

CMST 3115: COMMUNICATION & GENDER

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Meeting day and time: TTH 3:00-4:20pm

Office hours: T 2-3pm, TH 9-10am

Sec.: 1

Term: Fall 2015

Meeting room: COATES 127

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course examines gender differences, sex roles and sexual stereotypes in communication. Furthermore, we will examine how our ideas about sex and gender and our identities as men, women, and sexual beings are influenced by and contested in the communication around us, from interpersonal relationships to the mass media, from political campaigns to social movements. The key questions guiding our investigations this semester are:

- How have communication scholars conceptualized gender, sex, and sexuality? How do these signifiers impact our communication?
- What are the sources of our ideas about what it means to be male and female, masculine and feminine?
- How have we been influenced by communication to adopt and perform particular gender identities?
- What are the consequences of these messages for women, for men, for gays and lesbians, and for society?
- How are ideas about gender and gender roles related to ideas about sexuality, sexual orientation, and sexual identity?
- What is gender? Can it be altered or changed? How?

In order to take this course you must have taken CMST 2010 prior to enrollment.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The success of this course depends on the interactions generated between the instructor and the students (me and you). I do expect you to participate actively in class, share your ideas and opinions, comment on and assess those of your fellow classmates. However, I do demand that everyone treat each other with respect. Ridicule or disrespect of any sort will not be tolerated. While I use a wide variety of mediated examples to illuminate points and bring life to discussion in class, I do not use powerpoint presentations and will not post “lecture outlines” on Moodle. My hope is that we will all become more engaged members of the classroom discussions because of this commitment to an engaged and discussion-oriented environment.

COURSE WEBSITE

This course makes use of the Moodle website. You should be able to access Moodle through your PAWS account. After you log into PAWS, you will find the link to Moodle under the “Student Services” category. I will post readings, course assignments, documents, as well as any announcements. Make sure to check the website regularly.

COURSE MATERIALS

- Heinrichs, J. (2014). *Gender in Communication: A Critical Introduction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Additional readings/materials will be posted online.
- Access to and competency with online search engines and university libraries is essential for success in this course.

ASSIGNMENTS

Grade Scale

Letter Grade	Point Range Needed
A+	490-500
A	460-489
A-	450-459
B+	440-449
B	410-439
B-	400-409
C+	390-399
C	360-389
C-	350-359
D+	340-349
D	310-339
D-	300-309
F	0-299

Assignment Weights

ASSIGNMENT	Points
Exams	100 points each x 2 = 200 points total
Final Essay	200 points
Engagement	Various activities/assignments/engagement = 100 points total
TOTAL	500

Assignment Descriptions

ENGAGEMENT (Various activities/assignments/discussion = 100 points total): This class is based on your thorough participation and critical engagement with text and exercise materials. I expect you to come to class having completed the readings for that day. Students are expected to attend all lectures and to complete all required readings.

Material will be presented in the lecture that is not in the readings and **will be** addressed in the in-class essays. The engagement grade is composed of student contributions to class discussions and various writing and engagement assignments given throughout the semester. In addition, you will be graded on in-class assignments and discussions for which you will lose credit if you are not present. I also reserve the right to bump up the borderline grades of students who participate most actively in class discussions.

EXAMS (100 points each x 2 = 200 points total): There will be two in-class exams. Each will be worth 50 points. Each exam will consist of short and long essay questions. Exams will cover assigned readings, films shown in class, class lectures, and any other material given during class time.

The exams will test your understanding of concepts and theories as well of specific data in the readings and/or discussed in class. I expect all students to take the exams during the scheduled class periods. There is no final exam in this course. Although exams are not cumulative, this course is constructed in such a way that many concepts, themes, and ideas are connected and might be reaffirmed or contested in different readings for different weeks.

FINAL ESSAY (200 points): As a culminating assignment for this course you will write a 5-7 page essay analyzing the engendered and sexual scripts in a communication artifact. A detailed assignment sheet will be provided. Part of your grade for this assignment also includes a peer review process, whereby you swap papers with a peer and provide structured feedback.

Quality of Written Work

Take pride in the quality of your work in this class. Written work must be spell-checked, grammar-checked, and proofread: The quality of your writing will affect your grade.

All written work must be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, with a clear heading up at the top. Your name must be included.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

There are consequences if you miss class that you should consider while you make your decision about your attendance to this course:

- You are responsible for all information communicated in class, whether or not you are in attendance.
- You are responsible for participating in activities and discussion, and missing class will impact your engagement grade in this course.
- I do not lecture on the readings, so the information given in class is not something you can just get from the readings.
- If you miss a class, please get notes from a classmate rather than asking me for notes.
- You will not be able to make up exams or engagement activities.

Late Work

Tell me ahead of time if you're going to miss class. Excusable reasons for missing are, to be frank, few and far between, but include unexpected sickness **proven** by the presentation of a doctor's note, family emergency **proven** through presentation of an obituary, etc., or a university-sanctioned activity like a game or a concert **proven** by a note from an advisor or an instructor. Under these circumstances, I will work out a way for you to make up a missed assignment (either on another day during the same round, or during my office hours in front of myself and a few other instructors). Make-up assignments are reserved for **students who are in good standing** in the course and **schedule a make-up within one week**.

Missed assignments that are not accompanied by proof of excused absence may be made up within the week they are missed for the **maximum grade of a C**. (Life happens, but not without consequences.)

Grade Discussions and Appeals

I do not discuss grades over e-mail or in class. If you would like to speak with me about an exam, assignment, final grade, or any other graded material you must come to my office and

Speak with me face-to-face. If you cannot come to my office hours, I will gladly schedule an appointment that works with your schedule.

If you wish to appeal a grade on an assignment, you must submit a grade appeal within 7 days of receiving the grade, and you must follow these procedures:

- Wait at least 24 hours before setting up an appointment and submitting your written grade appeal to insure that you have time to carefully read and consider the feedback. Focus less on explaining that you deserve a certain grade, and more on proving that you accomplished specific objectives that you were not given the appropriate credit for. Make sure to cite specific instances from your assignment to provide support for these claims.
- After reading my feedback, submit a typed, written appeal that identifies the specific issue in question (e.g. quiz item, etc.) and explains the specific and well-supported reasons you believe the grade should be changed. Please refer to any class materials that support your rationale for a change.
- The written appeal should be submitted at least 24 hours prior to the appointment.
- When you arrive for the scheduled appointment, bring in your graded copy of the item in question (e.g., quiz, exam, etc.) and any additional evidence to support your claims and be ready to present them.
- After meeting with you, I may wish to contemplate the matter. In any case, I will decide within two school days whether to change or uphold the grade.
- I will provide you with a written justification of my decision. We need to meet within one week (7 days) of the grade's issue.
- Grade appeals will not be considered after that "statute of limitations" has expired.
- If we cannot come to an agreement, you are welcome to follow the formal grade appeal procedure as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

You may feel compelled to compare grades with others in the class. If both of you are fine doing this, then there is nothing I can do to stop you. However, keep in mind that you are appealing your grade, not how you were graded compared to others. I strive to make sure grades are individual, rather than comparative, evaluations.

Technology and Electronics in the Classroom

You are more than welcome to use technology in this classroom (Laptops, iPads, etc) as long as it does not serve as a distraction to you and other students. However, if your cell phone rings during class I reserve the right to answer it or take it for the remainder of class. If you use a laptop to take notes, that is fine, but it should not be out during discussions or engagement activities. Also, if I catch you on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or something unrelated to class—I will give one warning and if it happens again the rest of the class will lose the privilege to take notes electronically.

Waiting Policy

Class members should wait 15 minutes for me in the event I am late (which I do not at all foresee). After that period of time, you should consider class cancelled.

Course Content

This class sometimes requires us to talk about adult content or issues that relate to intimate parts of human life such as sexuality. If you ever feel uncomfortable let me know or feel free to excuse yourself. But I want to encourage us to all learn to engage intellectually and objectively content.

Netiquette

Think about how you communicate to your instructors and colleagues in person and via e-mail. When sending E-Mails:

- Address me professionally in e-mails (ex: “Hello, Dr. Mack”)
- In an e-mail, please sign your name (I might think LSUcutiepie@gmail.com is spam and delete it).
- Check your grammar.
- Remember tone is harder to make out in e-mail. Assume a polite and professional tone, and my response will be the same.
- Make sure to include any necessary background information needed for me to “make sense” of what you are e-mailing about. Also, make sure to be clear (just like in an essay) of what you want out of the e-mail.
- Do not text me from your phone in all caps, or in broken English. Always use proper punctuation, complete spellings, etc...
- Courtesy in this class gives most people 24 hours to respond to e-mail. I will not assume you will get an e-mail in less time; don’t assume I will either. Weekends may take longer.

If you fail to follow these guidelines, I will not answer your e-mail.

Academic Misconduct

Don’t plagiarize. Any student found to have turned in material not their own (either downloaded from the internet or written by another student) will immediately be reported to the Dean of Students. You can find the official LSU policies on plagiarism here:

<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/instruction/plagiarism2.html> . **Your work would be considered as plagiarism in part or entirely if it involves any of the following:**

- Submitting work that was written by someone other than you (an online source, a friend, etc.).
- Submitting work in which you use the ideas, metaphors or reasoning style of another, but do not cite that source and/or place that source in your list of references. Simply rewording a sentence does not make work your own.

- Submitting work in which you “cut and paste” or use the exact words of a source and you do not put the words within quotation marks, use footnotes or in-text citations, and place the source in your list of references.
- Submitting work that you have written together with a friend as if it was solely your own intellectual property.
- Submitting work for COMM 2063 that you wrote verbatim for another class.

Students With Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states: “If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the LSU Disability Services so that such accommodations can be arranged. After you receive the accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

Majoring in Communication Studies

Business leaders and other professionals recognize the importance of developing communication skills and analysis. Alan Greenspan, for example, stated, “To succeed, you will soon learn, as I did, the importance of a solid foundation in the basics of education – literacy, both verbal and numerical, and communication skills.” We hope this course contributes to your success.

To learn more about communication, you may want to major or minor in the Department of Communication Studies. The program explores how people sustain and change, experience, and make sense of the world through symbolic action. Students develop conceptual skills to analyze written, oral, and visual messages. Students gain practical experience in such areas such as public speaking, group decision-making, performance, and film. Such skills are elemental to careers in business, government, law, social services, and the arts.

A major in Communication Studies requires 36 hours including 12 hours of core classes and 12 hours at the 3000 or 4000 level. A minor requires 15 hours with one core class and 6 hours at the 3000 level or above.

More information is available at www.lsu.edu/cmst or by contacting our undergraduate advisor Mr. Kent Filbel (kfilli@lsu.edu), whose hours are posted at his office, 135 Coates Hall

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please Note: This course requires a substantial amount of reading. You are responsible for all readings. Please complete the reading assignment *before* the listed class.

The syllabus is provisional and is subject to revision as necessary. Additional readings may be assigned from time to time, and/or assigned readings may be omitted.

M refers to readings that are on Moodle, all other readings are from the textbook

Date	Topic	Readings Due
T 8/25	Course Introduction	
TH 8/27	A Critical Approach to Gender/Sex/Sexuality	Preface, Ch. 1
T 9/1	Theories of Gender/Sex	Ch. 2
TH 9/3	Gendered/Sexed Voices	Ch. 3
T 9/8	Gendered/Sexed Bodies	Ch. 4
TH 9/10	Film: Good Hair	
T 9/15	Film: Good Hair	
TH 9/17	Gendered/Sexed Language	Ch. 5
T 9/22	Exam Review	
TH 9/24	Exam I	
T 9/29	The Role of Institutions	Ch. 6
TH 10/1	The Family	Ch. 7
T 10/6	Romantic Relationships & Sexuality	(M) "What's 'normal' sex? Shrinks seek definition" (M) Esther Perel - Rethinking Infidelity (Video)
TH 10/8	Mediated Gender & Sex	Ch. 11 (M) Caroline Heldman - What is Sexual Objectification? (M) Pornography & End of Masculinity

Date	Topic	Readings Due
T 10/13	Film: Sexy Baby	
TH 10/15	Film: Sexy Baby	
T 10/20	The Workplace	Ch. 9
TH 10/22	Educational Systems	Ch. 8
T 10/27	Gender & Health Systems	
TH 10/29	FALL BREAK! HAVE FUN!	
T 11/3	Gender & Religion	Ch. 10
TH 11/5	Analyzing Engendered & Sexed Communication Artifacts	**Assign final paper**
T 11/10	Exam Review	
TH 11/12	Exam II	
T 11/17	No Class	Work on your essays!
TH 11/19	No Class	**Draft of Essay Due to Peer for Evaluation**
T 11/24	No Class	**Peer Reviews Due **
TH 11/25	THANKSGIVING BREAK 11/25-11/27	
T 12/1	In Class Writing Workshop	
TH 12/3	Communicating Gender in the Future	Ch. 12
TH 12/10	**Final paper due through Moodle by 5pm CST**	