

CMST 4107: Communication as Culture
Communication, Culture, and the Economy

T/TH 3:00-4:20
55 Allen Hall

Professor William Saas
Office: 216 Coates Hall
Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:30-2:30p.m.
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Course Description

In this course, we will explore the relationship between communication, culture, and the modern economy. Our exploration will entail: (1) critical engagement with research from experts across the humanities and social sciences; (2) use of rhetorical methods to analyze contemporary economic discourses and controversies; and (3) translation of our individual and collective research experiences into a comprehensive “argumentative dictionary.”

Course Objectives

- To understand the complex role of definition in cultural and economic discourses.
- To become more engaged and critical consumers of economic messages.
- To learn how to communicate complex ideas for consumption by non-academic audiences.

Communication-Intensive Course

This is a certified Communication-Intensive (C-I) course which meets all of the requirements set forth by LSU’s Communication across the Curriculum program, including

- instruction and assignments emphasizing informal and formal writing and speaking;
- teaching of discipline-specific communication techniques;
- use of feedback loops for learning;
- 40% of the course grade rooted in communication-based work; and
- practice of ethical and professional work standards.

Students interested in pursuing the LSU Distinguished Communicators certification may use this C-I course for credit. For more information about this student recognition program, visit www.cxc.lsu.edu.

Writing Center

I will be happy to meet with you to help with your writing and presentation preparation processes. E-mail me at least 24-hours in advance to set up an appointment, or just stop by during office hours. I am not your only resource, though. Students who want additional help with writing and presentation projects are encouraged to make appointments with a writing tutor in **Studio 151**, in 151 Coates Hall. Visit <http://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/cxc/writing/> to read information on how to prepare for and what to expect during a tutorial. There you will also find instructions on how to schedule tutorials on line. Hours are limited, so schedule early.

Required Texts

Graeber, David. (2014). *Debt: The First 5,000 Years (Updated and Expanded)*. New York: Melville House. [G]

Schiappa, Edward. (2003). *Defining Reality: Definitions and the Politics of Meaning*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press. **E-book available through LSU library.** [S]

Younge, Gary. (2013). *The Speech: The Story Behind Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 's Dream*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books. [Y]

Other required readings will be made available through the course Moodle page [M].

Assignments and Evaluation

Argumentative dictionary entry	50% or 500 pts
Entry consultation	5% or 50 pts
Film response	10% or 100 pts
Content quizzes (5)	10% or 100 pts
Midterm	10% or 100 pts
Participation	10% or 100 pts
Departmental assignment	5% or 50 pts

970-1000 points =	A+
930-969 points =	A
900-929 points =	A-
870-899 points =	B+
830-869 points =	B
800-829 points =	B-
770-799 points =	C+
730-769 points =	C
700-729 points =	C-
670-699 points =	D+
630-669 points =	D
600-629 points =	D-
0 -599 points =	F

Argumentative Dictionary Entry

Over the course of the semester, students in this course will compose, revise, and present to the class an original argumentative dictionary entry. Final entries may be included in *Defining Economic Reality*, an e-book completed by participants in the spring 2018 version of this course, or published in another format as determined in class. Entries will be produced over five stages, described below:

1. **Entry Proposal:** On January 22, you will submit a 2-page proposal for your entry. This proposal will include citation and discussion of no fewer than two research sources. *A more detailed assignment sheet will be posted to Moodle.* (50 pts)
2. **Rough Entry:** After your proposal is approved, you will write a 6- to 8-page rough draft of your entry. Your rough entry must contain a 75-word abstract, and a Creative Commons-licensed image. *A more detailed assignment sheet will be posted to Moodle.* (100 pts)
3. **Peer Editing:** Your entry will be the subject of a peer-review session. Your entry will be reviewed, and you will review the entries of your peers. You will write one-page reviews for two of your peer's drafts. *A more detailed assignment sheet will be posted to Moodle.* (100 pts)
4. **Oral Presentation of Entry:** Following the peer editing process, you will give an oral presentation of your entry. *A more detailed assignment sheet will be posted to Moodle.* (100 pts)

5. **Final Entry:** Prior to the final exam period, you will submit a final version of your entry. The final entry must contain a 75-word abstract, and a copyright-free image. You may be asked to revise this final draft again prior to inclusion in the e-book. (150 pts)

Entry Consultation

You will meet with me once during the semester to discuss your argumentative dictionary entry. **This meeting must occur prior to the day that entry rough drafts are due.** The purpose of this meeting is to help you to identify the subject of your dictionary entry, as well as to ensure your timely completion of that entry. More information on the requirements for this assignment will be shared in class.

Film Response

We will view three films in this class. Each film will be paired with a reading or set of readings. You will write a 3- to 4-page response paper to one of the films and its paired reading(s). More information on the requirements for this assignment will be shared in class.

Midterm

At the midpoint of the semester you will take a midterm examination. The purpose of this midterm will be to get a sense for your retention of course content, and also to assess your facility with the critical methods covered in class.

Content Quizzes (x5)

You will be given short reading quizzes throughout the semester. These quizzes will ask you to summarize and respond to recent readings.

Participation

Your attendance at each class meeting is required. You are also expected to participate in in-class activities and discussions. Your final participation grade (100 points) will be recorded according to the following criteria:

- Attendance: 80 points (penalty of 10 points per unexcused absence)
- In-class engagement: 20 points

If you are unable to attend a class, please let me know in advance, via e-mail or otherwise. Failure to do so will result in a point deduction from your participation grade. Excused absences are those that are required for participation in university events, or accompanied by a doctor's note. **I will collect documentation for non-university excused absences twice during the semester: Thursday, March 7 and Thursday, April 25.**

Reasonable Accommodation

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that impacts your work in this class and for which you may require accommodation, please see a Coordinator in the Office for Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall). After you receive your accommodations letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible.

TITLE IX & Sexual Misconduct Policy

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination based on the gender of students and employees of educational institutions that receive federal financial assistance.

In accordance with Title IX and other applicable law, Louisiana State University (“LSU”) is committed to providing a learning, working, and living environment that promotes integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free of discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual misconduct which includes sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and retaliation. LSU prohibits sex discrimination and sexual misconduct. This policy applies to all persons without regard to sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.

Sex discrimination and sexual misconduct violate an individual’s fundamental rights and personal dignity. LSU considers sex discrimination and sexual misconduct in all of its forms to be serious offenses. This policy has been developed to reaffirm these principles and to provide recourse for individuals whose rights have been violated. This policy establishes a mechanism for determining when rights have been violated in employment, student life, campus support services, LSU programs and/or an academic environment.

Basic Needs Security

Students who have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lack a safe and stable place to live, are urged to contact the Office of the Dean of Students for support. You may also notify the professor if you are comfortable doing so. They should be able to help direct you to available resources on campus.

Learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students here:

<https://www.lsu.edu/deanofstudents/about/index.php>

LSU Speech and Debate Team

If you are student who may be interested in debate, public speaking, or acting/performance, then the LSU Speech and Debate Team is perfect for you! Speech and debate is an intercollegiate activity where students debate, interpret literature through oral performance, and write and perform their own persuasive and informative speeches! Membership is open to all LSU students and no prior experience is required. Our students travel to compete at other universities and colleges, produce performances and debates on campus, and curate community workshops. Students who’ve been affiliated with speech and debate programs find success from the courtroom to Hollywood! If interested check out our social media at: https://www.facebook.com/LSUSpeechDebate/?ref=br_rs. You can also visit our department website at: https://www.lsu.edu/hss/cmst/student_orgs/Speech_and_Debate_Team/mixon.php.

The Organization for Communication Studies (OCS)

is for any undergraduate LSU student interested in Communication Studies. Whether you are a CMST major, minor, or any student interested in Communication Studies, our goal is to create a network of students and faculty united by a shared interest in communication, a desire to better one’s self through interpersonal interactions, and a sense of duty to the CMST Department and local LSU Community. Members of OCS will have opportunities to meet with representatives from various businesses and institutions to receive career search tips and learn about areas such as hospitality, customer service,

recreation and tourism, sales and marketing, and various entry level trainee programs. OCS members will also participate in department events such as hosting the OCS Fall Kickoff, the Public Speaking Competition, and the annual department Awards Banquet. If you are interested in joining OCS, please email your request to: **Dr. Joni M. Butcher, Faculty Advisor:** jbutche@lsu.edu

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings	Activities	Due
1/10	Introductions			
1/15	Defining (Economic) Reality	[M] <i>Defining Economic Reality</i> (skim) [M] Jasinski, "Definition/Definition of the Situation" [M] Saas, "The Econo-Rhetorical Presidency"	Entry proposal assigned	
1/17	Rhetoric & Economics	[S] Preface & Chapter 1 [M] Carrillo and Myerson, "Taxpayer Money" [M] Together Louisiana, "Why Louisiana Stays Poor" (video)		
1/22	The Moment	[Y] Preface, Introduction, and "The Moment"		<i>Entry Proposal</i>
1/24	The March & the Speech	[Y] "The March" and "The Speech" [M] King, "Address at the March" (video)		
1/29	The Legacy	[Y] "The Legacy" [M] Sugrue, "Restoring King"	Entry rough draft assigned	
1/31	Legacies	[M] King, "Beyond Vietnam" [M] King, "Showdown"		
2/5	<i>King in the Wilderness</i>	[M] Terry, "MLK Now" [M] Ransby, "King in Context"	Film response assigned	
2/7	<i>King in the Wilderness</i>			
2/12	Civil Rights & Economic Justice	[M] Rustin, "From Protest to Politics" [M] Randolph Institute, "Freedom Budget"		<i>Film Response</i>
2/14	Coretta & the Poor People's Campaign	[M] Stein, "This Nation" [M] Poor People's Campaign, "Principles" and "History"		
2/19	Defining "Millennials"	[M] Hobbes, "Millennials are Screwed"		
2/21	Defining Neoliberalism	[M] Monbiot, "Neoliberalism" [M] Logan and Bruner, "The Supreme Court and Money as Speech"		<i>**Reminder: meet w/ Saas for entry discussion**</i>
2/26	<i>The 13th</i>	Readings TBD		<i>Entry Rough Draft</i>
2/28	<i>The 13th</i>			
3/5	Mardi Gras Break			
3/7	Entry workshop I	Bring two copies of entry rough draft to class	Peer editing assigned	<i>Film Response</i>
3/12	Entry workshop II	Bring comments on partner drafts	Oral presentation assigned	

3/14	Gray Lecture (3:30 p.m. in 339 Atchafalaya Room, Student Union)	[M] Shome, TBD	Lecture at 3:30p.m.	<i>Entry Peer Edits- Plan for Revisions</i>
3/19	Review day	Bring midterm study sheet to class.		
3/21	Midterm			
3/26	Defining Debt	[G] Chapter 1 [M] Lakoff, “Keeping the Moral Books”		
3/28	Defining Money	[G] Chapters 2 & 3		
4/2	<i>Boom, Bust, Boom</i>	[M] Wray, “Why Minsky Matters”		
4/4	Entry Presentations			<i>Departmental Assignment</i>
4/9	Entry Presentations			<i>Film Response</i>
4/11	Entry Presentations			
4/16-18	Spring Break			
4/23	Argumentative Dictionary Planning	Bring argumentative dictionary editing materials to class.		
4/25	Financial Futures	[M] Fullwiler et. al, “The Macroeconomic Effects of Student Debt Cancellation”		<i>Final Entry</i>
4/30	Final Exam Period (5:30-7:30p.m.)			