COMG 471: Verbal Communication
“W” Writing Intensive Focus Designated Course
Spring 2015   TTh 1:30-2:45pm  George 215

Instructor:  Jessica Gasiorek
Office:  George Hall 321
Office Hours:  Tuesday 10:30-12:30 & by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the use of language in communication and explores how we use language to regulate our social world. We will start the course by looking at what language is and where the study of it fits in the discipline of Communication. We will then discuss how language can vary, people’s attitudes and ideologies about language, and what the social consequences of using different forms of language can be. Next, we will examine biases in language use (which are often unconscious), and discuss how the language we use can both reflect and shape our cognition. Finally, we will discuss how language can be considered a cooperative activity, how we adjust our communication for others, and how this can go awry. We conclude with a review and discussion of how we use language to regulate our social world.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, you should be able to demonstrate an understanding of:
- The fundamental properties and qualities of language;
- The social meaning and consequences of different types of language use;
- How language and cognition are related;
- How we use language cooperatively;
- How we adjust our language for others;
- How we use language to regulate our social world.

COURSE READINGS AND WEBSITE

The basic reference text for the course is:


Additional readings for each week/topic will be posted on the course website on Laulima (http://laulima.hawaii.edu/). The website will also provide you with the latest announcements, a discussion board, and other course materials. You are expected to regularly check the Laulima website. To log in, use your University of Hawai‘i username and password.
VERBAL COMMUNICATION
COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: Attendance is very important to this class. The materials covered in class will include a significant amount of information that is not in the readings, so you will need to be present in order to get all the material that will be covered on the exams. We will also be having class discussions and activities to which you are expected to contribute, so your attendance is important for both your own and your classmates' learning. If you miss class, you are responsible for any and all material covered, and assignments and announcements given.

Late Work Policy: To pass this class, you must complete all assignments. All assignments should be submitted via Laulima BEFORE class on the days indicated. Assignments turned in after the class meeting will be considered late. For each day an assignment is late, you will lose 5 points. Make-up exams will ONLY be allowed under extraordinary, documented circumstances. The instructor of the course should be notified immediately when such circumstances occur and either an alternative assignment or extension will be provided. If you are participating in a university-affiliated activity, you must make arrangements with the instructor prior to the absence.

Academic Integrity: Any student caught plagiarizing an assignment or cheating on an exam will receive a failing grade on the assignment or exam, and may be subject to further disciplinary action. Using someone else’s information in any way—their words, their ideas, or their explanations—without acknowledging them is considered plagiarism. This includes paraphrasing another person’s ideas without citing the source; copying information from the Internet, other students, or any kind of published material without citing the source; or submitting materials that you have written for another class without the permission of both courses’ instructors.

University of Hawai‘i’s Student Conduct Code covers these and other infractions in greater depth. You are expected to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code, which can be found at http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/policies/conduct_code/.

Email Use: You are responsible for checking your email account frequently and consistently to remain current with University communications. You are expected to monitor and manage your email storage quota to ensure that you are able to receive new messages. Please check your email every day to keep up to date on important correspondence related to this course.

I will respond to your emails within 48 hours. If I do not respond within 48 hours, please email me again—occasionally emails get caught in spam filters. Emails received after 6:00pm the night before an assignment is due may not receive a reply before the assignment needs to be submitted, so plan ahead and ask questions early.

Students with Disabilities: If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you are encouraged to contact the KOKUA Program on campus for information about their services. These services are free and confidential to University of Hawai‘i students. The KOKUA office is located in the Queen Lili’uokalani Center for Student Services Building, Room 013. You can also call the KOKUA office at (808) 956-7511 or email the program at kokua@hawaii.edu. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how the course requirements and activities stated herein may influence your ability to participate fully.

Office Hours: Office hours are a resource for you. Please come by to discuss content from the course, ask questions about the field, or just say hello. If you cannot make the scheduled office hours but would like to talk with me individually, please send an email (gasiorek@hawaii.edu) and we can set up another time to meet.
VERBAL COMMUNICATION
ASSIGNMENTS

Papers: COMG 471 is designed as a “W” Writing Intensive course. This means that this class adheres to the criteria of the Manoa Writing Program:
1. The course uses writing to promote the learning of course materials.
2. The course provides interaction between the professor and students while students do assigned writing.
3. Written assignments contribute significantly to each student’s course grade (at least 40%).
4. Students write at least 4,000 words (about 16 typed pages).
5. The course is limited to 20 students.

You are expected to complete a series of writing assignments for this course to foster your learning of the course materials:

1. **Reading Responses (3000 words):** Course readings are a combination of popular press articles, academic journal articles, and academic book chapters. For these readings, I have created reading guides with a series of questions designed to focus your attention on key points. Each of these assignments will also give you an opportunity to share what you thought of the reading, and connect it to your own experiences (min. 250 words for each reflection). There will be a total of 12 of these across the semester (see course schedule for due dates).

2. **Research Project Write-up (1500 words):** As part of this class, you will conduct a research project in groups of 3-4 students, on a topic related to verbal communication. In this project, you will formulate a research question, collect data, and write up and present the results. There will be several check-in points on this project throughout the semester (for credit), with the final project due during the last week of classes. More information will be provided in class and on Laulima. Although research activities will be conducted as a group, each person in the course must turn in their own write-up for the project.

We will discuss these assignments in class, as well as dedicate class time to discussing key aspects of writing (e.g., outlining, structuring a literature review, writing a discussion section) as they relate to writing a social scientific research paper. Additional readings and resources related to writing will also be posted on the course website.

Final research project write-ups will be graded as follows:
- 30% Mechanics, style, grammar, spelling
- 10% Proper use of APA style/citations
- 20% Organization
- 40% Content (as it relates to the course)

You are required to submit drafts of all parts of your research paper before they are due, and I will give you detailed feedback on these drafts. These drafts will account for 30% of your final grade for the final paper; the remaining 70% will be based on your final version.

**Exams:** There are a total of three (3) exams for this course, including the final exam. Exams will each cover material from approximately 1/3 of the course. Exam questions may be multiple choice, true/false, or short answer.

**Research Participation:** The Department of Communicology uses the SONA system to manage opportunities for research participation. You will need to create an account at http://hawaii-communicology.sona-systems.com to participate in research. You are expected to participate in research projects conducted in the Department for this upper-division course. More information will be provided in class.

**Class Participation:** I expect you to be both physically and mentally present when you are in the classroom. Throughout the course, we will have discussions and activities in class. Your contributions to it are important to both your own learning and your classmates’ learning. Computers may be used for note-taking, but please refrain from being on email, checking Facebook or other social media and/or texting during class. If I see that you are using class time for that rather than for engaging with the material, you may lose class participation credit.
VERBAL COMMUNICATION
COURSE SCHEDULE
The following is a tentative schedule for the course.

Week 1 (January 13 & 15): Introduction
- Introduction to the course, policies, and assignments
- What is verbal communication and why do we study it?
- “Verbal” vs. “nonverbal” communication
- Defining “language”
  Reading: Crystal (2006): How what works; How we use the ‘edges’ of language; How we mean; How we analyse meaning

Week 2 (January 20 & 22): Properties and Qualities of Language
- Terminology for talking about language
- Written vs. spoken language
- Properties of language
  Reading: Crystal (2006): How words work; How we classify words; How sentences work; How writing and speech differ; How the electronic medium differs
  Hartshorne (2011): Where Are the Talking Robots?
  Reading Response #1 due Tuesday 1/20

Week 3 (January 27 & 29): Why (and How) Do We Talk?
- BBC Documentary: Why do we talk?
- Origins of language
- Similarities and differences across different languages
  Reading: Jabr (2014): Speak for Yourself
  Crystal (2006): How language began; How we classify words; How sentences work; How writing and speech differ; How the electronic medium differs
  Reading Response #2 due Thursday 1/29

Week 4 (February 3 & 5): Language Variation and Change
- Dialects and regional variation
- How does language change over time?
- Pidgins and creoles
  Reading: Crystal (2006): How languages are born; How language changes; How we know where someone is from; How to study dialects
  Drager (2012): Pidgin and Hawai`i English
  Reading Response #3 due Thursday 2/5

Week 5 (February 10 & 12): Language Attitudes
- How does the way we speak affect how others judge us?
- Solidarity and status evaluations
  Reading: Garrett (2010): Introduction – Attitudes to Language
  Crystal (2006): How we can’t choose what to say
  Giles & Niedzelski (1998): Italian is beautiful, German is ugly
  Marlow & Giles (2008): Who You Tink You, Talkin Propah?
  Reading Response #4 due Thursday 2/12
Week 6 (February 17 & 19): Language Ideologies
- What does it mean to speak “well”?
- Language criticism
- **Tuesday 2/17: Exam #1**
  Reading: Marlow & Giles (2010): ‘We won’t get ahead speaking like that!’ Expressing and managing language criticism in Hawai‘i.
  Harlow (1998): Some languages are better than others
  Reading Response #5 due Thursday 2/19

Week 7 (February 24 & 26): “Standard” and “Nonstandard” Language
- The “Standard Language” myth
- Purism and prescriptivism
- Slang as nonstandard speech
- Slang and language change
  Reading: Lippi-Green (1997): The standard language myth
  Hudley (2014): Which English you speak has nothing to do with how smart you are
  Reading Response #6 due Thursday 2/26

Week 8 (March 3 & 5): Language and Social Norms; Linguistic Biases
- Taboo words
- Grawlixes
- Biases in language use
- Negation bias
  Reading: Beukeboom (2013): Mechanisms of linguistic bias
  Reading Response #7 due Thursday 3/5

Week 9 (March 10 & 12): Linguistic Biases
- Linguistic category model (LCM)
- Linguistic expectancy bias
- Effects of biased language on cognition
- Language and stereotypes
  Reading Response #8 due Thursday 3/12

Week 10 (March 17 & 19): Linguistic Relativism
- Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and linguistic relativism
- How language reflects and shapes thought
  **Thursday 3/19: Exam #2**
  Reading: Boroditsky (2011): How language shapes thought
  Reading Response #9 due Tuesday 3/17

Week 11 (March 31 & April 2): “Invisible” Aspects of Language
- Function vs. content words
- Function of function words
- Linguistic style matching
  Reading: Chung & Pennebaker (2007): The Psychological Function of Function Words
  Reading Response #10 due Tuesday 3/31
Week 12 (April 7 & 9): Grounding and Perspective-Taking
- Cooperative nature of language
- Grounding
- Perspective-taking and communication
  Reading: Holtgraves (2002): Conversational Perspective-Taking
  Crystal (2006): How we choose what to say
  Reading Response #11 due Tuesday 4/7

Week 13 (April 14 & 16): Communication Adjustment
- How we adapt our communication for others
- Functions of accommodation
- Communication accommodation theory
- Code-switching
  Reading: Dragojevic, Gasiorek, & Giles (in press): Communication Accommodation Theory

Week 14 (April 21 & 23): Communication Adjustment Misfired; Communication Competence
- Overaccommodation and patronizing talk
- Underaccommodation
- Communication competence
  Reading: Giles & Gasiorek (2011): Intergenerational Communication Practices
  Reading Response #12 due Tuesday 4/21

Week 15 (April 28 & 30): Conclusions & Group Project Presentations
- Conclusions: Language regulating our social world
- Group project presentations
  No reading for this week.

Week 16 (May 5): Group Project Presentations
- Group project presentations
  No reading for this week.

Final Exam: Thursday, May 14, 2015 - 12:00-2:00pm
VERBAL COMMUNICATION
COURSE READINGS


VERBAL COMMUNICATION
POINTS BREAKDOWN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignments</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXAMINATION</td>
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<td>Exam 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>WRITING</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Responses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Project Write-Up</td>
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<td>PROJECT PRESENTATION</td>
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<td>RESEARCH PARTICIPATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Points Possible</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>Total Earned</td>
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To calculate your grade at any given point, take the total points earned so far, divide by the total points possible, and multiply the resulting number by 100. This will give you a percentage.

For example, suppose you earned 39/50 on the first exam and 9/10 on the first three reading responses.

3*9 + 39 = 66 out of 80 (= 3*10 + 50) possible points so far. 66 divided by 80 = .825 x 100 = 82.5%.

**Final grades will be assigned on the following basis:**

- A = 92.5-100%; A- = 89.5-92.4%;
- B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%;
- C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-79.5%;
- D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 62.5-66.4%; D- = 59.5-62.4%;
- F < 59.4%