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**
**COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

**COM 707**
**PHILOSOPHY AND COMMUNICATION**
**FALL 2011**
**DISTANCE**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

_Instructor: Dr. Marc T. Newman_
_Phone: (865) 429-5523_
_Fax: (865) 429-1561 (call ahead on office phone before faxing)_
_E-mail: marcnew@regent.edu_
_Office Hours: by appointment_
_Office Location: The Great Smoky Mountains or Near the Beach in CA_

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 core course is designed to acquaint you with the longstanding association (and sometimes downright acrimony) between philosophy, rhetoric, and communication in general. The course will begin with the examination of the basic tools, terms, and area of inquiry of philosophy, examining major figures in the field. Then we will bridge the gap with rhetoric by examining early philosophical analysis of rhetoric, and rhetorical defenses of philosophy and its scope (what it does). When philosophy exits academia and enters the public square, it often exhibits itself in the form of rhetorical cultural critique. Through Lewis, Weaver, and some critical examples, we will note how philosophical constructs can inform critical inquiry.

**Rationale/Course Overview**

**Course Description**

This core course is designed to delve deeply into the connection between philosophy and communication theory and practice. The course will begin with the examination of the core constructs of philosophy: epistemology, ontology, and axiology. Then the course turns its attention to primary works in the field defending philosophy as an appropriate task in a postmodern age, utilizing philosophy as a means of cultural critique, for preaching, and moral education. Finally, the course turns to Alasdair MacIntyre, one of the greatest living philosophers, to examine contemporary choices between Aristotle and Nietzsche.

**Integration of Faith and Learning**

C.S. Lewis, in his landmark essay, “Learning in War Time,” noted: “If all the world were Christian, it might not matter if all the world were uneducated. But, as it is, a cultural life will exist outside the Church whether it exists inside or not. To be ignorant and simple now – not to be able to meet the enemies on their own ground – would be to throw down our weapons, and to betray our uneducated brethren who have, under God, no defense but us against the intellectual attacks of the heathen. Good philosophy must exist, if for no other reason, because bad philosophy needs to be answered. The cool intellect must work not only against cool intellect on the other side, but against the muddy heathen mysticism which deny intellect altogether…The learned life then is, for some, a duty.”

Faith informs knowledge as premises inform conclusions. All thought is founded on sets of presuppositions that will lead, inevitably to ends. The psalmist says, “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.” The soundness of our conclusions will be determined by the veracity of our presuppositions. Therefore, it is important that Christian scholars not think that they must abandon presuppositions in order to achieve some chimerical objectivity and advance in the academy. Worse, it is a lie. The scholar will not abandon presuppositions in any case; instead one set will merely be substituted for another. G.K. Chesterton, in *All is Grist*, explained, “The whole point of education is that it should give a man abstract and eternal standards by which he can judge material and fugitive conditions.” By integrating faith and learning we can bring the eternal into the temporal, allowing us to “test the spirits” and to “hold fast to what is true.”
COMMUNICATION STUDIES PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Christian Worldview - Doctoral students will critique the worldviews commonly held by communication scholars and will formulate their own Christian worldview as a developing communication scholar.

- Academics - Doctoral students will summarize and explain common ontological, epistemological and axiological approaches to the study of communication and will compose their own definition of communication based on their approach to the field.

- Christian Community - Doctoral students will contribute to the academic Christian community of communication scholars through their participation in on-line or on-campus doctoral colloquiums and academic conference gatherings with other Christian scholars.

- Mission Impact - Doctoral students will identify the major international organizations in the field of communication study and will explain their contributions to the field.

RESEARCH METHODS: HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL METHODOLOGIES OUTCOMES

In this course, students will:

- be able to define communication in terms of the four basic philosophical areas of inquiry: epistemology, axiology, ontology, and teleology.
  - Demonstrated in a definition of communication paper assignment.

- understand the connections between philosophy and rhetorical argument and critique.
  - Demonstrated in online discussion boards and in the philosophical underpinnings paper.

- be able to ground rhetorical critique in foundational principles.
  - Demonstrated in online discussion boards and in the philosophical underpinnings paper.

- analyze and apply various philosophical positions
  - Demonstrated on discussion boards and as part of the final paper.

- use philosophical constructs to craft a rhetorical theory/model and use that theory/model in analyzing and critiquing a rhetorical artifact.
o Demonstrated on the discussion boards and in the final paper.

- use philosophical constructs to craft a rhetorical theory/model and use that theory/model in analyzing and critiquing a rhetorical artifact.

  o Demonstrated in the final paper.

- will assess rhetorical research and craft analytical critiques

  o Demonstrated through written blind peer evaluations of other student’s work and discussion boards.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

**REQUIRED TEXTS**


**Selected essays and journal articles will be assigned including:**


O’Connor, Flannery. “Good Country People” – you may find this in collections of her short stories, or online.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS


Copleston, Frederick. The History of Philosophy. – This series has been around for awhile, and it is considered to be the finest work on the history of philosophy in the English language. It can be purchased new on Amazon, but you can save an incredible amount of money on this series by picking it up at used books stores a volume at a time. You can also go to www.abe.com and find many of the volumes in this multi-volume set for under $2.

Lewis, C.S. That Hideous Strength. any edition. This is the third book in the Perelandra series. Even if you have not read Perelandra or Out of the Silent Planet, you can pick this up and follow fairly well. THS is a fictional outworking of the philosophical concepts in The Abolition of Man.

For a more complete understanding of MacIntyre, read the follow up books:


COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

A. Class Participation
   The week runs from Monday through Saturday – but I will release the questions at 6 PM on the Thursday before the week they are due. That will give you five days to consider and post your
initial response. I pray that all of you will try hard to organize your schedules in such a way that you will not have to work on Sunday – everyone needs a day of rest.

Students will be expected to have read the assigned materials before the week in which those materials will be discussed. It is important that everyone participate, but also that none of us become completely overwhelmed. The key advantage of asynchronous education is that, unlike class, there is no predetermined start and stop time – this is also a key disadvantage. Students may be asked to lead discussions on particular book chapters or essays.

If there are eight or more students in class, I will divide you into groups for the purpose of discussion.

At the end of the class you will be assigned a student’s final paper to peer review. Your job will be to look over your classmates paper and to evaluate how well the paper adheres to the MLA styles sheet, do some light proofreading (please make sure you thoroughly proofread your own paper before submitting it for peer review), identify areas of strength and weakness in paper, with special attention to the fit between the theory and the artifact, the quality of evidence in support of clear arguments, whether the conclusions are justified, and to generally make sure the paper meets the requirements of the assignment. Critique should be phrased in a positive way – with an emphasis on being helpful. That being said, you are not to help rewrite papers, just provide suitable critique so that students can make final adjustments. The peer review process is blind. You will not know the name of the author of the paper and the author will not know the identity of the reviewer.

**B. The Quality of Your Posts**

Once discussions begin, I expect the kind of robust analysis and debate that might accompany a conference panel. You will be posting discussion on Blackboard threads. Some threads will be “hotter” than others, but everyone will be expected to post universally (I will moderate that requirement if enrollment exceeds my expectations).

While it is fine to acknowledge the work of another student with positive feedback, such congratulations do not really move the conversation forward in a meaningful way. All of the posts in this class should advance at least one of the following objectives:

1) **Initiate:** all original posts should initiate new arguments for consideration. Additionally, your responses can initiate new lines of thinking sparked by the originator’s post.

2) **Extension:** you agree with the poster’s conclusions and you wish to extend upon them by offering corroborating evidence from another source, or by offering additional analysis that will illuminate a related area of thought.

2) **Clarification:** you are not clear about what a student means, so you ask questions to clarify the thoughts of another student. You should all be on the lookout for clarifying questions, and be prepared to respond by providing more analysis and examples.
3) Challenge: you think the poster’s position is inaccurate, wrong, or inadequate in some way. Respectfully identify the argument you believe to be mistaken, explain why it is flawed, provide evidence an analysis to support your position, and, if you have one, provide a counter argument.

You will be peer reviewing your final papers in the postings, so it particularly important to be constructive in your critique of one another’s work.

C. Timeliness of Postings
You must keep up with the flow of the postings for the week; that way we can all track through the course together. I recognize that sometimes life gets in the way of academics, but when students routinely participate in a timely manner, it enhances the educational opportunity of all of the other students in the class and serves as encouragement (see Phil. 2:3-4).

D. Late Policy
All scheduled written assignments are due by 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time on dates indicated on the syllabus. (I know that this appears to give an advantage to students on the East Coast as Pacific Standard Time students will have to have their assignments in by 8:59 PM, but “left coast” students will also receive their assignment three hours earlier, so it all works out.) All assignments turned in after that time will be considered late. All late assignments will receive a deduction of one letter grade. No work will be accepted after four days. Late assignments will be graded without comment – if you are looking for feedback, please submit your work on time.

E. Extensions
Unless stated by the professor, all assignments are due on the date stated in the syllabus. Late assignments will be graded down one letter grade unless the student has an approved extension. Except in cases of emergency, requests for extensions must be made to the instructor, at least twenty-four hours before the assignment is due. Be prepared to defend your reason why you need the extension.

F. Incomplete Grades
It is your responsibility to monitor your status in this class. I will not initiate a drop from class. If you find yourself unable to complete the work for the class, you must drop in a timely fashion. Failure to secure a drop will result in an "F" for the class. My experience demonstrates that 80% of students receiving "I" or "Incomplete" grades never complete the work. In an effort to spur you to complete any missed assignments in a timely fashion, I will not assign incomplete grades. In extreme circumstances, when extensions are provided to students, outstanding assignments may be completed early in the following semester and a grade change, if warranted, will be issued at that time. The only students who will be considered for extensions are those who have completed all of the other work for the semester, and who have been diligent in their posting for the class.

G. Academic Integrity
The Regent University Graduate Catalogue notes: “A community of teachers and scholars recognizes the principles of truth and honesty as absolutely essential. The expectation at Regent
University is that these principles will be rigorously followed in all academic endeavors, including the preparation of class reports and papers, giving and taking of examinations, and in protecting the validity of assigned grades. This assumes that all work will be done by the person who purports to do the work without unauthorized aids. Instructors will exercise due diligence in planning and supervising the academic program so that the principles of truth and honesty are encouraged.”

H. Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a student utilizes the ideas or words of another author without appropriate citation. Plagiarism is a severe academic violation, and will not be tolerated. The university’s policy on plagiarism is that a first instance will result in a failure of the assignment in which it occurs. I will notify the dean of any act of plagiarism in my classes. A second instance will result in failure of the class, and a third instance may result in expulsion from the university.

In an electronic, cut-and-paste age, plagiarism is easy to do, even if you do not intend to do so. The best way to avoid plagiarism is to adopt a research regime that keeps quoted material separate from your original writing until such time as you need it. When doing research on the computer, open a separate file for every article or book you examine. At the top of the page, write in all bibliographic information, then, under that heading, type or paste quotations or paraphrases along with the page number associated with the quotation or paraphrase. Then, when you craft your paper, each time you paste a quotation or paraphrase, insert the parenthetical citation in text, and copy and paste the bibliographic information immediately into the “Works Cited” page.

ASSIGNMENTS

All essays written for this class must be turned in using Times New Roman, 12 point font (this assures uniformity in guidelines). All essays must conform to the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th Edition). I am a big fan of subheadings, so since the assignment identifies parts in a paper, you should identify those parts with subheadings that are clear. MLA does not designate heading order, so please use this one: Major section – centered. First level sub-heading is flush left with the text for that section beginning on the next line. Second level subheading should be flush left in italics with the text for that section beginning on the next line.

Online Discussions – 20%: Since the success of an online class is dependent on the participation of its members, all students will be expected to engage in robust discussions each week over the assigned reading material. Please keep up with assigned readings.

Defining Communication – 20%: Write a 3-4 page paper in which you begin by positing a definition for “communication” (create your own, do not select an existing definition) and in the body of the paper break down and analyze your definition by explaining that definition’s epistemological, ontological, axiological, and teleological foundations. Cite freely from both in-class readings and any outside reading relevant to your definition, but make the definition your own.
**Theory Assignment – 20%:** Choose a philosopher to explore in a 5-6 page paper. Each paper must include background on the philosopher, explicate the philosophical theory in detail, and provide a brief review of literature explaining the influence, use, and/or extensions of the theory. Finally, explain how you think the theory can be useful to those studying communication.

**Philosophical Critique of Rhetorical Discourse – 40%:** This assignment represents the major research paper and analysis assignment for the class. Topics must be approved by the professor in advance. The focus of your paper must be a rhetorical artifact – this can include speeches, television shows or series, radio programs, or advertising campaigns (in any medium) or any other kind of discourse that is persuasive. Your 18-20 page paper (inclusive of references) will include: 1) an introduction (introduce the topic, explain why it is significant, the problem you intend to address along with the particular questions you intend to answer, and preview the remainder of the paper) 2) a review of the relevant literature to contextualize your theory and artifact 3) description of the artifact you intend to analyze, 4) explanation of the philosophical critique you intend to apply (craft your analytical tools from a particular school of thought, or a particular theorist), 5) analysis of the artifact using the philosophical categories you have constructed in the preceding section, 6) the conclusions reached by the analysis and implications for future research. Examples of philosophers whose theories have yielded excellent analyses in the past include: Alasdair MacIntyre, Friedrich Nietzsche, Richard Weaver, Immanuel Kant, Soren Kierkegaard, Rene Descarte, John Stuart Mill, Plato, David Hume, Michel Foucault, Stephen Toulmin, C.L. Stevenson, and others.

**GRADING**

In assigning grades to each of the graded sections of this class, I will use the following general standards.

**Discussion:**
A = Robust, universal posting on all reading assignments. Student shows insight into the reading, often going beyond the text to incorporate ideas, theories, and constructs from other works. Student drives discussion by consistently asking probing questions for follow up.

B = Regular posting on all reading assignments. Student demonstrates comprehension of the reading and the ability to apply it. Student interacts consistently with other class members.

C = Regular posting on most reading assignments. Student demonstrates a grasp of the content. Student responds to other class members.

**Writing Assignments:**
A = Strict adherence to style sheet. Assignments thoroughly proofed. The student establishes significance. Analysis is exceptionally well-organized and arguments are well-substantiated. Student demonstrates insight in conclusions and implications of the analysis. Writing style is strong.
B= Adheres well to style sheets. Assignments reveal few spelling, grammatical, or style errors. The student chooses appropriate artifacts. Analysis is organized and easy to follow. Student demonstrates an understanding of conclusions and implications in the analysis. Writing style is acceptable.

C  = Paper meets the minimum standards for the assignment.

NOTE: Any paper that is accepted for publication in a scholarly journal or for presentation at a scholarly convention will be assigned an A as long as the acceptance for publication or presentation occurs within one year of the end of this course.

**Evaluation and Grading**

A. Weight
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards and Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Definition of Communication Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theory Assignment</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophical Critique Final Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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B. Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96–100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93-95</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81-84</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75-77</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>74 or less</td>
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### COURSE SCHEDULE (WEEK-BY-WEEK)

**COM 701 -- WEEKLY READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**

Each week we will begin on Monday by discussing the reading assignments. Discussion Board questions will be available online the Thursday before the week they must be answered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>Assignments due that week (in italics) / Reading assignment for following week (in bold)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 22</td>
<td>Overview of the Course. <em>Students introduce themselves. Respond to opening questions on Blackboard. Assignment to discussion days.</em> <strong>Read Brockreide</strong> as soon as possible and Geisler Part One.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 29</td>
<td><strong>Read Geisler Part Two and Lewis “Meditations in a Toolshed.”</strong></td>
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<td><strong>WEEK 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>September 5</td>
<td>September 5 is Labor Day, please enjoy your families and post initial responses on Tuesday. <strong>Read Geisler Part Three.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK 4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>September 12</td>
<td><strong>Read Geisler Part Four.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK 5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>September 19</td>
<td><strong>Read Geisler Part Five.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>WEEK 6</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>September 26</td>
<td><strong>Read Pieper Chapters 1-5.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>WEEK 7</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>October 3</td>
<td><strong>Defining Communication Assignment Due by October 3, 11:59 EST. Send via email attachment. Read Pieper Chapters 6-9.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>WEEK 8</strong></td>
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<td>October 10</td>
<td>Discussion. <strong>Read Phaedrus</strong> (intro is helpful, but not obligatory) and Augustine, <em>On Christian Doctrine</em>, Book IV.</td>
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*Note: Dates may vary slightly due to course adjustments.*
MODULAR WEEK

October 17  Break for Modular Week

WEEK 9

October 24  Read Weaver, Chapters 1-4.

WEEK 10

October 31  Theory Assignment Due by Wed, November 2, 11:59 EST. Send via email attachment Read Weaver, Chapters 5-9.

WEEK 11

November 7  Read Lewis, The Abolition of Man, Downing, and Flannery O’Connor’s short story “Good Country People.”

WEEK 12

November 14  Read MacIntyre, Prologue and Chapters 1-6.

WEEK 13

November 21  Read MacIntyre, Chapters 7-13

WEEK 14

November 28  Read MacIntyre, Chapters 14-19.

WEEK 15

December 5  Philosophical Critique Papers must be completed and emailed in by Monday, December 5th, by 11:59 EST. Students will be assigned one paper to peer critique. Peer critiques must be emailed to the professor by Thursday, December 8th by 11:59 EST.

WEEK 16

December 12  All final papers are to be posted in the forum created for that purpose by Monday, December 12, by 11:59 PM EST.
Critical Dates and Deadlines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 3</td>
<td>Defining Communication Assignment must be posted</td>
<td>by 11:59 PM EST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2</td>
<td>Theory Assignment must be posted</td>
<td>by 11:59 PM EST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 5</td>
<td>All Philosophical Critiques Papers must be posted</td>
<td>by 11:59 PM EST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>All critical evaluations must be emailed</td>
<td>by 11:59 PM EST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 12</td>
<td>All final Philosophical Critique Papers must be posted</td>
<td>by 11:59 PM EST</td>
</tr>
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**DEPARTMENT RESOURCES**

Useful links:
- American Rhetoric (a good catch-all source): [http://www.americanrhetoric.com/](http://www.americanrhetoric.com/)

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

Please review the following links for important information on University policies:

- [Academic Calendar/Registrar Information](http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_life/disabilities.cfm)
- [Bookstore](http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_life/disabilities.cfm)
- [Honor/Plagiarism Policy](http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_life/disabilities.cfm)
- [Regent Library](http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_life/disabilities.cfm)
- [Student Services](http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_life/disabilities.cfm) (includes links to student handbook, disability services, University calendar, University Writing Center, etc.)
- [Technical Support – University Helpdesk](http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_life/disabilities.cfm)
- Disability Statement – the student is responsible for contacting the assistant director of Student Services at 757.352.4486 to request accommodations, provide necessary documentation, and make arrangement with each instructor. The following website 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 in their classes. [www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_life/disabilities.cfm](http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_life/disabilities.cfm)

**Student Course Evaluations**

Students will be given opportunity to provide the instructor, as well as the college administration with written feedback and evaluation of the course structure and its conduct. However, students should feel free to bring any concerns to the attention of the instructor at any time during the semester.

Last Updated: 5/17/2011

*At times, due to unforeseen circumstances, course content may be subject to change. Please check with your professor to insure you have the most recently updated Syllabus for this course.*