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## SP 501 Communication for Christian Leaders

Joy J. Moore

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**SP501a Communication for Christian Leaders (2hrs)**

Fall 2003 (Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> – Dec 12<sup>th</sup>)  
Tuesdays/Thursdays, 9:30 – 10:45 am  
SH408

Final Exam: December 9<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 am – 11:00 am

— *Posted Version 1909* —

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Office Hours:  
T/Th 1:30-2:30pm  
W 9:30 – 11:30am  
(Or by appointment)

**Course Description**

It is intended that this class provide an underpinning for preaching and teaching ministries of all kinds as an introduction to speech communication and Christian rhetoric. In brief, *Communication For Christian Leaders* aims to provide an introduction to the art of written and spoken communication within a theological framework and for the purpose of Christian ministry. Applying classical, historical, and systematic studies of rhetoric and communication to the life of the church, this class offers the tools that engender a pattern toward ever-increasingly improved communication. Combining theory and practice, this course examines the classical canons of rhetoric and the principles of effective communication in order to acquire practical wisdom for clear, coherent, and persuasive written and oral communication that bears witness to Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God as narrated in Christian Scripture. The focus of this class is on skill development for communication as a Christian leader whose foundational rhetoric is shaped by a conscious integration of theological perspective, scriptural knowledge, and cultural understanding.

**Objectives**

Having completed the course, students will demonstrate ability to:

- Express a basic understanding of the important features of classical rhetoric;
- Determine speech goals that meet a variety of audience needs;
- Develop a strategy for the organization and development of material in a way that is suited to the situation for clear, coherent presentations, and persuasive delivery;
- Recognize and eliminate grammatical errors, misspelling, distractive material and offensive constructions;
- Present an introduction and draw a conclusion that clearly relates the presentation to the subject or topic;
- Present an argument demonstrating proper reflection, research and use of sources;
- Discuss knowledgeably critical issues related to communication as a Christian leader in non-congregational arenas;
- Develop and communicate a vision of Christian rhetoric in a way that acknowledges how theory is embedded in and informs practice, enabling perspective and judgment necessary for effective communication.

## Course Requirements and Reading

### Class Preparation, Attendance, and Participation (20%):

- Assigned reading should be completed by the day listed. Attendance at and readiness to participate in all sessions of the class is expected. Three unexcused absences will result in the final grade being lowered by one full letter.
- Note that papers should be double-spaced, typed, with a standard 12-point font like Times New Roman and one-inch margins. Written materials must be submitted on time. Late work will be read and graded but will receive no written comments. Late assignments of any sort will result in an automatic reduction of grade by one letter. For each additional day an assignment is late, an additional reduction of a full letter grade will result.
- Persons are expected to participate frequently and substantively in peer evaluation, demonstrating constructive criticism and their reflective interaction with course reading and the speech's content. Evaluations for each speech in your section are to be turned on the day the speech is delivered.
- Participants should prepare for each class session by carefully reading the assigned texts.

### Speech Design and Delivery (50%)

- Each participant will deliver, for a grade, three speeches in class and provide one revised speech. (Note, these are not to be sermons.) For each speech, an outline is to be handed in prior to the day of delivery, for comment and suggestion. A manuscript, prepared in advance, is to be submitted at the beginning of class on the day the speech is due.

### Written Assignments (30%):

- A three to five page summary and response to *Telling the Story* by Andrew Walker, due October 7<sup>th</sup>.
- A written essay, of ten to twelve pages, describing your theology of Christian communication is due on the final day of class.

## Required Texts:

- ⇒ Walker, Andrew, *Telling the Story: Gospel, Mission and Culture*. London: SPCK, 1996.
- ⇒ Verderber, Rudolph F. and Kathleen S. *The Challenge of Effective Speaking*. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2003.

### Collateral Reading

- ⇒ Schmit, Clayton J. *Public Reading of Scripture: A Handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2002.

## Grading

As a foundational course for developing a theory of Christian communication, one of the objectives of this class is to set a trajectory for learning. The percentage of the final grade increases with each of the initial assignments. Value is placed on student demonstration of improvement over the course of the semester.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the presenting of another's ideas or writings as one's own including both written and oral presentations. **Recognizing that familiar language is a part of effective communication, it is an objective of this class for students to develop their own style of speaking. Therefore, written outlines and manuscripts are to include resources used and supply credit for 'borrowed' material. Each speech is to represent ones own work and creativity. Use of another's work without credit will result in a zero for the assignment and may lead to no credit in the class.**

In cases of suspected plagiarism, the instructor will meet with the student, to determine whether plagiarism has in fact been committed. In cases of student plagiarism, the instructor, working in conversation with the dean of the student's School, reserves the options, depending on her judgment regarding the severity and recurrence of the problem: (1) to provide an opportunity for the student to redo the same or comparable assignment, typically with the grade for that assignment penalized to account for the act of plagiarism; (2) to record a failing grade for the assignment in question; (3) to fail the student for the course; and (4) to recommend to the dean of the student's School that the student be dismissed from the Seminary. A written report of the episode and of the disciplinary action taken will be submitted to and affirmed by the dean of the student's School. The student may appeal the decision of the instructor through the normal appeal process.

Conduct that is considered dishonest includes: reusing previously and/or concurrently submitted material in another class without faculty permission, cheating by copying from another's work, allowing another to copy from one's own work, reading an examination prior to the date it is given without the instructor's permission, and similar types of conduct. Unlawful duplication of copyrighted material such as music, library materials, computer software, as well as plagiarism, are other examples of academic dishonesty. (Seminary guidelines related to acceptable duplication practice of copyrighted materials can be found at the library's circulation desk.)

(...adapted from Asbury Seminary's policy regarding plagiarism)

**Incomplete Policy**

The official end of each term is 4:00 p.m. on the last day of the examination schedule. (Fall 2003 = December 12<sup>th</sup>) This hour is the deadline for handing in all course work. Each instructor may set an earlier deadline for submission of any and all course work (Fall 2003 = Noon, December 9<sup>th</sup>) The Student must petition the faculty person involved and the student's advisor for permission to receive an "I" at the end of a semester.

A grade of "I" denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an unavoidable emergency, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment. If the work of a course is incomplete at the end of a term without an emergency, a letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted as "F".

Incomplete grades shall be removed one calendar month prior to the close of the following semester unless an earlier date is designated by the Office of the Chief Academic Officer on the individual petition. If the work is not completed by the time designated, the "I" shall be changed to an "F" unless a passing grade can be given based on work already completed or unless special permission is granted by the Chief Academic Officer.

Professors are required to give either a grade or an "I", if approved to each student registered for credit in a course.

Students with Incompletes in two or more classes will not be allowed to enroll in new semester or term without permission from their Dean.

(From page 29 of the 2001 – 2003 Catalog)

- The computer lab is located in the library, and is open to Asbury Theological Seminary students. Lab hours are the same as those of the B. I. Fisher Library. Persons are expected to know how to use available programs. Manuals and tutorial exist for those willing to learn on their own. Check the library catalog for specific titles of available tutorials in the media collection.
- Indicated lecture notes and PowerPoint presentations will be made available on the network. Students can review these materials by using one of the computers in the library computer lab and accessing the student drive.

## Course Schedule

2 Sept	Communication for Christian Leaders An Introduction
4 Sept	Part I: Obstacles, Opportunities, and Oops READ Verderber, Chapters 4-5
9 Sept	Part II: Obstacles, Opportunities, and Oops READ Verderber, Chapters 1, 2, 3
11 Sept	Thinking about Speaking READ Verderber, Chapters 6-7
16 Sept	Audience Analysis READ Verderber, Chapter 5
18 Sept	Content: Selection and Organization Verderber, Chapters 6-7
23 Sept	Succinct Response: Each will provide a 1 minute response to a question, distributed on Sept 18, without notes. (Notes are to be turned in prior to response)
25 Sept	Beginnings and Endings READ Verderber Chapter 8 <b>DUE: Narrative Outline</b>
30 Sept	Oral Presentation READ Verderber Chapters 9, 10, 11; Judges 1-3; Esther 7; Job 38-42; Psalm 19, 23, 24, and 27; Matthew 1, and 4:1-11; Luke 1:1-25; John 15; Acts 2, 7, and 17:16-18:1; Romans 11; Hebrews 8; Revelation 21-22. (Bring a Bible to Class)
2 Oct	Why Rhetoric? READ Walker
7 Oct	One Way of Telling the World <b>DUE: Telling the Story Response Paper</b>
9 Oct	The Informative Speech READ Verderber Chapters 12
14 Oct	The Persuasive Speech READ Verderber Chapters 13-14 <b>DUE: Informative Outline</b>
16 Oct	From Sesame Street to NYPD Blue READ Verderber Chapter 15 - 16
21 Oct	Speech presentations until the end of the semester <b>DUE: Persuasive Outlines</b>
21 <sup>st</sup> - 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Prepare a 2-4 minute personal experience speech to be delivered on one of these days. Outlines will be due on <u>Sept 25<sup>th</sup></u> . Refer to Verderber pg 30-32.
4 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Prepare a 4-7 minute informational speech to be delivered on one of these days. Outlines will be due on <u>Oct 14<sup>th</sup></u> . Refer to Verderber pg 224-235 (or chapt 12).
18 Nov - 4 Dec	Prepare a 6-8 minute persuasive speech to be delivered on one of these days. Outlines will be due on Oct 21 <sup>st</sup> . Refer to Verderber Chapt 13-14.
25-27 <sup>th</sup> Nov	No Class
9 Dec	<b>Due: Essay on Christian Communication</b> <b>FINAL</b>

## **Guidelines for Speech Evaluation**

### At an “A” level, the presentation:

- Clearly and concisely conveys the content or focus to be reflected on.
- Contains no grammatical errors or misspellings or objectionable constructions.
- Presents its argument in an exemplary fashion, particularly as regards concision and clarity.
- Draws a powerful conclusion that clearly relates the argument to the thesis.
- Contains minimal to no distractive material.
- Demonstrates clear evidence of deep and substantive reflection.
- Demonstrates exemplary research and use of sources.

### At a “B” level, the presentation:

- Clearly conveys the content or focus to be reflected on.
- Contains few grammatical errors or misspellings or objectionable constructions.
- Presents its argument in a reasonably clear and concise fashion.
- Draws a substantive conclusion that relates the argument to the thesis.
- Contains minimal distractive material.
- Demonstrates clear evidence of substantive reflection.
- Demonstrates cautious and substantive research and use of sources.

### At a “C” level, the presentation:

- Attempts to clearly convey the content or focus to be reflected on.
- Contains frequent grammatical errors or misspellings or objectionable constructions.
- Presents its argument in a fashion that is hard to follow and exhibits too much “subjectivity” (i.e., excess of opinion at the unnecessary expense of supporting information).
- Attempts to conclude in a fashion that relates the argument to the thesis.
- Contains significant distractive material.
- Demonstrates little evidence of substantive reflection.
- Demonstrates little evidence of substantive research

### At a “D/F” level, the presentation:

- Essentially fails to identify a focus.
- Contains many grammatical errors and/or misspellings and/or objectionable constructions.
- Presents little to no argument, and is futilely an opinion piece.
- Draws no meaningful conclusion.
- Minimal or no evidence of substantive reflection or research.