

## Syllabus: COMM F351 / WMS F351 - FE1

### Gender and Communication

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Fall 2009

Thursday: 5:30 - 8:30 pm - GR 402

Instructor: Dr. Jean Richey

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Office/Conference Hours: 503-B Gruening Bldg. Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday 3-4:45 pm

Call or email me if you need an appointment outside my office hours

**Required Texts:** DeFrancisco, V. P., & Palczewski, C. H. (2007). *Communicating gender diversity: A critical approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Additional Resources:** Course Syllabus \* & other course materials

are posted on the course website on Blackboard as PDF documents

\* Any revisions to the course syllabus will be updated and posted on Blackboard

### Course Description

This course examines gender and communication using a critical approach. To understand gender well is to study gendered lives in the context of other diverse social influences such as race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and national origin. Our construction of understanding regarding our own gender identity and the gender identity of others is constituted in communication within a sociocultural framework. A gender diversity perspective frames the study of power differentials, gender embodiment, femininity and masculinity, gender performance, gender violence, and gender emancipation.

**IMPORTANT:** This course places an emphasis upon individual/group interaction, class discussion, and productivity both in the classroom as well as on Blackboard. The use of Microsoft Word is recommended for writing assignments. If you use a different word processing program, please save your work as Microsoft Word compatible or as "text only" when attaching as a document on email. Instructor messages to students and course resources will be available on Blackboard on an ongoing basis throughout the semester.

**NOTE:** COMM F351 requires a substantial amount of time outside of the weekly class hours.

We will use our class time for class discussion of assigned weekly chapters and related material.

You are expected to be prepared for and participate in weekly discussions of course material.



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COMM F351/ WMS F351- Gender & Communication Syllabus

Fall 2009

Revised as of 7/20/2009

## COMM F351 Course Syllabus & Policies

Content: Course Description (see cover page), Course Materials, Grades, Course Policies, and Schedule of Assignments.

### Course Materials

#### *Required textbook*

DeFrancisco, V. P., & Palczewski, C. H. (2007). *Communicating gender diversity: A critical approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN # 978-1-4129-2559-4

### Supplemental Reading

Required additional course reading includes assigned journal articles and other resources relevant to the chapter material from the text (posted on Blackboard as PDF documents). Please peruse our course website on Blackboard for course supplemental readings and supporting course documents.

### Grades

Grading criteria will be based on a total of 600 points (see course schedule for details).

#### *Evaluation Items:*

Class Discussion/Participation	100	
Discussion Board (based on reading)	200	(5 @ 40 pts each) – graded on content & written presentation. The expectation for this assignment is a <u>well-constructed, academically-oriented paragraph</u> . A paragraph is more than one or two sentences. There must be a topic sentence with support material to substantiate your ideas. Personal opinion only without any support and/or discussion based upon course reading will earn only 20 out of 40 points possible. Also, when you paraphrase and/or use quotes from our readings as support, please cite the source and page number. A=36-40; B=32-35; C=28-31; D=24-27
Chapter Quizzes (open-book)	100	(4 @ 25 pts each) – will be posted on the quiz function on our course website.
Gender Self-Identity Collage	50	(based on course text and readings) – complete assignment will be provided in class.
Film Discussion Leader	50	(leading a group discussion) – entire class will view (outside of class) selected films representing specific course concepts of gender and communication.
Gender Communication Research Paper/ Oral Presentation (10-min.)	100	(6 to 8 page research paper on a gender topic relevant to course learning) – instructor approval required for topic; An explanation of assignment will be provided in class.

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TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE 600

### Final Grade

90 – 100%	A (540–600)	60 – 69 %	D (360–419)
80 – 89 %	B (480–539)	00 – 59 %	F (0–359)
70 – 79 %	C (420–479)		

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## COMM F351 - Statement of Course Policies

The purpose of this course is to provide the student with an understanding of current concepts of gender and communication as seen through a critical lens. Gender roles are shaped in our lives over time by social values and cultural influences. The more we know about these sociocultural processes, the better we are able to apply critical thinking toward understanding our own constructions of self as a woman or as a man. A critical lens applied to gender not only renders power and status social practices as suspect, but leads us toward liberation from the bind of gendered expectations. Communication is central to knowledge construction, thus is a key to enlightened, empowered gender understandings.

Students are expected to read the text before class discussion or lecture regarding the concepts contained within the chapters. As a result, students will be better prepared to apply critical thinking toward discussion of course concepts. Your Schedule of Assignments will be your guide to assignments each week. You are responsible for those assignments. If there are changes in the schedule, I will notify you on our course website on Blackboard. Keep current with the flow of the course each week. If you anticipate difficulties in your schedule, we will work it out AHEAD of time (exception: valid emergencies).

NOTE: I am much more flexible working out any problems you may have as long as you inform me as soon as you know you may need personal accommodation from the stated course schedule ☺ - I encourage you to co-construct a supportive instructor-student relationship with me early in the semester. Just a warning—snooze and you'll lose participation points from unexcused absences. An excused absence will not cause any points to be deducted). I expect you to be present for every class session in order to be part of the organizational communication process we call *class*.

### *Academic Honesty:*

University of Alaska Fairbanks student policies are in effect. Academic honesty is required of all members of a learning community. Hence, the University will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism on tests, in speeches, papers, or other course assignments. Students who engage in such dishonesty may be given failing grades or expelled from the University. *Plagiarism* is the appropriation or imitation of the language or ideas of another person and presenting them as one's original work. This sometimes occurs through carelessness or ignorance. If you are uncertain about proper documentation of sources or citation, please talk to me or e-mail me. If you quote or paraphrase someone else's ideas, opinions, theories, evidence, or research you must give the source credit. This includes direct quotes, paraphrased information, facts, and statistics gathered from any other source than your own original research. In the formal paper and/or presentation this means you must place a reference or citation at the end of your written work AND a verbal reference in your presentation. (Example: According to . . . " . . . " OR DeFrancisco and Palczewski (2007) discuss the notion of " . . . " as a central component of gender communication). Ignorance is NOT an excuse. The above information on plagiarism has been paraphrased from *A Speaker's Guidebook: Text and Reference*, published in 2001 by O'Hair, Stewart, & Rubenstein.

### *Use of Personal Technology in the Classroom:*

The use of personal mobile (cell) phones, Blackberries, iPods, Palm Pilots, digital cameras and/or camcorders, audio-recorders, laptop computers, DVD and/or CD players, radios, or mini-TVs is not permitted in this classroom (which is considered a professional classroom learning environment). EXCEPTION: If the use of technology is needed for a classroom assignment and/or presentation. If you need accommodation for one of these devices to be used in the classroom on a regular basis, please discuss your situation with me after our first class session. There are two main reasons for this approach to classroom learning in regard to a student's use of technology within the classroom environment: (1) the potential for annoying disruption to other students and to the instructor and (2) a student is required to have focused attention toward course material in each class session rather than divided or distracted attention.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

### *Attendance Requirements:*

This class runs on a tight schedule, thus a firm attendance policy is in place. Attendance will be taken during each weekly class session. Points may be deducted from the total points for assessing grades for “unexcused” absences only (and at the instructor’s discretion). Required assignments are due on the assigned due date. If you cannot meet a requirement because of military or any other documented outside obligation, please talk to me about your needs. If any serious health problems or duty assignments conflict with the class schedule, inform me as early as possible. The attendance policy of the Department of Communication stipulates that four 90-minute absences will lower your overall grade in the class by one grade level. I have adapted this rule to refer only to unexcused absences.

Attend class regularly. All students are expected to attend every class including the final day posted on our course schedule. Attendance and class participation are both graded elements of this course. However, there are circumstances for which an absence is unavoidable such as illness or family emergency. I must be notified of an absence before or on the day it occurs either through a phone message or via e-mail (I prefer e-mail). I check my e-mail in the morning and in the early evening and will respond to your questions and comments within a reasonable amount of time. Ten points will be deducted per unexcused absence. (Note: develop a rapport with me early in the semester—your smiling, interested face along with interpersonal skills can improve any seemingly difficult personal problem you may have with your work and progress in this course).

This class is based on theory requiring student effort in reading course materials on time for class participation. A significant part of your learning will come from the readings, in-class activities, online discussion postings, and your semester project. You are responsible for the in-class discussions and quizzes (which cannot be made-up after the due date – if you need to make other arrangements from the stated due dates for assignments, let me know in advance). Your presence in class is an essential component of your success and earned grade in this course.

## ETHICAL STANDARDS:

Courtesy and respect for others is an expected norm in COMM F351. Please refer to the “Credo for Ethical Communication of the National Communication Association (Appendix A). The use of the American Psychological Association (APA) approved guidelines for ethical behavior regarding the use of respectful language when interacting with others in class and in reference to gender, age, ableness, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, or other cultural factors are expected from each student and the instructor. Writing and speaking guidelines are available in the APA Manual, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (a handout is posted on our class website).

## CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS:

**Academic Misconduct** - Anyone found cheating on an assignment will receive a zero for that assignment. Anyone found to have used someone else's work without crediting that person (plagiarizing) will receive an "F" for the course and will face further actions at the discretion of the University. When in doubt, always identify your sources. The Department policy is the same as the UAF academic honor code (see your registration schedule booklet or your catalog).

**Appropriate Presentations** - Bias-sensitive language is expected both in speaking assignments and in written work. The use of profanity is inappropriate for classroom discussion and/or public presentation and will not be tolerated (central concepts regarding diversity are part of the course content). See APA guidelines for ethical communication posted on our course website.

**Assignments** - Out of class assignments must be typed and proofread. Handwritten assignments will not be accepted. Please submit your written assignments in Microsoft Word or save as a "text only" file if you intend to submit your work via email attachment.

**Student support & Special Consideration** – All students are eligible to use the services at the Student Health Center and are encouraged to go (and get documentation if necessary). Students with special needs or concerns need to contact Student Support Services (474-6844) for documentation to present to instructor. The Office of Disability Services (474-7043) provides accommodations to students with disabilities. Any student requiring special accommodation for learning or physical disabilities or situational difficulties that might affect class performance should provide documentation from the aforementioned university services and discuss the situation with me as soon as possible after our first class or make an appointment to talk to me outside of class. The University's policies for students with disabilities are a guideline for student accommodation in this course. Please feel free to discuss your needs with me at any time during the semester.

#### **GRADING:**

The assumption is that everyone in class begins at an "average" level of expertise. Higher grades are the result of a clear demonstration of a student's work and preparation for class discussion. The assigning of letter grades is as follows:

- A Highly superior performance; excellent in every significant way (90-100%)
- B Truly Superior; well above generally acceptable work or performance (80-89%)
- C Good. solid, generally acceptable work or performance; exceeding minimum standards (70-79%)
- D Minimally acceptable; barely meets acceptable standards (60-69%)

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**Men of quality  
are not threatened  
by women's equality.**

**I'll be  
post-feminist  
in the  
post-patriarchy**

## Additional Information about Course Assignments

1. **On-line Discussion Question Responses:** ½ page analytical written response to 5 different sets of questions posed about the course readings and films and at least one reaction in response to a classmate's response per each of the 5 assigned discussions (response to classmate is counted in the participation points for the course) for a total of 10 separate submissions posted on Discussion Board.
2. **Quizzes:** All multiple-choice, open book reading quizzes will be posted on our course website on Blackboard.
3. **Gender Identity Collage:** This is a creative self-reflection exercise which may be constructed as a poster or as an electronic document with images, etc. The research question to explore is "what is my gender role and/or my gender identity in my everyday life?" The Who, What, Where, Why, When process may help you explore this idea. An explanation of the full assignment will be provided in class. This assignment includes a short, informal, in-class oral presentation describing your gender identity ideas symbolized in the collage.
4. **Film Discussion Leader:** co- facilitation of a discussion regarding a film selected by you and your class partner or team that requires distributing questions in advance of class to all students in class including the instructor (these questions must be posted on Blackboard), and structuring and leading the discussion around theme for the specific class (see weekly topics on schedule). Expectations for this course assignment: demonstration of an understanding of the film, relevant gender concepts and ability to share leadership of a class discussion which actively engages class peers in a lively, academic discussion.
5. **Gender Issue Paper/Presentation:** Interviews and other research exploring a gender communication topic of choice. You may choose to construct this research paper as a controversial gender issue where you explore two sides of a controversial subject on a theme relevant to the course content including your own innovative thoughts about a resolution/suggestion/new paradigm for understanding or solving the conflict which could include: specific communication skills, interviewees responses and an exploration of interviewees lived experience. Complete a 6-8 page research paper. Topics must be selected and approved by week seven.

**Schedule of Assignments: COMM F351 Gender and Communication**  
**University of Alaska Fairbanks Fall 2009**

WEEKLY CONTENT		
Week 1	Thurs.	3-Sep Introduction to Course-Overview of the course texts/related assignments Readings: Course Syllabus & course assignments View film: <i>Tough Guise</i>
Week 2	Thurs.	10-Sep <b>Chapter 1</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Developing a Critical Gender/Sex Lens</i>  1st Response paper DUE, Thursday, 9/17 - post on Blackboard Discussion Board
Week 3	Thurs.	17-Sep <b>Chapter 2</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Alternative Approaches to Understanding Gender/Sex</i> Guest Speaker: TBA
Week 4	Thurs.	24-Sep <b>Chapter 3</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Gendered/Sexed Voices</i> Film Discussion Leader: NICK & ETHAN FILM: <i>Breakfast Club</i>
Week 5	Thurs.	1-Oct <b>Chapter 4</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Gendered/Sexed Bodies</i> Film Discussion Leader: AMY, LIZ, MARISSA FILM: <i>Shallow Hal</i> QUIZ # 1 (ch. 1, 2, & 3) - DUE by Thurs., 10/8 - quiz is posted on Blackboard
Week 6	Thurs.	8-Oct <b>Chapter 5</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Gendered/Sexed Language</i> Film Discussion Leader: FILM:
Week 7	Thurs.	15-Oct <b>Chapter 6</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: An Introduction to Gender in Social Institutions</i> Film Discussion Leader: FILM:
Week 8	Thurs.	22-Oct <b>Chapter 7</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Family</i> Film Discussion Leader: RYAN, DUSTIN, CODY, & TIANA FILM: <i>Miracle</i> QUIZ # 2 (ch. 4, 5, 6) - DUE by Thurs., 10/29 - posted on Blackboard
Week 9	Thurs.	29-Oct <b>Chapter 8</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Education</i> Film Discussion Leader: ALTHEA, ALISSA, BREANNA, & LEANNE FILM: <i>Dangerous Minds</i>
Week 10	Thurs.	5-Nov <b>Chapter 9</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Work</i> Film Discussion Leader: DANIELLE, BECCA, & AMBER FILM: <i>North Country</i>
Week 11	Thurs.	12-Nov <b>Chapter 10</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Religion</i> Guest Speaker: TBA QUIZ # 3 (chaps 7, 8, 9) - DUE by Thurs., 11/19 - posted on Blackboard
Week 12	Thurs.	19-Nov <b>Chapter 11</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: Media</i> Film Discussion Leader: KELLEY & ARON FILM: <i>Anchorman</i> 5th Response paper DUE, Thursday, 12/3 - post on Blackboard Discussion Board
Week 13	Thurs.	26-Nov Thanksgiving Holiday - Thursday, November 27th & Friday, November 28th NO CLASS!!!!
Week 14	Thurs.	3-Dec <b>Chapter 12</b> <i>DeFrancisco &amp; Palczewski: One Last Look Through a Critical Gender Lens</i> QUIZ # 4 (chaps 10, 11) - DUE by Thurs., 12/11 - posted on Blackboard Film Discussion Leader: FILM:
Week 15	Thurs.	10-Dec 1st Day -RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS
FINAL EXAM EVENING, Thursday, 12/17- 8-10 p.m.		
FINALS WEEK	Thurs.	17-Dec 2nd and Final Day -RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS
LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM COURSE - Friday, October 30, 2009		