

COMMUNICATION AND GENDER

SPCH 3115

Syllabus: Summer 2004-05

ABOUT THE CLASS

Catalogue Description: Prerequisite: SPCH 2010 or permission from the instructor. An examination of the biological and cultural perspectives on communication between the sexes.

Course Overview: This class is a discussion of the nature of communication between and within the sexes. Gender is different than sex however, as sex is the biological determination and gender deals with perceptions of masculinity and femininity. Therefore, discussion will not be limited to male and female communication, but will also encompass other areas of gender such as homosexuality, metrosexuality, masculine and feminine behaviors, feminism, and masculinism (lack of a better word), or the male perspective of power in society.

This class is NOT a politically correct topic. Subject matter will vary, but will include



discussion about sex and perceptions of sexual behavior, and will likely generate lively and perhaps heated discussion. The class should be interesting, but if such discussion is offensive, you may want to take another class instead.

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Texts Used

- Sex on the Brain by Deborah Blum
- The Myth of Male Power
- Textbook: The Gender Communication Connection by Teri Kwai Gamble and Michael W. Gamble



DO YOUR WORK AND COME TO CLASS!

Reading: First and foremost, you need to read the lecture material **BEFORE** coming to class. Each class will be taught seminar style and I WILL call on you to make contributions to the discussion. If you do not read the material beforehand, you won't be able to contribute much to class discussion. Additionally, I may throw in a quiz or two at times to see if you actually did read. The questions on the quiz won't be complex, but will just let me know if you have been reading the material. These test scores will help determine your participation grade for the class.

Come to Class: Attendance in the class is required. You are only allowed 3 absences from the class, with any additional ab-



sence reducing your overall grade by 3% each absence. In the past, I have failed somewhat to enforce this rule, but it will be enforced here.

Do your work: In addition to the required reading, there will be two short perspective papers that require you to use your noggin. The due dates are NOT flexible. Any papers turned in late will have a 5% deduction for each day late (if it is due on Tuesday, and I don't get it from you until Thursday, that would be a 10% grade deduction. These rules and others are also listed on Page 3.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES

Reasonable accommodations can be made for students with a documented disability. Students with a documented disability should contact Student Services, Room 206 of the Student Center. Their number is 473-6545.

Men may live like fools, but fools they cannot die.

Edward Young(1683-1765)



BOYS ARE FROM JUPITER BECAUSE THEY GET. . .

Have you ever wondered where jokes come from? Why there are so many from one sex, bashing the other, and whether or not it has any effect on that sex?

Warren Farrell suggests that women have more freedom to bash men than men have to bash women. Do you agree with this? Why or

why not? Also, there are a bunch of researchers who claim that men think differently than women, that they have different goals with communication, and that they have skills that women don't have and vice versa. Do men REALLY think more spatially than women? Are women REALLY more emotional? All of these

thoughts will hopefully come during class discussions, that is, if you help this poor old MAN with the reading, the class discussions, and the text findings. You don't have to agree with the MAN in charge, but you do have to listen when he offers opinions of the researchers. All in all, we should have fun.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS NOW AVAILABLE

You have two main writing assignments for this class as well as three tests and a short presentation. These assignments will be handed out at the same time as this syllabus and the due date for each is listed in the class schedule.

The paper topic for the first paper may range from the portrayal of women in internet forums to the issues of gays in the military. I included a handout of possible topics, but if you have a topic of your own that you find unique and relevant, please feel free to choose it, but check with me first just to make sure it is really communication-oriented.

Both papers should be between 6-8 pages (double spaced; Times New Roman, 12 point font), not including cover sheet, abstract, and refer-

ences.

As always, I will grade these papers on your grammar and spelling (like an English paper), and they must adhere to APA 5th edition standards. Each paper is worth 20% of your grade.

For the second paper, I would like you to find and read a popular book that focuses on issues of gender or gender perceptions and write a critique of that text using what you have learned in class discussion, reading, or other resources that you used for the first paper.

In addition to the two papers, you will also have three exams. The format of the tests may vary and one of the tests may be take home (which will be discussed in

class) Each test is worth 17% of your overall grade.

The final 9% of your grade will come from a required informal presentation/discussion of one of your perspective papers. For this assignment, you should offer a short outline of your project to each class member, discuss the main points you covered in your paper, and highlight the areas that you most had concerns with (or those that you strongly agreed with) if critiquing a book. It would be nice if you also had some questions for us to answer beforehand, or other

ways to add interest.

PLAGIARISM IS NOT ALLOWED!

Although this may not be a shock to most of you, plagiarism has been ruled to be unethical and just plain bad practice. According to Rhonda Shook, professor of Speech Communication and Theatre at LSUA, plagiarism "is unacceptable," and a way to get kicked out of her class. Dr. O'Donnell couldn't agree more. In his groundbreaking article, "Don't plagiarize or you will fail Doran's class, Doran describes plagiarism as the "claim of someone else's work as your own." Plagiarism takes many forms, it could be just an omission

of a citation, a piecing together a bunch of different documents without paraphrase, or could be the copying and pasting of an entire document.

"It just makes sense to document your citations and give credit to those who deserve it, says Dr. O'Donnell, That way, if there *are* problems found later, you are protected. Additionally, citing sources may add to your credibility.



Do you think that more women are afraid of snakes than men, or is this just a myth?

Please don't make the mistake that some students have made, trying to find documents and turning these documents in as their own work. Doran catches these quite effectively, fails the student for the course, and reports the conduct to the university. Check with your student handbook to see the consequences of these actions.



CLASS RULES AND POLICY

The new rules are in. They are simple to follow and should help to make this a fun and productive hour and 15 minutes each class session. Please read these rules and follow them.

Rule One: No cheating in any way. I will fail you for cheating.

Rule Two: Come to class prepared. Read the material BEFORE class and be

prepared for discussion.

Rule Three: Be on time to class.

Rule Four: Respect others (and the professor). Tolerance is not an option. This class will involve perspectives that you may feel strongly against. Voicing your opinion is okay, but let others have theirs as well.

Rule Five: Participate in class discussion. I think I will learn a lot in this class from you and your experiences and perceptions are a valuable asset for others. I will try to make the class as participatory as possible, and need your help.

Rule Six: This is MY class. Don't study or read for another class. This is rude.

Rule Seven: Have fun!

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OFFICE HOURS NOW POSTED!

Doran's office hours are now posted. According to his matrix, Doran will have office hours Monday and Wed. from 10:00 to 12:00, Friday from 8:00 to 9:30, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 to 2:30. Of course, you can always make an appointment with him. You can also catch Doran many afternoons in his office.

Doran's phone number is 427-4409 and his office room is Coughlin Hall, room 107. He can also be reached through email at dodonnell@lsua.edu. Doran is a lonely guy and doesn't mind students coming by with questions or to discuss school-related concerns. Additionally, since Doran is the faculty advisor for "Speak Easy," the speech communication club, he is also available for discussion in that area.

The Professor Reserves the Right to Make Changes to this Syllabus which will be announced in class.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week of

- Aug. 22: Discuss Syllabus and class expectations: Read Chapters 1 and 2 in text.
- Aug 29: Chapters 1 and 2: Read the introduction and Chapters 2, 3, and 4 in Blum for next week
- Sept. 5: Discuss Blum: Read Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8 in Blum
- Sept. 12: Discuss Blum to Chapter 8: Read Chapters 3 and 4 of textbook
- Sept. 19: Discuss Chapters 3 and 4 of Gamble and Gamble: Read Chapters 5 and 6 of Gamble and Gamble
- Sept. 26 : Discuss Chapters 5 and 6 of Gamble and Gamble: **Test #1 handed out**
Read pages 17-90 in Farrell
- Oct. 3: **Test #1 due Tuesday:** Discuss Farrell: Read Chapters 7, 8, and 12 of Farrell for Next Week: Happy Fall Holiday!
- Oct. 10: **Perspective Paper #1 is Due : Take Home Test handed out:** Discuss Farrell
- Oct. 17: Catch up on Syllabus: Read Chapters 7 and 8 of Gamble and Gamble
- Oct. 24: Discuss Chapters 7 and 8: Read Chapter 9
- Oct. 31: **Test #2 Tuesday:** Discuss Chapter 9: Read Chapters 10 and 11
- Nov. 7: Discuss Chapters 10 and 11: Read Chapters 12 and 13
- Nov. 14: Discuss Gamble and Gamble 12 and 13: Read Chapters 14 and 15:
- Nov. 21: Catch Up of Syllabus: Discuss Chapters 14 and 15
- Nov. 28: **Final paper is Due Tuesday:** Finish Chapters 14 and 15

Note: This syllabus is subject to change and likely will. All changes will be made in a timely manner and will be discussed in class.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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When I was in Second Grade, I was Forced to Wear a Dunce Cap in Front of Class for Messing up an Assignment. I don't remember the assignment, but I remember the Humiliation.

GENDER PAPER #1: DUE OCTOBER 14

Objective: To increase your understanding of gender communication by having you focus on an event or concept and analyzing that event or concept using research and theory in gender studies.

Task: You will write a 6-8 page paper (not including references) that discusses an event, concept, perspective, or issue related to communication and gender. This paper should be both informative and persuasive, using solid research and use of theory or theoretical perspectives to back any arguments you make regarding the area of study. For example, if you choose to write a paper that argues that women are portrayed as less capable than men in the media, you would have to discuss the reasoning behind your perspective using support from journals and other sources, offer examples that you have seen or witnessed on your own, and

perhaps negate any other perspectives that might counter your arguments, using solid logic and reasoning to support your view.



Presentations

Available on Desire 2 Learn!

All Grades and All Power-Point Slides Will be Posted Online as I get them Done.

Hot Topics for Paper #1

Topics: Below I have listed a set of topics that you might choose from. This list is NOT comprehensive, and you are allowed to come up with a topic on your own if you choose to do so. Make sure that the topic is broad enough to find information about it, but also narrow enough to not be overwhelmed. I don't want any 20 page papers and I don't think you want to write them either.

- When she does it, it is flirting, but when *HE* does it, it is harassment.
- Women in the military don't belong in battles alongside men.
- The portrayal of women in the movie "Happy Gilmore" and other movies leads to social problems.
- Women use sex as a form of power.
- Romance means different things for men and women.
- Boys really shouldn't play with Barbie: Negative effects of androgyny.
- Men are every bit as emotional as women; they just show it in different ways.
- Beauty matters more for a woman than a man.
- Men are better at math and women as language: Cultural effects of language on gender role development and understanding.
- Nice guys really do finish last.
- Androgynous behavior and perspectives should be taught in public schools.
- Children learn better with own sex: The effect of the "other" sex on educational outcomes and classroom behavior.
- Does the type of car illustrate your masculinity or femininity? You bet it does!
- Don't hug her when she falls because it teaches her to be reliant on others.
- Men are still expected to be the breadwinners and should get paid more for doing so.
- Women *really* control society.
- Love means different things for each sex.
- Can a woman buy guys flowers? Hell no!
- Women really do live longer because they kill men through social pressure.
- Don't blame me, blame my period: The excuse just doesn't cut it.
- High schools should be allowed to have gay and lesbian clubs.
- Gay and Lesbian high schools go against the constitution.
- Howard Stern can't be a liberal. Just look at the way he treats women!
- Sports coverage is biased only because men are better athletes.
- Don't be a hairdresser or interior designer, they'll think you are gay!
- It's easier to have friends of the opposite sex than your own.
- She must be a dyke. Look at that haircut! The effects of stereotyping the sexes by looks and behaviors.
- It truly is more acceptable to be a lesbian than a gay male.
- Women are mean to other women because of looks.
- Women's liberation has given them less freedom.



All papers should be typed and double-spaced and conform to all guidelines of the American Psychological Association's 5th edition publication manual. Excellent papers may be expanded and/or submitted for presentation, or may be brought together as a collection for future classes or publication (if you so desire).