

**COMM. 5260.01 Oral Communication**  
**Dr. Renee A. Huss, Instructor**  
**Spring I, 2006**  
**Thursdays, Webster Hall, Room 405**  
**E-mail: [reneeannettehuss@aol.com](mailto:reneeannettehuss@aol.com)**  
**Phone: 314-955-5885**

### **Course Description**

This course will focus on the interactive function of teaching, and will include an overview of the elements, characteristics, and principles of oral and interpersonal communications as they apply to the school and classroom setting. Since this course is highly participatory in nature, your attendance is required at every class meeting for the acquisition of new skills.

### **Required Text**

*Communication for Teachers*, by Joseph L. Chesebro and James C. McCroskey, Allyn and Bacon, 2002.

### **Course Requirements**

Students will be required to follow the reading and activity schedule provided in this syllabus, and to complete the items described below.

### **Logs**

Students are asked to keep reaction/response logs, which are to be turned in *at the start of class* according to the reading and activity schedule outlined in this syllabus. These logs should include your personal responses and reactions to what we are doing in class, and to your reading. Logs are not to be merely a re-hashing of what we do in class, or outlines of textbook chapters. Your personal responses and reactions to what you read and do in class are wanted here. Logs will be returned with instructor comments on the following class night. The instructor will share questions and comments from the logs with the class at the opening of the class session. If you write something in your log that you do not want discussed in class, please indicate your preference in your log.

### **Peer Presentation**

Students will be required to prepare a 10- to 15-minute peer presentation on a research question selected by the student and approved by the instructor. Each peer presentation will explore a research question using the following three-part format: *overview of the research question, including main ideas and definition of key words and concepts; critique of information uncovered in the student's research, including a discussion of the operational usefulness of the author's (or authors') ideas to the student's work; and a section on application, in which the student will discuss the applicability of the*

## Peer Presentation, Continued

**research findings to his/her work in the classroom.** Presentations will be graded on their thoroughness, balance, and adherence to the above-described format. Presentations will be given during the last two class sessions. Students will turn in a list of sources used, plus copies of articles used in the presentation. Students will be expected to prepare a **handout** for the entire class to supplement their presentation. **Research questions for peer presentations must be selected by the fourth class meeting and reported in the log due that evening.**

## Reading and Activity Schedule

- Jan. 19** Course overview and administrivia; foundations of effective oral communication in the classroom – support, confrontation and rapport-building skills. Activity: introduction to systems theory in the classroom.
- Jan. 26** Discussion of Section One of our text, *Our Students*. Read chapters 1-5 to prepare for this discussion: *1 – Learning Goals and Objectives; 2 – Student Listening Behavior; 3 – Willingness to Communicate and Communication Apprehension in the Classroom; 4 – Students’ Motives for Communicating with Their Instructors; 5 – Student Nonverbal Communication and Its Influence on Teachers and Teaching*. Activity: neuro-linguistics for teachers. **Log due.**
- Feb. 2** Discussion of Section Two of our text, *Our Teaching Behavior*. Read Chapters 6-12 to prepare for this discussion: *6 – Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy: Uses and Outcomes; 7 – Making Content Relevant to Students; 8 – Teaching Clearly; 9 – Socio-Communicative Style and Orientation in Instruction: Giving Good Communication and Receiving Good Communication; 10 – Use of Humor in the Classroom: The Good, the Bad, and the Not-So-Funny Things That Teachers Say and Do; 11 – Understanding Student Reactions to Teachers Who Misbehave; 12 – Teacher Behavior and Student Motivation*. Activity: parent-child communication as it relates to failure and underachievement in school. **Log due.**
- Feb. 9** Discussion of Section Three of our text, *Special Topics*. Read Chapters 13-16 to prepare for this discussion: *13 – Teacher Communication in the Distance Education Context; 14 – Communicating with Students from Other Cultures; 15 – Communicating with Students of Various Ages; 16 – The Big Picture: ‘Putting it All Together’ to Communicate More Effectively with Students*. Activity: building community in the classroom. **Log due.**
- Feb. 16** **Research questions for peer presentations must be selected and approved by this evening.** Preparation for peer presentations - a preparation booklet will be provided in class for students to use for note taking and the

## Reading and Activity Schedule, Continued

development of their presentations. This preparation booklet will be completed in class. *Log due.*

**Feb. 23** Preparation for peer presentations. During class students will have the opportunity to practice each section of their presentations in small groups and receive feedback from their peers. Students are expected to incorporate this peer feedback into their presentations. Note: students should pay careful attention to time frames when preparing to present. Students will have no more than 15 minutes to complete their presentations. *Log due.*

**March 2** Peer presentations and feedback. *Final log due.*

**March 9** Peer presentations and feedback, closing activities.

## Grading

Grades for this class will be calculated as outlined below:

- Logs – 20%;
- Class attendance and participation in discussions – 40%;
- Peer presentation on research questions – 40%.