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SP 501 Communication as Christian Rhetoric

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Communication for Christian Leaders SP 501

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This syllabus may be amended prior to the beginning of class.

It has been developed specifically for the ExL program of Asbury Theological Seminary. It may be distributed to members of the course and others by permission. It is not intended for general distribution on the Internet. Permission to copy or distribute in whole or in part must be requested from the professor.

Welcome to SP501!

Congratulations! You are about to enter the world of change. When we speak a word--any word--we impact the world around us....

The spoken word can be the medium of new knowledge. Think of how the words "E=mc²" have changed the face of our culture. The spoken word can create chaos. We think of the diatribes of Hitler as he enflamed the world with hatred and bitterness...The spoken word can be the channel of healing and hope. "Hush," says the caring mother, "Don't cry. Mother's here." Fear and uncertainty are changed. Transformed.

The Christian message is the communication of supreme change: "And the Word became flesh...and to those who believed in Him he gave power to become the children of God."

The aim of this course is to help us all to become more EFFECTIVE communicators of the Christian Message. The word "effective" is an important one. There is one thing I need to say right off the bat:

"THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A GOOD OR A BAD COMMUNICATOR"

(Please say that right now...out loud)

We evaluate communication in terms of **EFFECTIVENESS**. That's what this course is all about. How can we become more effective in our presentations...and effect change...

Course Description

Communication for Christian Leaders is designed to give you both a theoretical understanding of communication in the real life context of church and ministry as well as hands-on experience as we develop our skills as Christian communicators. My goals for you as students are that...

1. You will explore a variety of communication theories from Aristotle's Canons of rhetoric to contemporary theories of narrative, persuasion, and compliance-gaining. As a result, you will not only gain a broader understanding of communication but will be able to develop your own model of the communication process.
2. You will acquire the tools to better understand your listeners. Effective communicators are listener-centered, and we'll learn ways to carry-out audience/congregation analysis.
3. You will develop the resources for constructing effective presentations. While your biblical and theological studies will be the essential sources, we'll investigate the outside sources from which you can draw illustrative and applicational materials.
4. You will develop and apply different organizational strategies in the development of presentations.
5. You will carefully examine the components of presentational effectiveness from non-verbal communication, vocalics, dynamics, and word choice.
6. You will focus your attention on three critical areas of effective communication: (a) communicating information, (b) making emotional appeals, and (c) communicating to persuade.
7. You will explore secondary ways to enhance the effectiveness of your presentations such as the incorporation of visual aids.
8. You will improve your ability to critical listen and evaluate the presentations.

Required Materials/Resources

Because this is a course that tries to be both practical as well as theoretical, the following texts and materials are necessary for you to complete this course:

Texts: Duane Litfin, *Public Speaking: A Handbook for Christians*, 2nd Edition, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1992.

R. N. Bostrom, E. S. Waldhart, M. W. Shelton, and S. Bertino, *Getting There: Public Speaking*, Prospect Heights, IL, Waveland Press.

Equipment: Since this course involves PRESENTATION, you will need to have access to the following equipment:

1. A Video Camera (NTSC format ONLY) for video-taping of **three** presentations.
2. Video Equipment to copy your video presentations. All video tapes should be copied for your own security in case an assignment is lost in the mail.
3. Real Producer—a free download in the course center. You can use this program to record all audio-only presentations.
4. A microphone that can record audio presentations into Real Audio format.
5. A cassette recorder (if you decide not to use RealProducer).
6. Mailers for your audio and video presentations.
7. About 8 **BLANK** video cassettes. About 8 **blank** audio cassettes.

Outside Support: As a distance learning course, SP 501 is going to require that you enlist the support of other adults in your church or community to serve as **LOCAL MENTORS** of your presentations. There must be **at least FIVE** mentors to listen to your video-taped presentations and complete the evaluation forms.. **THREE** mentors should commit to listen to **all** video-taped presentations during the semester. The other mentors can be used who do not have to be at all presentations as long as there are at least five for the presentation. All mentors should meet the following qualifications.

1. At least one mentor must be male and not married to the female mentor.
2. At least one mentor must be female and not married to the male mentor.
3. All mentors must be adults (over 18) may not be a member of your immediate family.
4. No more than ONE mentor may be member of your family.

In addition to local mentors, you will also need the help of two additional people: **a camera person** to operate your video camera and **a timer** to help you stay within the time-limits of each presentation. Neither one of these should be

mentors. I suggest that you equip your timer with visible index cards marking the 2-minute, 1-minute, 30-second end of your presentation. They can hold them up in an unobtrusive way during your presentation.

Making it work:

SP501 is a performance class. I know that some of you are rolling your eyes saying, "It will never work!" I think you will be surprised that it does work if you follow these procedures for each audio and video presentations.

For Video Presentations

1. Record your presentation using a VHS camera. Remember, your cameraperson SHOULD NOT be one of your mentors since they will be busy filling out your evaluation sheets.
2. Immediately after your presentation, ask your mentors to take time to fill out their evaluation sheets.
3. When the sheets are completed, ask them for verbal feedback as well so that they can elaborate on their comments.
4. Collect the sheets and photocopy them. Send the copies to me at **641 Willow Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844**. Keep the originals in a safe place until the end of the semester.
5. Copy your video using your camera and a VCR. You should make copies for:
 - a. Your instructor (641 Willow Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844)
 - b. Your team members (you will need to exchange postal addresses as soon as you are assigned to a team. Teams may change during the semester so keep informed.)
6. You are responsible to **KEEP YOUR ORIGINAL** until the end of the semester. **This is important! Mail services can loose things! Please make sure you use a reliable mail service. Use priority/first class mail or the UPS/Fed Ex equivalent.** I strongly suggest that you invest in the appropriate mailers for both video cassettes and for audio tapes. This will save you and me a lot of headaches.. **Please e-mail me and your team members when you send your tapes so that we can know to expect them.**
7. When you receive your video, please send an evaluation to each speaker of your team and **COPY IT FOR THE INSTRUCTOR. If you don't send me a copy, then you will not receive credit for the evaluation.**
8. When I receive the video or audio tape, I will send my evaluation to you as a Word attachment. I may also place some sample audio/video presentations on the course web site:
http://fc.asburyseminary.edu/~fred_fitch/

For audio presentations

There are two ways you can do the audio-only assignments:

OPTION # 1—Download Real Producer and send them as e-mail attachments:

1. Download and install Real Producer Basic from the course center
2. Using the recording wizard, choose the second option “Record from a media device.”
3. Since you are only doing audio, select “capture audio” from the following screen and click “next.”
4. Fill out the information to identify your presentation. You only need to fill in the “title” and your name. Click “next”.
5. On the “file type,” choose “Single-rate web servers.” Click “next.”
6. For target audience, choose 28K modem. Click “next.”
7. For audio format, choose “Voice Only.” Click “next.”
8. For the output file, leave as is (or save it differently if you’re computer savvy—just make sure you retain the “.rm” extension.) Click “next.”
9. Click Finish.
10. Plug in your microphone. Click “start” when you are ready to record. When you are done recording, click “stop.”
11. Click play to review.

The advantage to this method is it will give you some extra time in completing your assignment and getting feed back from your class members. You’ll be sending these files as e-mail attachments, and that’s free! The disadvantage is that sometimes these files take a long time to download—especially if you are working with a dial-up connection.

OPTION #2

1. Record your presentation on a blank audio cassette.
2. Make copies for yourself, for me, and for the members of your learning team.
3. Send them by a postal service to your team members and to me to be evaluated. Make sure that you include enough postage so that they arrive as priority or first class mail.

The advantage to this method is that you will avoid computerized glitches with learning how to work the RealProducer program. The disadvantage is that you will need to have the assignments done early to allow for postal delivery. It will also be more expensive.

Making it really work:

In working with video and audio files, videotape, e-mail and regular mail, it will come together if you ALWAYS keep these things in mind:

First, **observe all due dates.** Late assignments will not only jeopardize your grade (ahem!), they will slow everything down for everyone else.

Second, **observe the 24-hour turn around.** Get assignments off within 24 hours. **Make sure you include enough postage** when you send video and audio tapes.

Third, **observe time-limits.** Each presentation has specific time limits. Going over those limits (along with detracting from effectiveness) will increase recording, copying, downloading, and evaluating time.

Fourth, **keep a copy EVERY assignment.** Sometimes things get lost in transfer. Sometimes they get sent to the wrong place. Sometimes postal services (like in New Jersey) have to screen all mail. Just in case something gets lost, make sure you save a copy.

Important People:

For institutional and ExL questions, you should contact Amy Jo Adams (ExL_Coach@asburyseminary.edu) or Kevin Osborn (ExL_Director@asburyseminary.edu).

For computer technical support, you will need to know Andy Adams (exl_support@asburyseminary.edu).

Hannah Kirsch is Asbury's reference librarian for the ExL program (Hannah_Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu).

Dorothy James is in charge of Inter-Library Loans, and she can help you find specific articles for your work (Dorothy_James@asburyseminary.edu). There may also eventually be a teaching assistant, to serve as a back-up when I am out of town.

Class Procedures

The ExL program of Asbury Theological Seminary works to insure that you, as an on-line student, will be receiving the same materials and equivalent experiences of those who are taking the class on-campus. To help achieve this goal, the course is divided into learning modules. Modules will be posted in the course center as the class advances throughout the course. Each module will include items for you to discuss as a class, to work on as a team, and to complete as individuals. Each module will also include the due date for the completion of assignments/presentations.

Speaking Assignments

Module 1: Greeting (Audio-taped using RealProducer)

During the first week of class, I would like everyone to try to send a greeting using the RealProducer software. This will give you some practice using the software. You may decide to use it instead of cassette recording for audio presentations. It will also give us all a chance to know you! Send this file to me as an attachment, and I will post it to the course web site!

Module 2: Tell your own story (Audio taped, 3 minutes)

Tell your own story to a local audience (a congregation, Sunday school class, small group of friends, or family gathering). The audience should include your **local mentors**. The stories should be audio-taped and tapes should be sent to:

1. The instructor (641 Willow Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844) along with the evaluation sheets from your local mentors.
2. Members in your team folder. (Make sure that you give each other your addresses. Class policy is that no tapes will be returned to the student.)

If you would like to do this and other audio-only presentations using RealProducer, you may. This will probably mean doing the same presentation twice: once for your peers and me using RealProducer, once for your mentors so they can evaluate you. In that case, only copies of the evaluations need to be mailed to me.

When you mail mentor evaluations, please mail them together in one envelope.

Module 3: Oral Interpretation (Audio only, 2 minutes)

Choose a selection of literature (a poem, a short story, a passage of scripture or a children's story) and read it aloud. The presentation should be audio-recorded, sent to me and to members of your team.

Module 4: The Informative speech (Video-taped, 6 minutes)

The purpose of this speech is to clarify a concept, idea, principle, method or process for your listeners. Select a topic or biblical text that you would explain to a Sunday school class or local congregation. You will need to create a clear statement (central idea) about the topic and break it down into its significant parts that can be organized effectively. You will be asked to prepare a visual aid (preferably a Power Point presentation) that should add further clarity to your topic. It's preferable that the presentation be made to as large a group as possible that include your mentors. The presentation should be video-taped. One copy of the tape along with mentor evaluations will be sent me; the other copies will go to your team members for their evaluations.

Module 5: The emotional appeal (Audio only, 2-4 minutes)

The purpose of this presentation is to use a story to convey a particular emotion. Your objective is not only to make your audience identify that emotion but to actually empathize with you or the character of the story you tell. You may use your own experiences as the source for this story or that of some else. To clarify the appeal you can employ analogies to clarify the emotion. Making emotional appeals is a significant component in persuasion. The presentation should be audio-recorded, sent to me and to your team members as a cassette or audio file attachment.

Module 6: The persuasive speech practice

The purpose of this speech is to persuade your listeners to accept a proposition in which you believe. The proposition may be based on a biblical, moral or spiritual issue that is important to you. The assignment calls for the marshalling of evidence (research) as well as effective use of emotional appeals. You may choose to use a visual aid if you like. The presentation will be structured as a problem/solution and it is recommended that you use Monroe's Motivated Sequence. This presentation is only a practice recording sent to your peers only for their feedback and comments. Their evaluations will be e-mailed back to you. I should also receive a carbon copy of this evaluation so that the evaluator will receive credit.

Moduel 6: The persuasive speech (Video-taped 8-10 minutes)

Based on the above criteria and the comments of your peers, this presentation be made before as large a group as possible that include your mentors. This presentation should be video taped with the original going to me only. Your mentors and I will evaluate the presentation in terms of its persuasiveness.

A word about e-mails and attachments. Because I am working with a dial-up connection at home, I prefer that all written assignments come to me as e-mails and not attachments. Attachments can take a long time to download. The one attachment that you will be sending me will be the visual aid for your informative presentation. For materials that you download from me, I usually will post items in a variety of formats: Word 2000, Word 97, Real Text Files (.rtf), and Acrobat files (.pdf).

Written Assignments

Listening Reports

Throughout the semester you should choose 10 oral presentations of at least 10 minutes in length to listen to for evaluation. Using the Listening Evaluation Form in the "Forms" folder, you will write an evaluation of the presentation's effectiveness. These presentations can be sermons, special lectures, or speeches that are not a part of an on-going class. They may be radio or taped messages or live presentations. (Check out the ATS Chapel website and listen to the chapels on-line. I encourage you to listen to a variety of speakers so you

can develop a sense of what works and what doesn't. No more than one report will be accepted during any given week.

Interview with a Pastor

During Module 2, you will interview a pastor in your area to learn her/his procedure for developing a sermon. In the interview ask about their preaching responsibilities, the congregation they serve, the sources they use for the development of their messages, the strategies they use to organize the presentation. What is their criteria for a successful sermon? For a flop? How do they manage their time for preparation? How do they decide on their topic? Present your findings in a 3-5 page reflection paper.

On-line discussions

A component of each module will be participation in an on-line discussion. The topics for discussion will include both areas of focus within the course materials as well as evaluations of presentations which we will listen to/view as a group. These presentations will be included in the course pack in video or audio format. We may even listen into the Asbury Seminary chapel on the web and evaluate a chapel speaker. When you reply to a discussion question in the discussion center, please use the "reply" icon so that responses can be threaded together under the question asked. **DO NOT SEND YOUR DISCUSSION RESPONSES TO ME OR TO THE COURSE OFFICE.**

Outlines

You will need to do written outlines for your informative and persuasive presentations. Outlines must be sent to me via e-mail in a timely fashion so that they can be evaluated and returned before you actually get up to speak. **PLEASE SEND THEM AS REGULAR E-MAILS USING THE COURSE OFFICE ICON.**

Peer Evaluations

As a student of SP501, you will have an active part in evaluating each other in this virtual classroom. Please take the time to listen carefully to those students you are asked to evaluate. Balance your comments so that they are both encouraging and constructive. The SP501 office should receive a CC of all peer evaluations. Peer evaluations can be sent using the on-line forms found by following the links on the course home page or may be mailed as attachments using the evaluation forms in the "Forms Folder."

Modular assignments

Each module will include small assignments that you will submit to me electronically. They will include elements of accountability that will make sure you that you stay current with the reading as well as exercises that are designed to clarify course concepts.

Final Reflection E-mail

On the last week of class, I would like you write a no-draft reflection e-mail discussing both the strengths and weaknesses your mentors and peers have pointed out in your public speaking. What strengths are consistent? What problems persist as well? Have the evaluations been accurate? Why or why not? Evaluate your own progress since the beginning of the semester. (This is a sit-down-and-write assignment.) Do it sincerely and you get full credit.

Evaluation of presentations

All of your oral presentations will be evaluated by me based on the criteria of the class. I need to warn you in advance that as a skills-based course, evaluations will be come stricter as your presentational skills become refined. What I'm saying is that I tend to evaluate earlier assignments with greater leniency than later assignments. I welcome your reactions and responses to my evaluations. If you do have any questions or concerns, I welcome your e-mails and phone calls.

Making contact

I welcome you to contact any time by e-mail. As a pastor, sometimes my own life gets hectic and it's hard to get to the computer and answer e-mails. So you may also call me in my church office at (732) 356-2502 during office hours (9-5 EST). If I am not there, try me at home (908) 281-5427, or on my mobile phone (732) 672-8203. If for any reason the First Class program is not working, you can send e-mail to me at zpastor@prodigy.net. (Please do this only in the case that First Class doesn't seem to work.)

Selected Bibliography

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Robinson, H. W. (1980). *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.

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Assignments for SP501

Module	Assignment	Due Date	Medium	Delivery to	Value
1	Discussion 1	Feb 14	Email	Discussion	5
1	E-mail	Feb 14	E-mail	SP501 Office	5
1	Keirse	Feb 14	E-mail	SP501 Office	5
1	Greeting	Feb 14	Attachment: RP	SP501 Office	10
1	Mentor contract	Feb 14	Postal	Home address	5
1	Public Speaking Pre-test	Feb 14	E-mail	Office	5
1	Confirmation message	Feb 14	E-mail	SP501 Office	5
2	Communication Model	Feb 21	Attachment or Postal	SP501/Home	25
2	Discussion 2--Quiz	Feb 21	Email	Discussion	5
2	Discussion 3--Ethics	Feb 21	Email	Discussion	5
2	Outline: My story	Feb 21	E-mail	Office	10
2	Present: My Story (3 minutes)	Feb 28	Audio Attachment or Cassette by Postal	Office+ Group Folder	50
2	Self Eval: My Story	Feb 28	E-mail	Office	
2	Mentor Evaluation	Feb28	Postal	Home address	
2	Audience Analysis	Feb 28	E-mail	Office	25
3	Discussion 4: Blackwell	Mar 4	E-mail	Discussion	5
3	Presentation: Interp	Mar 10	Audio Attachment or Cassette by Postal	SP501+ Group Folder	50
3	Self Eval: Interp	Mar 10	E-mail	Office	5
3	Peer Evaluation	Mar 14	E-mail	Office + Speaker	10
3	Pastoral Interview	Mar 17	E-mail WORD attachment	Office	100
4	Central idea	Mar 28	E-mail	Office	5
4	Outline: Informative	Mar 31	E-mail	Office	25
4	Discussion 5: Jurassic 1	April 4	E-mail	Discussion	5
4	Discussion 6: Jurassic 2	April 4	E-mail	Discussion	5
4	Visual aid	April 11	E-mail attachment or Postal	Office or Home	10
4	Presentation: Inform (6 minutes)	April 11	Video Cassette	Home + Group Members	100
4	Self Eval: Inform	April 11	E-mail	Office	5
4	Peer Evaluation	April 18	E-mail	Office + Speakers	5
4	Mentor Eval	April 11	Postal	Home	10
5	Discussion 7: Dr. Killian	April 18	E-mail	Discussion	5
5	Discussion 8: NPR	April 18	E-mail	Discussion	5
5	Discussion 9: Time to Kill	April 25	E-mail	Discussion	5
5	Present: Emotional Appeal (4 minutes)	April 25	Audio Attachment or Cassette by Postal	Office/Home + Group Members	50
5	Self Eval: Emotional	April 25	E-mail	Office	5
5	Peer Evaluation	May 2	E-mail	Office +Speakers	10
6	Discussion 10: MLK	May 2	E-mail	Discussion	5
6	Discussion 11: JFK	May 9	E-mail	Discussion	5
6	Discussion 12: Handgun	May 9	E-mail	Discussion	5
6	Outline: Persuasion	May 9	E-mail	Office	25
6	Practice Presentation: Persuasion (10)	May 12	Audio Attachment or Cassette by Postal	Group Members <u>only</u>	25
6	Peer Evaluation: Practice Persuasion	May 16	E-mail	Office + Speakers	10
6	Persuasive Presentation (10)	May 22	Video Cassette	Home <u>only</u>	200
6	Mentor Evaluation Persuasion	May 22	Postal	Home	10
6	Public Speaking Post Test	May 22	E-mail	Office	5
6	Self-Evaluation: Persuasion	May 22	E-mail	Office	5
6	Peer-Mentor Reflection paper	May 22	E-mail	Office	
	Listening Report 1		E-mail	Office	10

	Listening Report 2		E-mail	Office	10
	Listening Report 3		E-mail	Office	10
	Listening Report 4		E-mail	Office	10
	Listening Report 5		E-mail	Office	10
	Listening Report 6		E-mail	Office	10
	Listening Report 7		E-mail	Office	10
	Listening Report 8		E-mail	Office	10
	Listening Report 9		E-mail	Office	10
	Listening Report 10		E-mail	Office	10
				TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	1000

Office=First Class Office for SP501; Home= 641 Willow Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844; Speakers = The speakers for your learning team.

I recommend that you copy this sheet and use it as a means to keep track of your progress in SP501.

Check-list for SP501 Presentations

Presentation	<u>Mentor Eval</u>	<u>Team Eval</u>	<u>Self-Eval</u>	<u>Media</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Value</u>
My Story	Yes	No	Yes	Audio	3 min.	50
Oral Interp	No	Yes	Yes	Audio	2 min.	50
Informative	Yes	Yes	Yes	Video	6 min	100
Empathy	No	Yes	Yes	Audio	4 min	50
Persuasive Practice	No	Yes	No	Audio (or Video)	10 min	50
Persuasive	YES	NO	YES	Video	10	200