

Communication and Popular Culture

Fall 2017

COMS 3365.01 3 Credit Hours

Professor: Dr. Brandau

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Office : Dan Rather Bldg. 322 A

Required Course Texts

Sellnow, D. D. (2013). The rhetorical power of popular culture: Considering mediated texts. Sage: Los Angeles.

Course Objectives

This class is designed to get students to use critical thinking to examine arguments and messages presented in media texts. In this day and age, information and mediated texts are at a user's fingertips at all times. The rise of the internet, smart phones, Youtube, Twitter, television and movies on demand means that these texts are more powerful than ever in shaping our ideas and beliefs. They create, shape, and reinforce beliefs about what is normal and desirable. The goal of this class is to have students use theory to deconstruct the content of these messages and their impact.

Course Policies

1. **Attendance.** Although this is an online class, you must log in every week and participate in the class discussion boards. This is not a self paced class. There are due dates you must meet. Failure to regularly log in and participate in the class will result in a lower grade.
2. **Late Examinations.** If you miss an examination and have a **legitimate** reason for doing so, you must make it up within a reasonable time (normally 1 week or less). All arrangements for missing an examination must be made **prior** to the time the examination is scheduled. If such arrangements are not made, then no make-up

examination will be given and you will receive a zero for that examination. All make-up exams will be strictly essay.

3. **NO late assignments will be accepted.** You are responsible for turning in assignments on time. Keep up with the course activities and due dates to ensure you do not miss a deadline. **If you have problems uploading an assignment, contact the DELTA Center (936-294-2780) immediately to ensure you do not miss the due date/time. Anything that is uploaded incorrectly resulting in my not being able to view it, will result in a ZERO for that assignment.** (Do not wait until the last minute to upload your materials!!!)

4. **Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is defined as “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work” (Dictionary.com). All work must be the original composition of each student. Although you must use outside sources, you must cite them appropriately. Plagiarism will result in a zero for the assignment. Assignments will be checked for plagiarism by **any and all means available**, including electronic checking services (i.e. Turnitin.com). The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

5. **Americans with Disabilities Act.** If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students at 294-1720.

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly

confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

6. **Religious Holidays.** Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

7. **Classroom Visitors.** Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. It is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

8. **IDEA System.** Students are asked to complete an IDEA evaluation of the course and the instructor at the end of the semester. Participation is voluntary.

9. **Classroom conduct.** Free discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable.

Students are expected to read and abide by all rules and policies in the SHSU Student Handbook. The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline is found at the following link:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/documents/2016-2018%20Student%20Guidelines.pdf>

Assignments

1	25%	Exam	Discussion Boards 25%
		Exam 2	
		Exam 3	
		25%	
		25%	

Instructor's Notes

My office is in the Communication building room 212. If there is something you do not understand or need help with please come see me. I encourage you to make an appointment even if it is during office hours because I may step out of my office for a few minutes.

My office hours are tentatively scheduled as:

W 10:00- 12:00

TTh 10:00-11:00

I am in my office much more than the posted office hours if you need to see me at another time please make an appointment.

Continuation of enrollment in this course indicates acceptance of the terms and requirements of this syllabus.