

**RHET 125-01 Creating Visual Rhetoric**  
MWF 11:30-12:30; Lab MW 2:30-4:00

**Dr Catherine Collins**  
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**Office Hrs:** MWF 3:00-4:00. I write and work with student projects Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Please try not to call during these times; if you drop by and the door is open, however, feel free to come in and talk. I am around most days between 6:30 am and 4:30 pm. My other classes meet MWF 8:00-9:00 and 9:10-10:10. I have senior writing conferences MWF between 1:30 and 3:30.

**Texts**

<b>Martinez, Soraida</b>	<b>Soraida's verdadism: The intellectual voice of a Puerto Rican woman artist on canvas</b>
<b>Berger, John</b>	<b>Ways of seeing</b>
<b>Morreale, Joanne</b>	<b>A new beginning: A textual frame analysis of the political campaign film</b>
<b>Eisner, Will, Russell, Craig, McRae, John, &amp; Powell, Eric</b>	<b>9-11: Artists respond, Vol. 1</b>
<b>Gaiman, Neil, Lee, Stan, Thompson, Jill, &amp; Dwyer, Kieron</b>	<b>9-11: September 11, 2001: Stories to remember, Vol 2</b>
<b>Jacobson, Sid and Colon</b>	<b>The 9/11 report: A graphic adaptation</b>

There will be additional readings on reserve in the library from books and scholarly journals; some readings are posted online to Hand Outs in Class Tools. If you do not own Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual*, please purchase a copy.

**Course Description and Requirements**

This course is designed to introduce you to the Creating in the Arts mode of inquiry. Courses that satisfy this requirement seek to provide an understanding of the creative process as a means of discovery, exploration and self-expression. Students in these courses should:

- acquire basic experience in an artistic medium;
- develop an understanding and appreciation for process in creative expression;
- negotiate between conceptual ideas and spontaneous opportunity/discovery;
- discover expression;
- exhibit or present their work publicly.

1. What is the principal creative activity of this course?

The course is designed so that you will create visual rhetoric with or without the accompaniment of a verbal text. There are four different creative projects that will take you through an exploration of (1) how form creates and satisfies expectations; (2) how visual images and written commentaries can intersect for the audience and thereby create a new appreciation/understanding of both the visual image and the written text; (3) how visual rhetoric is

designed to market products, political candidates, and social issues through advertising campaigns that manipulate words and images; and (4) how visual rhetoric informs our understanding of significant cultural trauma such as the news coverage of 9/11. Individually and in groups, you will prepare and present your projects, critique other students' projects, and reflect, through critical essays, on the process and product of visual rhetoric. This peer critiquing process contributes to an evolving understanding of the relation of words and images and will serve your interests as you rework one of your projects for the final presentation.

2. How does this activity contribute to an understanding of human creativity?

With the 9/11 project we will study how Alain Brigand asked 11 independent filmmakers from around the world to explore their memories of the events and aftermath of 9/11 with one restriction, the film could last only 11 minutes, 9 seconds and 1 frame. We will pay particular attention to two of these films to introduce the concept of visual rhetoric. Both of these contributions restrict the viewer's sense perception; Lelouch's film denies the viewer sound, relying instead on the juxtaposition of images and the use of light and darkness to argue his point; Gonzalez Inarrito overloads us with sound and restricts our access to the visual scene.

This exploration of 9/11 films allows us to talk about how filmmakers used their creativity in very distinct ways to reflect on the events of 9/11. In a second case study we will examine how several authors employ the comic book form to tell the story of 9/11. Our question will be, How might audience expectations about the appropriateness of particular forms shape their acceptance of the narrative messages? We will discuss common images, metaphors, and techniques in the different narratives that emerge. The focus of our discussion will be on choice—the filmmakers' choices, the writer/illustrator's choices, and our choices. Employing a series of images of 9/11 from the Internet and the department's collection of news reports of the event, you will add your own work to create a response to the events.

The question of chance discoveries arises in both the process of creating the project and discussing it with class members, and as a result of reflection on one's own and one's classmates' creative projects (a focus in at least one of the critical response papers).

You will also be asked to recreate one of your projects—to rediscover something new through reflection on the creative process. You must both create and refine your creative projects. I ask that you keep a portfolio of your work.

3. How will we satisfy the requirement of performance or comparable culminating experience? [Necessary condition: the course should require of students a public demonstration, presentation or exhibition of their work(s) - at least within the classroom, preferably beyond.]

All of the projects will be presented and critiqued in class. Final projects will be presented at a showing open to the campus.

4. What other features and objectives make this an appropriate course for General Education designation?

Although Creating Visual Rhetoric is rooted in rhetorical approaches to the intersection of word and image, this course includes readings from a variety of disciplines. One goal is to explore an area of growing interdisciplinary interest in visual culture. The course does not presume any familiarity with visual culture or visual rhetoric, and while it asks you to create visual projects, it does not require prior experience with the technologies that might assist this production. The projects can be completed by individuals or in small groups. I encourage you to find students with different talents with whom to work (e.g. one person might have strong artistic talents, another has technical expertise in creating movies, while yet another has outstanding analytic ability).

Course Description: This is an entry-level course in creating visual rhetoric. You will explore basic visual concepts to determine how words and images intersect in persuasive messages. We will ask what makes an image iconic? How do visual and verbal images contribute in the creation of meaning? How does form in visual and verbal messages create and satisfy expectations? What role do images play in news stories and the public's experience of events at which they are not present? The course is designed to create visual messages with and without verbal accompaniment using a variety of formats such as photographs, movies, ad campaigns, etc. Case studies include protest art, news images of 9/11, and political and product advertising.

This is a project and discussion-based class on visual and verbal messages. Readings will introduce the area of visual literacy, rhetoric, and cultural studies. You will create visual rhetoric. You will also write short critical response papers in each unit. Class time will be devoted to group presentation, critique, and reworking creative projects. There is a required lab for this course that meets Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Not all of the creative work can be completed during the lab, but this will give you time to make substantial progress on your projects, and it will give me an opportunity to work with you on the creative aspects of project development.

### Course Policies

1. The department has an attendance policy. Any absences over three (excluding university excused absences) will result in a lower grade of one mark per day (4 absences would lower an earned B to a B-; 5 absences to a C+).
2. Plagiarism, the theft of another's ideas, images, music or writing, is not acceptable. When in doubt, cite the source. If you paraphrase, cite the source to indicate that these are not your ideas or arguments. If you plagiarize you may receive an F on both the paper and in the course. Use either MLA or APA guidelines for source citations. When you are making a movie, you must add all of the image and music citations to the Credits at the end of the film. Get in the habit of copying the URL for images at the same time you download an image. You will save yourself time if you do so.
3. Due Dates: We will have regular quizzes over the readings and visual material at the beginning of class sessions (come on time or you'll miss them!). Quizzes cannot be made up. You will have four graded projects. One of these projects will be reworked as a final project. Finally, you will write four short (500-600 words) critical response papers, one for each unit.

The quiz scores and class contributions are worth 10%  
Critical response papers are each worth 10%  
Projects are each worth 10%  
The final project is worth 10%

### Readings and Assignments

#### Visual Culture, Visual Rhetoric: Image and Imagery:

This first unit focuses on developing a grammar of visual rhetoric. We explore basic concepts in visual literacy and focus on the rhetorical use of images.

Concepts of Visual Rhetoric	August 29-September 5	Homework due September 5 lab
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The Gaze in Visual Rhetoric	September 7-10	Homework due September 10
	September 10 Lab: iMovie basics: image capture, titles, credits, using the software	
Kenneth Burke's Conception of Form	September 12-17 September 12 Lab: form September 17 Lab: iMovie, sound and music tracks	Homework due September 17
Berger: Ways of Seeing	September 19-24 September 19 Lab: Essay 2 September 24 Lab: Essay 4,6	19: essays 1, 3 21: Essay 5,7 24: Visual statement Homework
Iconic Cultural Images	September 26-28 September 26 Lab: Flag as Iconic	
Project 1	October 1-8 October 1 & 3 Labs: work time	Draft of form essays due October 1 Presentations of Project 1

Readings:

Dondis, D. (1989). *A primer of visual literacy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Burke, K. (1968). Lexicon Rhetoricae in *Counterstatement* pp 123-183. Berkeley: University of California Press. (On reserve)

Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of seeing*. London: British Broadcasting System. Purchased text.

Van Leeuwen, T & Jewitt, C. (2001). *Handbook of visual analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Introduction, Ch. 2 (Content Analysis) and Ch. 9 (Television and Film). (On reserve)

Lutz, C. & Collins, J.L. (1993). *Reading National Geographic*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 187-216. (On reserve)

Hodges, L. (1998). Case II-C Taste in photojournalism: A question of ethics or aesthetics? (pp. 37-30). In Patterson, P. & Wilkins, L. *9Media ethics: Issues cases*. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill. (On reserve)

Patterson, P. & Wilkins, L. (1998). Picture this: The ethics of photo and video journalism. (pp. 216-226). In *Media ethics: Issues cases*. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill. (On reserve)

Collins, C. A. (2001). The iconography of hope and despair in Ferlinghetti's and Stone's representations of Richard Nixon in Corrado Federici & Esther Raventós-Pons (Eds). *Literary Texts & the Arts: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. New York: Peter Lang (2003), pp. 193-208. Hand Outs in Class Tools

\*Hariman, R. & Lucaites, J. (2002). Performing civic identity: The iconic photograph of the flag raising on Iwo Jima. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88:4, 363-392.

\*Edwards, J.L. & Winkler, C.K. (1997). Representative form and the visual ideograph: The Iwo Jima image in editorial cartoons. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 83: 289-310.

All items in the readings that begin with an asterisk may be found through the library database called Communication and Mass Media Complete. Try the following URL or go to the library site electronically, choose databases and then use the alphabetical list to find Communication and Mass Media Complete.

[http://web19.epnet.com/search.asp?tb=1&\\_ug=sid+5D84A202%2D2822%2D46F4%2DA94F%2DE3586FFCB46F%40sessionmgr5+dbs+ufh+cp+1+53F9&\\_us=hd+True+hs+True+ss+SO+sm+ES+A444&\\_uso=hd+False+db%5B0+%2Dufh+3690&newsrch=1](http://web19.epnet.com/search.asp?tb=1&_ug=sid+5D84A202%2D2822%2D46F4%2DA94F%2DE3586FFCB46F%40sessionmgr5+dbs+ufh+cp+1+53F9&_us=hd+True+hs+True+ss+SO+sm+ES+A444&_uso=hd+False+db%5B0+%2Dufh+3690&newsrch=1)

Project 1: Print format or Video focusing on form in visual messages

Critical response paper 1: What do you see as the most compelling aspect of form in visual rhetoric?

### **Words and Images: Reading and Seeing Together**

This unit examines the relationship between visual and discursive elements in argument. As a case study, Soraida's painting and social commentaries illustrate how narratives of identity can be created visually and verbally. We will explore how Soraida combines aesthetic and rhetorical strategies for persuading the non-Latina(o) viewer to examine cultural assumptions and judgments about Puerto Ricans and other minorities.

Words & Images: Reading and Seeing Together in Soraida's Art	October 8 (Lab)-12 October 8 Lab: Reading the paintings October 10 Lab: 2 Styles & Verbal Messages	October 10, Visual Characteristics Homework
Stereotypes in the Media	October 15	
Project 2	October 15 (Lab)-22 October 15 & 17 Lab: project work	Presentation of Projects October 22

Readings:

Martinez, S. (1999). *Soraida's Verdadism: The intellectual voice of a Puerto Rican woman on canvas*, Gibbsboro, NJ: The Paint Works Corporate Center. Purchased text,

Lester, P. M. (1996). *Images that injure: pictorial stereotypes in the media*. Westport, CT: Praeger. (On reserve)

Project 2 Create an image in any form (photograph(s), painting, collage, movie (no sound or text) and an accompanying social commentary. Your project need not focus on race or gender, but it should make a statement about social stereotyping.

Critical Response paper 2: In which class project, other than your own, did you find the most compelling interaction of the visual and verbal dimensions of the message?

### **Visual Rhetoric in Advertising**

This unit will look at print product advertising and paid political announcements as forms of visual rhetoric.

Advertising: A New Beginning	October 24-26 October 24 Lab: View Film	
Advertising Assumptions & Ethical Issues	October 29-November 2 October 29 Lab: Ad analysis	Ad Analysis Homework
Project 3	October 31 Lab- November 5	Projects Due November 5

Readings:

Morreale, J. (1991). *A New Beginning: A textual frame analysis of the political campaign film*. New York: State University of New York, Albany. Purchased text.

Ewen, S. & Ewen, E. (1982). *Channels of desire: Mass images and the shaping of American consciousness*. San Francisco: McGraw-Hill. (On reserve)

Leiss, W., Kine, S., & Jhally, S. (1986). *Social communication in advertising*. NY: Methune. Excerpts from Part 3 (approaches to studying advertising, structure of advertising, image, icons, and metaphor). (On reserve)

Lilley, V. (1998). Case VII-F Calvin Klein's kiddie porn ads prick our tolerance. (pp. 210-215). In Patterson, P. & Wilkins, L. *Media Ethics*. (On reserve)

Project 3 Create a 30 second product or political advertisement using iMovie

Critical Response paper 3: Assess your advertising project by answering the following question: Which were the most persuasive elements in the ad, visual or textual?

**Visual Rhetorics of Witnessing: Cultural Trauma and 9/11**

Case Study: Brigand, A. (2002). *11'09'01 September 11: A film by 11 directors*. Galatee Films/Studio Canal production.

Case Study: Graphic Adaptations of 9/11

Case Study: Commemorations of 9/11

Cultural Trauma & 9/11: The Film	November 7 November 7 Lab: Film Viewing	
9/11 Reports	November 9	Graphic Homework
9/11 Artists Respond Vol 1 & 2	November 12-16 November 12 Lab: Graphics discussion November 14 Lab: Project Work	Graphic Homework
9/11 Rhetoric of Nationalism and Commemoration	November 19-26 November 19 Lab: Field of Flags November 21 Lab: Project Work November 26 Lab: Project	

	Work	
Presentations	November 28-30 November 28 class and lab: Work Time	Presentations due November 30

Readings:

Forum: 9/11 and the Rhetoric of "Evil" in *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 6:3 (2003). This is an introduction that everyone should read followed by seven short responses. Read the two responses that you are assigned. Write a critical response paper explaining why 9/11 is or is not appropriately examined in light of our concept of evil.

\*Biesecker, B. (2002). Remembering World War II: The rhetoric and politics of national commemoration at the turn of the 21st century. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88:4, 393-409.

\*Bostdorff, D. (2003). George W. Bush's post-September 11 rhetoric of covenant renewal: Upholding the faith o the greatest generation. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 89:4, 293-319.

\*Kitch, C. (May2003)"Mourning in America": ritual, redemption, and recovery in news narrative after September 11. *Journalism Studies*, 4:2, 213-224.

Project 4: Create an iMovie that reflects your response to the events and aftermath of 9/11. Length 3:30-4:00 minutes.

**Final Project:** Having learned from your first effort and the class's critique, take any one of your four completed projects and recreate it. I expect substantive changes.

Rethinking the Creation of Visual Rhetoric	December 3	
Revising Projects	December 3 Lab: Work Time December 5 Class & Lab: Work Time December 7 Class: Work Time	Projects due December 13 Final Exam Period