1-1-2004

SP 501 Communication for Christian Leaders

Clint Baldwin
Welcome ☺…

to SP501 – Communication for Christian Leaders!

Wow, what fun that we get to consider how to better communicate with one another, consider how to better share the Gospel and consider how all of this can affect, is affecting and should be affecting ours and others lives! Pretty exciting! Truly, this is an area of study where new understanding/s and new practice/s can make monumental differences in ours and others lives.

*Our words (not to mention our actions) shape worlds.* Worlds are formed, de-formed and transformed through the language that we utilize. With our words we can create chaos or peace. Through communication we share ourselves and others share themselves with us. Through communication: we establish relationships; we speak – truthfully and deceitfully; we act – ethically and unethically; we live our lives. For all practical purposes, we are because we communicate...our very existence is based upon communication (who knew that there would be such thoughts in a welcome section ☺). It is through relationship – with God, with others and with the world around us – that we come to recognize our own being.

From all of this it follows, communication being such a foundational/core characteristic of who we are as persons, that study of this subject is of utmost importance for Christians in general and particularly of Christians who are moving toward and/or functioning in positions of leadership and influence. Thus, we embark this course recognizing with humility the importance of the task before us and at the same time celebrating the gift of this ability of communication that God has given us where we can be in relationship with Him and with others – we recognize and celebrate this gift of communication, the gift of life!

**Course Description**

*Communication for Christian Leaders* is offered as an introduction in communication principles and practice, especially as specifically related to contexts of theology and Christian ministry. This class is structured to provide foundation as to how we might understand our nature and
function as created, communicative beings and as well, how we might best develop and employ our God-given communicative characteristics in the service of God. Thus, there is a dual concern for theory and practice in the course actualized through assignments emphasizing significant reflection and meaningful performance.

**Course Objectives/Expected Student Competencies:**

Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate a basic comprehension of important categories of classical rhetoric and how these categories have import for messages being offered by Christian leaders
2. Constitute presentations according to audience composition
3. Be aware of basic structural, grammatical, and linguistic aspects of speech organization
4. Recognize the ethicality of speaking from a base of knowledge and conviction on topics
5. Offer a broader sense of what communication is…of what it consists of and entails
6. Better recognize how God’s nature provides the model/s for our being communicators
7. Recognize that it is not just about having the ability to do something that matters, but also (and really, more importantly) having substance/legitimacy/authenticity validating such ability

**Course Material:**

**Required Reading:**


**Collateral Reading:**


*Please note: readings may be supplemented from time-to-time with materials made available via electronic media. Advance notice will be given.*

**Course Requirements:**

1. 3 to 4 page reflection on Schultze’s *Communicating for Life.*
   (specifics offered closer to semester inception)
2. 3 to 4 page reflection on Winter’s *Still Bored in a Culture of Entertainment.*
   (specifics offered closer to semester inception)

3. 2 page reflection on the Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and Ephesians. Consider his dealings with issues of speech, words, Christ, God’s Word, and principalities and powers. How might Paul’s thoughts on these matters affect the manner in which we communicate today? What are we to think of cultural forms, of media, of governing structures, etc.? How do our answers to these questions affect our communication?

4. 3 to 4 page reflection on Augustine’s Teaching Christianity.
   (specifics offered closer to semester inception)

5. 3 Oral presentations. 5 to 7 minutes in length.
   (specifics offered closer to semester inception)

6. Final Essay. Due on the last day of class.
   (specifics offered closer to semester inception)

**Course Assessment**

5. Oral Presentations – 100 pts. each (300 pts total)

   Total possible points = 1000

**Course Grading Criteria:**

**Graded Work:**

Asbury Seminary defines grades using the following criteria (Catalog, p. 28):

A= Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives
B= Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives
C= Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives
D= Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives
F= Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

A plus (+) or minus (–) indicates positions between categories (for example, B+ = very good; C– = slightly below acceptable, etc.).

**Incomplete Work:**

“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 the 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.’” (From ATS 2001-03 Catalog p. 29)

**Course Specifics:**

1. Presentations must be given on the assigned dates. Basically, make-up speeches are simply not possible. However, in certain extreme cases, exceptions may of course be made.
2. Late written-work will be penalized.

**How to Submit Course Work:**

Unless specified otherwise, you will submit coursework that is due by dragging it/sending it to the SP501 Office Icon area that will be provided in each of your FirstClass email accounts. Each of your assignments to be handed-in should come with a document title beginning with your last name, then your first name, and finally a short item description such as “midterm, etc., ending with “.doc” or “.rtf” or whatever appropriate designator.

**Course Schedule:**

(more specifics will be offered closer to the beginning of the course)

**Beginnings...**

Our course officially begins February 14, 2004. If not before, sometime during the day, our course icon will appear on your FirstClass desktop.

**Week 1 – Feb 14**

Introductions

**Weeks 2 – Mar. 6**

Oral Presentation
Schultze and Winter papers due

**Weeks 3 – Mar 27**

Oral Presentation
Augustine and Pauline papers due

**Weeks 4 – May 8**

Oral Presentation

**Endings...** -- May 8 will be our ending class...