

COMS 3319: Persuasion and Social Movements

Spring 2019

Section S01: TR 3:30 p.m. – 4:50 p.m. M&C 255

Professor: Dr. Langford

Office: M&C 1016

Office Hours: TR 11:30 a.m. – 12:25 p.m. & 1:50 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.

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“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” ~ First Amendment

REQUIRED TEXT

Catherine L. Langford, *Communicating Protest: The Fight for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties in American Social Movements* (Dubuque, IA: Great River Learning). Available at: www.grtep.com

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

Since the founding of our nation, persons have participated in social movements in order to increase liberty, equality, justice, and freedom. People have organized in support of race, class, gender, and political issues. This course will examine the nature and structure of 20th and 21st century social movements, as well as how they operate as communicative and rhetorical entities. This course will also consider the ways in which institutions seek to repress social movements. We will consider questions about the organization or movements, how do movements mobilize, how do movements define interests and frame issues, and what kinds of affects do they have on society? We will include a variety of movements, including feminist movements, civil rights movements, human rights movements, reproductive rights movements, lesbian and gay movements, and labor movements. We will also consider the ways in which these movements intersect with political branches of government (legislative, executive, bureaucratic) and the courts.

Your college degree is not just a credential or a ticket to upward mobility. It is a privilege that should prepare you for a life of service to others, one part of which is active citizenship.

Active citizens read a daily newspaper and expose themselves to a variety of different points of view on public issues. A good way to follow current issues is to read some of the many fine journals of opinion in the United States, including (on the conservative side of the political spectrum) *National Review*, *The American Conservative*, and *The Weekly Standard*; (in the center) *The New Republic*; and (on the left) *The Nation* and *The American Prospect*. An excellent source for news and opinion (including frequent debates) is the online magazine Slate: <http://slate.msn.com>

The objective of the humanities in a core curriculum is to expand the student’s knowledge of the human condition and human cultures, especially in relation to behaviors, ideas, and values expressed in works of human imagination and thought. Through study in disciplines such as literature and philosophy, students will engage in critical analysis and develop an appreciation of the humanities as fundamental to the health and survival of any society.

This course satisfies the Texas Tech University core curriculum requirements in humanities.

COMPETENCY STATEMENT

Students graduating from Texas Tech University should be able to: think critically, demonstrate an understanding of the possibility of multiple interpretations, cultural contexts, and values.

LEARNING OUTCOMES & ASSESSMENTS

Students completing this course should be able to:

1. Understand the structures and functions of social movements.
Assessment: Exams, Service Learning Reflection Activities, Participation
2. Understand and analyze the communicative, rhetorical, and persuasive functions of social movements.
Assessment: Exams, Service Learning Reflection Activities, Participation
3. Understand how institutions operate to suppress social movements.
Assessment: Exams, Service Learning Reflection Activities, Participation
4. Critically examine a variety of social movements.
Assessment: Exams, Service Learning Reflection Activities, Participation

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

The information that you will learn in this course will be immensely helpful to you in your everyday life. It is my hope that you will fully prepare for each class, so that you can take as much new knowledge with you when you leave the

course at the end of the term. Please note that while I will present new information to you and serve as a facilitator for class discussions, you, ultimately, are responsible for your own education.

ATTENDANCE

Students perform better in the course when they attend class. You are allowed up to 3 unexcused absences for any reason over the course of the semester. However, I am not responsible for providing you with information (course content or assignments) presented in class. I will send around an attendance sheet for you to initial. I do this for several reasons, one of which is to have a “date of last attendance” for students who do not complete the course. If you will be absent, you should contact me (via email is fine) to let me know about your absence in advance. More than 3 absences will lower your grade. For every absence over the 3 unexcused absences, you will lose half a letter grade (35 points) from your final point total.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Several studies have suggested that laptops in the classroom undermine the educational experience rather than enhance it. For this reason I now ban the use of laptops in the classroom. Although different students learn in different ways, if you are like most students, you will follow class discussion better, remember the material better, and get more out of each class if you do not bring a laptop to class. For a brief summary of the benefits of handwritten notes, see: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/national/wp/2014/08/26/ditch-the-laptop-and-pick-up-a-pen-class-researchers-say-its-better-for-note-taking/> For similar reasons I expect not to see cellular devices out in the classroom.

ADA STATEMENT

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. Students should present appropriate verification from AccessTECH. No requirements exist that accommodations be made prior to the completion of this approved university procedure.

HOLY DAY

Texas House Bill 256 requires institutions of higher education to excuse a student from attending classes or required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day. The student shall also be excused for time necessary to travel. An institution may not penalize the student for the absence and allows for the student to take an exam or complete an assignment from which the student is excused. No prior notification to the instructor is required. (Although prior notification would be appreciated.)

ASSESSMENTS

All assignments and presentations are due on the assigned due date. They are due at the beginning of class. Reading assignments must be completed before coming to class and students are expected to be prepared to discuss each reading. All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, and follow a standard citation format (Chicago, APA, or MLA). All assignments should be stylistically and grammatically appropriate for each assignment. Slang phrases and other forms of popular parlance are not effective ways to express professional ideas or educated concepts. Be sure that you have (and save until after the semester is over) hard copies of your work.

Exams

Three exams will be given this semester. **100 points each; 300 points total**

Service Learning 200 points total

As part of the field research for this class, you are expected to have ongoing participation in some community or school-based project engaged in popular mobilization to bring about social change. Social movements work from grassroots movements; therefore in order to facilitate experiential learning you will need to participate in a movement to end hunger. Social movements also help to develop social consciousness. Following Maslow’s Hierarchy, if an individual’s physiological needs are not met (if they have no place to live or nothing to eat), that person will not be concerned with his or her belonging, esteem, or self-actualization needs. This class is concerned with helping at-risk people groups meet each level of needs in Maslow’s Hierarchy (depending upon which at-risk group you are working with in which capacity).

During your service learning experiences, you need to pay particular attention to how your community partner dramatizes its problem, how it tries to attract new volunteers and resources, who has power in the organization and why, who is disenfranchised, and how this experience is similar to, or different from, the social movements we learn about in class. You should also pay attention to how other organizations in the community communicate about the issue you are working with in response. Is this an issue considered by any governmental organizations (control agents)? What struggles does your community partner need to

overcome? What are the strengths of the message of your community partner and what would you suggest as different communication strategies?

Reflective Journaling

The reflection journaling prompts will be completed via a Word document posted to Blackboard. Periodically throughout the semester you will need to respond to a series of questions. These questions will ask you to indicate where you worked and what you did, as well as to: compare your experience to what you have learned about in lecture or your readings, to look at the people in power in the setting that you are in as well as those individuals who could be considered disenfranchised, and to process the issue you are working with, social and structural processes or systems that contribute to hunger and poverty, as well as the function of the individual, the community, and the government in ameliorating those problems. You also will be asked in what ways your experience is similar to, or different from, social movements considered in class. You will also need to reflect upon the communication strategies employed by your community partner in order to reach and to educate the community about your issue in Lubbock County.

10 hours of volunteering: 100 points

Each reflective journaling assignment: 20 points each (100 points total)

Alternative Activity

* This is a "S" designated course, which means that it is a service learning course. All students are expected to participate in the service learning component in some fashion. If, for an extraordinary circumstance, you are unable to participate you need to see me within the first week of class. In conjunction with me you will select a research project to produce a 20-25 page analysis of a social movement. In your analysis you will need to include a consideration of the following: (1) the purpose or goals of the movement, (2) the major actors in the movement, (3) major activities or organized social protests of the movement, (4) how the movement rhetorically communicated its message to the public, (5) and the ways in which the movement has effected social change.

Quizzes

You will need to complete quizzes that are available through the textbook. You will need to complete quizzes for 10 out of 11 chapters. The quizzes need to be completed prior to the topic scheduled for that day. Meaning: you need to read the chapter and answer the questions prior to the topic being discussed.

100 points

Participation 100 points

This class is going to function as a seminar-like class. That means that you need to read the material and reflect on questions and contribute to class discussion in a substantive fashion. I will bring notecards to class with your name on it. If you are in class and able to respond to the question(s), I will note that. If you are in class and cannot respond to the question(s), I will note that. If you are absent and unable to respond to the question(s), I will note that. In addition, chronic tardiness will impact your participation grade.

GRADE SCALE

A = 630 – 700 B = 560 – 629 C = 490 – 559 D = 420 – 489 F = 0 – 419

LATE WORK

All assignments, presentations, papers, and exams must be completed as scheduled. Late or makeup work will not be accepted unless you are given permission prior to the due date. However, simply notifying the instructor of an upcoming absence does not necessarily mean that you will be excused. All late work is subject to the instructor's discretion regarding acceptance. If accepted, work will be deducted by one or more letter grade(s). Failure to show up for an exam or presentation may result in a failing grade for the assignment.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

I will uphold the standards of academic honesty as stated in the TTU Student Handbook. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with this policy. Each student is expected to uphold these standards. Every student is to submit independent and original work. "Academic Dishonesty" includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or source citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting another person's work as your own, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Anyone needing further clarification as to these standards is encouraged to meet with me.

DAILY SCHEDULE (tentative):

<u>Date</u>	<u>Due</u>	<u>Agenda for Class</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
Jan 17		Intro to Course & Social Movements (SMs) Definitions & Characteristics Rights and Rights Consciousness The Politics of Rights	Introduction Chapter
Jan 22		Persuasive Functions of SMs Stages of SMs SMs as Communicative Events The Rhetoric of Agitation & Control	Introduction Chapter
Jan 24		Abolition	Abolition Chapter
Jan 29	Name of SL Organization Reflection Journal #1	Abolition, cont.	Abolition Chapter
Jan 31		Suffrage	Suffrage Chapter
Feb 5		Suffrage, cont.	Suffrage Chapter
Feb 7		Labor Movement	Labor Chapter
Feb 12		Exam #1 Introduction, Abolition, Suffrage	None
Feb 14	Reflection Journal #2	Labor Movement, cont.	Labor Chapter
Feb 19		Civil Rights	Civil Rights Chapter
Feb 21		Civil Rights, cont.	Civil Rights Chapter
Feb 26		Civil Rights, cont.	Civil Rights Chapter
Feb 28		Free Speech Movement	Free Speech Chapter
Mar 5	Reflection Journal #3	Free Speech Movement, cont.	Free Speech Chapter
Mar 7		Peace / Anti-War	
Mar 12		No Class—Spring Break	
Mar 14		No Class—Spring Break	Peace Chapter
Mar 19		Peace / Anti-War, cont.	Peace Chapter
Mar 21	Reflection Journal #4	Women’s Liberation	Feminism Chapter
Mar 26		Exam #2 Labor, Civil Rights, Free Speech, Peace/Anti-War	Feminism Chapter
Mar 28		Women’s Liberation, cont.	Feminism Chapter
Apr 2		Women’s Liberation, cont.	Feminism Chapter
Apr 4		Pro-Life / Pro-Choice	Pro-Life Chapter
Apr 9	Reflection Journal #5 SL Hours Due	Pro-Life / Pro-Choice	Pro-Life Chapter
Apr 11		Pro-Life / Pro-Choice, cont.	Pro-Life Chapter
Apr 16		Queer Rights	Gay Rights Chapter
Apr 18		Queer Rights, cont.	Gay Rights Chapter
Apr 23		Human Rights	Human Rights Chapter
Apr 25		Human Rights, cont.	Human Rights Chapter
Apr 30		Exam #3 Women’s Lib, Pro-Life/Pro-Choice, Queer Rights, Human Rights	None
May 2		Discussion: Contemporary SMs	None
May 7		Course Conclusion	None

FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE: No final exam is scheduled.

***** Your continued enrollment in this class signifies your knowledge of and agreement to comply with the guidelines, policies, and requirements contained in this syllabus. *****