Commun 335: Critical Analysis of Communication

Dr. John Jordan
Office: JOH 235
email: jjordan@uwm.edu

Required Texts

• All required readings and lecture materials will be available on the class Canvas site.
• There are no textbooks to purchase for this class.

Course Description
This course is an introduction to the methods of critical analysis of communication, and is designed to enhance your ability to function as an effective critical thinker and consumer of public discourse. The aim of the course is to provide you with tools for moving from your first encounter with a communicative text to producing an informed and articulate critique of that text. Specifically, we will focus on understanding the textual elements of rhetor, situation, and audience, and the strategies and obstacles that emerge from them. Case studies of significant rhetorical acts will be used to make course concepts tangible. You will develop an understanding of the nature and function of strategic communication in various outlets as a pragmatic tool used to communicate ideas, persuade audiences, and influence communal values. The final project in the class will require you to demonstrate your own critical thinking and research skills through a written analytical essay.

Course Requirements (Graded)

• Online discussion participation
• Two analytical essays

The two essays have specific time and date deadlines for being turned in. Apart from those, the class largely is self-paced. Materials are accessed as pdf and video downloads that can be read and watched offline.

A complete syllabus will be distributed to all enrolled students no later than the first day of class.