

Communication Pedagogy, **COMM 8035**
 Thursdays, 4:30-6:45, 1020 One PP South
 Fall, 2011 CRN 83318
 Office hours: M-W2-4, T-H 1-2, and by appt.

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This is a course on methods and practices of teaching communication area courses. It is designed to introduce you to some of the philosophies behind different ways of teaching, as well as to assist you in your teaching experience at Georgia State. We will thus be dealing both with theoretical material as well as more basic, "how to" information and skills. The goal of the course is to make you more comfortable in the classroom, to better your pedagogical skills, and to improve your understanding of your own teaching. The course plan moves you from "how to teach at this particular institution" (i.e. the syllabus assignment) through "thinking about the theory and practice of teaching" (i.e. the research paper) to evaluating your own teaching and preparing to sell it on the job market (i.e. the portfolio). You are expected, at a minimum, to keep up with the reading, meet all course deadlines, and fulfill your responsibilities as a member of an academic community. Failure to do so will result in a substantially lowered grade for the course. Some class time will be reserved every week for the discussion of issues, problems, and positive experiences in your individual classrooms. You may also see me privately about any classroom concerns you may have.

Policy on Academic Honesty, in GSU Faculty Handbook ,Section 409 available at <http://www2.gsu.edu/~www/fhb/fhb.html>. We follow this policy completely. **Course Schedule:** The course syllabus provides a general plan for the class; deviations may be necessary. Revisions will be announced in class. **Course Evaluations:** "Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please take time to fill out the online course evaluation." **Students with Special Needs:** Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which accommodations are sought.

Course Requirements

In addition to class attendance and participation, there are specific written requirements. You are expected to meet all deadlines. No late assignments will be accepted unless arrangements are made before the due date. **ALL** of your written work must be typed, double-spaced in 12-point type. All standards of written English apply.

Course Syllabus: You will design two course syllabi; the first, a tweaking of your present lower-level course, the second an upper-level undergrad seminar on a topic of your choice. They are worth 5 and 15% of the course grade.

Research Paper: You will write a 10-15 page paper on some aspect of communication pedagogy. It is worth 50% of the course grade.

Professor Paper: You will "shadow" any full-time professor in the department, and speak with them about teaching. Your paper will reflect **ONLY** positive aspects of that professor's teaching, and what you learned about teaching by observing her/ him teach. It is worth 20% of the course grade.

Teaching Philosophy/Portfolio: You will prepare a statement of your teaching philosophy suitable for inclusion in your teaching portfolio. It and the portfolio together are worth 10% of the course grade.

Final Grade: I grade on a 100-point scale. Overall final averages of between 93-100=A; 90-92=A-; 88-89=B+; 83-87=B; 80-82=B-; 78-79=C+; 73-77=C; 70-72=C-; 68-69=D+; 63-67=D; 60-62=D-; 0-59=F.

Reading

You are expected to do the reading before the class when it is assigned. The following books and

articles are required, and will be handed out via CD in class.

Tentative Course Schedule (changes may be necessary)

Thurs August 25 Introduction

Thurs Sept 1 First days of class

Reading: articles labeled “1” on CD; collection on useful syllabi, new teachers, etc

Thurs Sept 8 Fitting in as a New Teacher

Reading: articles labeled “2” on CD; collection on instructor issues

First course syllabus due

Thurs Sept 15 Goals and Student Engagement

Reading: articles labeled “3” on CD

Thurs Sept 22 Teaching in your Disciplines

Reading: articles labeled 4 on CD, Closely read those in your area and quickly look at the others

Second, upper-level COURSE SYLLABI DUE

Thurs Sept 29 NO CLASS

Thurs Oct 6 Learning Methods and Grading Rubrics

Reading: articles labeled 5 on CD

RESEARCH PAPER TOPICS – first inklings—one paragraph DUE

Thurs October 13 Research on teaching and learning

Reading: articles labeled 6 on CD on critical pedagogy, and bell hooks, Teaching to Transgress (readings labeled 10.8 parts 1-4)

Thurs October 20 Teaching to Transgress – reaching students

Continue last week’s discussion

RESEARCH PAPER TOPICS – expanded ideas – one-to two pages DUE

Thurs Oct 27 Using Technology

Reading: articles labeled 7 on CD

Thurs November 3 NO CLASS

Thurs Nov 10 Academic Honesty, Difficult Students and Other Problems

Reading: articles labeled 9 on CD

Thurs Nov 17 NO CLASS; many people gone to NCA

RESEARCH PAPERS DUE

Thurs Nov 24 NO CLASS Thanksgiving break

Thurs December 1 Final Issues

Professor papers DUE

Mon Dec 12th TEACHING PHILOSOPHIES and Teaching Portfolios DUE

COURSE SYLLABI First – worth 5% Second – worth 15% of course grade

The FIRST syllabus will be a further tweaking of the (presumably) undergrad core course you will be teaching in the fall and spring. Make sure that it has all the required GSU information. And incorporate atleast 2 or 3 ideas from our readings on “promising” or upgraded syllabi and innovative inclass work or student assignments.

The SECOND syllabus will be a special course you could teach at GSU if you were given an upper-level special topics course on the topic of your choice. I want to see you incorporate thoughtful readings, student assignments, and material in the course description and course objectives that successfully argue that this course will give undergraduates vital skills and information that will significantly add to their work in the major. What would your dream course be (albeit a practical and useful course for juniors and seniors). It will be a significant addition to your teaching portfolio.

Many area-specific listservs and organizations offer syllabi banks. It is not “cheating” to use such initial sources for your syllabus; teaching and learning are collaborative processes and you are strongly encouraged to learn from the experiences, examples, and ideas of others. For the purposes of this assignment, you simply need to acknowledge them as sources, and include copies, notes, or citations when relevant.

The syllabus will include a cover memo that includes:

- ~A statement describing the course;
- ~A statement about the course objectives;
- ~A statement connecting the class work that you have included with the goals of the course—which goal is each assignment to designed to achieve, and how will each assignment help to achieve that goal;
- ~A statement about why you have chosen to organize the course in the way that you have;
- ~A statement explaining why you have chosen these particular readings;
- ~A statement explaining the course format;
- ~A summary statement that includes anything else you want understood about this particular class.

RESEARCH PAPER 50% of course grade

In this 10-15 page paper, you may select any topic that interests you, provided that it has clear relevance to the topic of communication pedagogy. I expect a coherent, organized, thoughtfully written essay that clearly conveys both an argument and a conclusion. This assignment is worth half of your final course grade; as with all graduate-level assignments, you will be graded on your ability to: articulate a clear and coherent argument; defend that argument with available evidence; the degree to which you embed that argument in an on-going conversation in the field; and demonstrate the significance of your contribution to that conversation. You may rely on either qualitative or quantitative evidence. Standards of evaluation are commensurate with what you expect in other doctoral level seminars.

All topics must be cleared with me in advance. Your papers should be typed, double-spaced, with margins of one inch on all sides. Pay attention to grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation. **Proofread your work.** Corrections in pen are acceptable. The easier it is to read your work the happier I will be. Please do not use plastic or paper covers; simply staple your paper in the upper left hand corner. You will be best served by making your argument as fully and as economically as possible. You will not get extra points for long essays; nor will you be well served by failing to develop your ideas fully. My best advice is to say all that you have to say, and then stop. I am happy to read drafts of your papers, **provided you have proof-read them.**

I cannot decide for you what argument(s) you may wish to make, but I will be more than happy to help you find a general area or to assist you in refining an argument. Your texts offer a good source for ideas; you should also look at back issues of journals such as *Communication Educator*. Some possible general topics include:

- ~Feminist pedagogy
- ~Competence-based learning and teaching
- ~The pedagogy of Paulo Friere
- ~Diversity in the classroom
- ~Writing across the curriculum
- ~Debate across the curriculum
- ~Distance education
- ~Teaching and technology
- ~Race/ class/ gender/ sexual orientation/ etc. in the classroom

- ~Assessing teaching/ learning
- ~Use of narrative in teaching
- ~Teaching methodologies
- ~Communications concerns in the classroom (Too talkative student, comm apprehensive student)

PROFESSOR PAPER 20% of course grade

For this assignment, you will locate a willing professor, and “shadow” them as they teach. I prefer you interview to one of the tenure-track faculty members, NOT a fellow grad student or visiting instructor. You must attend at least one class; you may, of course, attend as many as the professor will allow. You must also have a conversation with that professor about teaching: relevant topics include teaching style, approach to teaching, good and bad experiences in the classroom, special problems or issues related to course material, gender, age, etc.

You will then write a 3-5 page paper that discusses **ONLY THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THIS EXPERIENCE**. The point is to learn about good teaching by experiencing and discussing an example of it. You are encouraged to share this paper with the professor concerned in order to ensure that s/he is accurately represented.

While the tone of this paper should fall somewhere between the formality of a research paper and the informality of a journal, all papers should be typed, double-spaced, with margins of one inch on all sides. Pay attention to grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation. **Proofread your work**. Corrections in pen are acceptable. The easier it is to read your work the happier I will be. Please do not use plastic or paper covers; simply staple your paper in the upper left hand corner. You will be best served by making your argument as fully and as economically as possible. You will not get extra points for long essays; nor will you be well served by failing to develop your ideas fully. My best advice is to say all that you have to say, and then stop.

TEACHING Philosophies and PORTFOLIOS 10% of course grade

Putting together an effective portfolio is an important professional skill, as they are an increasingly important aspect of employment, tenure, and promotion materials, as well being increasingly required by many departments as part of the annual review process. Because you have not yet received most of the material that will go into your portfolio, we will begin by drafting a statement of teaching philosophy. This statement is both personal (it discusses your own philosophy) and strategic (it will be reviewed by search committees and departmental review committees). The grade on this assignment will lean toward the latter of these elements. Your teaching philosophy will **integrate** your approach to teaching with the other elements of the portfolio. That is, it will make sense of the rest of the material. No material should be included in the final portfolio that is not relevant to the philosophy.

For future reference, a good teaching portfolio will include:

- ~An introductory statement detailing the contents of the portfolio with some text that tells the reader what to expect and why;
- ~A statement of teaching philosophy (see course pack for an example)
- ~A statement of goals, and the means intended to reach those goals (If, for instance, the goal was to teach students to “write effectively,” you will define “effective,” and detail how you intend to accomplish this—through frequent writing, unstructured writing, structured writing, whatever);
- ~An evaluation of how well the means selected worked to assist students in reaching the course goals, and evidence to support those claims (given the goal stated above, assess the degree to which the means helped achieve the ends, and provide data—either improved grades, examples of students’ work,* whatever);
- ~A statement of what you would change to make the course more effective in meeting its goals;
- ~Copies of the syllabus; tests, other assignments;
- ~Any other material that would be relevant.

* Student work should **ONLY** be included with student permission (have them initial a statement on their work granting permission). All student work **MUST** be anonymous; remove all indications of the students’ identity except for the initials.