

[English 411 :: Environmental Communications (The Rhetoric of Going Green)]

[Section 010]

Meeting Time and Location: M/W/F 10:10 – 11:00 am; 205 ISE

Instructor: Dr. Meg McGuire

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Office Hours: Mondays 2:30 to 4:00 pm, Tuesdays 11:30 am to 1:00 pm, or by appointment

[Required Texts]

- *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere*, Robert Cox. 3rd Edition
- Additional readings provided on Sakai

[Course Description]

This course examines the rhetorical theories and strategies within professional contexts, in this case, environmental discourse. By analyzing both scientific and popular environmental literature, as well as the various sides of this topic, you will have a better understanding of how communication is important and can impact the various discussions regarding environmental policies and practices. We will spend time looking at various case studies of both effective and ineffective environmental rhetoric. We will also examine environmental discourse in multiple modes including images, social media, websites, etc.

I do want to note that this class is not about becoming a “treehugger” or persuading others to go green. This class will be an objective study of how various audiences communicate about the environment.

[Course Objectives]

By the end of the semester you should be able to:

- Analyze and evaluate texts, images, etc. pertaining to environmental discourse
- To develop a strong, careful, correct professional style
- To communicate effectively in various media (written and oral, visual and verbal, paper and electronic, face-to-face and mediated)
- Practice effective research strategies, and integrate research correctly and ethically from credible sources
- Understand and apply components of the writing process such as planning, collaborating, organizing, composing, revising, and editing

[Course Policies]

Attendance:

A great deal of what we do in this course will build upon discussion and work done during class meetings. Therefore, **daily attendance is required for this class**. Please remember that it is your responsibility to find out from your peers what you missed in class. Contact me as soon as possible via email if you know you must absent. We will be many graded in-class assignments and these cannot be made up. **Excessive absences (six or more) will result in failure of the course.**

Extenuating Circumstances

If you become seriously ill, have a family emergency, or otherwise experience other extenuating circumstances during the semester **that constitute a legitimate reason for missing classes** or falling behind in the course, **let me know as soon as possible so we can try to resolve the issue**. You should also contact the Dean of your College. This office can assist you in notifying faculty and in validating your situation. You will need this validation to make up missed class work and assignments.

Tardiness:

At the beginning of each class I will call roll. If you come into class late and miss your name being called, you must come up to me at the end of class and let me know you were in class. **Otherwise you will be marked absent.**

Professionalism and Courtesy

All students are expected to conduct themselves professionally in the class and to treat the professor and other students with respect at all times. I expect you to be physically and mentally ‘present’—listen, contribute, and otherwise engage. Texting or carrying on a side conversation, surfing the net or checking FB instead of working is not acceptable in this class.

Late Work:

I do not accept late work. Assignments should be turned in on the date they are due. However, I do realize that life happens and that sometimes gets in the way of assignments. If this does happen, please let me know **BEFORE** the due date and we can work something out.

Technology:

If you own a laptop, I encourage you to bring it to class as I will often allocate class time for working on assignments. However, I will expect you to use your laptop like a professional who understands how to appropriately multi-task.

I ask that all your assignments be submitted through Sakai, unless otherwise specified. You will have until the end of class time of the due date to submit these assignments. Assignments must be attached as a .doc or PDF file. You will also need to include your last name and assignment name in the file name. For example, if I were turn in a research analysis, my assignment file name would look like this:

mcguire_infographic.doc

Any other file name will not be accepted and you may be marked down for turning in late work.

[Course Projects and Assignments]

Major assignments will include instructions and explanations of grading expectations for each project.

In and Out of-Class Assignments (15%):

Classroom discussions and activities are important in achieving the overall objectives of the course. Homework and in-class work will be included in the final course grade and will often build towards your final projects. Many of these assignments are graded and some are not, but all are mandatory and necessary to contribute to your success in this course. I also expect that you will meaningfully contribute to in-class discussion, whether it is large group discussions or small group work.

Twitter Responses (15%):

This class requires you to create and maintain a Twitter account throughout the semester. You will be engaging with the readings and each other on Twitter.

Infographic Project (20%):

You will present information about a specific environmental issue in an infographic. You will utilize texts, images and overall document design and create this infographic on Piktochart.

Medium Analysis (20%):

This assignment will be a 3-page analysis of mainstream media representation of the environmental movement. Writers will choose a medium that conveys environmental information and respond to questions of rhetorical situation, public discourse, information architecture.

Annotated Bibliography (30%):

You will investigate an environmental issue by examining 5 scholarly and scientific articles and 5 mainstream articles. This will include a summary of the articles, as well as what this information contributes to the topic being investigated. You will then compare and contrast each approach to information.

[University Writing Center]

The Writing Center in 016 Memorial provides free one-on-one instruction to students who have writing assignments in this or any course. You may make an appointment by visiting the Center's Web Site: www.cas.udel.edu/writing-center. (The telephone number is 831-1168.)

[Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)]

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please meet with me in the first or second week of the semester. Any student who may require an accommodation should contact me as soon as you become aware of your circumstances.

[Academic Misconduct/ Plagiarism]

The University of Delaware protects the rights of all students by insisting that individual students act with integrity. Accordingly, the University severely penalizes plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Unethical or plagiarized work will receive a zero and may result in failure of the course. I will also report any serious breach of ethics to the Dean of your College.

[Course Evaluation]

A final expectation of the course is for you to complete the on-line student evaluation. This survey will be available for you to complete during the last two weeks of the semester. Apart from being an expectation of the course, your evaluation provides valuable information to me and to the Department.

[Class Schedule]

[*Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere = ECPS*]

[Dates and activities may change]

Week One (August 27-30)

Introduction to class and environmental communication. Introduction to Twitter response assignment.

Week Two (September 2-6 – No class Monday, 9/2 for Labor Day)

Read Chapters 1, *ECPS*. Twitter responses.

Week Three (September 9-13)

Read Chapter 2, *ECPS*, *Informational Graphics: The Visual Dimensions* (found on Sakai). Twitter responses. Introduce Infographic Assignment

Week Four (September 16-20)

Read Chapter 3, *ECPS*. Read *Practices of Looking* (found on Sakai). Twitter responses. Continue working on Infographic Assignment.

Week Five (September 23-27)

Read Chapter 4, *ECPS*. Twitter responses. **Meet in MEM 028 Monday, September 23 :: Infographic Assignment peer review Friday, September 27**

Week Six (September 30 – October 4)

Read Chapter 5, *ECPS*. Twitter response. Introduction of Popular Media Analysis. **Infographic Assignment due Friday, 10/4.**

Week Seven (October 7-11)

Read Chapter 6, *ECPS*. Twitter response. Continue working on Popular Media Analysis

Week Eight (October 14-18)

Read Chapter 7, *ECPS*. Twitter response. **Medium Analysis peer review Friday, October 18.**

Week Nine (October 21-25)

Read Chapter 11, *ECPS*. Twitter Response. Introduction to Annotated Bibliography assignment. **Popular Media Analysis due Friday, October 25.**

Week Ten (October 28-November 1)

Read Chapter 12, *ECPS*. Continue working on Annotated Bibliography. Library?

Week Eleven (November 4-8)

Conferences

Week Twelve (November 11-15)
TBA

Week Thirteen (November 18-22)
TBA

Week Fourteen (November 25-29 – No class November 27 and 29)
Continue working on Annotated Bibliography

Week Fifteen (December 2-6)
Annotated Bibliography due. Wrap up semester.