Politics 328W
Political Metaphors
Course Web Page: http://www.willamette.edu/~mmarks/poli-328.html

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Spring Semester 2016
TuTh 9:40–11:10
Walton, Room 21
MWF: 10:15–11:15, TuTh 8:30–9:40,
and by appointment

Course Description

This course provides an opportunity for students to critically interrogate the use of metaphors in political discourse. Metaphors often are deployed by individuals inside and outside government to frame political issues, shape policy debates, influence public discourse, and persuade government officials and the population at large to act in specified ways. Through readings, in-class discussion, and extended writing students will investigate political metaphors and their role in politics around the world. An integral element of the course will involve regular opportunities during class sessions to discuss metaphors that appear in contemporary political discourse.

This class fulfils in part the writing-centered component of Willamette’s undergraduate general education requirements. The main writing project is an analytical essay that will be developed over multiple drafts. Therefore, this course provides an excellent opportunity for Politics majors to prepare for their senior theses in these majors.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between metaphors and politics.
2. Identify political metaphors.
3. Explain the impact of political discourse on the practice of politics.
4. Write a research paper that is well written, well organized, states a clear and cogent thesis, and that is supported by logical arguments and relevant evidence.

Time Commitment for This Course

Willamette’s Credit Hour Policy holds that for every hour of class time there is an expectation of 2–3 hours work outside of class. Thus, for a class meeting three hours a week such as this one you should anticipate spending 6–9 hours outside of class engaged in course-related activities. For this course you should allocate your time among the following three activities: Reading the assigned texts, reading newspapers and/or online news resources on topics relevant to the class, researching and writing the multiple drafts of the research paper.

Course Organization

Classroom format will consist of a combination of instructor-led lessons and student discussions. Class attendance is mandatory. Given the collaborative nature of the research paper process, students are expected to participate in offering guidance and feedback to their peers. Peer editing is a requirement of this writing-centered class. In addition, attendance at other students’ oral presentations is mandatory. The instructor thus reserve the right to raise final grades for superior classroom participation, and lower final grades for unpreparedness, disruptiveness, and deficient classroom attendance.
Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Laptop computers can assist in note taking and wireless Internet access on campus can aid in organized classroom exercises. However, electronic devices can also be a classroom distraction. Laptop computers are permitted in class for note taking purposes. Additionally, there may be occasions when the class as a whole may want to use the campus wireless network to look things up online. However, please refrain from checking e-mail, online chatting, websurfing, game playing, etc. during class. If you are observed doing so during class time, you will asked to no longer bring your laptop to class. Additionally, cell phones should be turned off prior to class.

Accommodations

Students requiring accommodation should contact the Office of Disability & Learning Services (Baxter Hall, Phone: 503-370-6471, TTY: 503-375-5383) for consultation and to make the necessary arrangements.

Written and Oral Assignments

The main written assignment for this course is an iterated analytical essay utilizing course readings, additional theoretical literature as necessary, and empirical evidence in the form of historical or current events involving political discourse specifically focusing on political metaphors. Empirical evidence for the paper can be acquired simply by reading daily news accounts of politics and policy. Additionally, students can find ample information about political discourse, politics, and policy through books and articles readily available in the Hatfield Library and online as well as newspaper and other news organization archives also readily available via library and online resources.

The theme of the paper should elaborate on how political metaphors frame political issues, shape policy debates, influence public discourse, and persuade government officials and the population at large to act in specified ways. Students will choose a metaphor from history or current events that occurs prominently in political discourse and which conceptualizes an issue as part of an ongoing political debate. Students will then show how this conceptual metaphor shapes politics in terms of making an issue prominent, formulating policy, and bringing about political outcomes. More information on how to craft a thesis for the analytical paper can be found in a separate hand-out provided by the instructor (also available online).

There is no required minimum or maximum length for each draft of the paper. There is an old adage (variously attributed to Abraham Lincoln or J. D. Salinger) that, in answer to the question “how long should a man’s legs be?,” the answer is “long enough to reach the ground.” In other words, your paper should be long enough to accomplish its task (no longer, and no shorter). Having said that, it is most likely that a good first draft will range between 2000 and 4000 words (7 to 13 pages), a good second draft probably will fall into the 3000 to 5000 word range (10 to 17 pages), and a good final draft most will most likely run between 4000 to 6000 words (13 to 20 pages), all give or take. Each draft of the paper should include a title (on a title page), an abstract, and a bibliography.

Students will also be required to make an oral presentation of their paper to the rest of the class.

Additional information about the paper and oral presentation will be made available on a separate hand-out provided by the instructor.
Grading and Policy on Academic Honesty

Incompletes will only be given under exceptional circumstances such as serious illness. You may appeal any of your grades during office hours only after you have handed in a typed, reasoned memorandum detailing the specific reasons why you think the grade you received is not justified.

Late writing assignments will be assessed a one-third grade penalty per day (e.g., a B+ paper handed in a day late receives a B). Early submissions of assignments are gladly accepted. Notice that some of the essays are due on a Monday.

The final grade will be determined as follows: First draft 25%; Second draft 30%; Final draft 35%; Oral presentation 10%.

Everything you turn in must be your own written work. You may not copy, borrow, or appropriate other authors’ work. Reference to other people’s ideas must include attribution. All references to other authors’ work must be fully documented in the form of citations and/or footnotes, and direct quotes must be indicated as such with quotation marks. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be pursued vigorously and appropriate penalties (including an “F” for the course) will be applied.

Required Readings

Students should purchase the following book:


Course Schedule and Weekly Reading Assignments

January 19–21: Introduction

No Readings

January 26–28: Metaphors and Political Discourse

BEER & LANDTSHEER: Introduction by Beer & Landtsheer (pages 5–52) and Conclusion (pages 261–264)

February 2–4: Cold War Metaphors in American Political Discourse

BEER & LANDTSHEER: Chapters by Gregg (pages 59–73) and Shimko (pages 199–215)

February 9–11: Issues in Political Metaphors

Students should bring to class for each class session this week at least one news article (from a newspaper, news magazine, or online news source) about a recent or current issue involving political metaphors.

February 16–18: Metaphors and Political Identities

BEER & LANDTSHEER: Chapters by Ivie (pages 75–90) and Anderson (pages 91–108)

FEBRUARY 22: FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER DUE
February 23–25: Metaphors and War & Peace

BEER & LANDTSHEER: Chapters by Herbeck (pages 121–139) and Beer & Boynton (pages 141–161)

March 1–3: Issues in Political Metaphors

Students should bring to class for each class session this week at least one news article (from a newspaper, news magazine, or online news source) about a recent or current issue involving political metaphors.

March 8–10: Metaphors and Change

BEER & LANDTSHEER: Chapters by De Landtsheer & De Vrij (pages 163–189) and Rosati & Campbell (pages 217–236)

MARCH 14: PEER-EDITING DRAFT OF PAPER DUE

March 15–17: Peer Editing

Peer editing activities.

March 21–25: Spring Break

No classes.

MARCH 28: SECOND DRAFT OF PAPER DUE

March 29–31: Metaphors and Globalization

BEER & LANDTSHEER: Chapter by Luke (pages 237–258)

April 5–7: Issues in Political Metaphors

Students should bring to class for each class session this week at least one news article (from a newspaper, news magazine, or online news source) about a recent or current issue involving political metaphors.

April 12–14: Issues in Political Metaphors/Student Oral Presentations

See instructions from last week.

April 19–21: Student Oral Presentations

No readings

April 26–28: Student Oral Presentations

No readings
May 3: Student Oral Presentations

No readings

MAY 3: FINAL DRAFT OF PAPER DUE (including abstract)