Syllabus
Fall Term, 2008

COLLEGE: College of Health and Human Services
DEPARTMENT: Department of Health Sciences
COURSE TITLE: Communication Disorders in Literature and Media
COURSE NUMBER: SST 191
SEM/YEAR: Fall, Spring, Summer
INSTRUCTOR: Dennis C. Tanner, Ph.D., Professor
OFFICE ADDRESS: Bldg. 66, Office 231F
CREDIT HOURS: 3
LOCATION: Rm. 101, Bldg. 66
COURSE LEVEL: Undergraduate
PREREQUISITES: None
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Course Internet Support Site: http://www.nicenet.org

Course: Communication Disorders in Literature and Media

Course Objectives:

1. Students will read selections from several books and view clips from movies which include a character with a communication disorder and discuss the author’s or screenwriter’s use of him or her to help build the story line, increase the general interest of the book, and/or for plot development (critical thinking, critical reading, ethical reasoning).

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to explore communication disorders as they are portrayed in literature and media. The goal of this course is twofold. First, the portrayal of communication disorder in literature and media will be used to explore society's perception of people who have them. The professor will provide and solicit examples of communication disorders from literature and media. Using these examples, each major communication disorder will be discussed relative to the student's preconceived ideas about them. Topics to be discussed include the student's perceptions of people with communication disorders, psychological and vocational implications, and societal stereotypes and prejudices. Second, each communication disorder will be discussed from a clinical and scientific perspective, and information will be provided about etiology, diagnosis and treatment. The profession of speech-language pathology and audiology as well as other disciplines involved in the diagnosis and treatment of communication disorders will also be discussed.

The thematic focus of this course will be Valuing the Diversity of Human Experience, and it is a interdisciplinary studies course in the Science/Applied Science distribution block. This course will address several of the essential skills, (critical thinking, critical reading, ethical reasoning, scientific inquiry, effective writing, and effective oral communication), and will pay particular attention to critical thinking and scientific inquiry.
Students will analyze communication disorders in literature and media and critically address prejudices, stereotypes, and stigmas associated with them (ethical reasoning, critical reading).

Students will describe responsible, ethical ways the motion picture industry, print and electronic media portray communication disordered individuals (critical thinking, ethical reasoning).

Students will write a research paper addressing communication disorders and address current scientific thought about their etiology, diagnosis and treatment (critical thinking, scientific inquiry, effective writing).

COURSE STRUCTURE/APPROACH:

The concepts will be discussed in the framework of the Communication Chain which provides a systematic structure for understanding the relationship among all aspects of speech, voice, language and hearing. The communication chain looks at the origin and structure of verbal thought, motor programming of respiration, phonation, articulation, resonance and prosody, acoustic transmission of sound pressure waves, sound detection, perception and interpretation of the signals in the auditory association areas of the cortex.

The majority of the course will be lecture. However, there will be student participation exercises which may include the following:

**Demonstration Projects**

During this course, students will have several opportunities to experience what it is like to have a communication disorder. Some videos and films will be played in their entirety, and segments of others, which illustrate communication disorders, will be shown. There will be a discussion on how the video or film affected the student and his or her perceptions of people with communication disorders.

TEXTBOOK AND REQUIRED MATERIALS:


A packet of selected readings may be required and made available at the University Bookstore

COURSE OUTLINE:

The following will be analyzed both from a literature and media perspective (especially their ethical considerations), and scientifically with regard to etiology, diagnosis and treatment.
Stuttering and cluttering
The voice and its disorders
Articulation and phonological disorders
Language development and disorders
Hearing loss and deafness
Motor speech disorders and dysphagia
Aphasia in adults
Communication disorders resulting from dementia
Communication disorders resulting from head and neck injuries

EVALUATION METHODS AND DEADLINES:

There will be three multiple choice examinations given at appropriate intervals during the semester. The final is comprehensive. The term paper is due two weeks before the final examination date.

LEARNING PORTFOLIO:

Students will write a term paper addressing the portrayal of a communication disorder in literature and media. This exercise is intended to develop critical thinking skills and writing abilities. This assignment might be a particularly useful one to include in a learning portfolio, since it encompasses both types of writing style (research paper/general overview).

EXAMINATIONS AND TERM PAPER:

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<th>Examination</th>
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<tr>
<td>Examination I</td>
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<td>Examination II</td>
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<td>Examination III</td>
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<td>Term Paper</td>
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*TERM PAPER:

Each student is required to write a term paper addressing a particular communication disorder. The paper will consist of two parts. The first section of the paper shall consist of a portrayal of a communication disorder in movies or literature. One or more references to the disorder shall be included in the text of the paper. Students should then discuss the reference and consider the following:

1. Why did the author or screenwriter include the reference to a communication disorder?
2. Did the reference promote and propagate existing stereotypes about communication disorders, and if so, how?
3. Was the inclusion of the communication disorder necessary to developing the protagonist, other characters, and/or story line?
4. Was there clinical inaccuracy or misleading information in the portrayal of the communication disorder?
The second section of the paper shall be a research section addressing the etiology, diagnosis and treatment of the communication disorder discussed above. It shall be written American Psychological Association (APA) style and include relevant general clinical information about the nature and course of the disorder.

Failure properly to follow the following will result in point reductions for the assignment:

1. APA style
2. Topic statement and limitation of the paper
3. Current research (at least two references to current journal articles from the past five years).
4. Summary
5. Accuracy of information and sources
6. Spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc.
7. Quality of information presented
8. Topic coverage
9. Summary (What the student learned from the assignment written in 1st person.)

The paper should be no shorter than 10 pages, double-spaced with 1" margins.

GRADING SYSTEM: This course will be graded on a curve using total points for means and standard deviations and subsequent grade determinations.

RETESTS/MAKEUP TESTS:

**Attendance:** Attendance is required.

**Plagiarism:** It is understood that in developing any required class projects, that the student cites each reference source and gives the proper credit for an idea, quotation or finding. Failure to cite the source of referenced material is unprofessional and violates the code of conduct for undergraduates.

**Cheating:** Cheating is intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise. Cheating on any exam will result in an "F" or "O" points awarded for that exam.

**Makeup Tests:**

All tests are to be completed on the administration date. Any student missing an examination should contact the professor promptly. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade for the course. There will be a letter grade reduction for each day of unexcused tardiness.

**Selected Literature and Media Examples**
Age Old Friends
Anywhere But Here
The Bible: Tower of Babel
The Bible: Moses
Bill Clinton
The Bone Collector
Cheech Marin
Children of a Lesser God
Christopher Reeve
Deuce Bigalo-Male Gigolo
Forrest Gump
Gary Busey
A Fish Called Wanda
The Godfather
Harry Potter
The Howard Stern Show
Jack Klugman
James Earl Jones
Julie Andrews
Kenny Rogers
The Ladies Man
Legends of the Fall
Mel Tillis
The Miracle Worker
Nash Bridges
Nell
The New Twilight Zone: Word Play
Of Mice and Men
One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest
Pearl Harbor
Rain Man
Ronald Reagan
Rush Limbaugh
The Simpsons
Sling Blade
Snatch
Stephen Hawking
That ‘70s Show (Fez)
Warner Brothers Cartoon Characters
What’s Eating Gilbert Grape?
The World According to Garp