



COMM 3361
AFRICAN AMERICAN RHETORIC
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION & FILM

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Damariyé L. Smith

INSTRUCTOR'S EMAIL: dlsmith23@memphis.edu – DO NOT email me through e-courseware.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

- This course is designed to survey African American rhetoric. African American rhetoric is “the study of culturally and discursively developed knowledge-forms, communicative practices and persuasive strategies rooted in freedom struggles by people of African ancestry in America¹.” This course will introduce students to cultural frameworks, specifically rooted in African culture as lenses for rhetorical analysis of African American discourse.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Critically evaluate rhetorical and literary devices used in African American rhetoric
- Value and appreciate the role of African American rhetoric in the field of Rhetoric
- Demonstrate ability to recognize African American rhetorical patterns in any given discourse
- Demonstrate an understanding of African American rhetorical theories and concepts
- Understand the Afrocentric orientation
- Complete rhetorical analysis essay on an African American artifact

REQUIRED TEXT:

- Gilyard, K., & Banks, A. J. (2018). *On African American rhetoric*. Routledge.
- Stoner, M., & Perkins, S. J. (2015). *Making sense of messages: A critical apprenticeship in rhetorical criticism*. Routledge. (**FREE PDF AVAILABLE**)

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Midterm – 50 points (Multiple choice)
- Final exam – 100 points (Multiple choice)
- Reflection questions – 100 points (2 reflections @ 50 points each)
- Reading quizzes – 100 points (10 quizzes @ 10 points each)
- Final paper presentation – 50 points
- Final rhetorical analysis paper – 100 points

¹ Elaine B. Richardson and Ronald L. Jackson. *African American rhetoric (s): interdisciplinary perspectives*. SIU Press, 2007, ix.



- **TOTAL:** 550 points

Course Policies & Protocol

Reading

It is solely your responsibility to complete the course reading. By familiarizing yourself with the text it should allow you to deepen your contributions to class discussions, strengthen your ability to understand African American rhetorical practices, and excel on exams. If there are any aspects of the reading that are unclear please do not hesitate to ask for clarification.

Attendance Policy (Not for Online)

~~Success in this course depends on the participation and the mutual support of students. You are allowed 3 absences without penalty (Please note: this includes sickness, funerals, etc. Anything after that regardless of what it is for, you will be dock points). six or more absences will result in you losing your attendance/participation points. Three tardies = one absence.~~

~~Please DO NOT email me stating that you will be absence when you are within your already allotted three (3) absences. If you miss an assignment on the day you are absent you will NOT be allowed to make it up barring an extenuating circumstance.~~

Remember attendance is YOUR responsibility.

I utilize the University of Memphis attendance system and I submit the roll at the start of class (*there is no grace period*). If you are not marked “present” at the time I submit my attendance to the University, the system will AUTOMATICALLY send you an email in which I do not have control over. If this is the case, please make sure to check in with me after class that I have checked you in as “tardy”. Even if I mark you “tardy” understand the system will still send you a notice.

Grading Policy

I DO NOT discuss any grades on the day I return work to you. If you have a disagreement please submit your disagreement in writing.

Late work Policy

Assignments are due on the day listed in the syllabus, unless otherwise noted. In an event that your assignment is late, you have exactly 24 hours to turn it in for half-credit (assuming it is done correctly). After that, you will receive a zero. **THIS RULE DOES NOT APPLY TO EXAMS AND QUIZZES.**

Electronics/Distracted Policy

If I see you on your cell phone, laptop (**even to take notes**) or simply working on other assignments in class, I will ask you to leave until the next class session and you will be marked absent for the day. Consider this your first warning!



Academic Dishonesty

[The Office of Student Conduct](#) defines the following on the linked website:

Plagiarism - "The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works of another person as one's own without proper attribution."

Cheating - "Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or aids in any academic exercise or test/examination. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours."

Fabrication - "Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise."

Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Students guilty of academic misconduct, either directly or indirectly, through participation or assistance, are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class in addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions, which may be imposed through the regular institutional disciplinary procedures.

An instructor who believes a student has committed an act of academic misconduct shall notify the student in writing of the basis for the belief and allow the student five (5) business days to respond to the allegation. The student shall respond to the allegation by scheduling a meeting with the instructor to discuss the matter. After meeting with the student to review the alleged misconduct, the instructor has two options: (a) they may make a decision regarding appropriate action, or (b) they may refer the matter to the Academic Integrity Committee. (*University of Memphis Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, page 17-18*)

The following penalties will be assessed for instances of plagiarism and academic dishonesty:

- Minor/Incremental/unintentional plagiarism:
 - First offense--one letter grade penalty.
 - Second offense--fail assignment.
 - Third offense--fail course.
- Major plagiarism (defined as plagiarizing an entire speech or major portions of a speech):
 - First offense--fail assignment.
 - Second offense--fail course

All instances of plagiarism other than a first minor offense will be reported to the Department Course Coordinator. All instances of major plagiarism will be referred to the University Academic Integrity Committee.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your



written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all." (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005*)

Midterm and Final Exam

These exams will be comprehensive and will consist of T/F and multiple-choice questions. Both exams will be administered via e-courseware (i.e., online).

Students with Disabilities

Any student who anticipates physical or academic barriers based on the impact of a disability (including invisible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, and head injuries) is encouraged to speak with their instructor privately within the first two weeks of class. The college and your instructor will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Any claim of disability must be documented by Disability Resources for Students (DRS) in order to receive accommodation. Students with disabilities should also contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) at 110 Wilder Tower, 901-678-2880 for further assistance with course access or accommodation.



COURSE CALENDAR

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Assignments due</u>
August 11 – 13	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Pre-course reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *What are rhetorical messages? *What is African American rhetoric? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Read Stoner & Perkins: Chapter 1 *Read Keith Gilyard “Introduction: Aspects of African American Rhetoric as a Field”
August 18 – 20 (Week 1)	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Understanding Criticism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Welcome, syllabus overview, Q&A *Review pre-course readings *Criticism: What critics do with rhetorical messages? *Four kinds of critical thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Read Stoner & Perkins: Chapter 2 and 3 *Take Syllabus Quiz (Due Aug. 19 @ 11:30pm) *Take Quiz #1 (Due Aug. 21 @ 11:30pm)
August 25 – 27 (Week 2)	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Writing in a rhetorical way</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Review readings *The process of Description *The process of Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Read Stoner & Perkins: Chapter 4 and 5 *Take Quiz #2 (Due Aug. 28 @ 11:30pm)
September 1 – 3 (Week 3)	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Writing in a rhetorical way</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Review readings *The process of Interpretation *The process of Evaluation *<i>Lecture</i>: Fundamentals of basic writing and composition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Read Stoner & Perkins: Chapter 6 and 7 **Take Quiz #3 (Due Sept. 4 @ 11:30pm)

<p>September 8 – 10 (Week 4)</p>	<p><u>On African-American Rhetoric</u></p> <p>*Review readings</p> <p>*Introduction</p> <p>*Historical Overview of African-American Rhetoric</p>	<p>*Read Gilyard & Banks: Chapter 1 and 2</p> <p>**Take Quiz #4 (Due Sept. 11 @ 11:30pm)</p>
<p>September 15 – 17 (Week 5)</p>	<p><u>On African-American Rhetoric</u></p> <p>*Review readings</p> <p>*Jeremiads and Manifestoes</p> <p>*Rhetorical Theory</p>	<p>*Read Gilyard & Banks: Chapter 3 and 4</p> <p>*Take Quiz #5 (Due Sept. 18 @ 11:30pm)</p>
<p>September 22 – 24 (Week 6)</p>	<p><u>On African-American Rhetoric</u></p> <p>*Review readings</p> <p>*Technology and African American Rhetoric</p> <p>*Rhetoric and Black Twitter</p>	<p>*Read Gilyard & Banks: Chapter 5 and 6</p> <p>*Take Quiz #6 (Due Sept. 25 @ 11:30pm)</p> <p>*Select artifact for final paper. (<i>Submit to instructor by September 27 by 11:30pm</i>)</p>
<p>September 29 – October 1 (Week 7)</p>	<p><u>On African-American Rhetoric</u></p> <p>*Review readings</p> <p>*College Writing Instruction and African American Rhetoric</p> <p>*Conclusion</p>	<p>*Read Gilyard & Banks: Chapter 7 and 8</p> <p>*Take Quiz #7 (Due Oct. 2 @ 11:30pm)</p> <p>*Complete Reflection #1 (Due Oct. 4 @ 11:30pm)</p>

<p>October 6 – 8 (Week 8)</p>	<p><u>Utilizing African American Rhetorical Theory to understand discourse</u> *Review readings</p> <p>MID-TERM</p>	<p>*Submit Mid-term exam (<i>Due October 11</i>)</p> <p>*Review African American rhetorical theory cheat sheet.</p>
<p>October 13 – 15 (Week 9)</p>	<p><u>Crafting your rhetorical analysis</u> *<i>Lecture</i>: Making claims and reasoning.</p>	<p>*Begin drafting the Main claim (e.g., Thesis statement) and reasons.</p> <p>*Take Quiz #8 (Due Oct. 16 @ 11:30pm)</p>
<p>October 20 – 22 (Week 10)</p>	<p><u>Crafting your rhetorical analysis</u> *<i>Lecture</i>: Supporting your claims with primary & secondary evidence.</p>	<p>*Begin drafting and searching for evidence (primary and secondary) to support your claims/reasons.</p> <p>*Take Quiz #9 (Due Oct. 23 @ 11:30pm)</p>
<p>October 27 – 29 (Week 11)</p>	<p><u>Crafting your rhetorical analysis</u> *<i>Lecture</i>: Acknowledging and Responding to claims</p>	<p>*Begin creatively thinking about possible weaknesses in your arguments.</p> <p>*Take Quiz #10 (Due Oct. 30 @ 11:30pm)</p>
<p>November 3 – 5 (Week 12)</p>	<p><u>Crafting your rhetorical analysis</u> *<i>Lecture</i>: Warrants</p>	<p>*Begin drafting your warrants and completing Final paper.</p>
<p>November 10 -12 (Week 13)</p>	<p>*Final paper due *Final paper presentations</p>	<p>*Submit Final paper (<i>Due November 15 @ 11:30pm</i>)</p> <p>*Submit Final paper presentation (<i>Due November 15 @ 11:30pm</i>)</p>

		*Complete Reflection #2 (Due Nov. 15 @ 11:30pm)
November 17 -19 (Week 14)	FINAL EXAM *Thurs. Nov 19, 10:30am - 12:30pm	
November 24 -26 (Week 15)	HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!	