

**COMMUNICATION STUDIES 203**  
**COMMUNICATING ACROSS DIFFERENCES**  
*Winter Quarter*  
***Be The Change You Want To See***

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**OFFICE HOURS:** 8:30 – 9:20am daily  
And by appointment

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Privilege, Power, and Difference 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition by Allan G. Johnson  
Difference Matters: Communicating Social Identity by Brenda J. Allen  
Readings and Assignments posted on Blackboard

**ABOUT THE COURSE:** Welcome—I am very excited to be offering CMST 203 this quarter. While this course will ask a lot of you, I hope to facilitate it in a safe, interactive, engaging, and ultimately transformative way. Through personal stories, course documents, theater, discussion and practice you will explore your relationship to social categories like culture, race, class, sexual orientation and gender. The goal is improved understanding of your own identity, privilege and ability to communicate across differences. We will examine these issues in a sensitive, curious, and fearless manner using critical thinking skills.

**CLASSROOM GOALS:**

1. To create an environment of trust and mutual respect so that discussion is not stifled by defensiveness.
2. To recognize that no one in the classroom is under attack or seen as the official representative of a particular group. We speak from our own experiences as a member of a particular group, which may be different from another member of the same group.
3. To treat each other as individuals, not as racial, ethnic, class, or gender categories. No one is a category.
4. To understand that, even with our differences, we share a common trait - our humanity.
5. To realize that the quality of our communication is directly linked to the quality of our lives.

***LEARNING OUTCOMES:***

In order to function effectively in a multicultural society, successful students will be able to:

1. Identify, describe, and examine how the conceptual “multicultural” canon has been developed and restructured in the United States.
2. Recognize and delineate the structural dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression in our systems and institutions.
3. Identify, describe, and analyze your own membership in different social categories and their relationships to issues of power and privilege.
4. Identify and share cultural values through telling of personal stories.
5. Define and list characteristics of culture.
6. Identify and share cultural values through telling of personal stories
7. Identify ways in which culture influence communication.
8. Respond to views expressed by people of other cultures in ways that emphasize understanding rather than judgment.
9. Identify, describe, and analyze individual identity development on scales measuring racial and ethnic identity models.
10. Analyze communication events from the perspectives of cultures and values other than one's own.
11. Identify cultural influences on self-concept, communication styles, nonverbal behavior, gender and role-expectations, intimacy, conflict, and group membership.
12. Identify and dismantle stereotypes.
13. Demonstrate the power of language to shape and reflect perceptions & attitudes.
14. Identify racist and sexist attitudes codified in language.
15. Define ethnorelativism, and ethnocentrism.
16. Avoid ethnocentric evaluation of cultural practices different than one's own
17. Intentionally shift frame of reference.
18. Define perspective-taking.
19. Use perspective-taking to understand viewpoints different from one's own.
20. Compare and contrast the stories of immigrants/refugees and native-born Americans.
21. Define classism.
22. Identify class values.
23. Use this knowledge to build a personal view of our culturally diverse society
24. Identify, describe, and examine the intersections of the "isms" (racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, etc...).
25. Recognize and apply your understanding of how privilege and context influence your communication choices.

### ***COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:***

The work involved in this course consists of:

- ✓ Reading the assigned material, answering the assigned discussion questions (10) & participating (frequent, voluntary, relevant comments that reflect knowledge of readings and classroom goals)
- ✓ Writing 5 journal entries
- ✓ Taking 3 exams
- ✓ Exposing yourself to books, theater, film, and other experiences that challenge you.
- ✓ Critically examining the media you consume.
- ✓ Tracking your relationship to a privileged social category and turning in a portfolio chronicling your journey.

### ***COURSE POINTS:***

5 journal entries @ 10 points each	50 points
10 discussion questions @ 10 points each	100 points
3 exams @ 40 points each	120 points
Exposure Portfolio Assignment	100 points
Misc. Homework/ pop quizzes participation @ 20 points	10 points
	<u>20 points</u>
	400 points

### ***Expectations and Policies:***

Both analytical and experiential skills will be developed in this course and both require self-exploration *in and out* of the classroom. **I EXPECT THAT:**

- \* You be in class both mentally and physically.
- \* You talk with me about potential absences **BEFORE** they happen.
- \* You talk with me about concerns or issues you have with me, a classmate, or the course in general.
- \* All assignments are completed and turned in on time. Any late assignments will lose points per day late depending on the total points of the assignment. Daily, in-class assignments can not be made up. Journals are due at the beginning of class.
- \* Written assignments be proof-read, and your own work (see plagiarism). All papers need to be double-spaced and typed.
- \* You **PARTICIPATE**. This includes the following:
  - Attend class regularly and on time, Ask questions, observe, offer insights, elaborate, disagree, discuss, and actively participate in communication exercises. Do these *appropriately*. We will discuss what that means in class. Actively listen and stay “plugged in” when you are not contributing.
- \* Since the nature of this course creates an atmosphere for the sharing of personal experiences and relationships, I encourage you to use discretion and maintain a high degree of sensitivity and respect. That is, do not repeat things shared in this class to others unless permission is given. 100% of trust and honesty is expected from each student and I will honor that too. **RESPECT--** The operating principle in this classroom will be that of respect; respect for oneself, respect for each other, respect for differing viewpoints, respect for the instructor, and respect for the educational process.

**ATTENDANCE:**

This is a communication class and your presence is required to get a passing grade. Excused absences do not lower your overall grade in this class. Excused absences are those that are both valid and verifiable, i.e. illness, bereavement, and school-related activities. I will ask for verification and I expect that *you will be responsible* for getting any notes/materials that you missed. If an emergency occurs and you cannot notify me in class, leave a message with a number for me to contact you. If I do not hear from you the absence will be considered unexcused. I will deduct points from your final participation grade for every unexcused absence after three unexcused absences. I also reward perfect attendance by raising your final grade by .10 decimal point.

**TARDINESS:**

Tardiness is viewed unfavorably by me and is rude to your classmates. I realize there are unavoidable situations; however, there are some people who are chronically late. This behavior is disruptive and unfair to those who make an effort to be here on time. If your tardiness is chronic you may lose participation points. If you anticipate being tardy on a regular basis please talk to me.

**MAKE-UP EXAM/ POLICY:**

Only in special circumstances will I consider making-up an exam. Please notify me prior to the scheduled exam if you wish to arrange a make-up. The more notice I am given, the more likely you will be able to make it up. The exam must be taken/given within ONE WEEK of the regularly scheduled time.

**PLAGIARISM:**

**HONESTY:** Our communicative conduct has ethical implications. Please tell me the truth and I will do the same for you. Cheating or plagiarism (using the work of another and presenting it as your own) will result in a failing grade for the assignment, and at my discretion it could fail you for the course. This puts you and me both in a painful situation. Taking papers off of the web, taking ideas from papers/speeches, quoting entire sentences and or, using information you gained from books, periodicals, even friends without citing a source (giving credit) is Plagiarism. Be sure to give credit to your sources. If you are unclear how to cite sources or if your information is original—please ask.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Students with disabilities that have accommodation needs are required to meet with Disabled Student Services (206-546-5832) to establish their eligibility for accommodation. Please review your accommodation requirements with me so that I understand and can meet your needs.

**PLEASE TURN OFF ALL TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT BEFORE ENTERING THE CLASSROOM.** Class is not to be interrupted by your cell phone or pager. If your phone rings during class, I will answer it. If you choose to take notes on a laptop that is fine; but if I discover that you are using it to check email, Myspace, Facebook or any other non-class related activity, I reserve the right to ask you not to bring your laptop back to class for the remainder of the quarter.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

A separate handout will be distributed detailing topics, assignments, and important dates.

***“Men hate each other because they fear each other. They fear each other because they don’t know each other. They don’t know each other because they don’t communicate with each other.”***

**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**