

**COM 323: Gender and Communication (Online)**  
**Fall 2015**  
**Dr. Donna M Elkins**  
**Spalding University**

**Textbook and Required Materials:**

Wood, J. T. (2016). *Gendered lives: Communication, gender and culture*. (11th ed.) Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

**Course Description:** Combining cognitive and experiential approaches, this course focuses on gender and culture as they relate to communication. Students will obtain a critical understanding of gender construction, in addition to learning how gender affects verbal and nonverbal communication.

**Course Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Communicate with others having an advanced understanding of gender, including an understanding of the theorized difference between the concepts of sex and gender.
2. Become familiar with the history of U.S. women's movements and men's movements and their goals.
3. Appreciate the role of communication throughout an individual's life and social systems (e.g. family, school, workplace, media) in constructing consciousness of gender.
4. Listen to and read the writing of others with an appreciation for how their communication and your understanding of it are influenced by gender.
5. Engage in critical consideration of, reflection upon, and effective decision-making about gendered communication as found in media and your own experience.

**LOC #5: Critically analyze messages**

- Identify meanings embedded in messages
- Recognize the influence of messages
- Enact mindful responding to messages

**LOC #8: Utilize communication to embrace difference**

- Articulate the connection between communication and culture
- Respect diverse perspectives and the ways they influence communication
- Articulate one's own cultural standpoint and how it affects communication and world view

## Course Requirements

**Critical analysis essays** that require reading, viewing, researching and writing about specific focused topics in the class related to your own life experience and media interaction. The typical essay will be 4-5 pages in length and may require exploring resources apart from those provided in the course text and materials. You will have a choice between nine critical analysis essay topics so that you can choose two most relevant and interesting to you. 55 points

**Discussion forums** that allow you to talk and share perspectives and thoughts with classmates about the readings and other materials each week. You will have a choice of 12 discussion forums throughout the class and can choose to post to the 5 forums you find most interesting. To achieve excellence on the discussion forums, your participation should be *frequent*, *significant* and *communal* (see specific guidelines at end of the syllabus). 15 points

**Short weekly reading quizzes** over the textbook reading assignment for each week. These quizzes can be retaken up to three times until the deadline or until you earn the score you want. The goal of the quizzes is to ensure that you have spent some time reading the material in the text as that is our basic foundation for learning in the class. 85 points

**VidGrid Presentation.** This presentation will allow you to share your work on one of the critical essays with others in the class through a standard 8-10 minute video presentation which will include PowerPoint slides or other professional visuals to assist in making your points. Classmates will review and offer feedback on your presentation topic. 45 points

### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Week	Topic	Reading and Viewing	Assignment Options
1	<i>Beyond Sex and Gender</i>	Introductory Video to the Class Chapter 1 Video: Chronicle of Higher Ed Ask Me – What LGBTQ Students Want their Professors to Know <a href="http://chronicle.com/article/Ask-Me-What-LGBTQ-Students/232797/">http://chronicle.com/article/Ask-Me-What-LGBTQ-Students/232797/</a>	Discussion Option – “Ask Me” Video  Essay Options (due after mid-term): 1. Film review of <i>Boys Don’t Cry</i>
2	<i>Theoretical Approaches to Gender Development</i>	Chapter 2  Essays from <i>Women’s Studies in Communication</i> , Volume 37, Issue 3, September 2014	Discussion Option – Laws that reinforce gender roles  Essay Option: 2. Using special designations like “women” in journal titles and other resources

3	<i>Feminism and Women's Movements in the US</i>	Chapter 3 Video: TED Talk Interview Billie Jean King and Women's Equality <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/billie_jean_king_this_tennis_icon_paved_the_way_for_women_in_sports">http://www.ted.com/talks/billie_jean_king_this_tennis_icon_paved_the_way_for_women_in_sports</a>	Discussion Options – (1) Billie Jean King Video (2) Feminism
4	<i>Competing Images of Men</i>	Chapter 4	Essay Options: 3. Comparison of two women's organizations NOW and IWF 4. Men's roles in film <i>Courageous</i>
5	<i>Verbal Communication</i>	Chapter 5 Article: Suleiman, C. & O'Connell, D. C. (2008). Gender differences in media interviews of Bill and Hillary Clinton. <i>Journal of Psycholinguistic Research</i> , 37: 33–48 Doi: 10.1007/s10936-007-9055-x	Discussion Options - (1) Feminine language (2) Smiling experiment  Essay Option: 5. Gender Differences Article Review
6	<i>Nonverbal Communication</i>	Chapter 6 Article: Gervais, S. J. & Hillard, A. L. (2011). A role congruity perspective on prejudice toward Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin <i>Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy</i> , 11 (1): 221--240	Essay Options: 6. Review of Role Congruity Article 7. Portrayal of women and men in advertising
7	<i>Family and Early Years</i>	Chapter 7  Article: Girls Just Want to Be Mean <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2002/02/24/magazine/girls-just-want-to-be-mean.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2002/02/24/magazine/girls-just-want-to-be-mean.html</a>	Discussion Options – (1) Women's Achievements (2) Salaries & Savings
8	<i>Gender in Schools</i>	Chapter 8 Myra and David Sadker research website: <i>Failing at Fairness</i>	Essay Option: 8. Review of article on Sadker website: An

		(1995) and <i>Still Failing at Fairness</i> (2009) <a href="http://www.sadker.org/DavidSadker.html">www.sadker.org/DavidSadker.html</a> .	educator's primer to the gender war
9	<i>Male and Female Friendships</i>	Chapter 9	Discussion Option – (1) Men and Women in Friendship (2) Disagreements so far
10	<i>In the Workplace</i>	Chapter 10 Video: TED Talk Sheryl Sandberg and Women in Leadership <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/sheryl_sandberg_why_we_have_too_few_women_leaders">http://www.ted.com/talks/sheryl_sandberg_why_we_have_too_few_women_leaders</a>	Essay Options: 9. Review of Sheryl Sandberg's video interviews
11	<i>Media Standards</i>	Chapter 11	Discussion Option – Favorite Media Characters
12	<i>Gendered Power and Violence</i>	Chapter 12 Video: TED Talk Gender Violence in India <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/meera_vijayann_find_your_voice_against_gender_violence">http://www.ted.com/talks/meera_vijayann_find_your_voice_against_gender_violence</a>	Discussion Option – Reaction to Gender Violence in India Video
13		Creating a VidGrid Presentation of best critical essay to share with class	
14		Review of and comments from classmates on final presentations	