Gender and Communication: Practical Skills You Can Use
Developed and Taught by Marianne Neuworth, PhD
Summer, 2015

Course Description and Objectives
Women and men frequently have different expectations when it comes to communicating. In this course we will examine research that sheds light and clarity on how communicating with the opposite gender can be more efficient and effective.

This course expands on basic interpersonal communication concepts, including nonverbal communication, and treats gender as a cultural phenomenon that can be fine-tuned with attention and practice. We will consider contexts such as family, work, and media, and internal dialogues we might have with ourselves. The goal of this course is to assist you in developing greater compassion and insight to yourself and the opposite sex, and to achieve enhanced happiness and contentment in your current relationships.

By the end of this course you will:
- learn how humor can be used to lighten and clarify meaning in interactions
- understand how your own communication can impair or enhance your objectives
- create a welcoming environment for your listeners and conversational partners
- utilize nonverbal communication that diffuses discomfort and increases ease
- recognize gendered leadership behaviors that impede or fortify credibility and respect
- develop your best approach to navigating conflict

Course Activities
Media, books, songs, fairy tales, and first-person experiences will be used and analyzed during the course. There will be ongoing in-class participation and discussion, and we will review research that highlights effective ways to recognize and negotiate differing role expectations, for example, when asking for a raise, negotiating a sale, purchasing the “right” product, and inhabiting a leadership role.

Course Requirements:
Journal Assignment: There will be two short journal assignments, where you record your observations and experiences of “gender moments” when you notice that your gender is a salient aspect of an experience or occurrence.

Short Analysis Paper: You will write a short (3-4 pgs.) paper on a topic related to gender and communication; details will be provided on the second night of class.

Class Presentation: There will be one, short, low-pressure presentation toward the end of the course.
Class Policies
1) You must attend 7 of the 8 classes and complete all of the assignments in order to receive credit for the course.

2) During class, please turn off all beepers, pagers, and cell phones, and please completely refrain from text-messaging – I know this can be challenging, but please consider it a courtesy to me and to those around you.

3) Please do your best to be on time for each class.

COURSE CALENDAR
Summer, 2015
(You should have the following reading/homework assignments completed by the date listed. Note: Due dates, assignments, and topics subject to revision).

Week One
Intro class and selves
Listening lecture and exercises

Week Two
Archetypes and Stereotypes
Communication and Gender Research Review
Gendered “Things”

Week Three
Verbal Communication within Families and Work Places
Deborah Tannen – You Just Don’t Understand video interview

Week Four
Emotions, Identity, and Non-Verbal Communication

Week Five
Leadership and Gender – some surprises

Week Six
Papers Due
Power, Persuasion, and Values – Media

Week Seven
Journals due
Humor and Gender

Week Eight
Final Presentations
Course Wrap-Up