

## ***CST200: Communication and Society***

Spring 2008, 200-04 (11-12:15 @ Cury 303)

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Office Hrs: T & Th 12:30-1:45 (& by appt.)

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### **Communication Studies Program Mission Statement**

*We research, teach, and practice communication  
to cultivate the ethical voices of people that speak in critical, constructive, and  
transformative ways to identities, relationships, and communities.*

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course directly deals with the departmental mission by exploring communication processes and dialogues by which our relationships and communities are built. We will examine how people, including ourselves, understand and accept each other, work through conflicts, and partner with one another to address social problems in their communities. This course is based on the idea that individuals, collective action, and institutional support *together* provide a model for the most promising opportunities for civic engagement. Thus, throughout the semester, we will grapple with the question, “*How can I, working with other individuals and organizations, help confront social problems and build relationships in my local and global communities?*”

This is a service-learning (SVL) course. UNCG defines Academic Service Learning as:  
a teaching method that links community action and academic study so that each strengthens the other. Students, faculty and community partners collaborate to enable students to address community needs, initiate social change, build effective relationships, enhance academic skills and develop civic literacy. Service Learning encourages critical consideration of the ethical dimensions of community engagement.

Thus, you will volunteer to gain first-hand experience of the role of communication in the local community, while at the same time serving as an active agent for constructive change by meeting the needs of the community.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Name, identify, and analyze the basic principles associated with **community, social capital, social identity, dialogue and theories of social construction.**
2. Express the relationship between *communication* and *society*.
3. Critically analyze a social issue relevant to our community from a communication perspective.
4. Articulate the role of service-learning in higher education based on your experiences working with a community partner.
5. Distinguish the ethical and social responsibilities of civic engagement in the context of public spaces in a diverse society.
6. Utilize written and oral communication strategies (writing, research, and speaking) to coherently, clearly, and thoughtfully present your ideas.

### **TEXTS**

#### **Texts available at UNCG Bookstore**

- Allen, B. J. (2004). *Difference matters: Communicating social identity*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland.
- Loeb, P. R. (1999). *Soul of a citizen: Living with conviction in a cynical time*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin.
- Vogel, J. (2006). *Free speech 101: The Utah Valley uproar over Michael Moore*. Silverton, ID: WindRiver.

## Readings on Blackboard

Several required readings are on blackboard. Print out the readings and bring them to class.

## REQUIRED ONLINE TOOLS

**Blackboard.** We will use Blackboard extensively in this class for a number of purposes including posting announcements, assignments, and grades, and submitting assignments. Visit Blackboard daily, because I make announcements between class periods.

**E-mail Communication.** You must be reachable at your UNCG e-mail address. Please check your e-mail every day.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

*Further information on each assignment will be provided in class as the assignment comes up.*

**Class Participation.** We will engage in many in-class activities (e.g., responses to films, experiential exercises) to enhance our understanding of course material. You must be in class and actively participate in these activities to earn points for the activities. Missed activities may not be made up.

**Questions & Examples.** Every week when we have readings, you will bring a thought-provoking question or an example (e.g., a newspaper story, a personal story, a visual) that pertains to a main point of the assignment reading(s). We will use the questions and examples to facilitate class learning.

**Blackboard discussions.** Every week, you will engage in blackboard discussions on the topics and ideas that emerged from the assigned readings and class discussions.

**Application & reflection.** In mid-semester, you will write a paper in which you apply course learning thus far by reflecting on the ideas we discussed and by connecting the ideas to your service-learning, personal experiences, and your thoughts on your relationships, community, and society.

**Service-learning-related assignments.** The best way to understand the role of civic engagement in our society is to experience one. You will work with a community organization weekly throughout the semester for a total minimum of 20 hours over at least 6 visits to the service-learning site. A list of the organizations is provided in class. SVL-related assignments include:

Service-learning orientation by Office of Leadership and Service-Learning: This is mandatory and part of your course attendance. Attend one of the following: 1) 1/24, 3:30-5, MAPLE ROOM, EUC or 2) 1/25, 12:00-1:30, KIRKLAND, EUC.

Presentation: At the end of the semester, you and others who worked with the same community partner will make a formal group presentation to the class about experience and learning through service-learning. The presentation should include an overview of your work at the site and how your experience at the site illustrates course concepts and your knowledge of these concepts.

Site Visit Log: Each time you visit your SVL site, you will record the time spent and the work you did, and get a signature from your supervisor.

Final Paper: You will write a paper in which you draw connection between course concepts and your service-learning experience as well as reflecting on your overall learning in the course.

## GRADING

Class participation	10%
Questions and examples	10%
Blackboard discussions	20%
Application & reflection	20%
Service-learning presentation	15%
Service-learning site visit log	5%
Final paper	20%

**Grade Scale.** A=90-100%; B=80-89%; C=70-79%; D=60-69%; F=below 60% (plus and minus are in thirds of these categories).

**Grading System.** This course follows the UNCG Grading System (visit [www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/current/AcaRegs/Grading.html](http://www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/current/AcaRegs/Grading.html) for additional information).

- A: EXCELLENT**—indicates achievement of distinction and excellence in several if not all of the following aspects: 1) completeness and accuracy of knowledge; 2) intelligent use of knowledge; 3) independence of work; 4) originality.
- B: GOOD**—indicates general achievement superior to the acceptable standard defined as C. It involves excellence in some aspects of the work, as indicated in the definition of A.
- C: AVERAGE**—indicates the acceptable standard for graduation from UNCG. It involves such quality and quantity of work as may fairly be expected of a student of normal ability who gives to the course a reasonable amount of time, effort, and attention. Such acceptable standards should include the following factors: 1) familiarity with the content of the course; 2) familiarity with the methods of study of the course; 3) full participation in the work of the class; 4) ability to write about the subject in intelligible English.
- D: BELOW AVERAGE**—indicates work which falls below the acceptable standards defined as C but which is of sufficient quality and quantity to be counted in the hours of graduation if balanced by superior work in other courses.
- F: WELL BELOW AVERAGE**—indicates failure that may not be made up except by repeating the course. The performance is characterized by more than one major flaw and an extraordinary amount of minor flaws.

### **COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

**Academic Honor Policy.** Misconduct such as cheating (e.g., using unauthorized information during an exam), fabrication (e.g., inventing and using false data or information), and plagiarism (e.g., presenting someone else's idea as your own or without citation; allowing your work to be used by others without citing you) will result in disciplinary sanction ranging from a failing grade for the assignment to expulsion from the University depending on the seriousness of the misconduct.

You may study with other students, but each of you must write your own paper/answer based on your own insights and understanding of the issue at hand. Two or more papers/answers that share much resemblance will be considered as a case of plagiarism, and the authors will receive zero for the assignment.

Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Honor Policy described in the current Student Handbook. Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Pledge on all major work submitted. For the details of the types of violations, sanctions, and the hearing process, please visit <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity>.

**Attendance and Participation.** Your regular attendance and active participation are imperative to your learning in this course. Here are the definitions of attendance-related concepts I use for this class:

- a. Complete attendance: Come to class on time and pay thoughtful attention to class until the class session is over. No activities unrelated to our class (e.g., text-messaging, surfing on the net, homework). I will ask you to leave the classroom if you engage in irrelevant activities.
- b. Partial attendance (= ½ attendance): Late arrival (arrive after the roll is taken) or early departure (leave before the session is over). It is your responsibility to let me know of your presence if you arrive after the roll is taken.
- c. Excused absence: The absence is due to a university-sanctioned event, a sudden illness, a traffic accident, death in your family, or a jury duty. The absence will be excused after providing legitimate documentation (e.g., doctor's note) and completing any activities that you missed during the class session in question.
- d. Unexcused absence: All other absences not included in the "Excused absence."

You may be excused for two absences without penalty. Use this privilege wisely for doctor's appt. or any other reasons other than the excused absences defined above. After the first two absences (or 4 partial attendances), you will lose 2% from the final grade for every unexcused absence.

Whether your absence is excused or unexcused, you are responsible for catching up with any information and assignments you missed.

As a member of the class, you are expected to demonstrate the following:

- a. Evidence of careful reading of the assigned readings. Bring a well thought-out question or two from the assigned reading(s) to class as part of your participation.
- b. Frequent, thoughtful, respectful and reflexive contributions to class activities.
- c. Listen to all opinions carefully and respond to them as co-equals, not antagonists.

**Communication with the Instructor.** Maintaining timely and consistent communication with me is absolutely CRITICAL to your successful participation in the course. Bring my contact information everywhere you go. Please make an appointment with me if you cannot make it to my office hours. I will be happy to make an arrangement to meet with you at a different time.

**Discrimination and Harassment.** The University policies regarding affirmative action and sexual misconduct are enforced in this class. If you feel discriminated against or harassed by students, faculty, or staff on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, or disability, please contact the office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (334-5099). You can find the details of the policies and procedures at <http://saf/dept.uncg.edu/conduct/>.

**Incomplete Grade.** An incomplete grade is given only when a student has completed most of the assignments successfully and has attended class regularly but was unable to finish the final project or the final exam due to an extreme circumstance such as being hospitalized for an illness or an accident.

**Keeping Track of Your Grades and Progress.** Your grades will be posted on Blackboard so you can keep track of your progress and grades. Come to talk to me within a week after a grade is posted when you have questions about the grade or you need my assistance in improving your future grades. I want everyone to succeed in my course, but I will not know what concerns you have until you initiate a conversation with me.


**Learning Difficulties.** If you have a documented disability or medical condition that may affect your participation in this class, please contact Disability Services, 208 Elliot University Center, 334-5440 (voice & TTY) as soon as possible. During the first week, please bring me a copy of the documentation from the Access Center describing the accommodations that you need in the course.

**Saving Assignments.** Save your assignments in your computer or through other secure means and keep all written assignments that are graded and handed back to you until the final grade is posted. I will keep exams and papers for one semester after you completed my course. You are welcome to come to my office to collect your papers/exams. After a semester, I will discard all remaining exams/papers from the previous semester.

**Submission of Assignments.** All written assignments must use the APA style and must be typed, double-spaced with 1" margins all around. Use 12 font size Times New Roman. Proof-read all papers. A paper that fails to meet these guidelines will automatically receive a one letter grade deduction.

Be mindful of the deadlines indicated in the course calendar. HARD COPIES are required for all paper assignments. No electronic submission is accepted unless otherwise specifically instructed. An assignment that is due outside class should be turned in to the Department office (Ferguson #103) between 8a.m. and 5p.m. or hand it to me BEFORE the due date. DO NOT slide your paper under my office door. A late submission loses 5% after the deadline (the beginning of the class) but on the due date before 5p.m. and 10 % per calendar day including weekends.

## COURSE CALENDAR

*This schedule is tentative and subject to revision by the instructor. Changes are announced in class and on blackboard prior to the dates that are affected by the changes.  indicates readings from a textbook, and **BB** means readings from Blackboard. Have the readings done before you come to class.*

### Week 1


Jan. 15 Course overview: Goals, expectations, and requirements.

Jan. 17 Service-learning: What is it? Why bother? (**BB** Soukup; Artz)

*Homework for the week/end—decide which community partner you wish to work with throughout the semester. Contact them to arrange your first visit.*

### ==== Weeks 2-5: Difference and Communicative/Social Construction of Identity =====

### Week 2


Jan. 22 Communication, difference, and social identity ( Allen, Ch. 1)

Jan. 24 Power matters ( Allen, Ch. 2)

***Mandatory SVL orientation by Office of Leadership and Service-Learning (Attend one)***

- ***January 24, 3:30-5, MAPLE ROOM, EUC***
- ***January 25, 12:00-1:30, KIRKLAND, EUC***

### Week 3

Jan. 29 Gender and sexuality matters ( Allen, Ch. 3 & Ch. 6)


Jan. 31 Race matters ( Allen, Ch. 4)  
**SVL Agreement Form due**


### Week 4

Feb. 5 Race matters (cont.)

Feb. 7 Class matters ( Allen, Ch. 5)


### Week 5

Feb. 12 Ability and age matter ( Allen, Ch. 7 & Ch. 8)

Feb. 14 Differences matter ( Allen, Ch. 9)  
Report of themes from blackboard discussions

### ==== Weeks 6-8: Challenge of Engaging Difference in Community =====

### Week 6

Feb. 19 Community divided: A Utah example ( Vogel, Prologue, Chs. 1-7)

Feb. 21 Community divided (cont.) ( Vogel, Chs. 8-13)

### Week 7

Feb. 26 Community divided (cont.) ( Vogel, Chs. 14-Epilogue)

Feb. 28 Community divided (cont.)  
Report of themes from blackboard discussions

=== **Weeks 8-10: Role of Dialogue in Engaging Difference** ===

Week 8

Mar. 4 Dialogue (**BB** Roy & Oludaja)

Mar. 6 Dialogue (**BB** McNamee & Shotter)

Week 9 Spring break

Week 10

Mar. 18 Dialogue (**BB** Pearce & Pearce)

Mar. 20 *Harriett Elliott Lecture Series –EUC Auditorium*

*Dr. Thomas Nakayama, “Public Deliberation on Race and the Challenges to Transforming Public Life.”*

**Application/Reflection Paper due in class**

=== **Weeks 11-14: Social Capital and Your Role as Change Agent** ===

Week 11

Mar. 25 Social capital (**BB** Putnam; Stengel & Blackman)

Mar. 27 Social capital (**BB** Arneil, Chapter 6: Beyond *Bowling Alone*)

Week 12

Apr. 1 Social capital (**BB** Arneil, Chapter 7: Justice in diverse communities)

Apr. 3 Civil engagement and social change (📖 Loeb, Introduction – Ch. 3)

Week 13

Apr. 8 Civil engagement and social change (cont.) (📖 Loeb, Chs. 6 & 9)

Apr. 10 Social capital, civil engagement, and social change (cont.) (📖 Loeb, Chs. 11 & 12)

Week 14

Apr. 15 Review of the major concepts: Putting the pieces together  
Report of themes from blackboard discussions

Apr. 17 Review of the major concepts: Putting the pieces together (cont.)

=== **Weeks 15-16: Experience of Engaging Difference in Community** ===

Week 15

Apr. 22 **SVL Presentations**

Apr. 24 **SVL Presentations**

Week 16

Apr. 29 **SVL Presentations**

May 1 **SVL Presentations**  
**SVL Site Visit Log due in class**

**Final Paper due to Ferguson #103 by 5p.m., May 6** (No class—Friday schedule)