

CMST GRADUATE BULLETIN

Department of Communication Studies

Fall 2019

CMST 4107: Communication as Culture

Ashley Mack, MW 12:30-1:50pm, 248 Woodin Hall

This class introduces students to a cultural studies approach to studying communication. Such an approach emphasizes a radically interdisciplinary way of exploring how cultural processes and artifacts are produced, shaped, distributed, consumed, and responded to in diverse ways. Through discussion, research and writing, class members investigate these varied dimensions of culture; and learn to understand them in their broader social, aesthetic, ethical, and political contexts. This course introduces students to the analytical techniques and interpretive strategies commonly employed in cultural studies, and reviews the basic concepts that inform cultural studies approaches, including: conjuncture, articulation, ideology, power, agency, identity, resistance, and representation. We will ask questions about how power informs or reflects various cultural practices, images, and the stories these items tell. We will also examine how cultural artifacts such as advertisements, digital images, television, icons, propaganda, artistic expressions, literature, and architecture are produced, consumed, and appropriated.

CMST 4114: Contemporary Theories of Communication

Renee Edwards, MWF 10:30-11:30am, 112 Audobon Hall

There is nothing so practical as a good theory (loosely paraphrased from Kurt Lewin)! This class considers what theories are and how to evaluate and classify them before delving into specific interpretive and scientific theories including Relational Dialectics, Standpoint Theory, Uncertainty Reduction Theory, and the Elaborated Likelihood Model.

CMST 4142.01: Selected Topics in Performance Studies (Performing Protest)

Serap Erincin, MW 4:30-5:50pm, 137 Coates Hall

In this course you will conceptualize, devise, direct, and perform solo or collaborative pieces that we will broadly consider as protest performance. We will experiment with how individual experiences and imagination can become material for works of art while maintaining broader social and political themes. Through works of dance, theatre, performative writing, media and performance art and public demonstrations, artists and activists theorize and practice performance (broadly construed) as a means for protest and social justice. Artistic and social performances about racial, ethnic, and gender inequalities and conflict, state oppression and violence, and other injustices bring visibility to the issues they address. In this course, we will also engage with critical and philosophical texts that deal with protest performances, especially those concerning disenfranchised populations. We will read authors who provide theoretical frameworks, authors who pose global questions through case studies, and authors who pursue thematic approaches at the intersection of social justice and performance studies scholarship. We will also discuss protest performances, especially those by or that advocate for minorities and women. We will emphasize the transnational and cross-cultural politics of such praxis as well as the relationship between social media, technology, and communication. Finally, participants will

critically and artistically inquire into philosophical, political, or cultural questions of individual issues through their own performance. You may create a live, visual, literary, or media performance and write an artist's statement. Alternatively, you may write a 12-15 page research paper on a work or event of your choosing. You will develop several pieces of live, visual, or media art pieces throughout the semester, contribute to the class blog, and write in other capacities. This course emphasizes the relationship between theory and practice. Class meetings will be composed of a combination of lecture, discussion, in-class viewings, and student presentations/performances.

CMST 4165: History and Criticism of American (U.S.) Public Address
Stephanie Houston Grey, TBD, Online

CMST 4312: Critical Studies in Media Theory and Practice (Poetry and Video)
Patricia Suchy, TTH 12:00-1:20pm, 130 Coates Hall

This course explores the poetic in film and video in 3 overlapping senses: 1) in terms of how non-narrative films can move poetically (in form, in use of tropes--what, for example, is a rhyme or a metaphor in moving visual imagery?); 2) in terms of how film or video can represent pre-existing poems; 3) how a poem may be "written" in film or video, including how it may be installed as such in video installation art. We will screen and study examples of the poetic in moving images, including forms such as video poetry, cine-poetry, and video installation art, and including but not limited to works by Maya Deren, Bill Morrison, Bill Viola, Stan Brakhage, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Agnes Varda, et al. The course is linked with English 4007 (Writing Poetry) taught by Professor Laura Mullen. At points in the semester we will collaborate with poets enrolled in ENG 4007 on experiments in poetry and video. No prior video experience is required, but a willingness to experiment will be.

CMST 7900: Introduction to Graduate Studies in Communication Studies
David Terry, TTh 1:30-2:50pm, 218 Stubbs Hall

Provides an introduction to graduate study and is required for students declaring an emphasis in Communication Studies. The course focuses on research and writing in academia, the current landscape of Communication Studies, the research of scholars in this department, and your own place within Communication Studies. Ultimately, this class will give you the tools and vocabulary to speak to scholars inside and outside of Communication Studies who hold a range of perspectives.

CMST 7915: Research in Communication Theory
Renee Edwards, W 3:30-6:30pm, 153 Coates Hall

Are social and personal identities associated with different interpretations of messages and misunderstandings? The class will tackle this question (or a similar one) by exploring the theoretical bases for the topic and considering alternate research strategies for addressing it. Students will participate in a collaborative research project that moves from conceptual development through data collection and analysis to manuscript writing. Prior knowledge of research is not a requirement - this class is suitable for students at any stage from any area.

CMST 7946: Performance of Narrative Discourse (Bakhtin)

Patricia Suchy, T 3:00-5:50pm, 153 Coates Hall

In this course we will study the major works of the Russian philosopher, literary and cultural theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975). Despite a publication and translation history about as tortured as it gets, the influence of Bakhtin's works on narrative discourse, speech genres, Rabelasian carnival, the history of novels, and the philosophy of language and authorship has spread to a remarkable degree to the West and into various disciplines. Through their use and adaptation of his ideas, many scholars in communication studies have identified Bakhtin as a key theorist. While the seminar will often be inflected toward communication and performance studies, other disciplinary and inter-disciplinary applications and adaptations are welcome, depending upon the backgrounds and interests of the seminar participants. Our intent will be to grasp Bakhtin's ideas, but also to think *with* Bakhtin—to work in the mode of what he called “creative understanding” to see if his ideas can help us to solve problems or illuminate issues in our own research. Alongside this, we may discover how Bakhtin's ideas ask us to rethink some of our most fundamental ideas about art, unity, language, ethics, authorship, and communication. Whatever your interests are, you should emerge from this seminar with a sophisticated understanding of one of the major thinkers of the twentieth century.

CMST 7966.1: Rhetoric & Ideology

Ashley Mack, M 3:30-6:20 PM, 153 Coates Hall

In the final decades of the twentieth century, rhetorical and cultural studies scholars became increasingly concerned with the relationship between discourses and ideology. The study of ideology is the study of the production of common sense in social and political life, and the relationship of this production to the maintenance of power. Ideological discourses work to produce investments in systems of power and hierarchy (for example, white supremacy, capitalism, global imperialism, patriarchy, etc...) and are circulated through media, texts, performances, and other aspects of public life. Studying rhetoric and ideology allows critics to trace how discourses function in public life to rationalize and maintain these systems. This course explores the different theoretical conceptions of ideology and their deployment as resources in the analysis of discourses and rhetorics. We will contrast conceptions of ideological critique across classical Marxist, post-Marxist, psychoanalytic, feminist, post-structuralist, queer, postcolonial, de/colonial, and Cultural Studies. Finally, we will examine what implications these distinct critical perspectives bear on our understanding of key concepts in the study of ideology including: human agency, consciousness, hegemony, hierarchy, power, domination/oppression, and our modern social imaginary.

CMST 7966.2: Problems in Rhetorical Theory, Criticism, and History (Neoliberalism)

William Saas, Th 3:00-5:50pm, Location TBD

The object of this seminar is to equip participants with a deeper understanding of “neoliberalism” and its aesthetic, cultural, economic, geopolitical, and historical dimensions. Books and essays from scholars in several fields—including but not limited to Robert Asen (rhetorical studies), Wendy Brown (political theory), Scott Ferguson (film and media studies), Nancy Fraser (political theory), and Philip Mirowski (economics)—will provide the foundation for our inquiry. We will also, along the way, view, read, and listen to various examples of cultural production

under neoliberalism. Participants will be required to complete an article-length essay—to the specifications appropriate to their field—by semester’s end.