Mission Statement:

Our mission is to serve as a leading center of Christian thought and action providing an excellent education from a biblical perspective and global context in pivotal professions to equip Christian leaders to change the world.

COURSE SYLLABUS

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION & THE ARTS

REGENT UNIVERSITY

COM 700
Introduction to Doctoral Studies in Communication
Summer, 2012

Prologue: Online, May 14th-June 15th
On Campus Residency, June 18th-June 22nd, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. daily.
Epilogue: June 23rd-July 6th.

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Office Location: Communication and Arts Building-261

All students are required to read and have a thorough understanding of the syllabus. Any questions or concerns need to be addressed to the instructor.
Course Description

This required course (3 credit hours) is designed to prepare incoming doctoral students for scholarly study in the communication field. It is a field that reflects and draws from many academic and professional traditions. It is field with many significant areas of study within it and a wide variety of theoretical perspectives associated with them. It also is a field known for its use of a great assortment of research approaches and methodologies. This course should enhance your understanding of all of this.

As many of you already know, teaching, research, consulting and other professional endeavors in the field of communication can be meaningful and exciting. This course also should stimulate your thinking in this respect and particularly inspire many ideas for personal research you would like to pursue during your time in our doctoral program.

Integration of Faith and Learning

A primary aspect of this course is to better understand how to approach doctoral studies and scholarship in the communication field from a Christian or biblical worldview. As Christian believers, it seems essential that we should become increasingly adept at critically viewing our own or others’ scholarly research and theories dealing with communication and the arts, and the assumptions underlying them, from the standpoint of biblical truth. We can learn to do this with greater clarity and integrity.

As Mark Noll puts it in *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, “The point of Christian scholarship is not recognition by standards established in the wider culture. The point is to praise God with the mind. Such efforts will lead to a kind of intellectual integrity that sometimes receives recognition. But for the Christian, that recognition is only a fairly inconsequential by-product. The real point is valuing what God has made, believing the creation is as ‘good’ as He said it was, and exploring the fullest dimensions of what is meant for the Son of God “to become flesh and dwell among us.” Ultimately, intellectual work of this sort is its own reward, because it is focused on the only One whose recognition is important, the One whom before all hearts are open.”

As we pursue this task, please recognize that Regent University students come from a wide variety of Christian faith backgrounds and traditions. They and their views should be highly respected.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, you should have:

1. A greater understanding of and ability to articulate how our Christian faith informs and grounds doctoral studies in the communication field.
2. More familiarity with the history of the communication field and many of its key scholars or thinkers.

3. A better understanding of current trends and issues related to scholarly study and research in the communication field.

4. Become more familiar with and more able to apply basic research approaches or methodologies commonly used in communication studies.

5. Reviewed an academic journal and become more cognizant of many of the academic journals that are associated with the communication field.

6. The ability to describe and distinguish among the major academic/professional organizations in the communication field.

7. A working knowledge of the Regent University library electronic reference resources.

8. A clear understanding of the particular academic requirements for completing the doctoral program in the School of Communication and the Arts.

9. Begun to develop an individual plan for your course of study in the doctoral program in the School of Communication and the Arts.

**Course Format**

This course combines online distance coursework with a one week residency component at the Regent University campus in Virginia Beach. A “prologue” element of the course precedes the residency, while an “epilogue” element follows it.

**Prologue Period (May 14th-June 15th)**

During this period you should be reading all required texts or readings assigned for our class. In addition, you will be interacting online (using Blackboard, the educational software currently used by Regent University) in response to two or three discussion assignments that will be tied to specific course texts or readings.

It is important that all assigned books or readings be read before our first class session of the on-campus residency. There simply will not be sufficient time to read these once these residency class meetings have begun.
Residency Period (June 18th-June 22nd)

We will meet face-to-face each day during this period using a seminar style format. Class sessions meet each day from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Our time during these sessions will be devoted to discussion of a variety of topics and presentations by various faculty members and students.

Epilogue Period (June 23rd-July 6th)

During this period you will be finalizing a research proposal, one of the assignments in this course. It should be submitted on or before July 6th.

Required Texts

Several texts will be used in this course that should help fulfill the stated goals of our course and which should serve as a basis for discussion both online and during the residency component of the course. Again, it is important that all of these texts are read prior to the residency.

Brummett, B. (2011). *Techniques of close reading*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications. The author argues for the importance of and offers an approach for rhetorical criticism. Not a comprehensive work but a good supplemental one that we will use as a point of departure for discussion of historical and critical approaches to the study of communication.

Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. 3rd edition. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications. Creswell’s work is one of several popular research methods books that overview research design with an emphasis on both qualitative and quantitative research methods often used in the social sciences and particularly the communication field.

Kuhn, T. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. 2nd edition. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. The author’s classic book provides a starting place for challenging some of the assumptions underlying scientific research. We will use it in part to explore how we might approach scholarly study through the framework of a Christian worldview.

Rogers, E.M. (1994). *A history of communication study*. New York: The Free Press. This work in part takes a biographical approach to explore some of the early academic roots of the communication field as we know it today. We will use it as a stepping stone toward examining trends in the field in the past decade or so.

Schultze, Q.J. (2000). *Communicating for life: Christian stewardship in community and media*. There are quite a few books we might read, including others by this author, that should challenge us to examine our study of communication through the lens of the Christian faith. This work is one that should begin to stimulate our thinking and discussion in this respect.
**Recommended Texts**

If you do not have a strong background in the communication field:


Among a number of good books dealing with a Christian perspective of education or scholarly study are:


**Course Requirements and Assignments**

We will be engaged in a variety of assignments designed to fulfill the stated outcomes of our course.

*Reading*

All required texts should be read and prior to our on-campus residency component of the course. Two of these books (i.e. Schultze and Kuhn) also will be tied to “discussion exercises” that we will be involved with during the online prologue portion of the course.

*Discussion Exercises*

During the online prologue part of our course, the class will be participating in two and possibly three online discussion assignments. We will use our Blackboard course site “discussion board” to respond to these discussion exercises, each with its own guidelines including a specific time period for initially responding to the assignment and then responding to what others in the class post regarding it. These discussion exercises will enable us to discuss some topics and readings in some depth before the residency part of the course and should help build a sense of community prior to meeting face-to-face. You should find these assignments stimulating and they should not take an inordinate amount of time.

*Written Assignments*

Three relatively short written assignments should provide you with practical applications of course content and in part fulfill our stated course outcomes: (1) a description and analysis of a professional scholarly organization related to the field of communication; (2) a scholarly journal review; (3) a proposal for a scholarly research study or project, approached from three different basic methodologies.
1. **Scholarly/Professional Organization Review Paper**

After selecting an organization from the list below, or another professional organizational pertinent to the communication field, learn all you can about the organization, its purposes, history, size, publications, services and fees. This could include visiting its website and web-based resources and perhaps interviewing or exchanging e-mails with one of the organization’s representatives and authors.

Then summarize what you found in a 3 to 4 page, written review of the particular organization. This paper should be submitted on June 20th during our residency and copies should be provided for all other students in the class. Also, be prepared to discuss briefly in class what you found.

Here is a list of organizations you might choose from. To avoid too much duplication (e.g. no more than two people assigned to particular organization), a “sign up” process for selecting an organization will be implemented once our course officially begins the week of May 14th.

American Culture Association  
American Society for the History of Rhetoric  
Broadcast Education Association  
National Communication Association  
Eastern Communication Association  
Southern States Communication Association  
Central States Communication Association  
Western States Communication Association  
Popular Culture Association  
Popular Culture Association of the South  
Society for Cinema and Media Studies  
Religious Research Association  
International Communication Association  
American Academy of Advertising  
Society for the Scientific Study of Religion  
Religious Communication Association  
American Theatre & Drama Society  
Virginia Association of Christian Artists and Scholars

*(If there is a communication field-related academic professional organization that you would like to focus on that is not on this list, you are welcome to do so.)*

2. **Journal Review Paper**

Below is a list of academic journals reflecting various aspects of the communication field. Select ONE of these journals *(Again, there will be a process for “signing up” for*
these to avoid duplication, once our course officially begins the week of May 14th). Then review the most recent five years of the journal and develop a 3 to 5 page paper in which you summarize what you found. This should include: (a) topics that seem to be of interest to the editors; (b) methodologies typically employed by the authors; (c) apparent trends in topic and methodology choices; (d) editorial policies, if stated; (e) style guidelines; (f) sponsoring organization; (g) if available, acceptance/rejection rates; (h) current editor’s address and e-mail address.

The written review should be submitted on June 21st during the residency component of our course and copies should be provided for others in the class. Also, be prepared to discuss briefly what you found.
These are the journals to choose from:

Quarterly Journal of Speech
Journal of Applied Communication Research
Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies
Journal of International and Intercultural Communication
Communication Teacher
Communication Monographs
Communication Education
Journal of Mass Media Ethics
Media, Culture and Society
Journal of Public Relations Research
Journal of Radio Studies
Journal of Advertising
Journal of Advertising Research
Communication Theory
Journal of Religion and Film
Journal of Health Communication
Journal of Religion and Popular Culture
Journal of Communication and Religion
Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication
The Journal of Popular Culture
Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media
Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly
Journalism & Mass Communication Educator
Journalism History
Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television
Rhetorica
Rhetoric and Public Affairs
Philosophy and Rhetoric
Argumentation and Advocacy
International Journal of Communication
Journal of Media and Cultural Studies
Journal of Popular Film and Television
Journal of Film and Video
Studies in American Culture
Management Communication Quarterly
Journal of Business Communication
Quarterly Review of Film and Video
International Journal of Research into New Media
Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies
Communication Studies

3. **Research Proposal**

The purpose of this assignment is threefold: (1) to help you learn how to formulate a scholarly research idea that could lead to a more full-blown proposal; (2) to stimulate your thinking about scholarly research ideas that might eventually evolve into a dissertation proposal; (3) to demonstrate how a particular scholarly research idea might be approached from different basic research methodologies.

Select a research idea that reflects an area of study, a related trend(s), issue(s) or question(s) within the *communication field* that greatly interests you. By reading scholarly literature related to this, discover how much and in what ways it may have been studied in the past, if at all.

*Preliminary Proposal*

Once you have examined relevant literature and further refined your specific research idea, develop a brief (a couple of pages or so) *preliminary* research proposal in which you state the particular purpose of your research, the overarching research question(s) it will try to address, specific methodological approaches that might be used to address the purpose and questions effectively, a preliminary list of references that relate to and could be used to support or justify the study, and a brief discussion or the significance of the study (i.e. what unique and important contribution it could make to scholarly research and understanding in a particular area of study).

This brief, preliminary proposal is due at the beginning of our first class session on Friday, June 22\textsuperscript{nd} and copies should be distributed to others in the class. Also be prepared to very briefly discuss your proposal in class at that time.

*Final Proposal*

Once you have gotten some feedback and further settled on your idea (or perhaps another idea), develop a research proposal that is **no less than five but no more than 10 pages in length**. This can be completed during the “epilogue” portion of our course.

The basic structure of the proposal should look like this:
Problem (or Introduction)

In this section, discuss the general problem, trends, issues or context within which your research idea falls. This might be something scholars in a particular area of study have indicated or you believe is in need of scholarly research. At the same time, it might reflect current trends, issues, or questions that both scholars and other observers believe need to be addressed in our society or some aspect of it.

Purpose of Study

Develop a well thought out, specifically-stated purpose for your study and argument for its significance.

Literature Review

All scholarly research studies are built upon relevant bodies of research and thinking. This is used to discover and show others what previously has been studied related to the particular subject and what new contribution your study could make to this area of scholarship. This review of scholarly literature thus both informs others about this area of study and is used to support the particular study you have in mind. Although an exhaustive review of relevant literature is not necessary or possible for this specific assignment, view this as a preliminary but essential review of literature that could ultimately lead to something much larger in scope.

Research Methodologies

Our doctoral program is in part designed to heighten your understanding of and comfort in using various research methodologies used in the communication and arts fields. We have divided these into three commonly used, broad categories—historical/critical methods; quantitative methods; and qualitative methods—and each of these is dealt with in some depth in required courses you will be taking within your program. Within each of these, are many different, specific research methodologies and techniques. One of the objectives for this course is to begin thinking about the differences among these basic approaches and the many possibilities each offers, sometimes even in combination. All three will be discussed in preliminary fashion during the residency element of the course.

For this research proposal assignment, your methodology section should show how, in the case of each of the three basic approaches, a particular methodology you choose and associated with the particular approach could be used to fulfill the specific purpose of your study. In other words, you will be presenting three different ways to address the purpose and related research question(s), with a rationale for why each methodology could prove to be valuable in this respect.
Summary

Conclude the proposal with just a brief paragraph that summarizes why your proposal could lead to an important contribution to scholarship in your chosen area of study within the communication field.

(Either the APA or MLA stylebook can be used for this proposal for citing sources in text or listing references).

Tentative Course Schedule Residency Component

During the residency element of our course, we will be meeting in the School of Communication and the Arts building at Regent University each day from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with a break for lunch daily. At the moment, our plan is to first meet for a continental breakfast on June 18th, 7:30-8:45 a.m. at the Regent University Ordinary (an eating facility in the University’s student union building). Most evenings will be free or devoted to study time.

Class sessions will be devoted to discussion of assigned readings and topics, presentations by various faculty members, student presentations of assigned projects, and further orientation to the School, the doctoral program and its requirements, and doctoral study in communication.

While there are some particulars that still need to be added to the schedule for the residency element of our course, here are subjects or activities tentatively scheduled for the sessions each day:

June 18th  Introductions; Program Orientation and Requirements; Christian Scholarship; Biblical Principles and the Study of Communication.

June 19th  Field Overview: Part I-Trends and Issues in the Field of Communication; Field Overview Part II-Quantitative Research Approaches and Exemplary Studies; Field Overview Part III- Rhetorical History and Criticism (Brummett) Part IV-Historical and Critical Approaches and Exemplary Studies.

June 20th  Field Overview: Part V-Qualitative Research Approaches and Exemplary Studies; Presentation of Professional Organizations; Field Overview Part VI-Film Study; Doctoral Study Tools; Speed Reading and Comprehension; Completing a Dissertation.

June 21st  Presentation of Scholarly Communication Journals; PhD Students Panel; Field Overview VII-Ethnographic Research. Online Orientation.

June 22nd  Research Project Proposals; Questions/Experiences.
Grading

There are no exams in this course. Grades will be determined on the following basis:

Research Proposal—40%

Academic Journal Review—20%

Academic Professional Organization Review—20%

Online Discussion Exercises During “Prologue”—20% (determined on the basis of quality and timeliness of responses and interaction with others in the class; guidelines vary by assignment)

Incomplete Grades

It is Regent University policy that incomplete grades are to be given only for legitimate reasons such as severe illnesses or emergencies or other significant reasons acceptable to the professor and not because of neglect on the student’s part.

Academic Integrity

As should be expected, particularly at a Christian university, students should adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. This includes avoidance of plagiarism, defined as the uses of written and oral words of another person, including another student, without the acknowledgement of the speaker or writer’s indebtedness to that person. This also applies to the use of papers or other materials previously submitted for grading purposes to instructors of other classes, either at Regent University or other institutions. Any violation of this policy normally will result in failure of the course.

Office Hours

I welcome the opportunity to interact with or pray for you about any course or personal matter in person, by phone or by e-mail. During the prologue and epilogue parts of our course, I will usually be in the office on Tuesday and Wednesday 10 a.m.-12 p.m. If this is inconvenient for you, I will be glad to set up another time to call or meet.

Student Feedback

At or near the end of this course, you will receive an opportunity to evaluate course content and instruction. Students can access the University’s online evaluation system at: http://eval.report.edu/regentsurvey/students.cfm However, you are invited and encouraged to interact with me regarding the course at any time during the summer session. Again, I am delighted to have the opportunity to serve you as you prepare for further study in our program.
Regent University Services and Policies

Here are some links to important Regent University information and policies:

- Academic Calendar/Registrar Information
- Bookstore
- Honor/Plagiarism Policy
- Regent Library
- Student Services (includes links to student handbook, disability services, University calendar, University Writing Center, etc.)
- Technical Support – University Helpdesk

Disability Statement—the student is responsible for contacting the assistant director of Student Services at 752-353-4486 to request accommodations, provide necessary documentation, and make arrangement with each instructor. The student services website above is designed to help our disabled students learn of their rights and responsibilities with regard to disability services. The site also has resources for faculty to become better informed of their responsibilities toward the disabled students and their classes.