

San José State University Communication Studies
COMM 149F, Rhetoric and Public Life
Class 43036, Section 1, Fall 2019
Class 47620, Section 2, Fall 2019
Area: Foundations

Instructor:	Andrew F. Wood, Professor
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Homepage:	http://www.omnitopia.com
Course website:	http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/149F/
Office hours:	Tuesday, Thursday: 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. [Sign up via Google Calendar https://goo.gl/ubKHNx - and ensure that your calendar settings reflect the correct time zone] <i>For all visits, be prepared to show your reading/classroom notes.</i>
Class days/time:	Tuesday, Thursday: 1:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. [sect 1] Tuesday, Thursday: 3:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. [sect 2]
Classroom:	HGH 225
Prerequisites:	Upper division standing

Catalog Description

Knowledge of rhetorical theory and practice as they relate to public life, democratic governance and social conflict and consensus from the classical era to contemporary times.

Succeeding in a Four-Unit Course

SJSU students are expected to spend two hours outside of class for each single hour of class time. Because this is a four-unit class, you can expect to spend a minimum of eight hours per week in addition to time spent in class and on scheduled tutorials or activities (in a regular semester). Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses.

Engagement Unit

All four-unit courses in Communication Studies include a unit of engagement. This unit of engagement is designed to enrich students' learning experiences and to facilitate student achievement of course learning outcomes. Students enrolled in four-unit courses are expected to spend 45 hours (average of three hours/week in a regular semester) outside of the classroom to complete engagement activities. [In other words, this assignment runs parallel to the entirety of the course; don't start working on this component a week the deadline.] This unit is worth 25% of the overall grade. In our class, this activity is the *Fourth-Unit Engagement Portfolio*.

Canvas [Readings] Link

Visit our course website to access Canvas materials (including most readings, located in the "Files" section):
<https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1324442/files> [sec 1] or <https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1322117/files> [sec 2]

FOUNDATIONS, Inquiry, Practice

Each course in the Department of Communication Studies primarily focuses on one of three areas: Foundations (theoretical underpinnings of the discipline), Inquiry (research in the discipline), or Practice (application of communication theories and concepts to real world contexts). COMM 149F is a Foundations course. Although the course addresses research (inquiry), and practice (application), the primary purpose of COMM 149F is to examine rhetorical foundations of public life.

Foundations Area Outcomes

This course satisfies the FOUNDATIONS area of Communication Studies learning outcomes. All FOUNDATIONS courses, including COMM 149F, share these learning outcomes:

- **Understanding Communication Theories:** Demonstrate an understanding of the major theories that have shaped the field of communication, including historical developments, ethical issues, current trends.
- **Critiquing Communication Theories:** Demonstrate the ability to discuss the strengths and limitations of theoretical perspectives on communication.

Course Goals

Within the FOUNDATIONS area, COMM 149F explores the public sphere as a rhetoric that motivates, concentrates, expands, and contracts the potential for consequential human interaction. We study the impact of various philosophical, religious, national, corporate, and technological forces upon the public sphere throughout history, but our ultimate goal is propose models of meaningful community in our own time.

Student Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this course, you will:

SLO1. Identify historical shifts in community construction and social governance from ancient times to the contemporary age. (Understanding Communication Theories)

SLO2. Understand the role of rhetoric in the maintenance and critique of social order. (Understanding Communication Theories)

SLO3. Develop and compare models for public life in a manner that demonstrates knowledge and evaluation of historical examples. (Critiquing Communication Theories)

Required Readings [In order of appearance]

- Gibson, W. (1981). The Gernsback continuum. In T. Carr (ed.), *Universe 11* (pp. 81-90). Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company. [Canvas]
- Plato. (360 BCE). *The republic* (B. Jowett, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Internet Classics Archive. [Canvas]
- More, T. (1516/1997). *Utopia*. New York, NY: Dover Thrift Edition. [Available at college bookstore. ISBN: 9780486295831]
- Winthrop, J. (1630/1838). A modell [sic] of Christian charity. *Collections of the Massachusetts historical society, 3rd series 7:31-48*. Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society. [Canvas]
- Bellamy, E. (1888/1997). *Looking backward*. New York, NY: Dover Thrift Edition. [Available at college bookstore. ISBN: 9780486290386]
- Foucault, M. (2008). Of other spaces (L. De Cauter & M. Dehaene, Trans.). In M. Dehaene & L. De Cauter (Eds.), *Heterotopia and the city: Public space in a postcivil society* (pp. 13-29). Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge. [Canvas]
- Wood, A.F. (2009). *City ubiquitous: Place, communication, and the rise of omnitopia*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press. [Canvas]
- Crockett, Z. & Zarracina, J. (2016, October 31). How the zombie represents America's deepest fears. *Vox*. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2016/10/31/13440402/zombie-political-history> [Canvas]
- Atwood, M. (1985). *The handmaid's tale*. Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/books/titles/139094233/the-handmaids-tale> [Canvas]
- Arnold-de Simine, S. (2015). The ruin as memorial—the memorial as ruin. *Performance Research, 20*(3), 94-102. [Canvas]

Assignments and Grading Policy

Unannounced Quizzes (25 points each, total of 100 points - SLO1 and SLO2): To inspire you to read and retain the material we cover in this class, I will conduct seven brief unannounced multiple-choice quizzes. Each quiz will test only that you've read and considered the reading for that day. I will only use your four top scores for this component. *Missed quizzes may not be made up.*

Contrast Paper (50 points - meets SLO 1 and SLO3): Write an original 1½ to 2-page paper that compares at least two major course readings (Book Five of Plato's *Republic*, Thomas More's *Utopia*, and/or Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*) in terms of *one* of the following dimensions: change, conflict, education, family, gender, or leadership). Your paper must include at least three brief quotations from at least two of those major readings. Additional instructions:

- Download and paperclip the gradesheet (*not rubric*): <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/gradesheet.pdf>
- Note: No APA reference sheet is required for this assignment.

Ideal Community Project (100 points - meets SLO3): Write an original 3 to 4-page paper to apply your understanding of concepts and issues explored in this class to propose an original notion of an ideal community. The paper shall draw from classroom conversations and readings to introduce and describe a site where *people work together according to a coherent ethical standard to address problems in contemporary public life*. Your setting might be a city, school, monument, recreational site, or another locale. However, your choice must be an imaginary place, entirely created by you. Additional instructions:

Sources: You will employ at least four citations from different *classroom readings* to illustrate (or serve as contrast for) your project. In this assignment, online handouts and class notes do not count as cited evidence. Moreover, I expect you to employ evidence from the entire range of course readings, not just the first texts.

Practicality: While your project is imaginary, it goes beyond our initial classroom conversations about utopias; it is not a fantasy. Your project must be a physical community whose workings are drawn from contemporary technology and social norms, even as you attempt to alter those norms. Given the brief page length, I strongly suggest that you choose a small and manageable site. Don't raise more questions than you can answer.

Organization: An effective organizational pattern might be a *tour* of your community. Ensure that each stage of your tour includes both conceptual and theoretical background and vivid description of your site. Throughout, you will include in-text references to classroom readings to provide points of comparison and contrast.

Artifact: You shall also provide some artifact, which you will present during your Ideal Community Presentation: a drawing, a map, an original song, or some other illustration of this community [nothing that involves sand, liquid, or any other messy substance, please]. Be creative. I won't grade on artistic "quality," only on the care you take to communicate your ideas in a meaningful and interesting way. Take a look at the course online art archive to see some successful examples:
<http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/149F/149artcollection.html>

Download and paperclip the gradesheet (*not rubric*): <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/gradesheet.pdf>

Note: No APA reference sheet is required for this assignment.

Ideal Community Presentation (25 points - meets SLO3): Deliver a brief (5 to 7 minute) extemporaneous summary of your Ideal Community Project. This presentation is your chance to summarize major sections of your paper and potentially share the artifact of your community. Note: You may use one 3 X 5 notecard for this activity. To ensure an efficient progression of presentations, please do not use the projector.

Midterm and Final Examinations (50 points each, 100 points in total – meets SLO1 and SLO2): These exams offer an opportunity to demonstrate through multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions your understanding of the material discussed in this class. Time permitting, I will offer a review. *Bring an 882-E Scantron and a #2 pencil.*

Fourth-Unit Engagement Portfolio (125 points – meets SLO2): Compose a five page portfolio that explains the rhetorical framing of one specific challenge to contemporary social order (eg., artificial intelligence, authoritarianism, automation, declining civility, environmental degradation, gun violence, etc.) in a manner that exceeds time and resources available to a three unit course. Your portfolio will include the following materials:

Two page summary of one utopian or dystopian novel (at least 100 pages, written in the past 30 years): Read the entire book and explain how this text frames your selected challenge. Your summary will include plot overview, relevant characters, key scenes, and at least four brief quotations meaningfully integrated into your analysis. Include an appendix of photocopies of each quoted page.

Two page summary of four additional popular culture texts (half page each): Augment your selected book with a broader constellation of texts that address your selected challenge. Ensure that each text reflects a different medium (eg., song lyrics, music video imagery, advertisement, graphic novel, video game, television show, film, etc.), and strive to highlight points of similarity and divergence between your selections.

One page synthesis: Describe how the book and your four additional popular culture texts frame your selected challenge. Organize this synthesis according to the following questions: (1) How do these texts align and diverge to *explain the nature of the challenge*? (2) Drawing solely from at least one of your selected texts, how can we hope to *address this challenge*?

Additional Notes

- Grade breakdown: 100 points for depth of analysis; 25 points for prose, mechanics, and form.
- To select your novel and related popular culture texts, play with Google Search keywords (“dystopian novels,” “songs about surveillance,” etc.) and consider scheduling a visit with a peer in the COMM Center to discuss research strategies.
- To illustrate one approach toward this assignment, consider the following example. A portfolio seeking to explore *surveillance technologies* as a challenge to contemporary social order might include the following texts:

Novel: Dave Eggers (2013) *The Circle*
Television Show: *Black Mirror* “Nosedive” episode
Song: The Police, “Every Breath You Take”
Film: *Minority Report*
Advertisement: SimpliSafe

Friendly reminder: While a well known book such as George Orwell’s *1984* might work to address issues of surveillance technologies, you would not want to make that selection for this assignment, given that the book was published more than 30 years ago.

- Do not include images in your manuscript. If you wish to add images, they can be placed in an appendix that does not contribute toward page count.
- Do not include introduction, transitions, or review sections for this assignment.
- Download and paperclip the gradesheet (**not rubric**): <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/gradesheet.pdf>
- Note: No APA reference sheet is required for this assignment.

Grading: your final grade is based on the following point system:

Quiz 1 (unannounced)	_____ out of	25 points	(5%)
Quiz 2 (unannounced)	_____ out of	25 points	(5%)
Quiz 3 (unannounced)	_____ out of	25 points	(5%)
Quiz 4 (unannounced)	_____ out of	25 points	(5%)
Midterm Exam (scheduled 10/3)	_____ out of	50 points	(10%)
Contrast Paper (due 10/17)	_____ out of	50 points	(10%)
Fourth-Unit Engagement Portfolio (due 11/7)	_____ out of	125 points	(25%)
Ideal Community Project (due 11/21)	_____ out of	100 points	(20%)
Ideal Community Presentation (due 11/26-12/5)	_____ out of	25 points	(5%)
Final Exam (12/11 for 1500 or 12/16 for 1330)	_____ out of	50 points	(10%)

Determining Your Final Grade

Your grade will be assessed on a 500-point scale:

Total		_____ out of	500 points	(100%)
A+ = 485+ points	A = 465-484 points	A- = 450-464 points		
B+ = 435-449 points	B = 415-434 points	B- = 400-414 points		
C+ = 385-399 points	C = 365-384 points	C- = 350-364 points		
D+ = 335-349 points	D = 315-334 points	D- = 300-314 points		
F = 299 and fewer points				

University Policies

The following link contains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Communication Center

The Communication Center is located in Hugh Gillis Hall 229 and is open Monday through Thursday 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Center provides support for all students interested in developing their personal and professional communication skills, and offers specialized support for those enrolled in Communication Studies courses. Services include in-person tutoring, workshops, and self-paced online modules via Canvas. Upper-division Communication Studies students staff the Center and are trained in coaching students on a variety of topics related to our department courses – including public speaking and writing. Need a quiet place in Hugh Gillis Hall to study, meet, or practice your speech? We have several rooms available. To make an appointment with one of our tutors or to reserve a break-out room go to our online appointment system (<http://mywco.com/sjsucommcenter>). More information can be found through our COMM Center website (<http://commcenter.sjsu.edu/>).

Academic Counseling Center for Excellence in the Social Sciences (ACCESS)

Clark 240, 408-924-5363, <http://www.sjsu.edu/access/>

All COSS students and interested students are invited to stop by the Center for general education advising, help with changing majors, academic policy related questions, meeting with peer advisors, and/or attending various regularly scheduled presentations and workshops. Call or email for an appointment, or just stop by.

Library Liaison

The Communication Studies Department encourages vigorous and ethical research as part of information literacy for all of its students. For assistance with research or questions about the library, use the Communication Research Guide available at <https://libguides.sjsu.edu/communication> and/or email: Marci.Hunsaker@sjsu.edu, the Communication Studies Library Liaison. For additional assistance: 1) Visit: Go to the King Library 1st Floor Desk and ask for a librarian 2) Phone: 408-808-2300 (ask for a Librarian) and 3) Chat. For a chat link and other information about contacting librarians, see: Ask a Librarian (<https://library.sjsu.edu/ask-librarian/ask-librarian>).

Classroom Protocol

Student Conduct: It is your responsibility to know what constitutes improper behavior at San José State University. This information can be found in the SJSU university catalog and on this website:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/Students/>. Sanctions for improper behavior can include removal from the class.

Attendance: In this class, we will frequently discuss issues and concepts that cannot be found in the assigned readings. Therefore, your participation is required. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get class notes or other necessary information from a colleague. As a means to that end, I recommend getting contact information for at least three classmates (see last page of syllabus).

Tardiness: Be seated when class begins. I reserve the right to mandate a personal behavioral contract if you are excessively tardy.

Make-ups: Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period noted on the syllabus. Unexcused late assignments may be made up before finals week (in a regular semester). However, I deduct 10 percent per 24-hour period after the assignment is due.

Back-ups: You are expected use a cloud-based backup system (eg., Dropbox or Google Docs) to limit the risk of document-loss.

Extra Credit: Allowing some students a chance to earn additional points is unfair to those who work within the range of assignment values, requirements, and opportunities available in this class. Accordingly I do not offer extra credit.

Intellectual property: Course material that I have developed for this class cannot be shared publicly without my approval. You may not publicly share or upload my materials (including lecture notes) without my consent.

Mobile devices: Mobile phones, computers, and other tools are permitted in this classroom if they are used responsibly. Read my full policy: <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/mobile-device-policy.html>

Written Work: Excepting the Personal Profile Sheet, quizzes, and exams, all work submitted for this class will be typed. You are expected to employ double-spacing, one-inch margins, and 12 point Times New Roman font. And, of course, all work is expected to be original. Attend carefully to university expectations of academic integrity.

FAQ: Read the Frequently Asked Questions page at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/faq.html>

COMM 149F, Rhetoric and Public Life Fall 2019 Class Schedule

Subject to change with reasonable notice.

Dates	Description	Reading	Assignments	Notes
8/22	Revealing Public Life			We will discuss course concepts and activities.
8/27 8/29	City of Layers	William Gibson's "Gernsback Continuum"		
9/3 9/5	Rhetoric of Just Hierarchy	Plato's <i>Republic</i> [Book Five]		
9/10 9/12	Rhetoric of Ubiquitous Surveillance	Thomas More's <i>Utopia</i>	Fourth-Unit Engagement Workshop, Thursday	
9/17 9/19	Rhetoric of American Exceptionalism	John Winthrop's "Model of Christian Charity"		
9/24 9/26	Rhetoric of National[ist] Socialism	Edward Bellamy's <i>Looking Backward</i>		
10/1 10/3	Course Review	No readings this week	Midterm Exam, Thursday	
10/8 10/10				No Class, Tuesday or Thursday
10/15 10/17	City of Gardens	Michel Foucault's "Of Other Spaces"	Contrast Paper, Thursday	
10/22 10/24	City of Tomorrow	Andrew Wood's <i>City Ubiquitous</i> [chapter one]		
10/29 10/31	City of the Dead	Zachary Crockett's "How the Zombie..."		No class on Thursday
11/5 11/7	City of Prisons	Margaret Atwood's <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> [excerpts]	Fourth-Unit Engagement Portfolio, Thursday	
11/12 11/14	City of Ruins	Silke Arnold-de Simone's "The ruin as Memorial..."		
11/19 11/21	Revitalization of Public Life		Ideal Community Project, Thursday	

Dates	Description	Reading	Assignments	Notes
11/26 11/28		No assigned readings	IDC Presentations	No class on Thursday (Thanksgiving)
12/3 12/5		No assigned readings	IDC Presentations	
12/11 12/16	Course Conclusion	No assigned readings	Final Exam	1500 class: Wednesday, 12/11, 1445-1700 1330 class: Monday, 12/16, 1215-1430

Peer Contact Information (folks to call if you have questions about a missed class)

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____