

Easley looks at how images make arguments

Johnson County Community College knows Terri Easley, associate professor, speech and debate, as the tireless coach who devotes her free time and weekends to practicing with the JCCC debate team, winner of the 2010 Community College National Debate Championship and ranked No. 1 among community colleges so far this year. Equally impressive, Easley has a reputation as a scholar in visual rhetoric, presenting at national conferences.

Close to home, Easley will present two lectures on visual rhetoric in April as part of the JCCC College Scholars program. Her interest in the power of images to communicate complex messages began during her years in graduate school at Baylor University, when visual rhetoric was a fairly new concept in the field of communication studies. Easley has continued to contribute scholarly knowledge to the topic through her research looking at the specific aspects of how images make arguments.

“Since images are generally emotionally charged objects, it is important that we assess how those images can be evaluated as effective persuasive tools,” Easley said. “Because images play a dominant role in our lives, it is important that we understand how images play into the process of persuasion.”

Easley will deliver two lectures on the topic that are free and open to the public.

- *The Visual as Argument: An Analysis of Images as Tools of Persuasion* will be from 7-8 p.m. Wednesday, April 13, in the M.R. and Evelyn Hudson Auditorium of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art. A reception precedes the event at 6:30 p.m. in the Atrium.

In this presentation, Easley explores the ways images shape and communicate persuasive messages. Instead of just acting emotionally upon viewing images, Easley encourages people to learn the tools to evaluate visual images and become better consumers of media.

- *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Visual Representations of Women in American Politics* will be from 11 a.m.-noon



Terri Easley

Thursday, April 14, in the Hudson Auditorium.

As women have stepped onto the stage of American politics, images have been crucial to defining their role in the political sphere. In this presentation, Easley discusses the tactics and impacts of the current state of the visual representations of women in the image-oriented political arena.

As a bonus to faculty and staff, Easley will present a seminar, *Visual Imagery and Historical Parallelism: The Genocide Awareness Project and the Evolution of Argumentation in the Abortion Controversy*.

In this seminar Easley examines images used by the GAP pro-life movement traveling to universities throughout the country. Displays of images of aborted fetuses juxtaposed with genocidal visuals — the Holocaust, African Americans killed in racist lynchings and the extermination of Native Americans by the U.S. Army — strive to draw historical parallels between these events. Easley’s primary research interest for her master’s thesis was the use of images on both sides of the abortion controversy.

Easley has a bachelor’s degree in literary studies from the University of Texas at Dallas and a master’s degree in communications from Baylor University. Easley has used her research to establish an important place for herself in the discourse of communication. She has had two presentations accepted at the National Communication Association National Conference, both of which focus on visual rhetoric. She serves on the editorial board for *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate: The Journal of the Cross Examination Debate Association*.

For more information about the JCCC College Scholars program, contact Karen Martley, director, Staff and Organizational Development, 913-469-8500, ext. 3467. 