

Gender, Language and Communication COMM 281

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Class meets: MWF 10:25-11:15AM Corboy, L09
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Office Hours : W 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Course Overview

This course studies the relationship between gender, language and communication, and places that study at the service of others. Our course argues that the ways we see and understand gender are intimately connected to how we speak about gender; and in turn, how we understand gender influences how we perform and practice communication. Conversely, we learn to “practice gender” by means of communication and language, so that gender is not just something we are, but also something we perform and something we “talk ourselves into being.” Gender is also intimately related to other dimensions of identity such as ethnicity and class. We will study these crucial issues and put our newly gained understanding at the service of an organization that strives to make a difference in the lives of a community (e.g., GLBTQI community; refugees; the elderly; survivors of domestic violence; black male youth at risk, etc.)

This course emphasizes personal reflection and critical thinking, expressed in careful observation, description, and analysis of daily life, and of the cultural and ethical patterns that constitute our lived, social world. The course also highlights the importance of creative thinking, and of dialogue and open discussion of ideas. We learn to think critically and in innovative ways by playing with unexpected options, by questioning received ideas and by listening with an open and unprejudiced attitude.



Olympic gold medallist Stella Walsh was *intersex* (she had male and female biological characteristics)

Required Text

- DeFrancisco, Victoria Pruin; Palczewski, Catherine Helen; & McGeough, Danielle Dick (2013). **Gender in communication: A Critical Introduction**. Third Edition. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications).

Learning outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course should be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between gender, language and communication.
- Demonstrate understanding of the intersectionality of gender, race, class, ethnicity and religion.
- Use accurately key concepts related to the study of gender (e.g., agency, standpoint theory; gender performance; and heteronormativity)
- Apply gained knowledge of gender to concrete social scenarios, performances and practices; for example, those encountered while conducting community service.
- Demonstrate an increased ability to self-reflect on one's gender practices; as well as expectations and assumptions about gender.

Course Requirements:

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Reflection paper | 20 |
| Final paper | 30 |
| Exam | 20 |
| Presentation | 15 |
| Participation | 15 |
| <hr/> | |
| Total: | 100 |

1. 25 documented hours of engaged learning through service in organizations that contribute to social justice. This is a **requisite for the final paper and it is graded in conjunction with that paper.**
2. Two papers which relate service to gender, intersectionality and communication (50%)
3. Exam (20%). This will be take home and it can be done alone or with someone else.
4. Group presentation (15%). A chapter presentation on one of the different institutions affected by gender (family, school, work, church, and media). If you would rather not present, there is an option to write on an institution of your choosing, rather than presenting about it in class.
5. Participation. (15%)

This will be evaluated based on your overall course performance on the following aspects of participation: Oral, written and electronic contributions; group discussions and cooperation with classmates; and quality of response to assigned readings. The breakdown of participation is as follows:

- a. Attendance. Participating in class requires you to be in class. Absence from class means zero participation for that session. Absence from three weeks of classes will result in a maximum grade of C for participation. More than four missed weeks means an F in participation and may result in an F in the course.
- b. Short assignments. These will be written responses done in class or wikis or blogs submitted in Sakai. They include chapter activities from the textbook.
- c. Oral participation. This includes volunteering to answer instructor's questions; proposing questions of your own; making observations; offering critiques, challenging class content; bringing to class artifacts or materials that can help with class content, and giving the instructor feedback that can be useful to the class.
- d. Electronic participation: We will use Sakai to discuss class content, and do short assignments.
- e. Cooperation with classmates. Helping as secretary, time-keeper, and spokesperson in small groups; being adequately prepared to discuss readings; helping others with their projects; listening carefully to others' ideas; fully engaging those with whom you disagree (or agree), and doing so with respect and honesty.
- f. Ethical comportment. Be honest, respectful of self and others, and as assertive as you can when defending your perspectives. Always cite your references, and acknowledge those who have influenced you. Be aware of your needs and those of others in the classroom. Failure to act in an ethical manner (e.g., respecting disagreement) will affect the participation grade. Please see below the School of Communication policy on academic integrity.
- g. Academic progress. Learning is a process and this class acknowledges this. You may start a little shaky and improve your performance in the course of class, or be steadily good throughout. This element of "progress" will be taken in consideration when I assign the final participation grade and recognize your effort to improve academically. It follows that **not turning** in an assignment or being late is a really bad idea!!!

Grading Scale

| | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| A = 100-93 | A- = 92-90 | B+ = 89-86 | B = 85-82 | B- = 81-80 |
| C+ = 79-76 | C = 75-72 | C- = 71-70 | D+ = 69-66 | D = 65-60 |

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

This schedule will be modified according to the specific needs and pace of the Class. Handouts will be provided during the semester to specify any necessary updates and extended information on the schedule, as well as assignments and guidelines.

Please have reading done by assigned date.

FOUNDATIONS

Week1 8/27-29; 31 Introduction.
 Developing a critical gender/sex lens. DeFrancisco & Palczewski (D&P) Ch. 1
Please prepare resume or list of qualifications for job fair.

W.2 9/3 **Labor day: No classes**
 [9/5: Last day to withdraw without a W grade]



9/5-7 Approaches to Gender/Sex **(D&P , Ch. 1)**

9/7 Job, Internship, and Service Fair: 1-4 PM, Damen Student Center.

<http://www.luc.edu/career/careerfairsandevents/>

It is mandatory that you attend. Please bring your resume, and treat this as a job interview. Dress the part!

W.3 9/10-12-14 **(D&P, Chs. 1, 2)**

W.4 9/17-19-21 Gendered/sexed voices. **(D& P Ch. 2)**

W.5 9/24-26-28 Gendered/sexed bodies. **(D&P, Ch3)**

W.6 10/1-3-5 Gendered/sexed language **(D&P, Ch. 4)**
10/6 Reflection Paper due



W.7 10/8-9 **Mid-semester break**
 [10/9: Last day to withdraw with a 100% bursar credit]

10/10-12 **(D&P, Ch. 4)**
Mid-semester evaluation of participation

W.8 10/15-17-19 **Ch. 5**
10/20 Exam due

W. 9 10/22-24 **Ch. 5**
 10/26 Gender in social institutions. **Ch.6**

INSTITUTIONS: Presentations Start (Ws 10-13)

W. 10 10/29-31 Gender in social institutions. **CH.6**
 11/2 **Work (Ch. 9)**

W.11 11/5-7 Family (**D&P, Ch. 7**)
 11/9 Education (**D&P, Ch. 8**)

W. 12 11/12 Education Ch. 8
 11/ 14-16 Religion (**D&P, Ch. 10**)

W. 13 11/19 Media (**D& P, Ch. 11**)
 11/21-23 **Thanksgiving break**

W. 14 11/26 Media Ch. 11
 11/ 28 Finishing Up Paper
11/30

12/1: Final Paper due

W. 15 12/3-5-7 Through a critical lens D&P, Ch. 12
Discussion of final papers

W. 16 (12/13) **1:00 p.m.- 3:00 p.m**
 Final exam meeting time. Final Participation Evaluation
Discussion of final papers continues.



Laverne Cox is a transgender activist and an Actress In Netflix's *Orange is the New Black*

A General Guide to Grading

You can know that you are doing:

A/A- work when: Paper shows excellence in both content and form. It is well organized, well argued, and well written. Thesis statement and arguments are consistent, insightful, creative, intelligent, and serious. Paper does contribute in a cogent and original manner to our understanding of the chosen topic.

B/B+ work when: Paper goes beyond the basics and approaches the qualities of an exemplary high grade paper. It is clearly written and deals seriously with issues and ideas. Typically, this is a good paper that falls short in some aspect(s) of the writing task, such as elaborating conclusions, justifying choices, or fully explaining claims. The B paper is above average without being outstanding.

C/C+ work when: Paper contributes original ideas and honest reflection to the discussion at hand. It has shortcomings both in form and content, and might have been too sketchy and superficial in discussing the topic. The C paper is satisfactory and attempts to address the chosen topic.

D work when: A paper is poorly done, both in form and content. This is a paper that only accomplishes the minimum required and that disregards the instructor's advice and directions. It shows serious problems both in writing style and exposition of ideas. Typical problems include:

- a) being written in a language only loosely related to formal English;
- b) careless use of words and expressions;
- c) lacking a clear and effective form of organizing ideas;
- d) contradicting its own ideas or claims;
- e) using incomplete and disconnected sentences and/or paragraphs.

F work when: Paper was not submitted in the due date and/or falls below the minimum requirements of college-level work. It disregards directions given, is incoherent, and shows negligence and carelessness.



Thomas Beatie has been pregnant three times. Born a woman and a lesbian, he changed sex and gender to be able to marry his girlfriend.

Policies and Basic Courtesy

- No discrimination on the basis of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or physical and learning disabilities will be tolerated in the classroom.
- Students and instructor are expected to fully respect the views, backgrounds, and experiences of all class members. This respect is not expressed by silence or indifference, but by engaged dialogue.
- Attendance in this class **is not optional**, and will count towards your final participation grade. Missing more than **three weeks** (without a documented, written excuse) will automatically drop the final participation grade to a C maximum. Missing **four weeks** or more of classes will automatically drop the participation grade to F. Exceptions will be made for documented, valid excuses (personal accidents, death in the family, severe illness, athletic commitments).
- If you are late to class or absent and miss announcements, it is your responsibility to get the information from a classmate.
- You are expected to actively engage in class discussions and to study all assigned readings, whether they are discussed in lectures or not. **No late assignments will be accepted** (without a valid, written excuse). Take the necessary measures to hand in all assignments on time.
- All written assignments submitted for credit **must be typed and proof-read meticulously**. Errors in grammar, spelling and organization will cost you points.
- Papers sent via email will not be graded. **Always submit a hard copy of all papers**. You will be asked to submit an electronic copy for your records and mine, but this does not replace the hard copy I will need to grade your work.
- Papers and course assignments will not be graded based on students' ability to *imitate* the instructor's views or the textbook's. They will be graded based on understanding and appropriation of course material. That is, on your ability to use, evaluate, and integrate concepts learned in class.
- University standards regarding academic integrity, examinations and grading will be

observed in this course. **Plagiarism in academic work or dishonest examination behavior will result in an "F" grade** for the assignment or for the course, and might carry further sanctions (see the Loyola Undergraduate Studies Catalogue and the back of this syllabus). Avoid any behavior that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academic dishonesty (e.g., failing to credit a source, or using somebody else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours).

- Do not hesitate to ask for clarifications at any time during lectures. Questions and comments are not interruptions but fundamental components of learning!
- Electronic devices can be used in the classroom for as long as you are using them to enhance your participation and comprehension in class. Please do not check email, use chat programs or browse the Web during class, unless you want to look something up that is related to the class. Doing so will have a very negative impact on your participation grade.
- If you must eat during class, please consume something that you can eat quietly—no crunching wrappers, noisy chewing, etc.
- Do not get up and leave class while it is in session except in the most urgent situation (e.g. childbirth, heart attack, alien abduction).
- If you arrive late, please come in quietly. If you have a compelling reason to leave class early, please sit by the door and notify me before class starts.
- If you have questions about assignments, etc., it is best to speak with me after class or during an office appointment. When class is about to begin, I will likely be focused on what we will be doing for that session.

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources

Gender Identity

- Female/Woman/Girl
- Male/Man/Boy
- Other Gender(s)

Gender Expression

- Feminine
- Masculine
- Other

Sex Assigned at Birth

- Female
- Male
- Other/Intersex

Physically Attracted to

- Women
- Men
- Other Gender(s)

Emotionally Attracted to

- Women
- Men
- Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

School of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity
Please Read Carefully in its Entirety

- A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.
- Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:
 - Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
 - Providing information to another student during an examination;
 - Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
 - Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
 - Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
 - Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
 - Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or
 - Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the

following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at <http://luc.edu/english/writing.shtml#source> .

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty, and will be subject to sanctions described below. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The office of the Dean of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans. Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml .

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

The School of Communication policy is consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy of the College of Arts & Sciences.