

Communication 111
Gender and Communication
Fall 2015
Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00am to 11:50am
202 Wellman Hall

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:00pm to 1:00pm

Course Overview:

This course (formerly numbered CMN 103) is about the relationships between communication, sex, and gender. Although the course largely focuses on gender differences, it also emphasizes similarities when appropriate. The course not only examines communication differences (e.g., how men and women speak differently) and reasons for these differences (e.g., why they tend to speak differently) but also the consequences of these differences (e.g., how, when, and why typical female language is judged as less or more intelligent than typical male language).

The course is composed of four main sections. The *first* part of the course lays the groundwork/foundation for the remainder of the course. After the major concepts (e.g., sex, gender, stereotypes) and other pertinent issues are explained and differentiated, the first part of the course explains various reasons for sex- and gender-based differences and similarities. The *second* major part of the course reviews and discusses how gender is related to language use and conversational behavior. The *third* part of the course highlights gender-based issues regarding nonverbal communication, social cognition, and relationships. The *fourth* and final major part of the course looks at how gender and communication function in various settings, such as organizations, groups, health situations, computer-mediated contexts, and the media. The course closes with an overview of the gender and communication issues in relation to social change.

Course Objectives:

Throughout the course, my goals are to help you develop an awareness of the central issues surrounding gender and communication, think critically of these issues, and understand how these issues relate to your everyday lives. By the end of the course, in other words, you should have a good understanding of: (a) the core questions and concerns for gender and communication theory and research; (b) the associated criticism and problems with gender and communication theory and research; and (c) the everyday, practical applications of gender and communication theory and research.

Course Readings:

I require a textbook and a selection of supplemental readings for this course. The textbook is *Gendered Lives*, 11th ed. (2014) by Julia T. Woods. There are three older editions—8th (2008), 9th (2010), and 10th (2012)—which you can use instead of the 11th ed. (Do not use the 7th or earlier editions, as I have not checked their compatibility with the 8th - 11th editions.) The 8th, 9th, 10th, and/or 11th editions of text should be available at local and online bookstores.

The supplemental readings include a number of articles and book chapters that are relevant

for the topics we cover. I posted these readings under the resources section of the course website (SmartSite: <https://smartsite.ucdavis.edu/>). You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to view the readings. You can either print or simply read the readings via a computer.

The final section of the syllabus outlines the schedule of the topics we will cover and the associated readings. The supplemental readings are just as important as the text, so do not ignore either. You might want to read for a certain lecture before that lecture. *Coming prepared having done the readings will allow you to gain the most from the lectures.*

Lecture Format:

I will *not* completely regurgitate the readings in lectures. Lectures, in other words, will overlap the readings somewhat; but lectures also introduce new, related information relative to the readings. The readings also include information that I will not discuss in lecture. You are responsible for all material in both readings *and* lectures.

Lectures focus on my presentation of relevant information. My teaching experiences, however, have demonstrated that students gain the most from a lecture when it is interactive. Therefore, as much as I can, I will encourage class discussions by soliciting opinions, personal anecdotes, questions, comments, feedback, etc. from you throughout the lecture. By doing so, my goals are to help you learn and remember the information in an interesting way and to help you see how the information relates to your everyday lives. *Actively integrating and applying the information presented in lectures to your lives increases your ability to fully understand and retain the information.* Plus, your involvement generally makes for a better class.

Course Requirements and Exams:

Your grade for this course is based on two exams: a midterm and a final. The point breakdown for your course grade is as follows:

Midterm	80 points	40%	Monday, October 26th, 2015
Final	120 points	60%	Wednesday, December 9 th , 2015

The midterm will cover the reading and lecture material up to the date of the exam and is scheduled for Monday, October 26th, 2015, at the regular lecture time and location. The final will cover some course material from the first half of the course *in relation to* the second half of the course. The final is not cumulative. The final, however, will emphasize the latter half of the course, as you will have not been tested on that material yet. The final is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9th, 2015, at **8:00am** at the regular location. Memorization of course material is necessary but **not** sufficient to earn a high score on an exam. Both exams will emphasize an understanding of the main concepts of the class and also will challenge you to think creatively, integratively, and comparatively regarding the issues that are relevant to the course. Exams largely are composed (~75%) of multiple choice questions. Short answers and fill-in-the-blanks, however, will each make up a smaller portion (~12% each) of the exams. You cannot do well on the exams without having completed the readings and attended lectures taking thorough notes.

Your letter grade will be based on the total points you earned relative to the distribution of the total points earned by other student in the class. In other words, an absolute grading scale based on immutable percentage ranges (such as, 90% – 93% is *always* an A-) does not determine your letter grade. Rather, your particular grade will be assessed by how you performed compared to the class as a whole. This method of grading is not a traditional curve, where there is a pre-determined percentage of As, Bs, Cs, Ds, and Fs. This method of grading is based on the average number of points earned and how each student performs relative to this average. The class average number of points usually will earn the letter grade of a high C+

or low B-. Thus, for example, an average score of 105 out of 210 points (50%) would receive a C+ or B- not an F, as would an average score of 168 out of 200 points (80%).

Whereas the exams primarily determine your final grade, class participation can have an impact as well. The class participation component is defined as your level of involvement in lectures. If you actively and commonly participate verbally in lectures (see second paragraph of Lecture Format section above), then your course grade could increase by one level (e.g., B+ to A- or C to C+), assuming your grade (as determined by the two exams) is near the border of two grade levels. For example, if your exams indicate that you should get a B for the course, which is one point shy of a B+, then if you actively and frequently participated in lectures your course grade would be rounded up to a B+.

Early/Alternate-Time Exams:

Exams are scheduled for the dates and times as stated above and listed below. If you are currently aware that you will not be able to attend either exam, then you should **not** take this class at this time. Missing an exam will almost certainly result in you receiving an F for the course. I will offer this course again, at which time your schedule may be more conducive to the scheduled exam times. Exams will not be rescheduled for students under ordinary circumstances; yet, see next the section for instances when re-scheduled exams are acceptable.

Missing Exams:

Missing a scheduled exam results in zero points. Missed exams will not be rescheduled for students under any mundane circumstances. Makeup exams will be given only for valid emergencies (e.g., medical emergency, death in your family). Proof of such emergencies (e.g., a written excuse from a Medical Doctor, obituary) must be presented in a timely manner. Should a *valid* emergency occur, immediately consult with me to determine what constitutes acceptable proof of your emergency. Makeup exams will likely be essay format.

Lecture and Reading Schedule:

Below is the course schedule listing the date, lecture title, and readings. Assuming no unforeseen problems, the schedule will not change. For both exams, I will devote time during either a portion of a lecture or a whole lecture for a question and answer period, before which I will provide a study guide so that you can come prepared with questions.

Date	Lecture Topic	Required Readings
Mon., Sep. 28 th	Course introduction: Syllabus overview and course advice	Course syllabus
Wed., Sep. 30 th	Gender and communication: Major concepts	Wood, Ch. 1; Reading #1 (Basow, 1992)
Mon., Oct. 5 th	Sex and gender differences and similarities: Understanding general features, behaviors, etc. of men and women	Wood, Ch. 2
Wed., Oct. 7 th	Gender, language use, and conversational behavior I: Differences	Wood, Ch. 5

Date	Lecture Topic	Required Readings
Mon., Oct. 12 th	Gender, language use, and conversational behavior II: Explaining the differences	Reading #2 (Maltz & Borker, 1982); Reading #3 (Palomares, Reid, & Bradac, 2004)
Wed., Oct. 14 th	Gender, language use, and conversational behavior III: Consequences of the differences	Reading #4 (Reid, Keerie, & Palomares, 2003)
Mon., Oct. 19 th	Gender, language use, and conversational behavior IV: More consequences and integration	Reading #5 (Mulac, 2006)
Wed., Oct. 21 st	Midterm Q&A Period	—
Mon., Oct. 26 th	Midterm 10:00am – 11:50am	—
Wed., Oct. 28 th	Gender, emotion, and nonverbal communication	Wood, Ch. 6; Reading #6 (Hall, Carter, & Horgan, 2000)
Mon., Nov. 2 nd	Gender, social cognition, stereotypes, and communication	—
Wed., Nov. 4 th	Gender and relational communication I: Intimate and personal relationships	Wood, Ch. 9; Reading #7 (Buss, Shackelford, Kirkpatrick, & Larsen, 2001)
Mon., Nov. 9 th	Gender and relational communication II: Family relationships	Wood, Ch. 7
Wed., Nov. 11 th	Veterans' Day Holiday	—
Mon., Nov. 16 th	Gender and organizational communication: Group dynamics and leadership	Wood, Ch. 10
Wed., Nov. 18 th	No class	—
Mon., Nov. 23 rd	Gender and health communication Gender, computer-mediated communication, and human computer interaction	Reading #8 (Hall, Irish, Roter, Ehrlich, & Miller, 1994) Reading #9 (Reeves & Nass, 1996)
Wed., Nov. 25 th	Gender and media I: Content	Wood, Ch. 11; Reading #10 (Donnerstein & Smith, 2001)

Date	Lecture Topic	Required Readings
Mon., Nov. 30 th	Gender and media II: Effects	Reading #11 (Segrin & Nabi, 2002)
Wed., Dec. 2 nd	Gender and communication: Social change and other final thoughts Final Exam Q&A Period	Wood, Epilogue; Reading #12 (Warner & Steel, 1999)
Wed., Dec. 9 th	Final Exam 8:00am	—