

# CMM430: Gender and Communication

## **Saint Louis University Madrid, Spring 2013**

Mondays & Wednesdays 15:30-16:45 Padre Arrupe Hall, 24

With Dr. Blair, [blairsn@slu.edu](mailto:blairsn@slu.edu) Padre Arrupe Hall, top floor

Office Hours: Monday & Weds 16:45-17:45

Tuesday 12:30-15:00, Thursday 12:30-14:00

### **Course Description & Goals:**

From the popularity of books like, *Men are From Mars, Women are From Venus*, and *You Just Don't Understand Me?*, the field of gender communication is often described as one that seeks to understand how, why, and to what extent men and women communicate differently. This course takes the question of gender and communication from a different angle. Rather than asking how we communicate differently, this course explores how difference itself is communicated. Simply put, we will ask: how is gender communicated in public discourse? How does communication constitute gender?

To answer these questions we will examine a number of theories that discuss the constitution/construction of sex/gender systems and identity. We will begin by examining the theoretical foundations of gender and communication, and then we will examine gender in various contexts. This course is both reading and writing intensive, critically engaging contemporary academic scholarship and theoretical texts. As such, I expect that students will read work that is both unfamiliar and challenging, using writing as one of the many tools to work through course concepts, ideas, and arguments. Moreover, this class requires active engagement with fellow learners, course concepts, and the larger SLU Madrid learning community.

### **At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:**

- critically engage gender communication academic scholarship
- identify and discuss a variety of theories about sex/gender identity and the relationship between gender and communication from a variety of perspectives.
- write well-argued and rhetorically effective academic essay(s).
- critically analyze the gender dynamics in a communicative event.

## **Course Materials:**

-*Communicating Gender Diversity*, DeFranciso & Palczewski

-*Grace and Grit* by Lily Ledbetter

-Various readings posted on SLU Global

## **Assignments**

**Response Papers** (10 pts each/100 pts total): Response papers are short (500-550 word) papers responding to readings due the day of the paper. Response papers will be due Mondays and Wednesdays every week. The goal of these papers is to show me that you are reading and engaging with the material. They should not be summaries of the readings, but your take on the readings. If you complete them, you will receive credit.

**Participation** (50 pts): Participation points are earned by asking questions, responding to other student's remarks, and routinely contributing to our discussions. At minimum, you should complete the readings before each class in order to actively add to our conversations. **Though I may not comment on it during class, sleeping, texting, Facebooking, or working on other courses will detract significantly from your participation grade.**

This is a small class, and it will be obvious if you have not read the material. More importantly, it will detract from our classroom discussions. My goal is not to cover all of the assigned readings in each class; rather, I seek to augment the readings and probe important concepts further during our time together. You are responsible to know the material in the readings whether or not it is discussed explicitly in class. I suggest reading the material a few days before class to let concepts sink in and allow any questions to arise.

**Gender and Communication Essay** (450 pts total). There are two options for the paper you will write in this class: a rhetorical essay or an autoethnography. Both assignments will be due in pieces and will result in a final paper. More detail will be provided in class.

**Rhetorical Criticism Essay Assignment (7 components, see addendum)**

Project Focus (50 pts)

Literature Review (50 pts)

Descriptive Analysis (50 pts)

Critical Analysis (50 pts)

Peer Review (25 pts)

Final Paper Presentation (25 pts)

Final Paper (200pts)

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Total: 450 pts

**Autoethnographic Essay Assignment**

Project Focus (50 pts)

Literature Review (50pts)

Discussion (50 pts)

Three Stories (50 pts)

Peer Review (25 pts)

Final Paper Presentation (25 pts)

Final Paper (200pts)

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Total: 450 pts

## **Course Policies**

### **Course Format**

This is an upper division course, which means that there will be short lectures when appropriate, but the class will mostly consist of discussion. It is imperative that you contribute to our classroom conversations as you will learn as much from one another as from me. In discussion-based courses, you have a responsibility to your peers to come prepared to engage with the material.

### **Classroom Tone**

We will maintain our classroom as a safe, engaging, and productive place to learn. We will each need to be open to observing, discussing, and reflecting upon our own and others' communicative behaviors in order to learn. As such, each of us will need to be conscious of our role in providing a place where each class member will feel comfortable participating and contributing to class discussion and activities. In no way will I tolerate sexist, racist, or otherwise discriminatory or offensive comments or behavior towards others, and I expect all students to strive towards open-mindedness. This does not mean that we must agree with each other (or even like each other!), but that we do need to respect others' life experiences, observations, arguments, and opinions.

I welcome you to challenge one another's thinking and analysis during discussions. Remember that there is a way to respectfully disagree with another class member. As scholars, it is our duty to voice our opinions. As students, it is our duty to listen to each other's voices. Sometimes you may feel uncomfortable when listening to another person's point of view. As a student, it's important to notice these moments and encourage yourself to be open rather than defensive. I am happy to discuss classroom environment issues at any time. If you feel upset about anything that has happened during class, please come discuss it with me.

You are welcome to turn in assignments early. **All written assignments must be submitted in the following format:** Typed, Times New Roman 12pt Font, 1 inch margins, double spaced, correct grammar and spelling, with page numbers. I prefer assignments to be submitted via email to: [blairsn@slu.edu](mailto:blairsn@slu.edu)

**Late work** will be deducted 10% of the grade each day it is late.

**Grade Discussions:** I am open to discussing any grade with you in my office. I do not discuss grades via email or in front of other students. If you have a complaint about a grade, please come prepared with: 1) your graded

assignment, 2) a copy of the assignment description, and 3) a prepared statement about what you think I missed during the grading process. Please wait 24 hours after an assignment is handed back to discuss grades with me. This allows a short cooling off period.

**Attendance** is required. Late arrivals are highly discouraged since they disrupt the class. Arriving 15 minutes late or more **will count as an absence**. If you are unable to attend class, it is your responsibility to find out what assignments, handouts, activities, or instruction you missed. Only University events/ trips will be officially excused. However, it is your responsibility to make sure these trips do not interfere negatively with your performance in class. I will use my discretion to excuse medical situations.

**You are allowed 3 unexcused absences.** More than 3 unexcused absences will significantly lower your grade (5 point deduction per unexcused absence after the third). Missing 5 or more classes will be grounds to earn a failing grade. If you are sick and can't come to class the day an assignment is due, send it to me by email.

### **Accommodation Statement**

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about: Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor. University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to [http://spain.slu.edu/academics/learning\\_resources.html](http://spain.slu.edu/academics/learning_resources.html)

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at +34 915 54 58 58, ext. 204, send an e-mail to [counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu), or to visit the Counseling Office (San Ignacio Hall). Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

### **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity, such as would be expected at a Jesuit,

Catholic institution. As members of this community, students, faculty, and staff members share the responsibility to maintain this environment. Academic dishonesty violates it. Although not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, it can be said in general that soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of any work submitted toward academic credit is dishonest. It not only violates the mutual trust necessary between faculty and students but also undermines the validity of the University's evaluation of students and takes unfair advantage of fellow students. Further, it is the responsibility of any student who observes such dishonest conduct to call it to the attention of a faculty member or administrator.

Examples of academic dishonesty would be copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed-book exam, submitting materials authored by or editorially revised by another person but presented as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, tampering with another student's work, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students to engage in an act of academic dishonesty.

Where there is clear indication of such dishonesty, a faculty member or administrator has the responsibility to apply appropriate sanctions. Investigations of violations will be conducted in accord with standards and procedures of the school or college through which the course or research is offered. Recommendations of sanctions to be imposed will be made to the dean of the school or college in which the student is enrolled. Possible sanctions for a violation of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University. The complete SLU Academic Honesty Policy can be found at the following link:

[http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic\\_advising/docs/Academic\\_integrity.pdf](http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic_advising/docs/Academic_integrity.pdf)

### **Grade Breakdown**

Response Papers 100 pts

Participation 50 pts

Project Focus 50 pts

Literature Review 50 pts

Descriptive Analysis/ Three Stories 50 pts

Critical Analysis/ Discussion 50 pts

Peer Review 25 pts

Final Paper Presentation 25 pts

Final Paper 200pts

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Total: 600 pts

### **Points Grading Scale**

564-600 A

544-563 A-

522-543 B+

504-521 B

480-503 B-

462-479 C+

445-461 C

420-443 C-

360-419 D

>360 F

Meeting	Topic	Assignments
Monday Jan 14 <sup>th</sup>	Course Introduction	Read Syllabus
Weds Jan 16 <sup>th</sup>	Theoretical Foundations	Chapter 1
Monday Jan 21 <sup>st</sup>	Theoretical Foundations cont.	SLU Global Readings <b>Response Paper 1 Due</b>
Weds Jan 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Theoretical Foundations cont.	SLU Global Readings
Monday Jan 28 <sup>th</sup>	No classes	
Weds Jan 30 <sup>th</sup>	Understanding Sex / Gender: Biological, Psychological, Rhetorical, & Cultural approaches	Ch 2, SLU Global Readings <b>Response Paper 2 Due</b> <b>Project Focus Due</b>
Monday Feb 4 <sup>th</sup>	Understanding Sex / Gender: Critical/Cultural Approaches	SLU Global Readings
Weds Feb 6 <sup>th</sup>	Understanding Sex / Gender: Critical/Cultural Approaches	SLU Global Readings <b>Response Paper 3 Due</b>
Monday Feb 11 <sup>th</sup>	Understanding Sex / Gender: Critical/Cultural Approaches	SLU Global Readings <b>Literature Review Due</b>
Weds Feb 13 <sup>th</sup>	Gendered/ Sexed Language	Ch 5, SLU Global Readings <b>Response Paper 4 Due</b>
Monday Feb 18 <sup>th</sup>	Institutions	Ch. 6
Weds Feb 20 <sup>th</sup>	Gender in Context: Family	Ch 7 <b>Response Paper 5 Due</b>
Monday Feb 25 <sup>th</sup>	Gender in Context: Family cont.	SLU Global Readings <b>Descriptive Analysis/ Three Stories Due</b>
Weds Feb 27 <sup>th</sup>	Research & Writing	SLU Global Readings
Monday March 4 <sup>th</sup>	Gender in Context: The Workplace	Ch. 9 <b>Response Paper 6 Due</b>
Weds March 6 <sup>th</sup>	Gender in Context: The Workplace cont.	Grace & Grit book <b>Response Paper 7 Due</b>
Monday March 11 <sup>th</sup>	Gender in Context: The Workplace Cont.	Grace & Grit, SLU Global Readings
Wednesday March 13 <sup>th</sup>	Gender in Context: Religion	Ch 10

Monday March 18 <sup>th</sup>	Gender in Context: Religion	SLU Global Readings, <b>Response Paper 8 Due</b>
Weds March 20 <sup>th</sup>	Writing Workshop	SLU Global Readings
Monday March 25 <sup>th</sup>	No Classes-Spring Break!	
Weds March 27 <sup>th</sup>	No Classes-Spring Break!	
Monday April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Gender in Context: Gender & Media	Ch. 11, SLU Global Readings
Weds April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Gender in Context: Gender & Health	SLU Global Readings, <b>Response Paper 9 Due</b>
Monday April 8 <sup>th</sup>	Gender in Context: Gender & Health	SLU Global Readings
Weds April 10 <sup>th</sup>	Crafting the final Paper	<b>Discussion/ Critical Analysis due</b>
Monday April 15 <sup>th</sup>	Meet with Dr Blair & Peer Reviewers	
Weds April 17 <sup>th</sup>	Meet with Dr Blair & Peer Reviewers	
Monday April 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Gender in Contemporary Politics	SLU Global Readings, <b>Response Paper 10 Due</b>
Weds April 24 <sup>th</sup>	Gender in Contemporary Politics	SLU Global Readings
Monday April 29 <sup>th</sup>	Concluding thoughts	Ch 12
Final Exam May 7 <sup>th</sup> 1530-1830	Final Paper Presentations	<b>Final Paper Due, no late papers accepted</b>

*\*This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion*

### **Important dates**

Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> -Last day to add or drop a class without a grade of W

Feb 7<sup>th</sup> - Last day to choose audit (AU) or pass/no pass (P/NP) options

Feb 14<sup>th</sup> - Registration for Summer 2013 Sessions begins

Feb 27<sup>th</sup> -Midterm grades submitted

March 11<sup>th</sup> -Last day to drop and receive a grade of W

March 15<sup>th</sup> - Last day to submit transfer application for Fall semester