

San José State University

Communication Studies

COMM 295R, Ruins: Rhetoric and Performance

Class 45260, Section 1, Fall 2019

Instructor:	Andrew F. Wood, Professor
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Course Website:	http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/295R
Class days/time:	Thursday: 6:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.
Classroom:	HGH 223
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>

Catalog Description

Advanced consideration of selected topics in communication research and theory with emphasis on current literature. The topic will vary from term to term. Course may be repeated with instructor and advisor consent.

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. 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 objectives. Students enrolled in four-unit courses are expected to spend on average 45 hours (average of three hours per week over the course of 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. For COMM 295R, this component is the *Fourth-Unit Enhanced Reading Project*.

Canvas [Readings] Link

Visit our course website to access Canvas materials (including most readings, located in the "Files" section): <https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1325240/files>

Course Goals

Our course explores the strategic and rhetorical use of abandoned objects and places – disaster sites, ghost towns, abandoned monuments, and other decaying venues – in literature, architecture, and personal life. As a tool toward practical research, this course is less a series of lectures and more an unfolding conversation among a small group of colleagues, each of whom (including the professor) will commit to the development of individual conference-paper length essays and/or performances designed to tackle this question: How do “ruins” respond against, and provide a therapeutic response to, the excesses of late modernity?

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO1. Navigate and assess interdisciplinary literature concerning the role of ruins in contemporary life.

SLO2. Select and engage an additional book-length piece of scholarship related to classroom concepts.

SLO3. Produce original research and/or creative activity that demonstrate(s) your mastery of classroom concepts.

M.A. Program Learning Objectives

1. **Conceptual Foundations:** Students will be able to identify, explain, and critique the major paradigms, theories, and conceptual frameworks for understanding communication, and demonstrate an appreciation of the significance of ethics and social responsibility as they engage in communication. Learning objectives:
 - *Paradigms and Theories of Communication:* Students will be able to identify, explain and critique the major paradigms and theories that have shaped the field of communication, including their historical development and current trends.
 - *Ethics:* Students will be able to articulate the ethical and social responsibilities in communicating with others in different social contexts (i.e., interpersonal, organizational, intercultural, mediated, and public).
2. **Inquiry and Research:** Students will be able to analyze and evaluate published research, and design and conduct communication research studies using quantitative social science, interpretive, critical, rhetorical, and/or performative methods. Learning objectives:
 - *Research Methods:* Students will be able to interpret and critique research methods used in published communication research studies.
 - *Research Design:* Students will be able to design and conduct scholarly research using one or more method of inquiry.
3. **Professional Practice:** Students will be able to demonstrate advanced competency in scholarly writing, oral communication, and the application of conceptual foundations and research methods in professional contexts by designing and conducting applied communication activities. Learning objectives:
 - *Advanced Communication Competence:* Students will be able to articulate in-depth understanding of conceptual foundations and research methods through advanced scholarly writing and oral communication.
 - *Theory and Research Applications:* Students will be able to design, facilitate, and evaluate applied communication activities (i.e., presentations, workshops, forums, trainings, group discussions, etc.) in professional contexts utilizing conceptual foundations and research methods.

Required Readings [in order of appearance – all available on Canvas]

- DeSilvey, C., & Edensor, T. (2013). Reckoning with ruins. *Progress in Human Geography*, 37(4), 465-485.
- Wood, A.F. (in press). Haunting ruins in a Western ghost town: Authentic violence and recursive gaze at Bodie, California. *Western Journal of Communication*. [Classroom use; not for distribution]
- Stone, P., & Sharpley, R. (2008). Consuming dark tourism: A thanatological perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 574-595.
- Podoshen, J.S. (2013). Dark tourism motivations: Simulation, emotional contagion and topographic comparison. *Tourism Management*, 35, 263-271.
- Carter, C. (2015). *Rhetorical exposures: Confrontation and contradiction in US social documentary photography*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press. [excerpt: “The rhetoric of ruins: Walking with Walter Benjamin and Camilo José Vergara,” pp. 100-126]
- Ford, L.G. (2018). Drift report from downtown LA. *Journal of Writing in Creative Practice*, 10(2), 215-225.
- Fassi, A.J. (2010). Industrial ruins, urban exploring, and the postindustrial picturesque. *CR: The New Centennial Review*, 10(1), 141-152.
- Garrett, B.L. (2014). Undertaking recreational trespass: Urban exploration and infiltration. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 39(1), 1-13.
- Mott, C., & Roberts, S.M. (2014). Not everyone has (the) balls: Urban exploration and the persistence of masculinist geography. *Antipode*, 46(1), 229-245.
- Manninen, S. (2012). The art of leftovers: Memory, matter and decay. *Journal of Media Practice*, 12(3), 245-255.
- Santoro, P. (2015). Performing landscapes of/and loss. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 35(2-3), 234-254.
- Anderson, C.T. (2012). Post-apocalyptic nostalgia: *Wall-E*, garbage, and American ambivalence toward manufactured goods. *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory*, 23(3), 267-282.
- Schultz, C. K.N. (2016). Ruin in the films of Jia Zhangke. *Visual Communication*, 15(4), 439-460.
- Domingo, A. (2018). Analyzing zombie dystopia as neoliberal scenario: An exercise in emancipatory catastrophism. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 3(20), 1-9.
- Millington, N. (2013). Post-industrial Imaginaries: Nature, representation and ruin in Detroit, Michigan. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(1), 279-296.
- Fraser, E. (2018). Unbecoming place: Urban imaginaries in transition in Detroit. *Cultural Geographies*, 25(3), 441-458.
- Sturken, M. (2015). The 9/11 Memorial Museum and the remaking of Ground Zero. *American Quarterly*, 67(2), 471-490.
- Potts, T. J. (2012). ‘Dark tourism’ and the ‘kitschification’ of 9/11. *Tourist Studies*, 12(3), 232-249.
- Wood, A.F. (under contract). A rhetoric of ruins: Exploring the landscapes of abandoned modernity. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books. [Chapter 8: Chernobyl Exclusion Zone – classroom use; not for distribution]
- Roberts, K. (2019). The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Cenotaph and the shadow side of spatial research. *Fabrications*, 29(1), 86-108.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Guided Classroom Conversation [SLO 1 – 100 points]

To extend the utility of our classroom interactions, you will select and guide us through a relevant scholarly article or book chapter that augments a particular week's topic (discussion length: 10 to 15 minutes). Dates of your presentation will be negotiated early in the semester. Additional instructions:

- Use only peer-reviewed journal articles or book chapters [No convention papers or book reviews].
- Provide a handout (one page, maximum) that includes APA formatted reference and relevant quotations.
- Ensure that your selection relates directly to the week's topic. Thus, if we were scheduled to be discussing Bodie California ghost town, you'd be expected to find a scholarly essay about Bodie [within the broader context of ruins]. To aid your search process, check out the reference pages of the article(s) assigned for that week – but don't feel that you have to be limited to those options.
- Email an OCR [optical character recognition] searchable, screen-readable PDF of your article to me at least one week prior to your discussion. NB: In cases when two or more students propose the same essay, I will ask the second person suggesting the duplicate to select another option. Thus you should submit your suggestion sooner rather than later.

Course Project [SLO 1 and SLO 3 – 250 points]

The course project is an opportunity to produce a conference-quality paper or performance that addresses the topic of ruins in a specific modern context. This is not a “think piece” but an in-depth analysis of a particular example of place, media production, and/or lived experience. Toward that end you will accomplish the following goals:

1. Submit a 1-2 page proposal of at least three potential topics (devoting several sentences to each, and stating the Deliverable Option through which you will present your project). All material must be written in your own words. NB: Select topics that allow reasonably easy access to sites/media/artifacts. **[50 points]**
2. Submit a 5-7 page annotated bibliography [APA] that summarizes at least ten separate scholarly sources that are likely to contribute to your project. With the exception of a brief excerpt for each annotation, all material must be written in your own words. NB: You may use classroom readings. **[50 points]**
3. Deliverable [choose one of the following options. In both cases, you can integrate refined elements of your proposal and annotated bibliography.]
 - 3a. Paper Option: Produce an 18-22 page paper (including references) that includes topic justification, literature review, method summary, analysis, and conclusion. **[100 points]**
 - 3b. Performance Option: Produce a 5-8 page script for a monologue [text-based performance] and an additional 6-8 page artist's statement (including references) that includes topic justification, literature review, and summary of key themes/arguments. **[100 points]**
4. Presentation [10-12 minutes – subject to adjustment based on class size; not including potential Q&A]
 - 4a. Paper Option: Polished, extemporaneous summary of major sections from your paper. Supporting media are welcome but not required. **[50 points]**
 - 4b. Performance Option: Memorized, emotionally engaging production that demonstrates mastery of least three performance elements (eg., blocking, choreographed movement, costuming, lighting, props, set arrangement, sound design, and or audio/visual augmentation). **[50 points]**

Fourth-Unit Enhanced Reading Project [SLO 2 – 125 points]

Select and read a scholarly book cited in one of our course readings that engages the course topic of modern ruins. To demonstrate your mastery of that book, craft an original 4-5 page essay organized around these two headings: **Summary** (including at least five brief quotations) and **Assessment** of the author's effectiveness in producing an insightful argument. Aside from brief quotations, all material must be written in your own words.

Final Exam Presentation [SLO 1, SLO 2, and SLO 3 – 25 points]

Deliver a 5-7 minute extemporaneous oral presentation that reflects your growth as a researcher and writer while culminating your mastery of course concepts. Potential questions to organize your talk include (but are not limited to) the following: What surprised you about this class? What challenged you about this class? What frustrated you about this class? What opportunities did you discover in this class? What recommendations do you have for future versions of this class? A successful presentation requires well-developed ideas, clear organization, and professional, audience-focused delivery. Be prepared for questions from your colleagues and from me. NB: You must complete the Final Exam to receive a grade in this course.

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

Guided Classroom Conversation	_____ out of	100 points	(20%)
Course Project Proposal	_____ out of	50 points	(10%)
Course Project Bibliography	_____ out of	50 points	(10%)
Course Project Deliverable	_____ out of	100 points	(20%)
Course Project Presentation	_____ out of	50 points	(10%)
Fourth-Unit Enhanced Reading Project	_____ out of	125 points	(25%)
Final Exam Presentation	_____ out of	25 points	(5%)

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 or exemplar papers) 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, 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. NB: Review my gradesheet for advice on other items related to prose, mechanics, and form: <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/gradesheet.pdf>

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

COMM 295R, Fall 2019 Class Schedule*Subject to change with reasonable notice.*

Dates	Action	Reading	Assignments	Notes
8/22	Descending	DeSilvey and Edensor; Wood		We will discuss course concepts and activities.
8/29	Motivating	Stone and Sharpley; Podoshen		We will discuss Fourth-Unit Enhanced Reading selection options.
9/5	Walking	Carter; Ford		We will create calendar for Guided Classroom Conversation presentations.
9/12	Stalking	Fassi; Garrett; Mott and Roberts		We will participate in Course Project Proposal workshops.
9/19	Performing	Manninen; Santoro	Course Project Proposal	
9/26	Gazing	Anderson; Schultz	Fourth-Unit Enhanced Reading selection [ungraded]	
10/3	Lurching	Domingo		
10/10				No class
10/17	Touring 1 [Detroit]	Millington; Fraser	Course Project Bibliography	
10/24	Touring 2 [Ground Zero]	Sturken; Potts		
10/31				No class
11/7	Touring 3 [Chernobyl]	Wood	Fourth-Unit Enhanced Reading Project	
11/14	Touring 4 [Hiroshima]	Roberts		
11/21	Layering 1	No readings	Course Project Presentations 1 Course Project Deliverable	
11/28				No class
12/5	Layering 2	No readings	Course Project Presentations 2	
Thu, 12/12	Remembering	No readings	Final Exam Presentation (12/12)	Exam time: 5:15 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

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

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____