Is bullshit the excess of our collective bowel? Or the force that keeps it moving and "normal"?

The stench of bullshit is near and clear, and yet it lingers insidiously -- why? In this course we will explore the role bullshit plays in a democratic society by analyzing its relationship to rhetoric. To do this, we will write, read, critique, reflect, and interact with a variety of texts that explore a myriad of rhetorical situations and discursive formations -- ancient and modern, political and popular, fabricated and factual; our goal: to study the excrement of our society in order to interrogate the shit that stains our collective unconscious.

**Learning Outcomes**

In this course you will learn to:
- compose in multiple genres by responding to rhetorical situations and genre conventions
- ask questions and be guided by strategic explorations of those questions in order to generate research topics and sustain meaningful inquiry
- locate relevant source material, evaluate its credibility, and cite it appropriately
- analyze and synthesize ideas in source material to produce projects that interpret and evaluate your own ideas and assumptions, as well as those of other writers.
- apply strategies when composing, revising, or evaluating your own work that enable them to follow conventions and style of academic English
- reflect critically on how to apply their processes for writing and analysis to writing projects in other contexts, within and outside the University
COURSE EVALUATION AND EXPECTATIONS

In this course you will work on four major projects: one, a quarter-long multimodal blog project (20%); two, an annotated bibliography and article review that consolidates the first stages of your research process (20%); three, a research-based argumentative paper (20%), which will be revised for your fourth and final project, the zine (20%). Each of these projects are worth twenty percent of your grade. The remaining twenty percent of your grade will be based on how active and prepared you are for each class.

As a five unit course, you will be expected to work an average of fifteen hours per week.

To satisfy your C2 requirement, you must pass each project and earn a C or higher.

COURSE MATERIALS

You are not required to purchase a textbook for this course; however, it is expected that you "attend" each class with your assigned reading (printed or electronic, as long as you demonstrate that you've read the text prior to class).

POINT PERSONS PRESENTATIONS

Each writing community will be responsible for facilitating a one-hour discussion on a week's assigned course text. In these presentations your community will offer a brief summary of the text(s)' main points in order to then apply its argument to a contemporary social issue. In addition to preparing a discussion, please create a handout that outlines your key ideas as well as resources that may be helpful for your audience.

I encourage each group to meet with me before their presentation week.

And, no powerpoints -- please.
PLAGIARISM, ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & ETHICAL RESEARCH

As participants in academic discourse, we are obliged to understand -- but also interrogate -- conventions related to academic integrity and ethical research. The institutional view is one that values individual intellectual property; this is most evident in the UC Santa Cruz Campus and Administrative Manual, which reads: "plagiarism is defined as the act of using the ideas or work of another person or persons as if they were one's own without giving proper credit to the source." With this definition, the University advises that any act of plagiarism or perceived plagiarism be reported and the student penalized.

DON ROTHAMN AWARD

Each year the Don Rothman Endowed Award in First-Year Writing honors the achievements of students in the genre of nonfiction, academic, or analytic writing. Award winners will receive an acknowledgment and monetary award. The deadline for submissions is usually in June.

INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

UCSC considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission; therefore it expects every member of the community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture for all in its classrooms, work environments, and campus events.

If there are any aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that act as barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of your achievement, please notify me as soon as possible.
ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Week One: What is Bullshit?
Starting the Conversation
  Reading: "On Bullshit" (pgs. 1-8)

Project One, Part One due Sunday by 12:00pm PST

Week Two: Defining Bullshit
  Reading: "On Bullshit" (finish)
Academic Bullshit
  Reading: "A Kind Word for Bullshit"
Blog Posts due Friday, 5pm; Blog Comments due Sunday, 10pm PST

Week Three: "I do" Bullshit
  Reading: "Performative Utterances"
    "The Public Apology"
Performative Style
  Reading: "Style: The Hidden Agenda..."
Blog Posts due Friday, 5pm; Blog Comments due Sunday, 10pm PST

Week Four: Ethical Research and Resource Gathering
  Project Two Proposal due in class
Research Activity
  Reading: "Logical Fallacies"
Project Two, Part One due Thursday by 5pm PST

Week Five Finding Convergence
  Reading: "Rhetoric and Bullshit"
Writing Community Presentation #1
Blog Posts due Friday, 5pm; Blog Comments due Sunday, 10pm PST
ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Week Six: The Politics of Bullshit
   Reading: "Stuart Hall and Cultural Studies"
Writing Community Presentation #2
Blog Posts due Friday, 5pm; Blog Comments due Sunday, 10pm PST

Week Seven: Writing Community Workshop #1
   Transcription of Project Two due
Writing Community Workshop #2
   Draft of Project Two, Part Two due to peer
Project Two, Part Two due Friday by 10am PST

Week Eight: The Life and Death of Bullshit
   Reading: "Manufacturing Uncertainty"
Writing Community Presentation #3
Blog Posts due Friday, 5pm; Blog Comments due Sunday, 10pm PST

Week Nine: Digital Literacy
   Reading: "Literacy, Democracy, and Fake News"
Writing Community Presentation #4
Project Three due by Friday, 11:59pm PST

Week Ten: Writing Community Workshop

Virtual Writers' Party (TBD)

Final Project due August 30, 12pm PST