

**San José State University**  
**Communication Studies 149F: Rhetoric and Public Life**  
**Section 01, Spring 2012**  
**Area: Foundations**

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Instructor:</b>      | Hanns Hohmann   |
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| <b>Office hours:</b>    | Tu 20:45-21:15, W 10:30-11:45, Th 16:15-17:30, & by appointment |
| <b>Class days/time:</b> | TuTh 15:00-16:15  |
| <b>Classroom:</b>       | HGH 223   |
| <b>Prerequisites:</b>   | Upper-Division Standing (Pre/Corequisite: COMM 101)             |

**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 this Four-Unit Course**

At SJSU, students are expected to spend two hours outside of class for every one hour of class time. In this four unit class, you can expect to spend on average **12 hours** per week during a regular semester 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.

**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 acquaint you with traditional and modern sources and manifestations of rhetorical theory.

**Foundations Area Learning Objectives**

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

- *Theories of Communication*: Demonstrate understanding of the major theories that have shaped the communication field.
- *Ethics*: Demonstrate understanding of ethical responsibilities in communicating with others in interpersonal, organizational, small group, intercultural, mediated, and public settings.

**Course Goals**

Within the FOUNDATIONS area, COMM 149F is unique in providing students with an overview of rhetorical theory and practice related to public life, democratic governance, and social conflict and consensus from the classical era to the present. This overview is designed to contribute to a historically enriched and theoretically deepened critical understanding of the

manifestations of rhetoric in contemporary America. After an introductory discussion of present-day examples of public rhetoric, we will use an overview of the development of civic oratory in antiquity to outline a basic theoretical framework for the analysis of public discourse. Then we will examine some significant episodes and genres of political rhetoric in American history from the pre-revolutionary period to our own day and age. This semester, as the 2012 presidential election approaches, we will strongly focus on political campaigns and economic issues.

**In addition**, this course provides an opportunity to **enrich the student experience** in the understanding of rhetorical foundations and the intellectual criticism of rhetorical practice in public life by an **engagement unit** giving students the opportunity to conduct an **individualized research project** focused on a specific example of public rhetoric, accompanied by **face-to-face tutorials with the instructor**. This engagement unit enables students to link the learning goals of the course with their personal educational interests. This project will result in a **research paper**; the grade for this paper will contribute 30% to the course grade.

### Course Learning Outcomes

Successfully completing this course will enable you to:

**CLO1:** Demonstrate your understanding of **rhetorical foundations**: you will gain a reflective appreciation of the social, cultural, and historical foundations as well as the ethical dimensions of rhetorical practice and theory, and of the rhetorical role of the citizen in public life.

**CLO2:** Engage in intellectual **criticism of rhetorical practices** in public life: you will develop and apply analytical skills for interpreting and evaluating different forms of public discourse delivered as printed text, orally, or visually.

### Required Texts

*Course Reader*. (Available at San Jose Copy, 109 East Santa Clara St., San Jose, CA 95113, Telephone [408] 297-6698). **(CR)**

Richard D. & Alexander Heffner, *A Documentary History of the United States*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Signet, 2009. **(DH)**

Readings and links to readings on other web sites, posted on the instructor's web page. **(WS)**

### Library Research Help

You can obtain assistance for your library research at the Library Reference Service Desk on the second floor of the King Library. The telephone number is (408) 808-2100. There you can get immediate help with your questions about library resources (the library catalog, journal article databases, Link+, Interlibrary Loan, etc.)

### Classroom Protocol

Students are expected to come to class prepared by a thorough study of the reading assignments, ready to engage in focused and attentive discussion of the material. They are also expected to complete all work on time and to submit it in person to the instructor; emailed work will not be accepted; late work incurs a grade reduction of one letter grade per week; there will be no makeup work.

### Dropping and Adding

You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, and similar topics found at [www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct).

### Assignments and Grading Policy

Readings Quizzes (20% of Course Grade) (Meet **CLO 1-2**)

Midterm Examination (20% of Course Grade) (Meets **CLO 1-2**)

Final Examination (30% of Course Grade) (Meets **CLO 1-2**)

Engagement Unit: Individualized Research Paper (30% of Course Grade) (Meets **CLO 1-2**)

Detailed information about each assignment will be provided in handouts in class.

## **University Policies and Student Learning Resources**

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to be familiar with the University's Academic Integrity Policy available at [sa.sjsu.edu/student\\_conduct](http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct). "Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical development."

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on quizzes or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. "If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors."

### **Campus Policy in Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

### **Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs for student use are available in the new Academic Success Center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Student Union. In addition, computers are available in the Martin Luther King Library. The COMM lab, located in Clark Hall 240, also has a few computers available for student use.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, screens and monitors.

### **Communication Center**

The Communication Center is newly located in Hugh Gillis Hall 229. 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 workshops and self-paced online modules via D2L. Upper-division Communication Studies students staff the Center and are trained in coaching students on a variety of topics related to our department courses. Enrollment in COMM 80 provides support for the Center. More information can be found through the department website <http://www.sjsu.edu/comm/>.

### **Learning Assistance Resource Center**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The Learning Assistance Resource Center is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center.

### **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center in Clark Hall 126 is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. The writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. More information available at [sjsu.edu/writingcenter](http://sjsu.edu/writingcenter).

## COMM 149F, Rhetoric and Public Life: Course Schedule

**Please note** that this schedule may be changed with fair advance notice.

In conjunction with reading assignments from R.D. & A. Heffner, *A Documentary History of the United States (DH)*, please also read the **introduction** to the chapter of which the reading is a part.

| Week | Date   | Subject/Reading Assignment  |
|------|--------|---|
| 1    | (1/26) | Introduction  |
| 2    |        | Public Rhetoric in Contemporary America   |
|      | (1/31) | B. Obama, State of the Union Address (24 January 2012) (WS & Video)<br>M. Daniels, Republican Response (24 January 2012) (WS & Video)   |
|      | (2/2)  | Classical Foundations of Western Rhetorical Practice and Theory<br>G.A. Kennedy, Introduction: The Nature of Rhetoric (CR)<br>Pericles, Three Speeches Before and During the Peloponnesian War<br>[As represented in Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War] (CR)   |
| 3    | (2/7)  | Aristotle, Rhetoric (Book 1, Chs. 1-3) (CR)<br>Cicero, Second Speech Against the Agrarian Law of Rullus (Introduction & Part 1) (CR)  |
|      | (2/9)  | Cicero, Second Speech Against the Agrarian Law of Rullus (Part 2) (CR)<br><b>Engagement Unit Individualized Research Paper Assigned</b> (Thursday, 9 February)  |
| 4    |        | The American Revolution   |
|      | (2/14) | J. Hancock, Boston Massacre Oration (CR)<br>P. Henry, Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death (CR)   |
|      | (2/16) | T. Jefferson, Draft of the Declaration of Independence (CR)<br>T. Jefferson et al., Declaration of Independence (DH Ch. 1, pp. 3-7, 10-15)<br>J. Madison, The Federalist Number Ten (DH Ch. 2, pp. 15-20, 44-52)<br>P. Henry, Against Adopting the Federal Constitution (CR)  |
| 5    |        | Federalists vs. Republicans   |
|      | (2/21) | T. Jefferson & A. Hamilton, Letters to G. Washington on the Constitutionality of the Bank of the United States (DH Ch. 3, pp. 52-65)<br>Jacksonian Democracy  |
|      | (2/23) | J. Adams & T. Jefferson, Letters on Aristocracy (DH Ch. 8, pp. 111-123)<br>A. Jackson, Veto of the Bank Renewal Bill (DH Ch. 8, pp. 123-130)<br>Individual face-to-face <b>tutorials with the instructor</b> to discuss individualized research paper <b>topic choice and research strategies</b> begin during this week (Schedule TBA) |
| 6    |        | The Women's Rights Movement   |
|      | (2/28) | Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions (DH Ch. 12, pp. 172-180)<br>S. Truth, Ain't I a Woman? (CR)<br>E.C. Stanton, Solitude of Self (CR)   |
|      | (3/1)  | E. Pankhurst, Militant Suffragists (CR)<br>B. Friedan, The Crisis in Women's Identity (CR)<br>The National Organization for Women Statement of Purpose (DH Ch. 28, pp. 481-490)   |

- 7           The Civil Rights Movement and Beyond
- (3/6)       M.L. King, Jr., “I Have A Dream” Speech (DH Ch. 27, pp. 439-445, 472-476)  
               L.B. Johnson, “Great Society” Speech (DH Ch. 27, pp. 477-480)
- (3/8)       Malcolm X, The Ballot or the Bullet (CR)  
               M.L. King, I’ve Been to the Mountain Top (CR)
- 8           (3/13)       **Midterm Examination:** Tuesday, 13 March 2012, 15:00-16:15 (in class, HGH 223)  
               America at War
- (3/15)       Lincoln, Gettysburg Address (DH Ch. 14, pp. 204-207, 210)  
               F.D. Roosevelt, War Message (CR)  
               L.B. Johnson, Gulf of Tonkin Speech (CR)
- 9           (3/20)       S.J. & T. Parry-Giles, Virtual Realism and Commodified Dissent in *Fahrenheit 9/11*  
               (WS & Video)
- (3/22)       Individualized Research Paper Research and Writing
- SB       **Spring Break** (26-30 March 2012)
- 10          Presidential Campaigns
- (4/3)       R.M. Nixon, My Side of the Story (CR)
- (4/5)       M. Cuomo, Convention Keynote Address (DH Ch. 29, pp. 538-542, 561-571)  
               Republican Contract with America (DH Ch. 30, pp. 572-576)
- Individual face-to-face **tutorials with the instructor** to discuss **draft/outline** of individualized research paper  
               begin during this week (Schedule TBA)
- 11          (4/10)       R.E. Terrill, Mimesis and Miscarriage in *Unprecedented* (WS & Video)
- (4/12)       U.S. Supreme Court, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (WS)
- 12          Presidential Inaugural Addresses
- (4/17)       G. Washington, First Inaugural Address (CR)  
               J.F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address (DH Ch. 27, pp. 439-448)
- (4/19)       R. Reagan, First & Second Inaugural Addresses (DH Ch. 29, pp. 538-542, 551-561)  
               B. Obama, Inaugural Address (DH Ch. 32, pp. 611-619, 660-667)
- 13          Political and Economic Issues and Crises
- (4/24)       Populist Party Platform (DH Ch. 18, pp. 261-272)  
               W. Jennings Bryan, “Cross of Gold” Speech (DH Ch. 18, pp. 273-280)
- (4/26)       H. Hoover, Rugged Individualism (DH Ch. 22, pp. 344-359)  
               F.D. Roosevelt, First Inaugural Address (DH Ch. 23, pp. 359-372)  
               F.D. Roosevelt, “Rendezvous with Destiny” Speech (DH Ch. 23, pp. 372-377)
- 14          (5/1)       *In Debt We Trust* (Video)  
               D. Cheney, Interviews on PBS’ *News Hour* and CBS’ *Face the Nation*  
               (DH Ch. 32, pp. 611-641)
- (5/3)       *Inside Job* (Video)
- Individualized Research Paper Due:** Thursday, 3 May 2012 (in class, HGH 223)

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Current Issues and Developments

(5/8) Topics and Readings TBA

(5/10) **Final Examination:** Thursday, 10 May 2012, 15:00-16:15 (in class, HGH 223)

### COMM 149F: Analytical Questions for Readings

In studying the assigned materials and preparing for classes, as well as in writing your term paper, you will find it helpful to consider questions such as the following:

- ▶ What was the occasion, the motivating background (“exigence”) for this speech (or other “text” in a wide sense: oral, visual, or written), and how does the text contribute to the definition and interpretation of that situation, as well as responding to that situation?
- ▶ Who is the speaker (understood as the person delivering the speech or the producer or presenter of the “text” in a wide sense)? How is the speaker’s “ethos” (i.e., the character the speaker projects for the audience) defined through the speech?
- ▶ When and where was the speech delivered or published?
- ▶ Which audience(s) does the speaker address? How does the speaker define the audience(s) in the speech? Which assumptions about the audience’s views and characteristics does the speech make?
- ▶ Which audience(s) does the speaker not address, which audience(s) is(are) excluded by the speech, intentionally or unintentionally?
- ▶ What are the speaker’s aims in making the speech? Which changes or actions is the speaker trying to bring about or prevent?
- ▶ Which disadvantages and obstacles does the speaker face in realizing these aims?
- ▶ What advantages and opportunities can the speaker draw upon in this process?
- ▶ How does the speaker respond to the rhetorical situation, how does the speech take into account (or fail to take into account) the occasion and audience(s), these aims, advantages, and disadvantages?
- ▶ What are the main arguments that the speaker makes? Why were they chosen, i.e. how do they fit into the speaker’s persuasive strategy as shaped by the interaction between occasion, purposes, constraints, and audience(s)?
- ▶ Are there significant flaws in these arguments? Could better arguments have been made?
- ▶ Which major counterarguments does the speaker consider (or fail to consider)? How successfully are they dealt with? Could the speaker’s response have been improved?
- ▶ To what extent and for which purposes does the speaker use pathos appeals (i.e., appeals to the audience’s emotions) in the speech? By what means does the speaker attempt to stir the emotions of the audience?
- ▶ How does the speaker structure the argument? Are there significant reasons for choosing a particular arrangement of the major points?
- ▶ What are the ethical responsibilities inherent in the communication situation to which this speech responds and in which it intervenes?
- ▶ To what extent and how successfully does the speaker meet these responsibilities?
- ▶ What are the special stylistic features of the speech? How does the speaker use particular rhetorical figures to enhance the persuasive effect of the speech? (For an analytical vocabulary, see the Glossary of Selected Rhetorical Terms at the end of the Course Reader)

**Please note** that different texts give occasion to emphasize different questions to varying degrees; you will be able to refine your analytical skills as we discuss the speeches (and other “texts”) on this syllabus in detail.