



*Confederate General Robert E. Lee statue removed from a Dallas park
Sept. 14, 2017*

“The major focus of [public memory] is not the past . . . but serious matters in the present such as the nature of power Public memory speaks primarily about the structure of power in society because that power is always in question.”

--John Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 15.

HONR 300 Mobilizing Public Memory: Race in the U.S.

COURSE INFORMATION

Credits: 4
Gen Ed: WI/LO2 and LO6
Delivery Mode: Face to face in Hollenbeck 331, T/TR 2:30-3:45 PM
Course Schedule: Spring 2022

FACULTY

Professor: Dr. Catherine E. Waggoner, Professor, Dept of Communication & Digital Media
Contact: cwaggoner@wittenberg.edu
Phone: 937-327-7436
Office: Hollenbeck 326
Office Hours: MTWTh 1:00-1:50 pm and by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS

Cox, Karen L. (2021). *No common ground: Confederate monuments and the ongoing fight for racial justice*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.

Other required readings are posted on Moodle. Please download them and bring them to class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What does it mean to "create the past" via memorials, museums, and monuments? What gets

remembered, what gets left out, and what gets refashioned--and for what reasons? What is the significance of places of public memory for contemporary U.S. culture?

Such questions will guide us as we explore how memory is mobilized through the years, particularly for *controversial* moments in our nation's history. Because of our historical turbulence concerning racial issues and in order to understand the complex current manifestations of that turmoil in terms of public discourse, we will trace a trajectory from slavery to the U.S. Civil War to Reconstruction to the Civil Rights Movement to Black Lives Matter.

The process of creating a shared sense of the past is a distinctly rhetorical one, often dominated by visual elements. It is highly selective in that various parts of the past are remembered, while others are forgotten in order to maintain social unity and the stability of the culture. All public acts of commemoration, then, are potential sites of power struggles over *how* the past is remembered and *who* is served by a particular construction of the past.

In this course, we will learn ways to analyze sites of U.S. public memory, with a special eye toward how visual elements are used to influence viewers in distinctly rhetorical acts. We will investigate the process by which such sites were created, assessing the controversies occurring in the creation of what may seem like stable/fixed/noncontroversial monuments, memorials, and museums. In addition to exams, the assignments include visits to sites of public memory, both as a class and on your own and independent research with a proposal featuring an annotated bibliography, a final paper, and an oral presentation.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Explain the nature and function of public memory in general (Exams)
- Describe the rhetorical dimensions of the process of constructing public memory (Exams)
- Evaluate the rhetorical dimensions of the process of the constructing public memory (Exams)
- Articulate in some detail flashpoints of tensions concerning race in U.S. history (Exams, Final Project)
- Apply theoretical principles to material artifacts in a substantive manner (Final Project)
- Present effective oral and written arguments using research findings (Final Project)

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

This course is designed to meet the following General Education learning goals:

1. **Writing/LO2** Students will write effectively, considering audience and purpose.
2. **LO6** Students will analyze the ways social hierarchies structure human interaction in the U.S.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

My expectation is that you will attend every class session, as this is a seminar and we need your participation. That said, students are allowed three absences, no questions asked. (Please note, however, that coming late to class counts as half an absence.) After the third absence, the student's grade will be lowered. A significant portion of our class sessions will be spent in actively discussing the assigned readings, and applying theoretical ideas to examples from our readings and site visits. If possible, we will sit in a circle so that everyone may engage each other more effectively. It is important, then, for you to *really* read for each class session, not just skimming the words, but underlining,

highlighting, and above all—*taking notes*.

To help you read carefully, I am providing a description of four basic cognitive tasks involved in reading carefully (developed by Harvey Daniels for “Literature Circles”). Daniels suggests that each person assume one of the roles for each reading, helping to ensure a more substantive and systematic reading of the piece. We will use these roles informally to facilitate our discussions of assigned readings, more formally for tests, and you also should find them helpful for reading for your final project.

<p>Illuminator:</p> <p>Your role is to find important passages to read aloud. These passages should be memorable, interesting, puzzling, funny, or important. Your notes should include the quotations but also why you chose them. You will read these passages aloud as part of your class discussion.</p>	<p>Sample Questions:</p> <p>What are the key passages? What did the key passage(s) make you think about? What do you think the reading was about? How might other people (of different backgrounds) think about this passage/reading? What one question would you ask the author if you go the chance? Why? What are the most important ideas in this reading?</p>
<p>Connector:</p> <p>Your role is to connect what you are reading with what you are studying in other classes, or with the world outside of school. You can connect the reading to events in your own life, other classes you’ve taken, news events, political events, or popular trends. You can also connect the reading to other things you have read. The connections should be meaningful to you and your classmates.</p>	<p>Sample Questions:</p> <p>What connections can you make to your own life? What other places or people could you compare this reading to? What other books or articles might you compare this to? What is the most interesting or important connection that comes to mind? How does this essay relate to the other essays in the book?</p>
<p>Word Watcher:</p> <p>Your role is to watch out for words worth knowing while you are reading. These words might be interesting, new, important, or used in unusual ways. It is important to indicate the specific location of the words so that you classmates can discuss the words in context. You may need to look up these words in a dictionary to include the definition in your notes.</p>	<p>Sample Questions:</p> <p>Which words are used frequently? Which words are used in unusual ways? What words seem to have special meaning to the author? What new words do you find in this section? What does this word mean?</p>
<p>Summarizer:</p> <p>Your role is to prepare a brief summary of the day’s reading. Use the questions to the right to help you decide what to include. If it helps you to organize the information, consider making a numbered list or an outline.</p>	<p>Sample Questions:</p> <p>What are the most important ideas or events in this reading? What makes them so important? What effect do they have on the reader? What might be a good essay topic for this reading?</p>

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Exams (2)	25%
Memory Site Visit Paper	10%
Final Project Proposal with Annotated Bib	15%
Final Project	
Draft/Peer Review	5%
Paper	15%
Presentation	10%
Discussion Leadership	10%
Class Engagement	10%

ASSIGNMENTS

Exams

There will be two exams covering the readings, films, and discussions, largely comprised of essay questions. (W/LO2, LO6)

Memory Site Visits

You are required to make visits to memory sites this semester.

- Class Memory Site Visits. We will visit The Heritage Center in Springfield and The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati. (LO6)
- Individual Memory Site Visit. On your own, you are to visit a memory site of your choosing. For whichever site you choose, please write a 3-page paper (double-spaced). With your classmates in mind as the audience, you should describe the site, provide some background, and explain the site vis-à-vis one or two of the theoretical treatments of memory in the course. You will be asked to discuss your paper in class. (W/O2, LO6)

Project

How do sites that commemorate the past shape our vision of the present and the future?

You will select and research a public memory site relevant to race in the U.S. and make an argument about how that site influences the current public discourse regarding race. You will prepare a **draft** of your final paper for an in-class **peer review**. Your final **paper** should be 8-10 pages, not counting references/documentation. Finally, you will give an **oral presentation** of your work at the end of the semester, using visual aids, followed by a question/answer session. (W/LO2, LO6)

Project Proposal with Annotated Bibliography

In 4-6 double-spaced pages, you will propose the topic for your final project. In this paper, you will thoroughly describe the public memory site and preview your initial argument for how it influences current public discourse regarding race. You will attach an **annotated bibliography** of at least 7 sources, each about some facet of your public memory site and/or the historical event it commemorates. These can be newspaper accounts, credible websites, Wikipedia entries, and scholarly articles. Under each entry, you will describe the source and its primary contributions to your project (e.g., why is it a good source for you?) You are to spend approximately seven sentences on each source, summarizing it succinctly, and explaining its primary contributions. (W/LO2, LO6)

Discussion Leadership

On the days we are discussing Cox, *No Common Ground*, one of you will lead the discussion. You have latitude as to how you do that (e.g., activities, video clips, etc.), and I am available to meet with you in advance to prepare for it. (LO6)

Class Engagement

Your grade is determined, as well, by the quality and regularity of the engagement in the class. You are expected to have read the assignments before we meet in order to be able to participate effectively in discussions. (LO6) In brief, here's how I determine the class engagement grade:

- Participates frequently and is well informed = A
- Participates frequently = B
- Participates usually only when called upon = C
- Participates when called upon but is frequently not prepared = D

We will be addressing some sensitive histories/racial issues that are value-laden and often emotionally-charged. Thus, our discussions during class sessions will be conducted with the following guidelines:

- You are expected to be a respectful listener during class discussions, remembering that conversations about different cultures can be particularly sensitive. You never know what previous experiences your classmates have had.
- If/when you disagree with a fellow student, please do so with respect, not “zapping” that student (i.e., saying things like “that’s so ridiculous”).
- Let’s make this a conversation between us all, not just between professor and student. Look at each other and not just me when you are talking in class.
- Please monitor your own communication during discussions so that you do not monopolize them. Be sensitive to when others have not talked during discussions and feel free to ask them their thoughts. Our discussions will be more fruitful—and frankly more fun—when everyone participates.
- Finally, keep in mind that we likely will be sharing some very personal insights as we engage in discussion; this is what makes a seminar meaningful. I ask that you are respectful in handling class discussions outside of class, too, not gossiping about what someone has said later in the bars or around campus.

Course Policies

Electronic devices: If you want to use electronic devices in class for taking notes, please be smart and considerate about how you are using these devices in class.

Academic Integrity: We will uphold Wittenberg’s Code of Academic Integrity. Academic dishonesty of any kind (e.g., plagiarism or using someone else’s work as your own and cheating on assignments) will simply not be tolerated; the harshest penalties for such violation will be taken, including failure of the course. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me. See the *Student Handbook* or the Code of Academic Integrity’s web page for more information.

Special Resources

You will want to utilize the **Writing Center** and **Oral Communication Center** for help with writing and the oral presentation; these services are located in Thomas Library. Go here to make an appointment. <https://www.wittenberg.edu/administration/writingcenter/make-appointment> and

<https://www.wittenberg.edu/administration/occ/how-do-i-visit-occ>

Wittenberg University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, learning, chronic health, physical, hearing, vision and neurological, or temporary medical conditions, etc.), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, you must register with the **Accessibility Services** office by emailing accessibilityservices@wittenberg.edu. You can also find information on the Accessibility Services webpage found at www.wittenberg.edu/success. Please note that services are confidential, may take time to put into place, and are not retroactive. The Accessibility Services Office is located in the COMPASS: Sweet Success Center, Thomas Library, on the main floor.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Tues., 11 Jan.: Course introduction and overview

Thurs., 13 Jan.: Discussion of Confederate Monument Issues
Watch *Stone Ghosts in the South*
<https://youtu.be/msIDM8MyGqg>
using your assigned reading role.

Foundations of Memory/Rhetoric

Tues., 18 Jan.: Reading: Groce, "History, Memory, and the Struggle for the Future"
I-Bella, Emmanuel
C-Zoe
W-Jacob
S-Chloe, Abby

Thurs., 20 Jan.: Reading: Labode, "Confronting Confederate Monuments in the Twenty-First Century"
I-
C-
W-
S-

Tues., 25 Jan. &
Thurs., 27 Jan.: Reading: Blair, Dickenson, & Ott, "Introduction: Rhetoric/Memory/Place"
Field trip (1/27): Heritage Center, Springfield, meet there at 2:30 pm
I-
C-
W-
S-

Tues., 1 Feb. &
Thurs., 3 Feb.:

Reading: Casey, "Public Memory in Place and Time"
I-
C-
W-
S-

Slavery

Thurs., 3 Feb.:

Reading: Blight, "Introduction: The Underground Railroad in History and Memory"
Field trip: National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Cincinnati, depart 1:15pm, return 6:00 pm
I-
C-
W-
S-

Tues., 8 Feb.:

Reading: Ater, "Slavery and its Memory in Public Monuments"
I-
C-
W-
S-

The Civil War

Thurs., 10 Feb.:

Reading: Savage, "The Politics of Memory"
I-
C-
W-
S-

Tues., 15 Feb. &
Thurs., 17 Feb.:

Reading: Lancioni, "The Rhetoric of the Frame"
I-
C-
W-
S-

Tues., 22 Feb.:

Discussion of Memory Site visits and Exam 1 prep

Thurs., 24 Feb.:

Exam 1

Mar. 1, 3:

No class; FIRE Week

Do your individual Memory Site visit

Mar. 8, 10:

No class; Spring Break

Reconstruction and Jim Crow

Tues., 15 Mar.:

Reading: Cox, *No Common Ground*, Intro and Ch 1
Due: Memory Site visit paper and oral reports

Thurs., 17 Mar.:

Reading: Cox, *No Common Ground*, Ch 2
Discussion leader: _____

Civil Rights

Tues., 22 Mar.:

Reading: Cox, *No Common Ground*, Ch 3
Discussion leader: _____

Thurs., 24 Mar.:

Reading: Cox, *No Common Ground*, Ch 4
Discussion leader: _____

Current Controversies/Black Lives Matter

Tues., 29 Mar.:

Reading: Cox, *No Common Ground*, Ch 5
Discussion leader: _____

Thurs., 31 Mar.:

Reading: Cox, *No Common Ground*, Ch 6 and Epilogue
Discussion leaders (2): _____ & _____

Tues., 5 Apr.:

Readings: Blair & Michel, "Reproducing Civil Rights Tactics" and Olesky & Wnuk, "Augmented Places"
I-
C-
W-
S-

Thurs., 7 Apr.:

Conferences for the Final Project

Tues., 12 Apr.:

Proposal due

Thurs., 14 Apr. &
Tues., 19 Apr.:

Work on Final Project

Thurs., 21 Apr.:

Peer Review of Final Paper (**Draft due**)

Tues., 26 Apr. &
Thurs., 28 Apr.:

Project Presentations, Course Wrap-Up and Exam 2 prep
Online course evaluations due

Fri., 29 Apr.:

Final Paper due

Fri., 6 May, noon:

Exam 2