Professor Rebecca E. Burnett

Office: Hall 111

Office hours: T/Th 8:00-­‐9:30am

Phone: 404-894-1158

Email: [rebecca.burnett@lmc.gatech.edu](mailto:rebecca.burnett@lmc.gatech.edu)

**LMC 3411 — Rhetoric of Visual Communication**

**Course Prerequisite:** English 1102

**Course Description**

This course focuses on the rhetorical problems posed by images. Emphases include designing for multiple audiences, page and document design, and navigation in a nonlinear environment. Images are powerful, enabling you to translate experience, capture an instant, change perspectives, clarify (or create) ambiguity, and shape representations. Readings encourage you to explore ethical, aesthetic, philosophical, cultural, and technical perspectives. Throughout the course, you will write and speak about images, but you will also spend time learning the basics of photography and presenting your own creative images—with and without digital manipulation—in a variety of genres, including portraits and narratives.

**Learning Outcomes**

**LMC outcomes addressed in LMC 3411**

* Communication skills: Gather, organize, and express information clearly and accurately, with sensitivity to will be able to do so both by using traditional media and by tapping the potential of new digital media.
* Textual/Visual Analysis: Read, analyze, and interpret not only cultural projects such as film, literature, art, and new media, but also scientific and technical documents.
* Interpretive Frameworks: Become familiar with a variety of social, political, and philosophical theories and be able to apply those theories to creative and scientific texts, as well as to their own cultural observations.

**Course-specific outcomes addressed in LMC 3411**

* Use the concepts and vocabulary from aesthetics, art, design, photography, and visual rhetoric, engage in well-­‐informed, multimodal discussion about a range of cultural and technical issues related to visual representations of people, interactions, natural and created objects and events, and the built and natural environment
* Recognize, analyze, and discuss work of noted historical and contemporary photographers. Analyze the role and development of images in past and contemporary cultures.
* Conduct academic research to investigate a topic in depth and prepare a formal paper and presentation.

**Required Texts**

* Sontag, Susan. (1977). *On Photography.*
* Barthes, Roland. (1981). *Camera Lucida.*
* Benjamin, Walter. (1972). A short history of photography. *Screen,* 13(1), 5-­‐26.
* Bell, Susan. (2002). Photo Images: Jo Spence’s narratives of living with illness. *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine,* 6(1), 5-­‐30.
* Harper, Douglas. (2002). Talking about pictures: a case for photo elicitation. *Visual Studies,* Vol. 17: 1. 13-­‐26.
* Hirsch, Marianne. The generation of postmemory. *Poetics Today* 29:1. 103-­‐128.
* Rossner, Mike and Kenneth M. Yamada (2004). What's in a picture? The temptation of image manipulation. *The Journal of Cell Biology,* 166(1), 11–15.
* Ruby, Jay. (1981) Seeing Through Pictures: Anthropology of Photography. *Critical Arts,* 1(4), 3-­‐16.  Sontag, “Photography: A little summa” van
* Dijck, José. (2008). Digital photography: communication, identity, memory. *Visual Communication,* 7(1), 57-­‐76.
* **Other Required Materials**
* Digital Camera
* Access to software including Aperture and/or iPhoto, Illustrator, InDesign, MS Word, Photoshop, Picasa, Powerpoint, Prezi

**Assignments and Grading**

* PROJECT #1 Blog Postings, Responses, and Analyses 15%
* PROJECT #2 Research Paper and Formal Presentation 15%
* PROJECT #3 Print and Digital Tutorial and Reflection 15%
* PROJECT #4 Print and Digital Self-­‐Portrait and Reflection 15%
* PROJECT #5 Retrospective Project and Reflection 15%
* PROJECT #6 Portfolio and Reflection 15%
* Attendance, Participation, and Homework 10%

Specific requirements for assignments will be discussed in class. All assignments must be computer generated (no handwritten or typed documents). Keep a copy of all assignments you pass in. Sometimes you will be asked to also submit a DVD *and* a print document. Please use MSWord for your word processing.

The grading scale for students will be:

* A: 90-100. This student demonstrates a thorough understanding and skilled use of class concepts and terminology. Moreover, s/he uses class concepts and terminology in such a way that s/he teaches us something new about the subject at hand.
* B: 80-89. This student demonstrates a solid understanding of and ability to use class concepts and terminology. However, s/he may demonstrate the need to learn more about some aspect of the subject at hand or may need to continue practicing pulling together key concepts and ideas.
* C. 70-79. This student generally grasps the key concepts and terminology of this class, but cannot yet use them consistently to provide in-depth analysis of class materials.
* D: 60-69. This student fails to understand or use class concepts and terminology much if at all in class or projects. S/he may also fail to provide accurate or in-depth analyses of the topic at hand or texts associated with it.
* F: 0-59. This student demonstrates a complete lack of understanding about the subject at hand. S/he may also fail to complete major assignments in an appropriate and/or timely manner.

## Attendance Policy

Attending class is part of your professional responsibility. You’re expected to be in class when it is scheduled to meet. This class meets twice a week for 15 weeks, for a total of 30 class meetings. You receive an attendance grade, which is the actual percentage of the times you attend class, so if you miss no classes, you receive a 100% for attendance. In addition, this is what happens if you miss class:

* Regardless of your actual grades and regardless of the reasons for your absences, 4 absences (2 weeks or ~13% of the course) will lower your grade one letter grade (i.e., A-­‐ becomes B-­‐; B becomes C).
* Regardless of your actual grades and regardless of the reasons for your absences, 6 absences (3 weeks or ~20% of the course) will lower your grade two letter grades (i.e., B becomes a D; C becomes F).
* Regardless of your actual grades and regardless of the reasons for your absences, 8 absences (4 weeks or ~27% of the course) will result in automatic failure of the course.
* Institute-­‐approved absences (documented by the Registrar or Dean of Students) are not counted as absences. You are responsible for keeping track of your own absences. I take attendance; you can check with me anytime to ensure our records agree, but my attendance record is the official one.
* You are tardy if you arrive after I take attendance. Important to note: three tardies = one absence.  I urge you not to take self-­‐indulgent absences (e.g., not bothering to come to class, wanting to sleep in). I encourage you to plan your time so that you don’t disadvantage this class for other parts of your life (e.g., studying for an exam, participating in a sports event, going away for a long weekend). Academic work is important, so you don’t want to miss this class. Schedule jobs, study groups, team meetings, and other important commitments at some time this class doesn’t meet. Schedule job interviews so they do not conflict with this class.
* If you miss a scheduled oral presentation, you will receive a grade of 0 (that’s “zero”) for that presentation. In fact, if you miss any assignment, large or small, you receive a “0” for the grade. If you miss any exam, you will receive a grade of 0 (that’s “zero”) for that exam.
* As a professional courtesy, please call (404-­‐894-­‐1158 and leave a message) or send an email message if illness, an unexpected personal emergency, or business obligations prevent you from attending class or a team meeting (just as you would if you were going to miss work). Providing a reason is a profession courtesy, not an excuse. Regardless of the reason for your absence, you are responsible for information presented in classes you miss.
* Please check GA Tech’s position about class attendance: http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/

**Accommodations**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404)894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

**Academic Integrity**

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/ or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

*A Fair(y) Use Tale:* Professor Eric Faden of Bucknell University provides this humorous, yet informative, review of copyright principles delivered through the words of the very folks we can thank for nearly endless copyright terms. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJn_jC4FNDo>

**Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement**

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectation that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, you are encouraged to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

**Commitment to Inclusive Excellence**

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts and the School of Literature, Media, and Communication support the Georgia Institute of Technology’s commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society. This class is committed to meeting or exceeding the above expectations.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week Topic**

1. Sontag, Susan. “Photography: A Little Summa”
2. Benjamin, Walter. (1972). A short history of photography. *Screen,* 13(1), 5-­‐26.
3. Rossner, Mike and Kenneth M. Yamada (2004). What's in a picture? The temptation of image manipulation. *The Journal of Cell Biology,* 166(1), 11–15.
4. Sontag, Susan. (1977). *On Photography.*
5. **DUE: In-­‐Class Review of Tutorial Notebook**
6. Sontag, Susan. (1977). *On Photography.***DUE following in-­‐class demo: TUTORIAL NOTEBOOK—PENULTIMATE VERSION (either print or e-­‐version).**
7. Bell, Susan. Photo images: Jo Spence’s narratives of living with illness. *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine,* 6(1), 5-­‐30. **DUE: TUTORIAL NOTEBOOK REFLECTION**
8. Harper, Douglas. (2002). Talking about pictures: a case for photo elicitation. *Visual Studies,* Vol. 17: 1. 13-­‐26. **Draft #1 of Self-­‐Portrait.**
9. Hirsch, Marianne. The Generation of Postmemory. *Poetics Today* 29:1.

103-­‐128. van Dijck, José. (2008). Digital photography: communication, identity, memory. *Visual Communication,* 7(1), 57-­‐76. **DUE: Preliminary Mockup for Retrospective Project**

1. **INDEPENDENT REVIEW: RESEARCH PAPER**
2. **DUE: RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS (and individual feedback memos)**
3. **DUE: In-Class Review of Retrospective Project; DUE: Final Draft of Research Paper**
4. Barthes, Roland. (1981). Ruby, Jay. (1981) Seeing Through Pictures: Anthropology of Photography. *Critical Arts,* 1(4), 3-­‐16. **DUE: SELF-PORTRAIT Reflection; DUE: Proposal Memo for Portfolio.**
5. READ: Barthes. (1981). **DUE: Retrospective Project Reflection**
6. **Workshop PHOTOGRAPHY PORTFOLIO**

Final Exam Week: **DUE: PHOTOGRAPHY PORTFOLIO AND REFLECTION (in lieu of a final exam) Submit your portfolio and reflection electronically no later than the beginning of the assigned final exam: Period 10, Thursday, December 13, 8:00am. You may submit your portfolio and reflection at any time preceding this deadline.**