Georgia Southern University, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

WRIT 4570 (WGST 3090/)

WRITING, RHETORIC, AND CULTURE

Spring 2015

Dr. Lori Amy

1201 Forest Drive

Email: lamy@georgiasouthern.edu / Office Phone: (912) 478-7342

Office Hours: TR: 12:30 – 3:00 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces you to theories of the inter-relationship of writing, rhetoric, and culture and provides you experience with analyzing and practice in using multiple forms of cultural texts. Using a multi-media approach (video, online, audio, artistic, and print texts), we will analyze the rhetorical strategies used in different cultural texts and how these texts shape and are shaped by cultural groups. In this process, we will investigate issues of race, class, gender, and sexual identity, as well as investigate discourses of culture, politics, exile, genocide, disaster, nationalism, and activism. We will use documentary film, websites, autobiographies, academic essays, fiction, articles, and poetry to explore the tension between dominant and counter-narratives in a global culture. We are particularly interested in understanding how our words reproduce or diffuse violence, oppression, and social injustice.

COURSE GOALS:

In this course, through rigorous independent reflections and productions, class discussion

and community practice, you will:

* learn about important aspects, terms, and issues related to writing, rhetoric,
* and culture.
* define terms and themes common to the study of writing and language.
* analyze the structure and the inner workings of writing and language.
* employ elements and conventions of writing as appropriate to various
* genres.
* conduct research in writing and linguistics using a variety of technological
* resources.
* explain the role of audience, purpose, and rhetorical strategy in writing.
* synthesize information from multiple sources.
* produce a written or visual project that synthesizes knowledge and skills in
* writing and linguistics.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

* John D. Ramage *Rhetoric: A User's Guide* (on order with the university book store)
* I will provide you a copy of Arben Theodhosi's Image of Experience, which is the only print text you will need for the course.
* The rest of our resources will be linked online for you or available as uploads in Folio.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

* Daily Discussion Board Postings 30%

Your success in this course depends on your deep thinking about the issues we are addressing. A primary "text" of the class is our discussion – as a community, we are co-producing knowledge. What you learn is not simply a matter of how YOU understand what you read, but, rather, an encounter with how you are able to speak about and hear other's perspectives about the issues and texts we discuss. This is the basis of an understanding of the interdependence of Writing, Rhetoric, and Culture.

* Mid-term 10%
* Annotated Bibliography 30%
* Final Project 30%

MISCELLANEOUS:

Respect

This course constitutes a community. Respect is integral to any functioning community, so I

expect you to show respect to your peers and to me. We will often discuss controversial

subject matter, and each of your classmates deserves to be heard respectfully. We will all

disagree at some point in the semester on a variety of topics – be sure that you respectfully

listen to others. This is the key to discussing difficult topics. Please keep this in mind

throughout the semester.

Also, I can’t help you succeed if you don’t keep the lines of communication open. If you are

having personal issues, work issues, etc. that are conflicting with this class and affecting your

performance—talk to me immediately. Don’t wait. I am here to help. If you disappear for 2

weeks without word, I am disinclined to help you.

Attendance

As a writing course built on community-- with group work, daily in-class discussions, and

workshops, collaboration is key and requires your presence in class, on time. 4 absences are

allowed without penalty. For each absence beyond, your engagement score will drop by 5

points. All absences are unexcused, including illness. If you have extended and diagnosed

illness during the semester, contact me immediately. Appointments, etc. should be scheduled

outside class time. Cell phones going off in class or excessive texting will count as one

absence. I won’t want to ask you to leave, but I will if you force me to … 

Americans with Disabilities Act

This class complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with

disabilities needing academic accommodations must:

* Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC):
* Provide a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating what your need may be for academic accommodation. This should be done within the first week of class. Students with these particular needs should contact the Student Disability Resource Center

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honesty Honor Code as published in

section 3 of the Georgia Southern University Student Conduct Code. Plagiarism is using source

material without attribution. Your academic integrity is damaged by plagiarism—it is

cheating to steal someone else’s work without giving them credit. A community functions

best when it is honest in its relations. You will fail any paper that you plagiarize, and you may

fail the course. Remember it takes longer to cheat in writing than it does to sit down and

write the darn paper.

Writing Center (Forest Drive Bldg) and Academic Success Center (Humanities

Bldg)

Don't forget that the University Writing Center (Forest Drive Bldg. 1119) is one of your

most important resources as a student at Georgia Southern! The consultants in the center

will give you one-on-one help with any paper you're working on for any class on campus,

including this one. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the feedback and advice

they can give you! Make an appointment ONLINE

(http://class.georgiasouthern.edu/writingc/ ), call for an appointment (478 -1413), or feel

free to just drop in.

Substance Abuse Problems: If you or someone you care about is having trouble with

abuse of a substance, please seek help and support. We have a new office on campus, the

Office of Alcohol and Other Drugs Programs: http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/aod/

A brief overview of how we will proceed – updated schedule of assignments and links to specific readings will be maintained in Folio – see Getting Started.

* Introduction: What is Writing? What is Rhetoric? What is Culture?
* Cultures and Rhetorics of War – Global Perspectives
* Micro-Cultures: Structural Violences and Local Rhetorics of Identity
* How Does Persecution Happen? Beni Theodhosi and Communist Albania
* Counter-Narratives: Rhetorical Possibilities
* Writing Your World: Strategies and Performances