

School of Communication University of Miami

COS 591/691 (Special Topics)

Civil Discourse in an Uncivil Time

Summer A Intersession, 2018 (WCB 4027)

Saturday	5/11	9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Tuesday	5/14	6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Wednesday	5/15	6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Thursday	5/16	6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Saturday	5/18	9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Monday	5/20	6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Tuesday	5/21	6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Wednesday	5/22	6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Thursday	5/23	6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

*Class meetings occur during the inclusive dates of the intersession, however projects and individual meetings will continue until the end of the regular Summer I semester)

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<http://www.miami.edu/com>

Office Hours:

SYLLABUS

**THIS COURSE IS AVAILABLE FOR BOTH GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS!
THIS IS A WRITING (W) COURSE!**

This course may not constitute credit toward UM Communication Degrees for UM Communication degree seeking students, except as approved by individual program area directors on an exceptional case basis.

Course Description: Kenneth J. Gergen describes civil discourse as "the language of dispassionate objectivity", and suggests that it requires respect of the other participants, such as the reader or audience. It neither diminishes the other's moral worth, nor questions their good judgment; it avoids hostility, direct antagonism, or excessive persuasion; it requires modesty and an appreciation for the other participant's experiences. Yet, norms in contemporary public sphere argumentation and rhetoric frequently employ otherizing disrespect and hostility. This course will explore public discourse with a primary focus on speeches, debates, and public statements including interviews and press conferences as well as public use of social media space to examine history, norms, trends, practice, impact and the future of civility and inclusion in social space. Students will learn to critically analyze oratory as they experience it, with attention to community building, generation of common understanding, and problem solving efficacy. In addition, students will engage in experiential learning through practice in speechwriting and debating.

Course Objectives: At the end of this course, the student should be better able to:

- Recognize and value the benefits of Civil Discourse in democratic institutions and communities and explore the consequences of its absence

- Trace the history and contributors to the recent diminishment of civility in public discourse
- Consider structural, psychological, and technological variables which lead to uncivil discourse
- Learn to use language and communication practices to enhance engagement, collective problem solving, and community building
- Prepare and present effective manuscript speeches
- Participate in debates in which opposing ideas are challenged respectfully and rationally
- Organize, develop and support ideas with evidence and logical reasoning; conduct research to support and develop ideas; critically evaluate sources of information and opinions
- Explore ways in which rules of civility have contributed to hegemony as opposed to expanding agency of repressed voices
- Undertake a serious exchange of views, focusing on issues rather than the individuals espousing them

COURSE PREREQUISITES: none

MATERIALS FEES: none

ASSIGNMENTS/COURSEWORK:

The course will be organized in a workshop format. During each class meeting, lecture material will introduce the student to a topic related to civil discourse and one or more techniques of communication employing constructive strategies of inclusion. Students will work individually and in teams to employ rhetorical and argumentative strategies to prepare speech manuscripts, debates, written statements, and other communications which represent best practices. Students will always present their work, for discussion and feedback. Completed work will comprise journals and portfolios of student work.

Specific activities include (but may not be limited to) some of the following as determined by time and interest of the class and/or the instructor (i.e., subject to change):

1. Prepared speeches (length determined by time and number of students enrolled)
2. Participation in Debates
3. Preparation of e-communication and participation in a class network
4. Participation. includes in-class critiques of classmates' work, participation in group work, exercises, discussions and debates, quizzes, attendance, comments in class, impromptu speeches, general positive contribution to organizational culture of class, and homework assignments. Attendance is expected and will be recorded once during each class.
5. Undergraduate Paper. Eight-hundred word (typed, 12-point font, standard margins, double spaced, APA format) critique of a speech, debate or other approved communication artifact.
6. Graduate Project: Graduate students will write a Speech Manuscript of at least 10 minutes in length, AND, a 10-12 paper term paper analyzing an artifact which reflects uncivil discourse.

TEXTS (recommended):

Anderson, Chris. *TED Talks: the Official TED Guide to Public Speaking*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017. ISBN 9781328710284.

Lehrman, Robert. (2010). *The Political Speechwriter's Companion: A Guide for Writers and Speakers*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press. ISBN-10: 1604265493.

Noonan, P. (1999). *On speaking well: how to give a speech with style, substance, and clarity*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial. ISBN-10: 0060987405.

Perlman, A. M. (1998). *Writing great speeches: professional techniques you can use*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. ISBN 0-205-27300-9.

Strunk, William, and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. Pearson New International Edition, 2014. ISBN 020530902X.

Useful Links

<https://www.ted.com/>
<https://www.themoth.org/>
<http://americanrhetoric.com/index.htm>
<http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/previous.htm>
<http://www.greatamericandocuments.com/speeches/>
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-and-remarks>
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/medialist.php?presid=43>
<http://list25.com/25-speeches-that-changed-the-world/>
<http://gos.sbc.edu/>
<http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/series/greatspeeches>
<http://www.powerfulwords.info/speeches/>
<https://www.esquire.com/entertainment/g3344/best-commencement-speeches-of-all-time/>
<https://apps.npr.org/commencement/>

GRADING/EVALUATION: The course grade will be distributed as follows:

COS 591		COS 691	
manuscripts	60 %	Manuscripts	20 %
presentations	10 %	presentations	10%
participation	20 %	participation	20 %
paper	10 %	Paper	50 %

Consistent with the university scale, an “A” reflects excellent attainment, and is reserved for the most outstanding work in the class. A “B” reflects good attainment, better than most in class. A “C” reflects average attainment for a well qualified university student. A “D” reflects below average attainment, and an “F” reflects failure. Pluses and minuses reflect strongest and weakest performances within these categories.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: **Is expected and will be recorded. May contribute to participation grade.** Excessive unexcused absences will negatively impact your course grade. It is better to be late than absent, and of course, better to be on time all the time. The percentage of class time during which you are present will comprise a numerical score which will be averaged with quality of blog contributions and in-class participation to calculate the participation score.

HONOR CODE AND PLAGIARISM:

Students enrolled in this course are expected to abide by the University of Miami Honor Code. The purpose of the Honor Code is to protect the academic integrity of the University by encouraging consistent ethical behavior in assigned coursework. Academic dishonesty of any kind, for whatever reason, will not be tolerated.

No honest student wants to be guilty of the intellectual crime of plagiarism, even unintentionally. Therefore, we provide you with these guidelines so that you don't accidentally fall into the plagiarism trap.

Plagiarism is the taking of someone else's words, work, or ideas, and passing them off as a product of your own efforts. Plagiarism may occur when a person fails to place quotation marks around someone else's exact words, directly rephrasing or paraphrasing someone else's words while still following the general form of the original, and/or failing to issue the proper citation to one's source material.

In student papers, plagiarism is often due to...

- turning in someone else's paper as one's own
- using another person's data or ideas without acknowledgment
- failing to cite a written source (printed or internet) of information that you used to collect data or ideas
- copying an author's exact words and putting them in the paper without quotation marks
- rephrasing an author's words and failing to cite the source
- copying, rephrasing, or quoting an author's exact words and citing a source other than where the material was obtained. (For example, using a secondary source which cites the original material, but citing only the primary material. This misrepresents the nature of the scholarship involved in creating the paper. If you have not read an original publication, do not cite it in your references as if you have!)
- using wording that is very similar to that of the original source, but passing it off as one's own.

The last item is probably the most common problem in student writing. It is still plagiarism if the student uses an author's key phrases or sentences in a way that implies they are his/her own, even if s/he cites the source.

All work submitted for this course should be the original work of the student(s) completed during this semester. Work must be original to this course and only this course and completed independently without outside assistance except when openly attributed. Previously completed work, work completed as a part of a team except as assigned in the course, work completed for other courses or activities including intercollegiate debate or other competitions are not acceptable for the requirements of this class. The consequence for violation may be a failed grade on an assignment up to course failure.

In-Class behavior. Treat all fellow students and the Instructor with **respect!** Please **turn off cell phones** and any other non-essential electronic devices except when devices are engaged in class activity. **Laptops** may **not** be **on-line**. (exceptions to these rules may be offered when technology is utilized for class exercises.) No headphones. Ethical behavior includes using **appropriate** and **inclusive language**, cooperative behavior, and supportive and open communication habits whenever in class or in interaction with class members.

Students, employees, and parents can call the University of Miami Rumor Control Hotline for the latest information at **305-284-5151**. Outside the local area, call **1-800-227-0354**. For the latest updates on University of Miami activities, and to learn more about how the University *prepares for an emergency*, visit www.miami.edu/prepare.

Religious Holy Day Policy

It is the student's obligation to provide faculty members with notice of the dates they will be absent for religious holy days, preferably before the beginning of classes but no later than the end of the first three class days. Absences due to observance of religious holy days not pre-arranged within the first three class days may be considered unexcused and there is no obligation to allow any make up work, including examinations. Missing a class due to travel plans associated with a particular religious holy day does not constitute an excused absence. The University's complete Religious Holy Day Policy can be found in the 2017-2018 *Bulletin*.

COURSE TOPICS OUTLINE

session	Topic
1	The Rhetorical Perspective, Classical Views
2	Building Ethos
3	Building Logos, Presidential Policy Speeches
4	Building Pathos
5	Telling Stories, Narrative Speeches
6	Debates
7	Social Networks
8	Building Identification
9	Building Positive Enthusiasm

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I HAVE RECEIVED AND READ THE SYLLABUS FOR COS 591/691, Special Topic: **Civil Discourse in an Uncivil Time**. I HAVE COMPLETED THE PREREQUISITE COURSES LISTED IN THE SYLLABUS OR HAVE HAD THE PROFESSOR SIGN BELOW TO CERTIFY A WAIVER OF THE PREREQUISITES.

SIGNED: _____

PRINT NAME: _____

DATE: _____

PROFESSOR PREREQUISITE WAIVER (IF NEEDED) _____