

**Northern Arizona University – School of Communication**  
**Gender Communication Spring 2003 - SYLLABUS**

M/W 1:50-3:05 SC 424 seq. 33090 (room 210)

**Instructor:** Marsha Yowell, JD **Office:** Bldg.16 Room 118E

**Office Hours: W 8-11 AM & 3:30-4:30 PM, and by appointment**

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**Course Description:** This course will be a lecture/seminar on gender communication. We will focus on the construction and deconstruction of Gender including cultural, legal and ethical issues. We will study gender related stereotypes and paradigms of individuals/groups used by our institutions and mass media. We will also explore historical perspectives and theories related to gender communication.

**Course Prerequisites:** 60 hours or instructor's permission

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Wood, J.T. (2002) *Gendered lives: Communicating, gender, and culture*, 5th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. **ALSO required 5 Blue Books, one 3-ring paper binder & 1 manila folder.**

**OPTIONAL TEXTS:**

- (1) **Hacker** (2000). *A Pocket Style Manual*. (Bedford/St. Martin's.)(Style).
- (2) **Sprague & Stuart** (1996). *The Speaker's Handbook*. Sixth Edition. (Harcourt Brace College Publishers)

**SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS** WILL BE HANDED OUT IN CLASS OR PLACED ON RESERVE AT CLINE LIBRARY. The NAU Theatre Department, Campus Lectures, The Lumberjack and the Reel Women Film Series (RWFS) often have direct relevance to issues of cultural diversity. These and other opportunities will be recommended throughout the semester. See <http://www.nau.edu/wst/access/bigevents/index.html> for information on RWFS.

Course Philosophy

Learning is an active process in which we all participate. Viewing learning as an active process implies several significant distinctions between many traditional classroom interactions and what I hope this course will become for each of us. First an active process suggests **the importance of understanding** and experiencing ideas as they relate to our own lives, rather than just remembering a list of facts. This course should provide us with plenty of material upon which to reflect as we consider the pervasive influence of gender on personal identity and societal structures

Second, a process continually evolves with no clear beginning or end. Hence, this course should become a dialogue between all of us as we reflect upon the material presented and its relevance in our experiences. Such a conversation includes responsibilities to which we must all agree. Clearly, one initial responsibility involves being in class regularly. But merely being in class is not enough to create a climate in which we can all learn. Being prepared for class is an additional commitment that is necessary from each of us. A quick reading of the assigned material will do little to prepare for class. The nature of the material presented in this course invites critical reflection upon the ideas and a willingness to share our insights and perspectives on personal and potential controversial topics. A final and vitally important responsibility involves a willingness to be open to and consider the thoughts and ideas of others in the classroom. There will be different perspectives presented and held by each of us. No one experience or viewpoint is more important or more valuable than any other. You may not agree with the views expressed by others in the course, but we must all agree to respect each individual's right to have and share their own experiences. Hearing and listening to the perspectives of others should do nothing more than create greater understanding of the diversity of experience in contemporary American society.

Assignments

**You will be required to see an evening performance of *Catholic School Girls* on 3-6-03, 3-7-03, or 3-8-03**

Class Business. Each day the first ten minutes of class will be used for discussion of some of the many ways gender issues surface in the world in which we live. As a semester-long course, there is never enough time to include all of the interesting topics that arise from studying gender and communication. "Class business" will allow us to consider more of the ways gender issues pop up in our lives and experiences. As the course progresses, we will all be more aware of the power of gender and the prevalence of gender stereotypes. Reading, television programs, advertisements, classroom experiences, and our interactions with others all provide fertile ground for material for "class business." Please be willing to bring in examples for discussion and also be ready to share your perspectives on the issues raised.

Finally, “class business” is considered fair game for test questions—the ways we notice gender issues in daily life are at least as important as other material from the readings, lectures, and class discussions.

**Testing.** This course includes two exams each valued at 20% of the course grade, and a final that is worth 30% of the course grade. The final is cumulative, as the material presented later in the course builds upon earlier theories and information discussed. There are no provisions for missed tests. If you miss a test for a University-approved reason, the weight of that assignment is placed on the final. Of course, proper documentation and, if appropriate, prior approval are necessary for redistributing the weight of an exam to the final. The exams and the final will include both objective and essay items.

**Folder of Précis and Discussion Question Responses:** Throughout the course the textbook and additional readings/electronic media will be assigned for your consideration, reflection, and analysis. You will be required to prepare a response to the Text’s Discussion Questions for each Chapter in the Text and a Précis for each additional assignment. When responding to the questions, use one or more paragraphs to share your perspective on, understanding of, and experiences with the topics assigned. **All** assigned work must be typed and is due at the beginning of class. Please make certain that you retain a copy of work turned in for use during class, and study purposes. A suggested organization for your Précis is attached. As most of the issues are highly personal, consider the types of responses you are willing to share. These Précis and discussion question responses are not confidential and may be shared with other class members. I do not want to force you to share experiences you would rather not disclose. Please feel free to reveal only what you are comfortable with of your experiences or ideas as they relate to any of the assignments. The Discussion Question Responses and Précis are worth 20% of your course grade and are evaluated based on the depth and understanding you display of course concepts. Include analysis of the topic assigned, not just a description. **Depth** is the key issue. Don’t be afraid to carefully examine what you believe **and why** you believe what you believe. Explicit explanation of the support for your conclusions is critical. Most importantly, remember the Responses & Précis are really for your benefit, not mine, so use them to meet your needs. They are to be placed in a paper three ring binder and turned in twice during the semester, on March 6 and April 16; each time a grade will be assigned worth 10% of the course grade.

**Discussion Questions.** In order to facilitate discussion, participation, and critical thinking, you are required to submit at least two “focus questions/comments” for each day of those assigned on the syllabus. These questions/comments, which must be typed, should demonstrate careful reading and consideration of the assignments. Further, you are expected to push beyond the surface to explore or question the underlying assumptions and the implication of the material. Your focus questions/comments are to be submitted at the **beginning of class**, and will not be accepted after discussion has begun. They will be assigned points depending on their quality, and will account for 10% of your course grade.

**Honor Code.** You are bound by the standards of the NAU honor code for all of your work in this course. Hence, accept and give no “unauthorized Assistance” on any of the assignments for the course. Signing your name on your assignments is your pledge and consent to abiding by the honor code. Plagiarism, collaboration, fabricated sources, false information or other academic dishonesty shall result in a “0” for the assignment, and at the discretion of the instructor may result in a failing course grade.

**HELP:** If you want to discuss a concept covered in class in more depth, desire a greater challenge, need tutoring, have a problem or need help of any kind regarding class, please let me know. **I will be happy to work with you.** If you are not challenged sufficiently or have a disability (e.g. speech, vision or hearing impairment), or anticipate a need for special accommodation, please make an appointment and come see me **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** Students who want extra opportunities or have problems, but do not seek assistance until the end of the semester find possibilities and solutions are normally gone.

**ATTENDANCE:** Student attendance requirements are the official NAU requirements as set out in the NAU Undergraduate Catalog. **ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY.** 0-2 **UNEXCUSED** absences will not affect your grade as earned (based on assignments, tests and participation). **MORE THAN 2 UNEXCUSED ABSENCES SHALL RESULT IN A LOWERING OF YOUR GRADE ONE LETTER FOR EACH ADDITIONAL UNEXCUSED ABSENCE** (e.g. with 3 unexcused absences the maximum grade awarded will be a “B” even if your scores otherwise indicate an “A”).

**Please note, too many unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.** Weddings, work conflicts, job interviews are not excused absences. Excused absences are documented illness, death in the immediate family or institutional excuses. They are excused **only if all work/time missed is made up.** Make-up work will be allowed only with instructor approval. Please notify me in advance in writing **OR BY E-MAIL** of all institutional, medical or personal absences **UNLESS THERE IS AN EMERGENCY WHICH DOES NOT**

ALLOW YOU TO PROVIDE ADVANCE NOTICE (if no advance notice E-mail me ASAP afterwards). Please be on time. Late arrival is disruptive for everyone. **Points will be deducted for tardiness or leaving early.** If you come in AFTER ROLL notify me in writing immediately after class or you will be counted as absent.

**GRADE STANDARDS:**

- A** = outstanding, excellent, superior work. Exceptionally well prepared assignments, which **exceed the basic requirements** and demonstrate superior mastery of course content (including communication skills).
- B** = good, above satisfactory, doing more than required work. Well-prepared assignments indicating mastery of the subject matter & skills above that expected of most students.
- C** = satisfactory, average, fulfilling all requirements. Acceptable completion of work that fulfills the assigned requirements, and indicates a solid mastery of the subject matter and skills.
- D** = minimally acceptable, barely adequate, below average college level work. Unsatisfactory completion of assignments that indicate technical irregularity, misperceived concepts, and undisciplined efforts.
- F** = unsatisfactory, inadequate, not college level work. Failure to complete assignments, or completion with little evidence of serious thought, support of reasoning, or awareness of course contents.

**ASSIGNMENTS & EXAMS:**

- 1. Discussion Question Responses & Precises\*\*\*\*\*200 points
  - 2. First Exam\*\*\*\*\*200 points
  - 3. Second Exam\*\*\*\*\*200 points
  - 4. Participation and Class work\*\*\*\*\*100 points
  - 5. Final Exam\*\*\*\*\*300 points
- Total points 1000

I will keep all written work and tests so they will be available for conferences. Bring any questions you have regarding a particular test or assignment to me promptly so that it can be resolved quickly. I grade on a Scale, not on a Curve. There will be 1000 possible points. 90% (900) and above is an "A" (outstanding work), 80% (800) and above is a "B" (good work), 70% (700) and above is a "C" (satisfactory work), 60% (600) and above is a "D" (minimally acceptable work), if you have less than 60% (600) points you will fail.

I encourage students to come by early in the semester during office hours, or call me and we will set up a time to meet. Research indicates that a good study group can make a difference in how well you do in school. If you wish to get in a study group and are having trouble, let me know and I will do what I can to help. **I believe in the intellectual life of the university and am greatly enriched through a dialogue with students.** Let me know if you would like to get a cup of coffee, are doing something interesting in another class, or extra curricular activity. Movies, plays, poetry slams, etc. can make wonderful starting points for a dialogue. There is a Documentary at the Flagstaff Mall which I highly recommend right now called *Bowling for Columbine* if you have time this first week of School. It is part of the Film Lovers Festival selections that features some excellent independent filmmakers' work.

**Weekly Schedule – Subject To Adjustment To Meet Course Needs**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic and Assignment</u>
M 1-13-03	Introduction to class. Assignment: <u>Woods</u> Introduction: Opening the Conversation pages 1-11. Do Discussion Questions 1-8.
W 1-15-03	Discuss the Social Construction of Inequality, Feminism(s), Personal involvement, Communication as the fulcrum of Change, Challenges of Communication, Gender & Culture & Text Questions. Assignment; Enjoy Break for MLKJ Holiday.
M 1-20-03	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No Class
W 1-22-03	TBA. Assignment Chapter 2 Theoretical Approaches to Gender & Discussion Questions (DQ) 1-7.
M 1-27-03	Discuss Chapter 2 Communication, Gender & Culture, Transitions, Relationships, Gender and Sex, Definitions & Discussion Questions. Assignment: Chapter 3 & DQ. (1-8)
W 1-29-03	Discuss Chapter 3 The Rhetorical Shaping of Gender Women’s Movements, Men’s Movements, Other (Backlash, Ecofeminism & DQ 1-8. Assignment: Review for 1 <sup>st</sup> Exam.
<b>M 2-3-03</b>	<b>First Exam. (Woods pages 1-101 and material covered in class)</b>
W 2-5-03	Video and free writing. Assignment: Chapter 4 Gendered Verbal Communication & DQ 1-9.

- M 2-10-03** Discuss Chapter 4 - Language as a process defines, evaluates, enables hypothetical thought, organizes perceptions of gender, and allows self-reflection. (Gendered Speech Communities, child's play, Gender-Based misinterpretations, etc. Assignment: Chapter 5 Gendered Verbal Communication and DQ 1-9.
- W 2-12-03** Discuss Chapter 4-) Assignment: Chapter 5 – Gendered Nonverbal Communication & DQ 1-5.
- M 2-17-03** Discuss Chapter 5 - Functions, forms and implications of gendered nonverbal communication. Assignment: Chapter 6 – Gendered Family Dynamics & Discussion Questions 1-9.
- W 2-19-03** Meet at Cline Library for Gender research Assignment
- M 2-24-03** Discuss entering a gendered society, gendering communication in the family, the personal side of the gender drama and DQ 1-9. Assignment: Chapter 7 Gendered Close relationships & DQ 1-7.
- W 2-26-03** Discuss Chapter 7 – Gender & closeness, gendered friendships, gendered romantic relationships and DQ. Assignment Chapter 8 – Gendered Education: Communication in Schools & DQ 1-7.
- M 3-3-03** Discuss Chapter 8 – School Organization, curricular content, processes & DQ. Assignment: Read *Catholic School Girls Act One*. Bring DQ Folder to class and turn in 3-6, include a Précis of Act One of *Catholic School Girls*.
- W 3-6-03** Turn in Folder. Begin *Catholic School Girls* exercise. Assignment Read Act two and do Précis of Act Two. NOTE YOU ARE REQUIRED TO SEE *Catholic School Girls* PRODUCTION EITHER THURSDAY (3-6), FRIDAY (3-7) OR SATURDAY (3-8) EVENING.
- M 3-10-03** Complete *Catholic School Girls* exercise. Assignment See Play and review for Second test.
- W 3-12-03** Second Exam. Assignment: Read Chapter 9 – Gendered Organizational Communication to Pages 226-249.
- M 3-24-03** VIDEO. Assignment: Read Chapter 9- 250-259 and do DQ 1-12. Have a great spring Break 3-17 to 3-21.
- W 3-26-03** Discuss Chapter 9 and Legal Responses to address gendered inequity. Assignment Chapter 10 – Gendered Media & DQ 1-7.
- M 3-31-03** Discuss Chapter 10 – Themes in Media, Bias in News Coverage, Implications Gendered Media. Assignment: Read Chapter 11 – Gendered Power and Violence and DQ 1-8.
- W 4-2-03** Discuss Chapter 11 – Social Construction of Gendered Violence, Faces & Foundations of gendered violence, resistance and taking action. Assignment: Epilogue – Looking Backward, Looking forward Woods pages 325-334.
- M 4-7-03** TBA. Assignment: Woods pages 335-339 and DQ 1-7.
- W 4-9-03** Discuss Woods Epilogue. Assignment: Work on Folder Due 4-16. Bring in Gendered Court Case for Classroom Discussion.
- M 4-14-03** Discussion of Court Cases and gender equity in Social Justice. Assignment: Work on Folder.
- W 4-16-03** Discuss & Turn in Folders.
- M 4-21-03** Oleanna
- W 4-23-03** Oleanna.
- M 4-28-03 & W 4-30-03** Reading week Oleanna and Review for final
- Final Wednesday 5-7-03 12:30 to 2:30**

## PRÉCIS

A précis is a short summary of an article, essay, chapter, etc. used to **analyze text**.

1. If fiction briefly summarize the plot (what happened in the story) or if an essay (non-fiction) the important events/facts presented.
2. What is the story/essay's point of view? (Is it informative, persuasive, and/or evocative? Is it written in first, second or third person? Singular or plural? Does it use active or passive voice - does it use narration - dialogue? How does this effect/manipulate the reader and why is this point of view used)?
3. **What is/are the central idea(s)?**

**In class or your study group discussions:** If you do not understand a story or specific passage, what questions do you have about what specific passages?

**Other questions to ask your self:**

1. What is the Title and why?
2. When was the essay or story written?
3. How would you relate it to what was going on then and what is going on today?
4. What part & section of the text's classifications is it or would it be included in, why?
6. What mass media is present, discussed or important in the story/essay and why?
7. What are the main theme(s) of the story that relate to gendered communication?
8. Compare the story/essay with one other essay/story; explain how their themes are related.
9. What other comments or opinions do you have regarding these stories?

**To approach writing as an aid to critical thinking consider the following four-step process:**

1. Define your term/concept (What is it?) USE A DICTIONARY or other authority for help. BUT USE YOUR OWN WORDS.
2. Compare it to what you know and understand well (What is it like? What is it not like? Use analogy, metaphor, example & visualization).
3. Determine how it is related to other things (What caused it and why? What will it cause?).
4. Elicit opinions from others (what do experts, informed sources, the majority or specific minorities say about it?).

**Reasoning:** Chose what you believe based on what you have learned, and your own independent thoughts, and conclusions. Remember to judge your conclusions based on your own values. Be open to new ideas but test them with what you know.

**Format:** Put your name, the course number and section, plus the date in the upper right hand corner. Then left justified write the title, authors and source of the reading(s) being summarized. Include the text and page number of the publication. Use a standard sentence/paragraph/short essay form. If you are typing please double space and use one-inch margins.

**“Gender, like culture, organizes for its members different Influence strategies, ways of communicating, non-verbal Languages, and ways of perceiving the world”**

Carol Travis, *The Mismeasure of Woman*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992, p. 291)