

**COMM 182P: Communication in the Classroom****Fall 2013****Dr. Deanna L. Fassett****San Jose State University****TEXTBOOK:**

Course readings (as noted on the syllabus) will be electronically available.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION, LEARNING OUTCOMES, AND GOALS:**

Analysis of the classroom as a communication system. Application of communication principles to the facilitation of educational dialogue. After successfully completing this course, you will:

LO1: articulate and practice effective instructional communication principles (e.g., communication clarity, effective listening, classroom management, etc.).

LO2: explore, analyze and evaluate communication in the classroom as rooted in social systems of power and privilege.

LO3: practice reflexive strategies for exploring your own communication experiences as a teacher and as a learner in classroom settings.

LO4: meaningfully distinguish between communication education and instructional communication.

Within the PRACTICE area, COMM 182P emphasizes the skills you will need to be an effective communicator in the classroom. Specifically, it introduces students to the principles of oral communication effectiveness including lesson planning, communication clarity, classroom management, listening skills, and classroom communication ethics. In addition, this course provides an opportunity for you to put these theories, principles and skills into practice through individual and group teaching exercises, analysis of classroom communication and discussion of complex and challenging readings on communication in classroom contexts.

Put another way: Have you really ever thought about what creates a successful classroom? If we were to recite a list, we'd probably note the teacher's charisma, the subject matter, or even the amount of money a school receives in support... However, all of these things are mediated by communication. Regardless of what you'd like to teach or learn, effective communication skills are essential for your success.

In this course, we will explore two areas of communication study. The first, instructional communication, addresses how to make learning-related communication more effective for more people. Instructional communication researchers are interested in exploring how communication functions in a wide variety of educational situations—i.e., the classroom (whether it's a lecture course or a discussion seminar), the one-to-one conference (like an appointment at the Communication Center or Writing Center), or even the business training workshop. The second area of study we will explore is communication education, or the study of how best to teach the subject matter of communication; researchers in this area work toward making communication activities and courses, in particular, more meaningful and more effective.

Communication researchers who study education are interested in exploring a diverse array of questions (note how these are the same sorts of questions you might ask yourself as a teacher or student):

- How can teachers motivate students to learn?
- How can a teacher develop a positive, welcoming, instructive classroom environment?
- How can teachers best respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse (in terms of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, linguistic background, age, ability, economic class, etc.) student body?
- How can effective communication skills make different teaching methods (like lectures or collaborative learning) work better?
- Are there “best practices” in the teaching communication? What makes teaching communication distinct from teaching, say, history or mathematics?
- What role do the media play in shaping teachers’ and students’ attitudes toward the classroom?
- How might effective communication skills training and conflict management programs help stop racism, sexism, homophobia or other forms of violence?

And these questions are only the tip of the iceberg—you can, no doubt, think of your own questions, challenges, and fears with respect to teaching and learning. COMM 182P, *Communication in the Classroom*, is a semester-long exploration of how communication skills can create success or failure for the classroom teacher (and her or his students).

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**1. Participation (100 points).** For this class to succeed, we must work together to create a supportive and engaging classroom community. In other words, each of us must be prepared, on-time and attentive in classroom activities, whether lectures, small group discussions, or focused freewritings. Your participation grade in this course will be based on: your considered and critical contributions to class discussion, your effective use of in-class group work time, and your submitted in-class formal and informal engagements (i.e., take-home questions, in-class writings, etc.).

**2. Classroom Communication Analysis Paper (100 points).** You will submit an appropriately documented, carefully proofread (approximately 10 pp.) analysis paper that addresses the following:

- Please arrange to observe an instructional activity (i.e., a classroom meeting, a one-to-one tutoring session, a teacher-training workshop, etc.). Please ask for permission from the participants; remind them that you will keep their identities anonymous if they’d like. While you’re observing, be sure to take notes about the communication that is on-going in this instructional setting—i.e., where do you see concepts from our reading/discussions?
- Be sure to arrange an interview with the instructor/facilitator: How long has s/he been teaching? What made her/him want to be a teacher? What does s/he expect from the

day's lesson (or, how does s/he think the day's lesson went?)? What does s/he like best about teaching? What are her/his greatest concerns about teaching? What does s/he think the communication needs of her/his students are? (Take time to consider the other sorts of questions you might like to ask. Do your best to understand the context of this classroom.)

Then write an analysis of your interview & observation, thoroughly exploring at least five different concepts from the reading. Some potentially fruitful concepts include: teacher immediacy behaviors, the characteristics of a competent communicator, classroom communication climate, the characteristics of effective feedback, stages of relationship development, self-concept, self-disclosure, communication style, credibility, teacher expectancies, appreciative listening, informative listening, therapeutic listening, empathy, various distractions, strategies to improve effective listening, perception, general semantics, types of nonverbal communication—in other words, you have a lot of latitude!

Please note: Your essay will be more meaningful as an analysis if you organize it in light of an argument you wish to make about communication in the classroom—i.e., offer your readers a thesis, support your thesis with your analysis in light of the five concepts, etc. Please attach your observational notes (they need not be tidy!) and instructor/facilitator contact information to your analysis.

**3. Microteachings (2 at 50 points each).** This semester, you will prepare and teach **two** brief lessons.

**(A)** For this assignment, please prepare a 5-minute communication-related lesson. As you attempt to teach us this concept, event, experience, skill or process, try your best to engage us. This is to say that you should try to do whatever you can (subject to good sense and local/state/federal law) to motivate us to pay attention to you, to keep our attention throughout your lesson, and to help us retain or remember what you've taught us. Demonstrating relevance, i.e., showing us how what you have to teach us is important, is key to this assignment. Moreover, it may also help you to think about: creating contrast, taking a novel or original approach to old material, creating a sense of urgency, repeating the important stuff (I've often heard that repetition is the mother of learning), and organizing your thoughts and actions efficiently and effectively. Keep in mind the various possibilities such as instructional aids (visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, kinesthetic), well-placed questions and discussion, application, and so on... Define your audience as a group of students you're likely to teach someday (e.g., if you hope to be a third grade teacher, develop a lesson that's appropriate for that audience and engage us accordingly).

Please prepare a lesson plan to accompany your presentation, including the following elements: theory, objectives, introduction, procedures, closure, and evaluation (I will distribute a model in class). Keep in mind that the more specific you are, the easier it will be for you to see your results (e.g., "students will learn" or "students will learn to communicate effectively" is not as specific as "students will list the five different ways they can improve their listening skills"). Please also include a bibliography of any sources you use in your preparation.

As with all assignments for this course, you can expect content to matter most. This means that creativity, simplicity, focus and intention play significant roles. Strive for clear organization and sufficient development of your ideas. Remember that in teaching, as with any public presentation, you need to appear credible—i.e., likeable, competent, trustworthy and/or charismatic. You're most welcome to discuss this assignment with your peers or with me—just ask!

**(B)** Please prepare a 5 minute communication-related lesson that exemplifies critical pedagogy. As with the first microteaching assignment, please don't feel as though you must create a self-contained presentation; you might, instead, show us a small portion of a much larger lesson, activity or unit. Your goal is to teach us to engage in some kind of communication behavior that responds to or challenges some form of social injustice. Relevance and audience adaptation remain key in this assignment; your audience must understand the relevance of the lesson, and often that's achieved through engaging and appropriate language, examples, etc. Define your audience as a group of students you're likely to teach someday.

Please also submit a lesson plan that follows the format I distribute in class, attaching to it a brief (1-2 pp.) statement that explains the context and goals of the lesson, as well as how you feel it exemplifies critical pedagogy. While you are not required to cite any sources beyond the course texts, please do cite (in text and in bibliography) any sources you use to help make your case. Submit these documents on the day you present.

**4. Reading Responses (100 points).** You will write 10 reading responses (each one single-spaced page, 12-point font, one inch margins, approximately 400 words) over the course of the semester. Sometimes I will provide you with a specific prompt to address, but often I'll ask you to follow your own avenues of investigation and reflection. However, reading responses shouldn't be book reports, summaries or expressive essays. You should write them from the juncture of these four vectors:

- a. Your intellectual interests, and in particular, the mode of communicative activity that you identify as your area of concentration or focus (in other words, you might think about the connections to your favorite areas of communication study, your interest in becoming a debate coach, etc.);
- b. Your lived experience in and out of the classroom; and
- c. The reading for that week (as well as other readings for this course or readings you've enjoyed in other courses).
- d. Any questions you have in relation to the week's reading or our previous discussions.

#### **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
1	Introductions		
2	Communication in the Classroom Building a Community of Learners	Prentice and Kramer	Reading Response 1

3	What is the purpose of education?	Palmer, Noddings, Fish	Reading Response 2
4	What is communication?	Shepherd, Craig	Reading Response 3
5	What is the role of communication in learning?	UCB Teaching Guide, Cashin, Jones	Reading Response 4
6	How do students and teachers form relationships?	Rawlins, Cayanus	Reading Response 5
7	Microteaching Consultations		Microteaching 1
8			Microteaching 1 Microteaching 1
9	How does power work in the classroom?	Freire, Delpit, McCroskey et al.	Reading Response 6
10	Who is best served by education?	hooks, McIntosh, Nainby and Pea	Reading Response 7
11	What is the value of grading and assessment?	Kohn, Docan-Morgan	Reading Response 8
12	How might teachers and students facilitate social justice?	Wink, Kinchloe	Reading Response 9
13	How do critical approaches to communication pedagogy work?	Fassett and Warren, Hao, DeTurk	Reading Response 10
14			Classroom Communication Analysis Papers Due
15			Microteaching 2 Microteaching 2
16			Microteaching 2 Final Discussion

**Classroom Course Reading (in order of appearance)**

- Prentice, C. M. & Kramer, M. K. (2006). Dialectical tensions in the classroom: Managing tensions through communication. *Southern Communication Journal*, 71, 339-361.
- Palmer, P. J. (2007). A new professional: The aims of education revisited. *Change*. Available: <http://www.changemag.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/November-December%202007/full-new-professional.html>
- Noddings, N. (2011). Schooling for democracy. *Democracy and Education*, 19, 1-6.  
Available:  
[http://home.gwu.edu/~pryder/English11\\_S02/hooks%20confronting%20class.pdf](http://home.gwu.edu/~pryder/English11_S02/hooks%20confronting%20class.pdf)
- Fish, S. (2003). Save the world on your own time. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.  
Available: <http://chronicle.com/article/Save-the-World-on-Your-Own/45335>
- Shepherd, G. J. (2005). Communication as transcendence. In G. J. Shepherd, J. St. John, & T. Striphas (Eds.). *Communication as...: Perspectives on theory* (pp. 22-30). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Craig, R. T. (2005). Communication as practice. In G. J. Shepherd, J. St. John, & T. Striphas (Eds.). *Communication as...: Perspectives on theory* (pp. 38-47). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- U.C. Berkeley Graduate Student Instructor Teaching and Resource Center. (n.d.). Teaching discussion sections. Available: <http://gsi.berkeley.edu/teachingguide/sections/discussion-chapter.pdf>
- Cashin, W. E. (2010). Effective lecturing. Idea Paper #46. Available: [http://www.theideacenter.org/sites/default/files/IDEA\\_Paper\\_46.pdf](http://www.theideacenter.org/sites/default/files/IDEA_Paper_46.pdf)
- Jones, R. G. (2013). Using immediacy to build credibility on the first day of class.  
Available:  
[http://richardgjonesjr.squarespace.com/storage/First\\_Day\\_of\\_Class\\_Resources\\_Blog.pdf](http://richardgjonesjr.squarespace.com/storage/First_Day_of_Class_Resources_Blog.pdf)
- Rawlins, W. K. (2000). Teaching as a mode of friendship. *Communication Theory*, 10, 5-26.
- Cayanus, J. L. (2004). Effective instructional practice: Using teacher self-disclosure as an instructional tool. *Communication Teacher*, 18, 6-9.
- Freire, P. (2003). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed—30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*. New York: Continuum. (Chapter 2, pp. 71-86). Available: [http://www.users.humboldt.edu/jwpowell/edreformFreire\\_pedagogy.pdf](http://www.users.humboldt.edu/jwpowell/edreformFreire_pedagogy.pdf)

- Delpit, L. D. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review*, 58(3), 280-298. Available: <http://faculty.washington.edu/rikitekti/tcxg464sp08/Silenced%20Dialogue%20by%20L%20Delpit.pdf>
- McCroskey, J. C., Richmond, V. P., Plax, T. G., & Kearney, P. (1985). Power in the classroom V: Behavior alteration techniques, communication training and learning. *Communication Education*, 34, 214-226.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge. (Chapter 12, "Confronting Class in the Classroom"). Available: [http://home.gwu.edu/~pryder/English11\\_S02/hooks%20confronting%20class.pdf](http://home.gwu.edu/~pryder/English11_S02/hooks%20confronting%20class.pdf)
- McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in women's studies. Working Paper 189: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women.
- Nainby, K. E. & Pea, J. B. (2003). Immobility in mobility: Narratives of social class, education and paralysis. *Educational Foundations*, 17, 19-36.
- Kohn, A. (1994). Grading: The issue is not how but why. *Educational Leadership*. Available: <http://www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/grading.htm>
- Docan-Morgan, T. (2007). Writing and communicating instructional objectives. In L. W. Hugenberg, S. Morreale, D. W. Worley, B. Hugenberg, & D. A. Worley (Eds.), *Basic communication course best practices: A training manual for instructors* (pp. 25-41). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.
- Wink, J. (2004). History helps: Three perspectives (Excerpt). *Critical pedagogy: Notes from the real world* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon. Available: [http://www.joanwink.com/cp3/cp3\\_pgs72-79.pdf](http://www.joanwink.com/cp3/cp3_pgs72-79.pdf)
- Kinchloe, J. L. (2008). *Critical pedagogy primer* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). New York: Peter Lang. (Chapters 1 and 2). Available: <http://pedsub.files.wordpress.com/2010/10/kincheloe-crit-ped-primer.pdf>
- Fassett, D. L. & Warren, J. T. (2007). *Critical communication pedagogy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. (chapter 2, pp. 37-60).
- Hao, R. N. (2011). Rethinking critical pedagogy: Implications on silence and silent bodies. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 31, 267-284.
- DeTurk, S. (2011). Allies in action: The communicative experiences of people who challenge social injustice on behalf of others. *Communication Quarterly*, 59, 569-590.