.
- c) Handing in a book report on a book one has not read.
- d) Falsification of attendance records of a laboratory or other class meeting.
- e) Supplying information to another student knowing that such information will be used in a dishonest way.
- f) Submission of work (papers, journal abstracts, etc.) which has received credit in a previous course to satisfy the requirement(s) of a second course without the knowledge and permission of the instructor of the second course.
- g) The above list is not exhaustive. In the event there is a question as to whether alleged conduct falls within the scope of the Academic Honor Code, the vice president and dean of academic affairs' determination shall be final.

Claims of ignorance and academic or personal pressure are unacceptable as excuses for academic dishonesty. Students must learn what constitutes one's own work and how the work of others must be acknowledged." (*St. Lawrence University 2007–2008 Student Handbook*, pp. 149–154.)

All intentional and unintentional acts of academic dishonesty may result in disciplinary action. Recommendations of disciplinary action may include a failing grade on the work in question, a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension from the University, or expulsion from the University.

More information on academic integrity, including the Academic Honor Council's Constitution, can be found at: www.stlawu.edu/acadaffairs/academicintegrity.htm. For information about academic integrity or the Academic Honor Council issues, contact the Dean's Office at x5993.

Readings and Films

(From SLU Bookstore)

Diana Hacker

A Pocket Style Manual, 5th edition (2008)

Colson Whitehead

Apex Hides the Hurt (2006)

(Readings on Angel)

Lance Bennett

News: The Politics of Illusion

Jonathan Bignell

"Signs and Myths." "Advertisements."

David Croteau and William Hoynes

Media Society

Edward J. Epstein

The Big Picture

Calvin F. Exoo

The Politics of the Mass Media

Calvin F. Exoo

The Pen and the Sword

Henry Giroux

“Private Satisfactions and Public Disorders:
Fight Club, Patriarchy, and the Politics of
Masculine Violence”

Douglas Kellner

“Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism and
Media Culture”

Robert McChesney

The Problem of the Media

Stephen Papson

“Green Marketing and the Commodity Self”

Lynn M. Ta

“Hurt So Good: *Fight Club*, Masculine
Violence, and the Crisis of Capitalism.”

Andrew Wernick

“Advertising As Ideology”

(Websites)

<http://classes.yale.edu/film-analysis/>

<http://www.greenwashingindex.com/>

(Films)

David Fincher

Fight Club

Courtney Hunt

Frozen River

Christopher Nolan

The Dark Knight

Peyton Reed

The Break-Up

Schedule

Monday, Aug 24

Plenary (8.30)

Welcome to Ford College

Thursday, Aug 27

Introduction.

Monday, Aug. 31

Plenary

Read Kellner, “Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism and Media Culture”

Tuesday, Sept 1

The political economy of advertising

Thursday, Sept. 3

Read Bignell “Signs and Myths” and “Advertisements”

Friday, Sept. 4

Due in Angel drop-box by 4 p.m. Each of you should write a two-page description of the analysis conducted by your group on Thursday.

Monday, Sept. 7

Seminar

Writing workshop. Peer editing of analysis paper.

Tuesday, Sept 8

Read Wernick, "Advertising As Ideology." Due: summary of Wernick.

Thursday, Sept. 10

Read Papson, "Green Marketing and the Commodity Self." Greenwashing. Review greenwashing index: <http://www.greenwashingindex.com/> Due: Each group should bring to class an example of an advertisement that relies on green marketing and be prepared to discuss the extent to which greenwashing is present.

Friday, Sept. 11

Due: Two-page write-up of analysis of green marketing ad. Your paper should include a works cited page, in MLA format, citing the Papson article and the greenwashing website.

Monday, Sept. 14

Seminar

Writing workshop.

Discuss unit I presentations

Tuesday, Sept 15

Discuss unit I paper

Thursday, Sept. 17

Apex Hides the Hurt

Monday, Sept. 21

Seminar

Discussion of plans for unit I presentations. Each group should be prepared to discuss preliminary ideas for the presentation.

Tuesday, Sept 22

Due: first draft of unit I paper

Apex Hides the Hurt

Thursday, Sept. 24

No class

Monday, Sept. 28

Seminar

Discuss unit I drafts

Tuesday, Sept. 29

Rehearse Unit I presentations

Thursday Oct. 1

Presentations

Monday, Oct. 5.

Plenary

Presentations. Yale film site: <http://classes.yale.edu/film-analysis/> Due: Final draft of unit I paper.

Tuesday, Oct 6

Yale film site. The political economy of the movies. Read Epstein. Due: outline of the reading. View *High Noon* on Tues. or Wed. evening.

Thursday Oct 8

Formula film. Read Exoo, *Mass Media* pp.145-174. Due: 2-page answer to this question: In what ways does *High Noon* exhibit the characteristics of a Hollywood action/adventure formula film?

Monday, Oct. 12.

Editing of 2-page essay on High Noon

Tuesday Oct 13

The Dark Knight Due: 1-2 p. essay in answer to q.: In what ways does Dark Knight exemplify, or challenge, the Disguised Western formula?

Thursday Oct 15

Mid-semester break

Monday, Oct 19

Plenary

Discussion of Unit II presentation

The Break-Up

Tuesday, Oct. 20

Fight Club

Read Giroux, "Private Satisfaction and Public Disorders: *Fight Club*, Patriarchy, and the Politics of Masculine Violence"

Ta, "Hurt So Good: *Fight Club*, Masculine Violence, and the Crisis of Capitalism."

DUE: One paragraph abstract for each article.

Thursday Oct 22

Fight Club. Read Exoo, *Mass Media* pp. 172-176

Monday, Oct. 26

Seminar

Discuss plans for Unit II presentation

Tuesday Oct 27

Alternative Film *Frozen River* Read Exoo, *Mass Media* pp. 176-183

Thursday Oct. 29

Rehearse presentations

Monday, Nov. 2

Seminar

Rehearse presentations

Tuesday Nov 3

Presentations

Thursday Nov. 5

Presentations

Monday, Nov. 9

Introduction to Unit III assignment. Library resource tutorial.

Meet in Library classrooms: Exoo: Rm. 125; Grant: Rm. 140A

Tuesday Nov 10

Hegemony and the news media. Read Exoo, *Pen and Sword* Ch.1. Due: outline of reading

Thursday, Nov 12

War coverage. Read Exoo, *Pen and Sword* Chs. 2-3; due: brief outline of readings

Monday, Nov. 16

Seminar

Report on progress of Unit III assignment.

Tuesday Nov. 17

Why? Read Exoo *Pen and Sword* Ch. 6; due: outline of reading

Thursday Nov 19

Election Coverage. Read Bennett, Ch. 2; due: outline of reading

Monday, Nov. 30

Seminar

Workshop on assignment III. Come to seminar with examples to share of the kind of news coverage you're discovering, and be prepared to explain their significance.

Tuesday Dec. 1

Alternative Press, Internet, Global News; Reading TBA; due: outline of reading

Thursday Dec 3

Government and the media; media reform. Read Croteau and Hoynes, Ch. 3; due: outline of reading

Monday, Dec. 7

Seminar

Peer edit drafts of paper. Bring 4 copies of your draft.

Tuesday Dec 8

Report research findings; due: final draft of Unit III paper.

Thursday Dec 10

Report research findings

First-Year Program Philosophy and Goals 2009-10

A residentially-based, interdisciplinary first-year program is an ideal environment for beginning the four-year process of developing the complex intellectual and social skills that are at the heart of a liberal education and the habits of considered values and engaged citizenship that such an education should produce. The First-Year Program (FYP) and First-Year Seminar (FYS) are the core of our institutional commitment to improving your ability to engage in critical inquiry and research, to design and deliver written, spoken and/or visual texts that demonstrate rhetorical sensitivity, and to be sophisticated readers, listeners, and viewers of the texts of others. We believe that these same competencies can help develop your ability to communicate across differences (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, political views) as you find ways to live and learn together in the residence halls and as engaged and ethically reflective citizens both during and after your college years. These goals should be understood as the first step in our work with you over a four-year process of helping you to meet the University's Aims and Objectives.

We hope to help you see that writing, speaking, research, and interacting with others are rhetorical endeavors. Effective communicators are, by definition, rhetorically sensitive. Rhetorical sensitivity means understanding that all communication, whether formal or informal, involves having to make choices about your messages, whether written, spoken, or visual. To become an effective communicator, you need to recognize that the creation of a meaningful and powerful message involves both a creator and an audience, and that therefore the voice you adopt

in your communication, and the audience you imagine yourself communicating to, matter a great deal in creating your message. The choices you make in writing and speaking are central in determining how people read and hear your voice. Becoming conscious and reflective about those choices, and their ethical dimensions, is a central goal of the FYP and FYS.

Working with you so that you become more rhetorically sensitive means that you should be increasingly able to assess the requirements of a particular task and make intentional decisions about which mode or modes of communication and inquiry would be most effective in addressing it. To do so, you must develop specific writing, speaking, research, and technological competencies. To accomplish these goals, the FYP and FYS will present you with assignments that ask you to engage in a process that involves **recognizing** the rhetorical situation, **planning** communication strategies to address the task at hand, **composing and presenting** the message, and then engaging in **critical assessment** of your own work and that of others. The results of that assessment process will allow you to rethink, restructure, and revise your work. We further recognize that this process is not linear and that the effective creation of texts requires that you move back and forth among these four elements of the message creation process. This is why we require that your writing and speaking assignments be “projects” that include preparatory exercises and multiple drafts or rehearsals, all of which ask you to continue to reflect critically on the choices you have made in constructing your message.

This process of increased rhetorical awareness and skill development is at the heart of the philosophical and pedagogical perspectives that inform the work of the FYP and FYS. Because this process both transcends and integrates a variety of specific skills, the program has a philosophical commitment to designing assignments that ask you to integrate various modes of communication in furtherance of the higher-level rhetorical goals in which they are situated.

To ensure that the program is meeting its stated goals, all FYP and FYS syllabi are read by other faculty in the program to determine if they include a variety of assignments that forward the writing, speaking, research, and literacy goals of the program. All FYP and FYS courses have to be approved by faculty in the program before they are offered.

The WORD Studio

The Munn Center for Rhetoric and Communication maintains The WORD Studio in ODY Library—a place to get feedback from peers on assignments in Writing, Oral communication, Research, and Design of visual projects. You can come for a consultation to plan a paper or presentation (you don’t need anything but a blank piece of paper!); to find ways to improve the ideas, organization, and style of a draft; to videotape and review a presentation rehearsal; to practice a PowerPoint presentation, and more.

Peer tutors are not proofreaders or editors who silently “fix” your work for you; instead, they are trained to have a conversation with you about ways you can fix problem areas yourself and become better overall communicators. You may use The WORD Studio for consultations on assignments for any of your courses, although for FYP assignments you should first seek out your course mentor during his or her office hours.

The WORD Studio is open Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; and Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. You may also IM the Studio during regular hours with quick questions about grammar, citation, and style: *SLUword*.

