

CST 460: Cases in Applied Communication—Community and Civil Rights

Fall 2006 3 credit hours

Monday & Wednesday: 3:30 – 4:45 p.m. Curry 204

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Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. and by appointment

Communication Studies Program Mission Statement

We teach students the study of the strategic and ethical uses of communication to build relationships and community.

Course Overview

Community is one of the oldest forms of human association that challenges our ability to balance individual responsibility and collective interest. In the 21st century, many people long for community but find instead an absence of social fulfillment. Community comes to look less like a possibility, and more like an unreachable dream.

In this seminar, we apply communication theory and research to observe how one community, Greensboro, maintains its identity as a site of civil rights struggle and triumph. We examine the history of community formation, and the impact of race, economics, social class, media, and collective memory on its present day status. Greensboro's history is best understood within a broader context of the Southern narratives surrounding other events involving race, law and order, community, and collective memory. Specifically, our research foci will be on:

- The Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the first of its kind in the United States. We examine the report issued in spring 2005 investigating the events of November 3, 1979 when KKK and Nazis opened fire on a Communist Worker Party-sponsored march on the east side of Greensboro.
- A look at the Orangeburg Massacre of 1968, the Wilmington Revolution of 1898, the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921, and the Elaine Race Massacres of 1919.

Among other questions, we will ask, *what hope exists for community amidst spiritual, cultural, and ethnic diversity?* How do communicative practices sustain communal life? What are the ways in which our community is constructed through the lens of civil rights?

This elective course is designed for junior and senior communication majors who have successfully completed most if not all of the core requirements for the major.

Service-Learning

You will be engaged in community service work that focuses on needs assessment, program evaluation, research, policy development, grant writing or advocacy. Most, if not all of you, will have already completed a service-learning course where interaction or direct action with a community partner was the focus of your effort. In this course, we will be exploring more advanced forms of service-learning to develop your leadership potential in community work. You should plan on spending 30- 40 hours in community activities. You will need to record these

hours AND receive a letter from your community partner detailing how your work contributed to the accomplishment of their organizational goals.

Course Objectives

1. Identify **ethical and social responsibilities** of community involvement in an intercultural society.
2. Examine the **strategic uses of communication** by varying special interest and governmental groups to build relationships and community.
3. Assess the agendas of various community stakeholder groups in advancing civil rights in Greensboro through an **analysis of their communication** practices.
4. **Appraise how dialogue, ethics, and justice intersect** in the constitution of community.

Required Books

Arnett, R. C. (1986). *Communication and community*. Southern Illinois University.
Chafe, W. H. (1980). *Civilities and civil rights*. New York: Oxford University.
Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report (2006).

The books we read provide a historical and more current perspective of civil rights in the Greensboro community, focusing on the events leading up to and following February 1, 1960 and November 3, 1979. Additional readings detail events in other Southern cities involving civil rights, race relations and dominant/alternative narratives.

Required Readings on Blackboard

Bass, J. (2003). Documenting the Orangeburg Massacre. *Nieman Reports*, 57: 8-11.
Goble, D. (2001). *Final report of the Oklahoma commission to study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921*. Retrieved from www.tulsareparations.org on July 17, 2006.
Feldman, M.S., Skoldberg, K., Brown, R.N. & Horner, D. (2004). Making sense of stories: A rhetorical approach to narrative analysis. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 14: 147-170.
Hossfeld, L.H. (2005). *Narrative, political unconscious and racial violence in Wilmington, North Carolina*, pp. ix-xv. New York: Rutledge.
Stockley, G. & Whayne, J.M. (2002). Federal troops and the Elaine Massacres: A colloquy. *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, 61: 272-283.
Waller, S. (2005). *A City of Two Tales*, pp. 1-12.

Web Sites You Should View

www.sitinmovement.org, www.sitins.com, www.greensborotrc.org, www.gtcrp.org
www.news-record.org (for blogs and archives)
www.tulsareparations.org
www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/1898-wrrc/report/report.htm

Course Requirements & Grading

Weekly Participation in Discussions, Field Trips, etc.	100 points
Community Meetings & Responses (2)	100 points
Reflection Papers (2)	100 points
Mid Term	200 points

Final Project
Total Possible
Grading Scale

500 points
1,000 points

A=900-1000; B=800-899; C=700-799; D=600-699; F=below 600 (plus and minus are in thirds of these categories).

Weekly Participation

Part of your grade will reflect the degree to which you contribute consistently, actively, and substantively during class. Thoughtful questions and respectful commentary on another's perspective are encouraged to demonstrate excellent participation. We will be taking field trips and hosting many guest speakers during this course that require your attendance. Obviously, you cannot "make up" these experiences. **Attendance Policy:** You will be allowed three *excused* (I am notified in advance) absences only. Four or more absences will result in a lower class grade. For instance, the highest possible grade you can achieve with 4 absences is a B (assuming all your completed assignments are A quality). At five absences, the highest possible grade you can achieve is a C. Each additional absence will lower your final grade another full letter. **You get the idea, better to be in class than absent.**

Community Meetings

While the basis of our instruction will be in the classroom, we are examining practical, current community issues. In order to gain a sense of how people in the community are discussing matters related to civil rights, you will need to attend two meetings outside the classroom focusing on communication and civil rights. I will provide notice of some meetings, and you may find others. After you have attended, write a 3-4 page paper examining the communicative aspects of the meeting, drawing from and citing information from our texts.

Reflection Papers

Periodically, during the semester you will be asked to document your experiences and learning at your service site. Each of these papers will be structured in three parts: observations, analysis of episodes/examples (linking to course readings) and reflections/reactions. These papers are typically 3-4 pages in length.

Mid Term Exam

This will be an examination of your knowledge of facts surrounding history and current day practices concerning civil rights, and the communicative issues embedded therein. You will need to understand the concepts and theories in our readings, as well as the chronology and impact of events in our community's history.

Final Project

Your work in the community will be tied directly to the course readings, moving you to address with accuracy, depth, and breadth the various modes of civic engagement at your site, the goals of the project(s), the means by which people collaborate, and the constraints and opportunities of programs aimed at addressing community issues. You will learn from the inside out how to talk about communication, community, and civil rights, along with related topics (education, economic development, etc.), with confidence. To demonstrate your learning, you'll prepare for

grading the following: Service project plan and timeline; project notebook; oral presentation; evidence of completion of service hours and assessment letter by community partner.

Course Policies and Expectations

1. If at any time you have questions or concern about the course subject matter or assignments, please contact the instructor by phone, during office hours, or through email.
2. Engaging in the rewriting process enables you to polish your content as well as your style. All written work must be computer-generated and checked carefully for spelling and grammatical errors. The Writing Center, 101 McIver Building, 334-3125, is a good resource if you need additional assistance in this area.
3. All students are expected to adhere to the University's Academic Integrity Policy (<http://saf.dept.unch.edu80/studisp/Honor.html>).
4. Late work may be penalized 1/3 of a grade for each day it is late, including weekends (ex: B+ to B if one day late). You are expected to finish your work early enough to combat the troubles of "disk errors," "printing problems" or other technological difficulties (to borrow a colleague's question, aren't these the modern day equivalent of "my dog ate my homework?").
5. Be sure to keep electronic and hard copies of everything you turn in for a grade—this is a good habit to get into that will save you time and trouble.
6. If you have any special needs that require accommodation, please let the instructor know early in the semester so that we may develop a plan to meet your learning needs. If you have a disability, you will need to provide documentation to the Disability Services Office (334-5440).
7. I do not expect that all students will agree with each other, or that you will agree with me. However, I do expect that we will listen to each other and demonstrate respect for ideas and the learning process. Our differing backgrounds offer fertile ground on which to discuss different perspectives about our society.

Course Calendar

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| Week 1
8/14 & 8/16 | Introduction to community as a social and political construction of communication; review of the syllabus; inviting community into the classroom.
<i>Read:</i> Civilities and Civil Rights, Part I
<i>View:</i> Video on Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission |
| Week 2
8/21 & 8/23 | The historical context
<i>Read:</i> Civilities and Civil Rights, Part II
Walking Tour of Greensboro |
| Week 3
8/28 & 8/30 | Dialogue and conflict
<i>Read:</i> Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission Executive Summary (available online at greensborotrc.org).
<i>Guest Speakers:</i> Community activists |
| Week 4
9/6 | Community as interpersonal accomplishment and social demand.
<i>Read:</i> Communication and Community, Part I & II |
| Week 5
9/11 & 9/13 | Survivor Stories (narratives) and Guiding Principles for Truth and Reconciliation
<i>Read:</i> Waller & Feldman et. al—on Blackboard
<i>Read:</i> Final Report, pp. 454-461. |

Service Project Teams Finalized
Guest Speakers: November 3rd survivors

Week 6 Other communities and their conflicts
9/18 & 9/20 *Read: Hossfeld, Bass, Goble, Stockley & Whyne—on Blackboard*

Week 7 Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission
9/25 & 9/27 *Read: Final Report, pp. 9-36 and pp. 394-423.*
Guest Speakers: Truth Commissioners

Week 8 10/2 & 10/4	Midterm & Service Project Plan and Timeline Due
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Week 9 Fall Break & Dialogue
10/11 Communication antidote to community conflict
Read: Communication and Community, Part III
Due: First community meeting analysis

Week 10 Racial and Economic Divides
10/16 & 10/18 *Read: Final Report, Chapters 1-3, pp. 38-105*

Week 11 What Led us to November 3rd?
10/23 & 10/25 *Read: Final Report, Chapters 4-7, pp.107-210*
Due: Service project reflections #1.

Week 12 Institutions of Power Respond
10/30 & 11/1 *Read: Final Report, Chapters 8-10, pp. 212-256.*

Week 13 Legal protection for civil rights, media portrayal and public opinion
11/6 & 11/8 *Read: Final Report, Chapters 10-12, pp. 258-368.*
Guest Speaker: Lewis Pitts, civil trial attorney

Week 14 Greensboro today: Embracing processes for reconciliation
11/13 *Read: Final Report, Chapter 13, pp. 370-392.*
Due: Service project reflections #2.
Guest Panel: Truth Commissioners and/or Staff

Week 15 The Promise of Community Dialogue
11/20 *Read: Final Report, pp. 463-480.*
Due: Second community meeting analysis

Week 16 More on Dialogue
11/27 & 11/29 *Read: A Call to Dialogue booklet by Carol Steger*
Dialogue Workshop

Week 17 Course Wrap Up & Evaluation
12/4 *Read: To be determined.*

FINAL
EXAM Period Monday, December 11, 3:30 – 6:30 p.m.