Public Rhetoric and Practical Communication Online

Course Description:
This course in public rhetoric and practical communication in digital environments covers a wide range of potential genres, media, and audiences. We will study everything from Facebook profiles to video sharing sites as rhetorical spaces for public persuasion, commemoration, and comment. Students will do most of their graded writing to prepare for communication to public audiences beyond their undergraduate careers, which will include a personal statement, oral presentation with timed slides, online video essay, and undergraduate research portfolio demonstrating expertise.

Grade Breakdown:
Expertise Speech: 15% Synchronous and asynchronous presentation of 5 minute speech with 20 automatically timed slides delivered Ignite-style
Professional Narrative: 15% Document is 5300 characters in length
Online Curation Assignment: 15% - This will take the form of a collaborative online portfolio that demonstrates understanding of how to apply research and use references effectively
Class Participation: 30% Participation in synchronous and asynchronous online discussion, postings to forums, peer review activities, and other
Tests and Quizzes: 15% Short online responses to help you stay current in the course.
Short Writing Assignments: 10% For scaffolding longer assignments

Week One: Understanding Your Rhetorical Position
Overview, Rethinking Experiential Learning, Ethos, Logos, and Pathos

Week Two: Facilitating Meaningful Feedback
Different Forms of Feedback, The Sommers Study at Harvard, the Lunsford Study at Stanford, Self-Determination Studies, Research on Communities of Practice

Week Three: Building Your Public Reputation
Dimensions of Social Networks, Mediated Publics (Boyd), The Strength of Weak Ties (Granovetter), Hubs and Dependencies (Barabasi), The Contagion Model (Fowler), Trust and Cooperative Culture (Benkler), Kairos

Week Four: Composing with a Purpose
Social Advertising, The Noisy Channel, Speech Act Theory, Display, Transparency, Narrowcasting, and Curation

Week Five: Appealing to Audiences
Aristotle’s Means of Persuasion, Burke’s Triangle

Week Six: Practicing for Effective Delivery
How Do We Understand Information? Doing Compelling Public Talks
The Horizon of Expectations

Week Seven: Developing Graphicacy
Typography, Composition, Color Theory, Digital Standards

Week Eight: Claiming Expertise
Knowledge, Skills, and Expertise

Week Nine: Working Collaboratively and Using Evidence
Week Ten: Anticipating New Genres