

**COURSE SYLLABUS: GENDER & COMMUNICATION, COMM 35912, CALL # 11457,  
SECT 001**

Intersession, Summer, 2002; M thru F @ 9:00 - 12:00, Room D 301, MSP

**Dr. Bruce Riddle, Instructor**

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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 is required reading. 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) two to three 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 up to 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 day 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	_____	20	
	_____	20	
	_____	20	
	_____	20	
	_____	20	
Total	_____	500	

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

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
(SR = Supplemental Readings: I = Ivy)		
<b>UNIT 1: FRAMEWORKS FOR UNDERSTANDING GENDER AND COMMUNICATION</b>		
Mon, May 20	Introduction to the course: syllabus Gender Communication	I: Ch 1
Tue, May 21	Gender Differences in Information Processing & Research Approaches & Questions	I Ch 2, SR: Bate
Wed, May 22	Gender Identity and Culture Gender as Power Perspective	I: Ch 3 SR: Mulac & Braddock
<b><i>Paper # 1 Due, Wednesday, May 22</i></b>		
<b>UNIT 2: VERBAL &amp; NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION OF MEN &amp; WOMEN</b>		
Thur, May 23	Communication Styles of Men & Women	I: Ch 5
Fri, May 24	Relationship Development Self-Disclosure, Liking, & Intimacy Nonverbal Encoding & Decoding	I: Ch. 6
<b><i>Paper # 2 Due, Friday, February 15</i></b>		
Mon, May 27	Memorial Day Observed: No Class	
<b>UNIT 3: CONTEXTUAL ENACTMENTS OF GENDERED COMMUNICATION</b>		
Tue, May 28	<b>EXAM # 1: 9 - 10:30</b> Personal Relationships: Friendships, Dating & Courtship	I Ch. 7
Wed, May 29	Family Communication: Partners & Parent-Child <b><i>Paper # 3 Due, Wed, May 29</i></b>	I: Ch 8, SR: McMullin
Thu, May 30	Instructional Communication	I: Ch 11 SR: Hawkins

Fri, May 31	Organizational Communication <b><i>Paper # 4 Due, Friday, April 5</i></b>	I: Ch 10 SR: "Taming of the Shrews"
Mon, June 3	Contemporary Social Issues: Interpersonal Violence Discrimination & Harassment	SR: Rudd, et. al, Stamp, Sabourin; I: Ch 9
Tue, June 4	Contemporary Issues, cont. Print & Electronic Media; The Internet <b><i>Paper # 5 Due, Tuesday, June 4</i></b>	I: Ch. 4
Wed, June 5	Epilogue and Course Summary.	I: Epilogue, pp. 477-501
Thur, June 6	Group Projects & Presentations	
Fri, June 7	Group Projects & Presentations Final Exam: 10:30 - 12 <b><i>Group Project Papers Due, Friday, June 7</i></b>	

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? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

=====

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

This course takes place over a period of three weeks. Class will meet only 14 days due to the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 26. We will cover in three weeks what is normally covered during a 15-week semester. Obviously, this means that the course material will be concentrated, and we will move at a rapid pace. The course is the same one offered during the regular semester. You should not expect that evaluation standards or course requirements will be relaxed because this is an intersession course.

You will be expected to be in class each day having read the assignment for that day prior to class. Written assignments are listed on the course schedule and will be due on those dates. I do not expect to accept assignments that are submitted late. Unannounced quizzes will be designed to measure whether you have completed the reading assignment. The pace of this course will require a concentrated effort to complete all of the assignments. You should arrange your schedule accordingly. If you believe that a work schedule or personal circumstances will interfere with your full participation in this course, I recommend that you choose to enroll in another course at a later time.

## GRADING

The following standards indicate the general expectations for each letter grade.

A: This grade reflects a standard of excellence. Written work has been typewritten according to the APA Publication Manual, is free of typographical and spelling errors, is free of grammatical errors, reflects a clear and organized thought process through clarity of expression, and demonstrates originality and thoughtful insight into the subject. Generally, such papers have been carefully written, rewritten, and proofread. A grade of 90 - 100% has been achieved on exams and other graded evaluations.

B: This grade indicated solid, above - average work. A grade of B suggests one or two of the standards mentioned above have not been met. An average of 80 to 89% has been achieved on exams and other graded evaluations.

C: This grade reflects average work. To achieve a higher grade, substantial improvement is needed to correct errors in expression, spelling, grammar, and clarity of expression. An average of 70 - 79% has been achieved on exams and other graded evaluations.

D: This grade reflects work that is unsatisfactory, yet minimally passing. A student who receives a D should confer with the instructor to determine what is needed to achieve satisfactory standards. An average of 60 - 69% has been achieved on exams and other graded evaluations.

F: This grade reflects a completely unsatisfactory standard of performance. This grade is an indication that without significant improvement, a failing grade in the course will result. An average below 60% on exams and other graded evaluations has been earned.