

**COURSE SYLLABUS: GENDER & COMMUNICATION, COMM 35912, CALL #
11828, SECT 002**

Spring, 2002; M, W, F @ 2:15 - 3:05, Room D 303, MSP

Dr. Bruce Riddle, Instructor

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Office Hours: Mon., 9 - 11; Wed., 3:30 - 4:30; Fri., 1 - 2
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Required Text:

Ivy, D. K., & Backlund, P. (1994). *Exploring Genderspeak: Personal Effectiveness in Gender Communication*. New York: McGraw-Hill. Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown

Supplemental Readings: A packet of readings is available in the Communication Studies Office, MSP D202. This packet must be purchased by January 25, 2002. The cost is \$10.00 (Cash Only).

Course Goals:

This course is intended to improve understanding of the similarities and differences in communication behaviors between the sexes. By studying gender communication, you will gain an appreciation for and a better understanding of how the genders process information, how the perceptions are alike and how they differ, how nonverbal communication affects understanding, and how context affects communication perceptions and behaviors between the sexes. A study of the perpetuation of gender roles and gender identification will help you improve your understanding of intimate relationships, school settings, organizations, the media and society in general. A study of several societal ills such as sexual discrimination and harassment, spousal abuse and marital problems will improve your understanding of communication within and between the sexes.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students should have acquired the knowledge, attitudes, and skills:

- > To develop an understanding, informed by contemporary communication theory and research, of the similarities and differences in communication between the sexes;
- > To examine the ways in which communication creates and perpetuates gender roles and gender identities in various contexts such as the family, school, organizations, the media, and society in general;
- > To explore some of the specific communication issues involved in safe sex, interpersonal violence, male/female bashing, and sexual harassment;
- > To identify the major changes in communication about gender and sex over the past several decades and to construct scenarios for the future.

Course Requirements and Grading Scale:

1. **Examinations:**

There will be two exams, a midterm and a final exam. Each exam will count 100 points toward the final grade. The exam formats will be a combination of objective questions plus short essay questions. The final examination will not be cumulative. Exam questions will come from the text, from class discussions and from assigned readings. You are responsible for all assigned material even though it may not be discussed in class.

2. **Papers:**

You will write five (5) 2 to 3 page papers applying course concepts to your personal experiences. These papers will serve as a learning log for reflection on how specific concepts or topics from the readings or class discussion are related to your own personal experiences. The paper due dates appear on the course schedule. Your grades will be based on demonstrated understanding of course concepts and the extensiveness of description and analysis. All papers must be typewritten in APA format. Clear expression and the correct use of standard English is expected. Proofread your papers carefully before you submit them. Each paper will be worth 20 points. Prepare your papers well enough in advance to avoid technical problems such as computer crashes, printer failures and similar problems. These are not acceptable excuses for late papers. *No late papers will be accepted without prior arrangement with the instructor.*

3. **Group Project and Presentation:**

You will work in a small group and prepare a presentation on a topic related to gender, sex, and communication. Your group may choose, for example, to study the influence of gender and biological sex on verbal aggressiveness in interpersonal communication, or the communication factors involved in male/female mentoring in organizations. Portrayal of the genders in various media, male/female communication in superior or subordinate organizational roles, advertisements, and children's literature are other examples of appropriate topics for research. Your group's presentation should be designed to be instructional, informing your classmates of an important gender issue. You are encouraged to be creative, using role plays, audience participation, visual aids, or other ideas to capture interest and get your point across. Further discussion and clarification of this project will be provided later.

4. **Quizzes:** There will be five unannounced quizzes during the semester. The Quizzes will test whether you have read the reading assignments, and may be objective, short essay or a combination of both.

Course Policies:

1. Attendance is expected and mandatory. Students with more than one week (three days) of unexcused absences will have their grade reduced 5% for each additional absence. You are responsible for keeping track of your own attendance record. You are also expected to keep your instructor informed of your whereabouts before class if you cannot attend. Attendance on presentation days is especially important as that participation cannot be made up. Please plan your activities outside of class accordingly.

2. **Cheating/Plagiarism:** You are expected to do your own work. Material that you submit as your own should be original **for this class** and should represent your own efforts and not the work of another person nor work that you have created previously. Content such as current

theories should be attributed to the original author using the standard APA format for citations. Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be the basis for automatic failure in the course and possible University disciplinary action including dismissal. You are referred to the University telephone directory for the entire text of the University policy on cheating and plagiarism. If you have any questions, you should ask your instructor for clarification.

3. All written work must be typewritten and double-spaced using the APA style manual format. Assignments will not be accepted after the deadlines listed in the course schedule unless prior approval is obtained from the instructor.

4. Students with disabilities: In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodation to obtain equal access in this course, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester or when given an assignment for which an accommodation is required. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) in the Michael Schwartz Student Services Center (330) 672-3391.

Grade Log:

	My grade	Possible points	Grading Scale
Exam 1:	_____	100	450 - 500: A
Exam 2:	_____	100	400 - 449: B
Group Project	_____	100	350 - 399: C
Individual Papers (5)	_____	20	300 - 349: D
	_____	20	Below 300: F
	_____	20	
	_____	20	
	_____	20	
Quizzes (5)	_____	20	
	_____	20	
	_____	20	
	_____	20	
	_____	20	
Total	=====	500	

Communication 35912: Gender & Communication
Tentative Course Schedule: Necessary changes will be presented in writing.

Date: _____ Topic _____ Readings _____
 (SR = Supplemental Readings: I = Ivy)

UNIT 1: FRAMEWORKS FOR UNDERSTANDING GENDER AND COMMUNICATION

Jan 14 - 18 Introduction to the course: syllabus
 Gender Communication I: Ch 1

Jan 21 No class: Martin Luther King Day _____

Jan 23 - 25 Gender Differences in Information Processing &
 Research Approaches & Questions I Ch 2, SR: Bate

Jan. 28 - Gender Identity and Culture I: Ch 3
 Feb. 1 Gender as Power Perspective SR: Mulac &
 Braddock

Paper # 1 Due, Friday, February 1

UNIT 2: VERBAL & NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION OF MEN & WOMEN

Feb. 4 - 6 Communication Styles of Men & Women I: Ch 5

Feb. 11 -15 Relationship Development I: Ch. 6
Paper # 2 Due, Friday, February 15

Feb. 18 - 22 Self-Disclosure, Liking, & Intimacy I Ch. 6 (cont.)

Feb. 25 - Nonverbal Encoding & Decoding Handout
 Mar. 1 **EXAM # 1: Friday, Mar. 1**

UNIT 3: CONTEXTUAL ENACTMENTS OF GENDERED COMMUNICATION

Mar. 4 - 8 Personal Relationships: Friendships, Dating & Courtship I Ch. 7

Mar. 11 - 15 Family Communication: Partners & Parent-Child I: Ch 8, SR:
Paper # 3 Due, Friday, March 11 McMullin

Mar. 18 - 22 Instructional Communication I: Ch 11
 SR: Hawkins

Gender and Communication
Spring, 2001 Information and Syllabus Agreement (Please sign & return)

Name: _____

Local Address : _____

Local Phone Number: _____

Class Standing: _____

Major: _____

Communication Courses Completed: _____

What do you expect from this class? _____

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Agreement

I, _____ (print name), as a student in Dr. Riddle's Gender and Communication Class (Comm 35912, Section 35912) for the Spring Semester, 2002, have read this syllabus. I understand what is expected of me as a student regarding:

Class requirements _____ (initials)

Course policies _____ (initials)

Assignments _____ (initials)

Due Dates _____ (initials)

Attendance policy _____ (initials)

Signature

Date