Syllabus
Senior Capstone in Communication
COMS 450
Tuesdays 6-10

Insofar as man is the "typically symbol-using animal," it should not be surprising that men's thoughts on the nature of the Divine embody the principles of verbalization. – Kenneth Burke

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Note
The purpose of this course is to examine the interrelationship between religion and communication. While this class is about religion as a general concept, there is a clear Judaic-Christian emphasis within this class because of the merging of Greco-Roman rhetorical theory and Judaic-Christian theology that occurs during the first through fourth centuries within the Roman Empire.

Course Assumption
The following assumptions are made regarding your preparation for being in the course:
This is a senior capstone in communication studies, so technically to be in this course you should be a senior communication major.

Required Readings

All required readings are on Blackboard. NOTE: this is the Athens Blackboard system, not the OU-Southern Blackboard system.

There are NO Required Texts, but Two Are Strongly Recommended:

Jost, W., & Olmsted, W. (Eds.). (2000). *Rhetorical invention & religious inquiry: New perspectives*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Burke, K. (1970). *The rhetoric of religion: Studies in logology.* Berkley, CA: University of California Press. (originally published in 1961)

 Important Websites:
American Psychological Association's Style website - http://www.apastyle.org
National Communication Association – http://www.natcom.org
Eastern Communication Association – http://www.ecasite.com
International Communication Association – http://www.icahdq.org/
Religious Communication Association - http://www.americanrhetoric.com/rca

James C. McCroskey, Ed. D. - http://www.jamescmccroskey.com/
Jason S. Wrench, Ed. D. - http://www.roadspeakers.com/jwrench/
Early Christian Writings – http://www.earlychristianwritings.com
Dictionary of Open Access Journals – http://www.doaj.org
Journal of Communication and Religion: http://www.americanrhetoric.com/rca/rcajournals.html

GRADING
Final grades in this course will be based on the following:

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	88-89
B	84-87
B-	80-83
C+	78-79
C	74-77
C-	70-73
D+	68-69
D	64-67
D-	60-63
F	59 and below

ASSIGNMENTS   **(% of points)**

- *Religious Leader Interview*   (15) _____

- *Rhetorical Analysis of a Religious Artifact*   (15) _____

- *Course Project*   (25) _____

- Examinations

          Midterm   (10) _____

          Final   (15) _____

- Course Preparation   (20) _____

- Extra Credit   (X) _____

                                TOTAL _____

- You should monitor your own grades. It is very helpful to know your standing in the course at any time during the quarter. Since the passing of the Buckley Amendment by Congress, I am not allowed to give grades over the phone or Internet. However, you may inquire about your grades at anytime in person. Additionally, you may inquire in person about your final exam grade after you have received your quarter grade reports through the mail from the university.

Course Procedures

Attendance

Punctual attendance is expected at all class sessions, *especially* on speech days. If you participate in University sponsored activities (e.g., intercollegiate sports), you must inform your instructor **_before_** you are absent. Ohio University policy regarding attendance will be followed. Students are responsible for all missed work.

Extra Credit is not guaranteed in this course, but if opportunities arise they will be announced in class.

Academic Integrity
Honesty and originality are expected in all the work you present in this class. Proper citation and documentation of others' work is required on all oral and written assignments. Plagiarism, cheating, or unethical behavior of any kind will not be tolerated.

American With Disabilities Act
Any student, who, because of a disability, may require some special arrangements as prescribed by Ohio University in order to meet course requirements should contact me as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. Accommodations will be made, but I must be aware of your needs in order to make proper accommodations.

Course Schedule
Please note the schedule given on the first day of class is a tentative schedule and changes can be made at the instructor's/course administrator's discretion. To keep on top of any possible changes in the course schedule, regular attendance in class is necessary.

Readings
While there is a lot to read in this class, the books are interesting and easy to read, so readings that are assigned should be read before you come to class. The readings in this class are either in your textbooks or on Blackboard in the Course Documents section under "readings."

Course Assignments

Midterm Examination and Final Examination

There are midterm and final examinations in this course. Your midterm will occur halfway through the course and the final will occur during the final testing period. The final will cover

ALL material discussed in this course. These tests will be short answer/essay tests.

Religious Leader Interview

The goal of this project is to interview a religious leader within the Ohio Valley from a religious faith not your own. During the course of your interview, you will engage your interviewee in her or his perception of the use of communication as a tool. Without leading your interviewee, you should attempt to see if your religious leader's perception of communication more generally and rhetoric more specifically is aligned with any of the classical thinkers. While your discussion could stay strictly with the religious leader's use of communication, you may expand your view and look at her or his perception of communication within the religious organization as well. This paper should be 5-7 pages using APA style utilizing the following format:

- Brief explanation of the interview.
- Explanation of the interviewee's religion & religious training.
- Explanation of the interviewee's training in communication/rhetoric.
- Interviewee's view on her or his use of communication/rhetoric in her or his profession.
- Interviewee's perception of the usefulness of communication/rhetoric in her or his profession.
- Your analysis of the interviewee's perception of communication.
- Comparison of your interviewee with classical notions of communication and religion.

Rhetorical Analysis of a Religious Artifact

Using the concepts explored by Kenneth Burke in *The Rhetoric of Religion: Studies in Logology* you are going to rhetorically analyze a religious artifact of your choosing. The religious artifact may be classical or pop-culture based. The artifact should be from a religion that you do not personally ascribe to in order to be the most open and aware of the rhetorical devices and implications within the text as possible. This paper should be 5-10 pages using APA style.

Course Project

Throughout the quarter you will undertake some type of major research project related to communication and religion. This project can take on many forms depending on your particular areas of interest in religion and communication. Possible project ideas could be an extended rhetorical analysis of a religious artifact, an examination of a specific historical figure that spent time writing on rhetoric and religion, or a qualitative/quantitative research project. These projects may be completed in groups (no more than 4 people). For each project, we will work together to create a contract between us on what you will accomplish during the project.

Course Preparation

During the first five weeks, I will be the primary teacher in this class. Starting in the 6th week, everyone will be responsible for teaching portions of the course. Primarily, everyone will prep one of the articles for that week for a 30-45 minute discussion/teaching session. More detail will be given during class.

Tentative Schedule of Course Events

Week Of	Content to be Covered
3/28/06	**The Two Legs of Western Thought: Greco-Roman Philosophy & Judaic Tradition**
DUE	
4/5/06	**Two Traditions Colliding**
DUE	
4/12/06	**The Influence and Legacy of St. Augustine of Hippo**
DUE	1 page project proposal
4/19/06	**The Rhetoric of Religion: Studies in Logology**
DUE	Religious Leader Interview
4/26/06	**Rhetoric and Hermeneutics**
DUE	
5/3/06	**Religious Rhetorical Thinkers After Augustine**
DUE	Midterm Examination
5/10/06	**Religious Communication as Communicative Performance**
DUE	Religious Artifact Analysis
5/17/06	**Applied Religious Communication in Health Care & Organizations**
DUE	
5/24/06	**Religious Communication and Pop Culture**
DUE	
5/31/06	**Social Scientific Approaches to Religious Communication**
DUE	
6/7/06	**Final Examination & Project Presentations**
DUE	On this day, the first half of the period you will take your Final Examination. When everyone has completed the examination, everyone will present their final projects.

Reading List

Week 1: The Two Legs of Western Thought: Greco-Roman Philosophy & Judaic Tradition

Kennedy, G. A. (1980). Judeo-Christian rhetoric. In, *Classical rhetoric and its Christian and secular tradition from ancient to modern times* (pp. 120-160). Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.

Smith, C. R. (1998). Christianity's impact on rhetoric. In, *Rhetoric and human consciousness: A history* (pp. 153-191). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland.

Week 2: Two Traditions Colliding

Cameron, A. (1991). How many rhetorics? The legacy of separation. In, *Christianity and the rhetoric of empire: The development of Christian discourse* (pp.15-46). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Ricoeur, P. (2000). *Naming* God (D. Pellauer, Trans). In W. Jost & W. Olmsted (Eds.), *Rhetorical invention & religious inquiry: New perspectives* (pp. 162-181). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Zebiri, K. (2003). Towards a rhetorical criticism of the Qur'an. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies, 5*, 95-120.

Week 3: The Influence and Legacy of St. Augustine of Hippo

St. Augustine. (1996). Book IV (E. Hill, Trans). In, *Teaching Christianity: De Doctrina Christiana* (pp.201-244). Hyde Park, NY: New City Press.

Olmsted, W. (2000). Invention, emotion and conversion in Augustine's *Confessions*. In W. Jost & W. Olmsted (Eds.), *Rhetorical invention & religious inquiry: New perspectives* (pp. 65-86). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Week 4: The Rhetoric of Religion: Studies in Logology

Burke, K. (1970). Introduction: On *theology* and *logology*. In, *The rhetoric of religion: Studies in logology* (pp. 1-6). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Original work published 1961)

Burke, K. (1970). On words and The Word. In, *The rhetoric of religion: Studies in logology* (pp. 7-42). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Original work published 1961)

Burke, K. (1970). Epilogue: Prologue in Heaven. In, *The rhetoric of religion: Studies in logology* (pp. 273-316). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Original work published 1961)

Booth, W. C. (2000). Kenneth Burke's religious rhetoric: "God-Terms" and the ontological proof. In W. Jost & W. Olmsted (Eds.), *Rhetorical invention & religious inquiry: New perspectives* (pp. 25-46). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Week 5: Rhetoric and Hermeneutics

Required

Silva, M. (1994). Who needs hermeneutics anyway? In, W. C. Kaiser, Jr., & M. Silva (Eds.), *An introduction to Biblical hermeneutics: The search for meaning* (pp. 14-25). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Kaiser, W. C., Jr. (1994). The meaning of meaning. In, W. C. Kaiser, Jr., & M. Silva (Eds.), *An introduction to Biblical hermeneutics: The search for meaning* (pp. 26-45). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Silva, M. (1994). Let's be logical: Using and abusing language. In, W. C. Kaiser, Jr., & M. Silva (Eds.), *An introduction to Biblical hermeneutics: The search for meaning* (pp. 46-65). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Kaiser, W. C., Jr. (1994). A short history of interpretation. In, W. C. Kaiser, Jr., & M. Silva (Eds.), *An introduction to Biblical hermeneutics: The search for meaning* (pp. 210-227). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Boone, K. C. (1989). Introduction. In, *The Bible tells them so: The discourse of Protestant fundamentalism* (pp. 5-15). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Jost, W., & Hyde, M. J. (1997). Rhetoric and hermeneutics: Places along the way. In, *Rhetoric and hermeneutics in our time: A reader* (pp. 1-42). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Gadamer, H. G. (1997). Rhetoric and hermeneutics (J. Weinsheimer, Trans.). In, *Rhetoric and hermeneutics in our time: A reader* (pp. 45-59). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Recommended (but not required)

Kaiser, W. C., Jr. (1994). Obeying the Word: The cultural use of the Bible. In, W. C. Kaiser, Jr., & M. Silva (Eds.), *An introduction to Biblical hermeneutics: The search for meaning* (pp. 172-191). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Silva, M. (1994). Contemporary approaches to Biblical interpretation. In, W. C. Kaiser, Jr., & M. Silva (Eds.), *An introduction to Biblical hermeneutics: The search for meaning* (pp. 228-249). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Boone, K. C. (1989). For reproof: Literal sense(s). In, *The Bible tells them so: The discourse of Protestant fundamentalism* (pp. 39-60). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Week 6: Religious Rhetorical Thinkers After Augustine

Smith, C. R. (1998). The Renaissance of rhetoric. In, *Rhetoric and human consciousness: A history* (pp. 194-233). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland.

Hoffman, M. (2000). Erasmus: Rhetorical theologian. In W. Jost & W. Olmsted (Eds.), *Rhetorical invention & religious inquiry: New perspectives* (pp. 136-161). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Darsey, J. (1997). Radical rhetoric and American community: Threnody for Sophrosyne. In, *The prophetic tradition of rhetoric in America* (pp. 1-12). New York: New York University Press.

Foucault, M. (1999). Pastoral power and political reason. In J. R. Carrette (Ed.), *Religion and culture: Michel Foucault* (pp. 135-152). New York: Routledge. (Reprinted from *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, vol. 2, S. J. McMurrin (Ed.), 1980, Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press)

Foucault, M. (1999). About the beginning of the hermeneutics of the self. In J. R. Carrette (Ed.), *Religion and culture: Michel Foucault* (pp. 135-152). New York: Routledge. (Reprinted from *Political Theory*, vol. 21 (2), 198-227, T. Keenan Trans., 1993)

Gunn, J. (2005). What is the Occult? In, *Modern occult rhetoric: Mass media and the drama of secrecy in the twentieth century* (pp. 3-26). Tuscaloosa, AB: The University of Alabama Press.

Gunn, J. (2005). Toward an Occult Poetics. In, *Modern occult rhetoric: Mass media and the drama of secrecy in the twentieth century* (pp. 36-52). Tuscaloosa, AB: The University of Alabama Press.

Gunn, J. (2005). The allegory of *The Ninth Gate*. In, *Modern occult rhetoric: Mass media and the drama of secrecy in the twentieth century* (pp. 204-229). Tuscaloosa, AB: The University of Alabama Press.

Week 7: Religious Communication as Communicative Performance

Fodor, J., & Hauerwas, S. (2000). Performing faith: The peaceable rhetoric of God's church. In W. Jost & W. Olmsted (Eds.), *Rhetorical invention & religious inquiry: New perspectives* (pp. 381-414). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Baesler, E. J. (1997). Interpersonal Christian prayer and communication. *Journal of Communication and Religion, 20*, 5-13.

Baesler, E. J. (1999). A Model of interpersonal Christian prayer. *Journal of Communication and Religion, 22*, 40-64.

Bruder, K. A. (1998). Monastic blessings: Deconstructing and reconstructing the self. *Symbolic Interaction, 21*, 87-116.

Graves, M. P. (1990). The clowning glory: Rationale and practical uses for religious Bozos. *Journal of Communication and Religion, 13*, 25-30.

Week : 8Applied Religious Communication in Health Care & Organizations

Health Communication (If Health Comm, focus on these articles)

Parrott, R. (2004). "Collective amnesia:" The absence of religious faith and spirituality in health communication research and practice. *Health Communication, 16*, 1-5.

Egbert, N., Mickley, J., & Coeling, H. (2004). A review and application of social scientific measures of religiosity and spirituality: Assessing a missing component in health communication research. *Health Communication, 16*, 7-27.

Parrott, R., Silk, K., Krieger, J. R., Harris, T., & Condit, C. (2004). Behavioral health outcomes associated with religious faith and media exposure about human genetics. *Health Communication, 16*, 29-45.

Soweid, R. A. A., Khawaja, M., & Salem, M. T. (2004). Religious identity and smoking behavior among adolescents: Evidence from entering students at the American University of Beirut. *Health Communication, 16*, 47-62.

Robinson, J. D., & Nussbaum, J. F. (2004). Grounding research and medical education about religion in actual physician-patient interaction: Church attendance, social support, and older adults. *Health Communication, 16*, 63-85.

Keeley, M. P. (2004). Final conversations: Survivors' memorable messages concerning religious faith and spirituality. *Health Communication, 16*, 87-104.

Harris, T. M., Parrott, R., & Dorgan, K. A. (2004). Talking about human genetics within religious frameworks. *Health Communication, 16*, 105-116.

Anderson, C. M. (2004). The delivery of health care in faith-based organizations: Parish nurses as promoters of health. *Health Communication, 16*, 117-128.

Long, M. (2004). The church's role in health and wholeness. *Health Communication, 16*, 129-130.

Organizational Communication (If Org Comm, focus on these articles)

Grant, D., O'Neil, K., & Stephens, L. (2004). Spirituality in the workplace: New empirical directions in the study of the sacred. *Sociology of Religion, 65*, 265-283.

Hall, D. (1998). Managing to recruit: Religious conversion in the workplace. *Sociology of Religion, 59*, 383-410.

Wilson, G. L., Keyton, J., Johnson, G. D., Geiger, C., & Clark, J. C. (1993). Church growth through member identification and commitment: A congregational case study. *Review of Religious Research, 34*, 259-272.

Dyck, B., Starke, F. A., Harder, H., & Hecht, T. (2005). Do the organizational structures of religious places of worship reflect their statements of faith? An exploratory study. *Review of Religious Research, 47*, 51-69.

Forward, G. L. (1999). Encountering the nonprofit organization: Clergy uncertainty and information seeking during organizational entry. *Journal of Communication and Religion, 22*, 190-213.

Hoge, D. R., Shields, J. J., & Soroka, S. (1993). Sources of stress experienced by Catholic priests. *Review of Religious Research, 35*, 3-18.

Courtright, J. L., & Hearit, K. M. (2002). The good organization speaking well: A paradigm case for religious institutional crisis management. *Public Relations Review, 28*, 347-360.

Huckins, K. D. (2002). Communication in religious lobbying: Making meaning, creating power. *Journal of Media and Religion, 1* (2), 121-134.

Week 9: Religious Communication and Pop Culture

Lewis, T. V. (2002). Religious rhetoric and the comic frame in *The Simpsons*. *Journal of Media and Religion, 1* (3), 153-165.

Gunn, J. (2005). Prime-time Satanism: Stock footage and the death of modern occultism. In, *Modern occult rhetoric: Mass media and the drama of secrecy in the twentieth century* (pp. 172-203). Tuscaloosa, AB: The University of Alabama Press.

Drumheller, K. (2005). Millennial dogma: A Fantasy Theme Analysis of the millennial generation's uses and gratifications of religious content media. *Journal of Communication and Religion, 28*, 47-70.

Zagano, P. (1990). Mediachurch: The presentation of religious information via media. *Journal of Communication &* Religion, 13, 40-44.

Livengood, M., & Book, C. L. (2004). Watering down Christianity? An examination of the use of theological words in Christian music. *Journal of Media and Religion, 3*, 119-129.

Campbell, H. (2005). Considering spiritual dimensions within computer-mediated communication studies. *New Media & Society, 7*, 110-134.

Other Reading (Non-Required)

Frobish, T. S. (2000). Altar rhetoric and online performance: Scientology, ethos, and the world wide web. *American Communication Journal, 4* (1), online available at: http://www.acjournal.org/holdings/vol4/iss1/articles/frobish.htm

Week 10: Social Scientific Approaches to Religious Communication

Stewart, R. A. (1994). Perceptions of a speaker's initial credibility as a function of religious involvement and religious disclosiveness. *Communication Research Reports, 11*, 169-176.

Stewart, R. A., & Roach, K. D. (1993). Argumentativeness, religious orientation, and reactions to argument situations involving religious versus nonreligious issues. *Communication Quarterly, 41*, 26-39.

Altemeyer, B. & Hunsberger, B. (1992). Authoritarianism, religious fundamentalism, quest, and prejudice. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion, 2*, 113-133.

Hughes, P. C. (2004). The influence of religious orientation on conflict tactics in interfaith marriages. *Journal of Communication and Religion, 27*, 245-267.

Joseph, S. A., Fr., & Thompson, T. L. (2004). The effect of vividness on the memorability and persuasiveness of a sermon: A test of the elaboration likelihood model. *Journal of Communication and Religion, 27*, 217-244.

Wrench, J. S., Corrigan, M . W., McCroskey, J. C., & Punyanunt-Carter, N. M. (in press). Religious fundamentalism and intercultural communication: The relationships among ethnocentrism, intercultural communication apprehension, religious fundamentalism, homonegativity, and tolerance for religious disagreements. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research, 31* (1).