COMM 5312: SEMINAR IN GENDER COMMUNICATION

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Office: BH 325, 825-5986
Office Hrs: M 6-7pm; TU 3:30-5:30pm; W 5-7pm
(Other office visits by appointment.)

Fall, 2014
Section 001: Wednesdays, 7-9:30pm
CS 103

Office: BH 325, 825-5986
Office Hrs: M 6-7pm; TU 3:30-5:30pm; W 5-7pm
(Other office visits by appointmt.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This graduate seminar will focus on gender communication, studied from two perspectives: (1) communication about women and men, in terms of language and media depictions of the sexes; and (2) communication between men and women, or the more interpersonal/relationship-development aspect of the topic. A variety of instructional strategies—discussion, lecture, class activities, individual projects—will be employed in this course to help us accomplish our goals. We’ll begin with a discussion of terminology and concepts necessary to a fundamental understanding of gender communication. For the remainder of the semester, students will read and critique both scientific research and popular literature in gender communication, while conducting a literature review of a topic of their choosing. Assignments will be directed toward the final course project—a literature review and research proposal on a gender communication topic.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: At the end of the course, students will be able to
1. define key terminology in gender communication;
2. identify and explain basic theories, issues, and research trends in gender communication;
3. develop and present an instructional strategy or training exercise based on a gender communication concept;
4. illustrate their abilities to analyze and synthesize research findings on a topic in gender communication and propose future research on the topic;
5. demonstrate their ability to deliver an effective oral presentation, summarizing their final papers.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS: The first expectation I have for students is that you keep up with the reading. Several readings will be assigned for each session; these readings are intense, so it’s important to plan ahead and make sure you’ve read (and understood) the material thoroughly before coming to class. You cannot hope to be successful in this course if you get behind in the reading. A secondary expectation surrounds the seminar approach to this class: In a seminar, students are primarily responsible for generating discussion. If you don’t read, we’ll have no substance for discussions and the course will degenerate into merely an exchange of personal anecdotes/opinions. I expect balanced participation, as well as rigorous, open-minded discussion, stemming from assigned readings. We need everyone’s involvement for the course to be successful. I appreciate all points of view and encourage an open, honest exchange of ideas.

REQUIRED READINGS: Required readings will be placed on reserve in the library and will constitute the bulk of our reading and discussion material for the semester. (Refer to the required reading list in your course guidebook.) In addition, because of students’ varied backgrounds, an undergraduate textbook, GenderSpeak: Personal Effectiveness in Gender Communication (5th ed.) will be required reading. E-versions of the textbook are acceptable. Students are expected to keep current in course readings even if the material is not directly covered in class.
CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: Please turn off all laptops, cell phones, watches that beep, etc. before the start of class and KEEP THEM OFF. If you must keep your phone on because you’re on call or have an emergency, turn the sound to vibrate. If you have to answer an emergency call, leave the room quickly and quietly. Be respectful of your instructor and classmates during class sessions. While I appreciate and encourage discussion, I won’t allow someone to dominate or show disrespect for another person’s contribution. I won’t tolerate talking among yourselves when I am presenting information, during classmates’ presentations, or while classmates are offering comments. I expect you to listen to me as well as one another, and not to work on things for other classes or your personal life during my class. No texting or checking emails on laptop computers, cell phones, etc. I don’t allow students to use laptops during class for 3 reasons: (1) They’re distracting to students around you; (2) I can’t be assured that you’re working on class material; and (3) students using laptops tend not to engage in class discussion because they’re engrossed in their computers. Discussion is a key element in a comm course. If you have a problem with this policy, talk to me. If you choose to purchase the textbook in an electronic format, talk to me about using a reader, pad, laptop, or other device in class.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: TAMU-CC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you need disability accommodations in my class, please see me as soon as possible. Please have your accommodation letter from the Disability Services Office with you when you see me. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), contact the Disability Services Office (CCH 116, 825-5816). All discussions will remain confidential and should occur within the first two weeks of class.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Because this course places a great deal of emphasis on discussion, it’s imperative that you attend all class sessions. Since the course only meets once a week, it’s even more important to attend so that you stay current and receive pertinent information. If you do miss a class, it’s your responsibility to get the information that was covered from one of your classmates. I suspect that many of you will feel that an attendance policy for a graduate course is inappropriate, but I’ve found that such a policy acts as an incentive. Here’s the policy that will be enforced for this class:
(1) Your first absence is without penalty. Use this absence for illness and emergencies.
(2) Each subsequent absence will lower your final course average by 6 points (equivalent of day class).
(3) You must attend at least 2 hours, 15 minutes of each 2 and a half hour class to be counted present.

MISSED WORK: If you miss class when you’re expected to make a presentation, turn in an assignment, or take a quiz, you will not be allowed to make up that activity on a subsequent date. The grade is a ZERO. There are only two exceptions to this policy: (1) you’re admitted to a hospital (not just seen by someone in an ER) and unable to attend class; or (2) you’ve experienced a death in your family. In both of these situations you must provide documentation supporting the reason for the missed activity. You or someone you know should get in touch with me, preferably by phone, as soon as the emergency arises. Contacting me before an absence is always preferable to contacting me after the fact. In extreme situations, you may also contact Student Affairs (825-2612) and request that a written memo be sent to all your instructors. Anyone traveling for a school-related event must turn in assignments or take quizzes before your travel, not after.
PLAGIARISM POLICY: Please understand that plagiarism is grounds for suspension from the university. Any student caught plagiarizing someone else’s paper, presentation, or speaking notes; lifting information from sources without citing those sources; attempting to turn in or present the same work in multiple classes; or cheating on a quiz may be given an automatic F for the course. Profs do compare notes and discuss student assignments. Do not even think about using material that is not your own—this includes website material. If you’re uncertain about the university’s policy on academic misconduct, refer to the Student Handbook or University catalog. If you’re uncertain as to what actions constitute plagiarism in communication courses, ask me.

EQUITY STATEMENT: All people, regardless of sex/gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, religion, physical/learning ability, sexual orientation, veteran status, etc., shall have equal opportunity without harassment in this course. Any problems can be discussed confidentially with your instructor.

GRADE APPEAL PROCESS: Students who feel they haven’t been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION: Assignments in this course build on one another, meaning that they progress toward a culminating final course project. Brief explanations of each assignment appear below; complete explanations of all assignments and quiz review guides can be found in your course guidebook. Written assignments must be typed and turned in at the beginning of the class session indicated in this syllabus. Unannounced “pop” quizzes over readings are a possibility.

Reporter/Critic Assignment: For each reading, students will serve as reporters and critics who will lead and facilitate class discussion. The reporter’s task is to summarize key ideas in an assigned reading. The critic’s task is to be evaluative, meaning that you explore with the class what you liked and didn’t like, thought to be difficult to understand, or found particularly relevant or irrelevant in an assigned reading. (See guidebook for more info.)

Annotated Bibliography Assignment: This assignment involves locating published research about gender communication and annotating it for possible later use. Select a topic you think you might want to pursue for the final project; then find 3 published articles from academic journals or edited books (2000 to the present) that you think will become part of your literature review for your final paper. Read over each article, extrapolating important ideas and incorporating them into your annotations. Keep annotations short and to the point—3-4 sentences max. (See guidebook for more info.)

Abstracts Assignment: For this abstract assignment, you will locate 3 published articles (which may or may not be the same 3 sources used for the annotated bibliography assignment) from academic journals or edited books (2000 to the present) that you think will become part of your literature review for your final paper. Next you will write original abstracts for each article. Abstracting means summarizing the highlights or most important aspects of an article into 1 or 2 paragraphs. (See guidebook for more info.)
**Instructional Strategy/Training Exercise:** In this assignment, students will share with classmates an instructional strategy (teaching lesson or activity) on gender communication that you have used in the classroom or think would be effective to use were you a teacher OR a training exercise in gender communication—one that you might use while conducting, for example, a workshop for a corporation or organization on gender sensitivity in the workplace. (See guidebook for more info.)

**Final Project: Oral Presentation:** Each student will make an informal, 10-minute presentation to the class, summarizing her or his final paper. Be prepared to field questions from your classmates and instructor. (See guidebook for more info.)

**Final Project: Paper:** The final research paper has two parts: (1) a literature review of research on a specific topic of your choosing, related to gender communication; and (2) a proposal of research that you believe needs to be conducted on your topic. This paper should be 20-25 pages in length (typed, double-spaced, standard font size and margins), written in APA (6th ed.) style. (See guidebook for more info.)

**Quizzes:** Two 25-multiple choice question quizzes will be given. Quizzes will be based on required readings; review sheets for quizzes are in your course guidebook.

**GRADING SCALE:** Here is my approach to letter grades: a “C” is average; a “D” is below average, and an “F” is way below average (a bomb out). A “B” is above average and an “A” is way above average. As and Bs are rewards for above-average performance, not minimal or average work.

**ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION:** Your final grade in this course is based on your performance on the following assignments and quizzes. All written assignments must be typed and turned in at the beginning of the class session indicated in this syllabus. Point values for each assignment and quiz are shown below. Your final grade is based on a percentage of 550 points, minus any deductions for excessive absences. Roughly 90% of 500 points (approx. 495 points) will earn you an A, roughly 80% (approx. 440 points) a B, and so forth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Participation (Reporters/Critics)</td>
<td>150 points (50 pts. each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abstracts</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional Strategy/Training Exercise</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz 2</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: Presentation</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: Paper</td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
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**COURSE SCHEDULE:** The tentative schedule below details assigned readings, information to be covered during each class session, presentation and quiz dates, due dates for assignments—roughly everything you need to know to stay on top of this course. I use the word “tentative” because this schedule might change; however, students will be informed well in advance of any changes in schedule. Check the schedule before you come to each class so that you will be prepared.
| Week 1       | 8/27   | Syllabus Overview & Introductions  
|            |        | Introduction to Gender Communication  
|            |        | **Assignment: Chapter Reporters & Critics** (Guidebook pp. 7-12)  
|            |        | Required Reading: Articles #1-4; Chs. 1 & 2 (GSpk) by W 9/3  
|            |        | Read: Syll. & Annotated Bib Assignmt (Guidebk pp. 1-6; 16) by W 9/3  
| Week 2     | 9/3    | Discuss Readings: Gender Jargon & Identity Development  
|            |        | **Assignment: Annotated Bibliography (DUE W 9/17)**  
|            |        | Required Reading: Articles #5-9; Ch. 3 (GSpk) by W 9/10  
|            |        | Read: Quiz 1 Review (Guidebook p. 13) by W 9/10  
| Week 3     | 9/10   | Discuss Readings: Gender & Mass Media  
|            |        | Review Annotated Bibliography Assignment  
|            |        | Quiz 1 Review  
|            |        | Required Reading: Articles #10-11; Ch. 4 (GSpk) by W 9/17  
| Week 4     | 9/17   | **DUE: Annotated Bibliography**  
|            |        | Quiz 1 (GSpk Chs. 1-3)  
|            |        | Discuss Readings: Gendered Language  
|            |        | Required Reading: Articles #12-14; Chs. 5 & 6 (GSpk) by W 9/24  
|            |        | Read: Abstracts Assignment (Guidebook pp. 17-18) by W 9/24  
| Week 5     | 9/24   | Discuss Readings: Gender, Interpersonal Communication, & Friendship  
|            |        | **Assignment: Abstracts (DUE W 10/8)**  
|            |        | Required Reading: Articles #15-16; Ch. 7 (GSpk) by W 10/1  
|            |        | Read: Quiz 2 Review (Guidebook pp. 14-15) by W 10/1  
|            |        | Read: Inst. Strat/Train. Assignment (Guidebook pp. 19-20) by W 10/1  
| Week 6     | 10/1   | Discuss Readings: Gender & Intimate Relationships  
|            |        | **Assignment: Instruct. Strategy/Training Exercise (DUE W 10/22)**  
|            |        | Review Abstracts Assignment  
|            |        | Quiz 2 Review  
| Week 7     | 10/8   | **DUE: Abstracts**  
|            |        | Quiz 2 (GSpk Chs. 4-7)  
|            |        | Required Reading: Articles #17-19; Ch. 8 (GSpk) by W 10/15  
|
**Week 8**  
**W 10/15**  
Discuss Readings: Power Abuses  
Review Instructional Strategy/Training Exercise Assignment

**Week 9**  
**W 10/22**  
**DUE: Instructional Strategy/Training Exercise**  
Required Reading: Articles #20-21; Ch. 9 (GSpeak) by W 10/29  
Read: Final Paper & Final Presentation (Guidebk pp. 21-25) by W 10/29

**Week 10**  
**W 10/29**  
Discuss Readings: Gender Communication in the Workplace  
Assignment: Drafts/Outlines (DUE 11/12), Final Presentations (DUE 12/3), & Final Papers (DUE 12/10)  
Required Reading: Articles #22-24; Ch. 10 (GSpeak) by W 11/5

**Week 11**  
**W 11/5**  
Discuss Readings: Gender Communication in Educational Settings  
Review Draft/Outline, Final Presentation, & Final Paper Assignments  
**F 11/7**  
University Deadline to Drop a Class

**Week 12**  
**W 11/12**  
**DUE: Drafts/Outlines**  
Individual Appointments

**Week 13**  
**W 11/19**  
Library Research Session (Ivy at NCA Convention)

**Week 14**  
**W 11/26**  
Thanksgiving Holiday

**Week 15**  
**W 12/3**  
**DUE: Final Presentations**

**Week 16**  
**W 12/10**  
**DUE: Final Papers (7:00pm, no later)**

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