

CRS 360
Com. & Rhet. Stud. in Perspective:

Discourse & Social Institutions

Dept. of Communication & Rhetorical Studies
Syracuse University
Spring 2015 - M/W 12:45 - 2:05 pm
Sims Hall 123

Instructor Info:

Professor S. DiDomenico¹

(Addressing me with simply “Professor D” in email or in person is fine!)

Office: 112 Sims Hall

Office Hours: Thursdays 11:30 am - 1:30 pm (or by appointment)

Office Phone: 315-443-3345

Email: smdidome@syr.edu (email is the best way to reach me)

Course Description:

This course will explore everyday discourse in a range of institutional settings, including doctor-patient consultations, the justice system, broadcast news media, psychotherapy, and telephone help lines (911, crisis/suicide prevention, etc.). Our goal together will be to explore the discursive practices through which organizational goals, identities, cultures, and relationships are constructed through talk and embodied conduct. We will highlight how the study of interpersonal aspects of institutional activity can provide a window into the often unnoticed and, effectively, invisible workings of these institutions. Course assignments will include active, hands-on exercises designed to help you develop your own analytical and communicative skills and see the importance of discourse throughout society and your everyday life

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Discuss how organizational goals, identities, cultures, and relationships are constructed through talk and embodied conduct.
2. Engage in close observation of social interactions in organizational and institutional contexts
3. Closely observe and transcribe tape-recorded, naturally-occurring interactions
4. Recognize and describe the actions institutional representatives are engaging in, and the specific practices they use to implement these actions

¹ Pronounced DEE-DOE-MEN-ICK-OH

5. Design and assemble professional materials (e.g., agendas, visual aids, handouts,) related to social interaction that demonstrate competency in written, mediated, and visual communication.
6. Display improved skills with engaging in academic dialogue, both written (via paper assignments) and spoken (via class discussions, collaborative exercises, & oral presentations).

Format:

Our class sessions will primarily consist of lecture presentations, discussion, and hands-on exercises.

Course Website:

Blackboard (<http://blackboard.syr.edu>) will be a central resource for information and you will be expected to check it regularly. Announcements, student grades, available videos, and supplemental readings will all be posted on this site.

Readings & Other Materials:

To do well in the course, you also need to keep up with the demanding reading load. Readings will often be challenging, requiring significant concentration and discipline. We will read classic and contemporary materials, some of which are purely theoretical, some of which are more ethnographic or discourse analytic in nature. Readings are to be completed before coming to class. Class lectures will be designed to supplement, *not replace*, the readings. Please bring the day's assigned reading(s) with you to our sessions together.

1. REQUIRED: Two (2) coursepacks of bound readings available via Blackboard.

- Note: You will need to print these yourself. Here are some steps for doing so:

- First, print the 2 coursepacks **double sided** at a campus computer lab (be sure the printer allows you to print double sided – ask the lab staff if you aren't sure!).
- Next, take the 2 coursepacks to a copy center (the one in Schine center, the Copy Center near Marshal Street, or a FedEx/Kinkos location) to get them bound with a (clear) front cover and (black) back cover attached.
- REMINDER: Be sure to print the coursepacks **double sided** to save paper!
- **FREE QUIZ POINTS:** Get your binder and your coursepacks bound and show them to me by 1/19 to earn full points towards our first two quiz grades.

2. **REQUIRED: A three-ring binder for handouts, notes, etc.** (I hole punch *everything* in an effort to help you stay organized, so please take advantage of it!). This will be worth points towards our third quiz grade.

Assessment

1) GENERAL INVOLVEMENT - 15%

- To do well in the course, you need to be present (see “Attendance” on page 4), pay close attention to the overarching “story” that is being told over the course of the term, and actively engage in meaningful discussions with your peers and the instructor (during class sessions, office hours, review sessions, etc.). Technically, no credit will be given for attendance; however, you should always attend class sessions since the exams will cover material presented in lectures but not in the readings (and conversely). Participation is essential to succeeding in this course since (a) it gives you a chance to test out your understanding of the concepts and (b) this will help keep you engaged with the course material. If, during the course of a session, anything is unclear, ask a question! If something doesn’t make sense to you, it probably doesn’t make sense to other people either.

2) HANDS-ON EXERCISES - 15%

- Either individually or with classmates, you will also complete a series of short analytic exercises designed to give you hands-on practice in analyzing naturally-occurring interaction.

3) COMMUNICATION SKILLS WORKSHOP - 20%

- You will work with a group of your peers to develop a short workshop related to the turn-by-turn, moment-by-moment interactional details of related to a specific issue or problem in the doctor-patient medical interview. This presentation will be geared towards a specific audience that could benefit from hearing about the latest findings on this issue. The 20% this project is weighted may be broken down into individual “milestone” assignments that will help you and your partner(s) stay on track and receive regular feedback from the instructor. More details about this assignment will be provided in a separate handout.

4) QUIZZES - 20%

- Regular quizzes will be given during the term. They are designed to (a) assess your comprehension of the assigned readings and (b) encourage you to come to sessions prepared. Quiz formats may consist of multiple choice, matching, true/false, and/or short answer questions.

5) EXAMS - 30% (= 15% midterm + 15% final)

- A midterm and final examination will test your knowledge of concepts from the required readings, lectures, and discussions. The exams may consist of a combination of “objective”-type questions (multiple choice, true/false) and written-response questions (short answer, essay). To prepare for each exam, I suggest that you keep thorough notes on the various “big ideas” that extend across the class readings and sessions. In an effort to help with this task, I typically review key concepts at the beginning and end of every class session.

Course Policies

I. Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are expected for in this class. Missing sessions will mean you are not exposed to material that you will be expected to know and understand (my lectures will almost always go beyond what is in the readings) and possibly missed in-class exercise points. You are allowed up to two unexcused (“freebie”) absences. After that, the “involvement/participation” portion of your grade will automatically be lowered by a *full letter grade*. Chronic lateness will also damage your grade. If you have a reason for several absences such as a personal or family emergency, you will be expected to get clearance for it from the Office of Undergraduate Student Affairs in Crouse 204. (Note: If you are a student-athlete and must miss class for a university-sanctioned event, let your teaching assistant know *in advance*. Assignment deadlines are the same for student-athletes as for other students, even if the student misses class on a day when work is due.)

The final exam date and time is scheduled by the registrar’s office and is not negotiable. Do not make travel plans for the winter break that interfere with the exam date/time. It will not be given in advance. Students missing either the final exam **MUST** have a documented excuse approved by the Office of Undergraduate Student Affairs, 204 Crouse. Without such documentation, you will receive a zero and very likely fail the course.

II. Religious Observances:

SU’s religious observances policy, found at http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available via *MySlice->Student Services->Enrollment->My Religious Observances* from the first day of class until the end of the second week of the semester.

III. Academic Integrity

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Avoid plagiarism by being very careful that it is clear to the instructor that your work is your own and not anyone else’s. Examples of academic dishonesty include:

- submitting somebody else’s work as your own;
- submitting work that is identical or near identical to another student’s;
- using an iClicker for another student;
- cheating on exams;
- and
failing to provide sufficient details about where the materials you use in your papers come from.

If you use sources in your assignments, be sure to always provide the authors’ names, publication year, and page number of any materials you use (e.g., DiDomenico & Smith,

2014, p. 43) and then a list of references at the back of the paper. If you are doubtful about issues regarding plagiarism or scholastic dishonesty, please feel free to discuss them with me. The consequences of scholastic dishonesty are very serious, from receiving a score of zero on the assignment and a report to the university academic integrity officer to failing the course and expulsion from the university.

IV. Grading Scale

Grades in this course will be determined on a straight percentage scale. Final grades will be assigned according to the university's standard grading scale. With regard to grading, there are three important points we would like to make:

- (1) It is my genuine desire to help you excel in this course.
- (2) It is your responsibility to demonstrate that your work is more than just 'satisfactory'.
- (3) Remember that I do not *give* you a grade - you must *earn* one.

V. Grade Inquiries

Grades will be made available as soon as possible following the submission deadline for any assignment. If you have any questions after you receive a grade, we ask that you wait 24 hours from the time you received the document back. In accordance with FERPA (the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act), we will not discuss any grades over email. If you want to appeal your assignment grade, you must turn in to me a well-written, typed critique of your work on the assignment within one week of the assignment being handed back (after one week, the grade stands as posted). The critique must make the argument for why your work is better than the assigned grades reflects. Although this critique is a requirement, the content of it may not be sufficient to warrant a grade change.

VI. Late Work

I expect all work to be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Assignments cannot be accepted late *unless prior arrangements are made*. Technical problems (including, but not limited to, power outages, erased/lost disks or jump drives, viruses, inaccessible networks, inability to print, etc.) do *not* in themselves constitute legitimate excuses for late or missing work. Please note that late course registration does *not* constitute a university-approved excuse.

VII. Technology Use

The Department of Communication & Rhetorical Studies encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe, supportive, and productive learning environment. To facilitate such an environment, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and common courtesy. Behavior that distracts students and faculty during class sessions is therefore not acceptable (e.g. cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, etc.). For this reason, use of computers and mobile devices is strongly discouraged. From past experience, I know that students with these items are tempted to spend class time reading e-mail, texting, looking at facebook, etc. This degrades the quality of your education. Instead of engaging in these activities before class, try re-reading your notes, reminding yourself of what puzzled you about an assigned reading, or discussing ideas for your next IRP with a classmate. This will make you more receptive to the material and more able to participate during discussion opportunities. Our time together this summer is

short and you owe it to yourself to maximize the educational experience you are entitled to (and, furthermore, may be paying for). If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class session.

VIII. Proper Email Communication

The way you compose (and proofread) your emails is an important aspect of your self-presentation in any class. Here are three principles I will expect you to follow when using this medium of communication to contact me:

- 1. Include the course number (CRS 360) in the subject line.
- 2. Include a greeting appropriate for a professional email
- 3. Clearly indicate what your question is. The more relevant information you provide, the more helpful and timely my response can be.
- 4. Sign the email with your FULL NAME.

IX. Lecture Notes/Outlines

There are no lecture notes or handouts guaranteed for this course (though I may pass some out from time to time). Psychologists know that people learn best when using as many of their senses as possible including sight, sound, and touch. It is also through repetition that we are able to memorize things better. So, by reading and making notes while you progress through the assigned readings, listening and remaining actively engaged during our sessions, keeping your own class notes, and playing an active part in discussions, you will enhance your grasp of the level of knowledge and understanding necessary for success in the course. If you miss a class session, you are fully responsible for getting lecture notes from a classmate. *To reward those who take notes while they make their way through the readings, a single looseleaf sheet of paper with notes may be used during the quizzes.*

X. Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary.

XI. Other University Resources for Students:

Writing Center

Campus Location: 101 H.B. Crouse Hall

URL: <http://wc.syr.edu>

The primary aim of the Writing Center is to help you become a stronger, more accomplished writer. No matter which form of support you choose, writing consultants will work with you at any stage of your writing process. Each semester hundreds of students choose to visit with consultants to:

- interpret an assignment sheet, talk through ideas for a project, discuss course readings, or plan for a paper,

- (re)consider choices with regard to audience, focus, reasoning, or organization,
- develop ideas with greater specificity,
- acquire research strategies, integrate scholarly sources, and apply proper documentation,
- improve edit and proofreading skills, expand vocabulary, and better understand technical conventions of academic writing.

SU Counseling Center

Campus Location: 200 Walnut Place

Web: <http://counselingcenter.syr.edu>

The Counseling Center encompasses services addressing mental health, sexual assault and relationship violence, and substance abuse issues.

Telephone Help Lines

1. CONTACT – (315)-251-0600 (Toll free)

-24 hour telephone support/counseling service for those in distress or crisis

2. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – (800) 273-8255

-24 hour telephone hotline available for anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress

3. The Trevor Project – (866) 488-7386

-The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ and questioning young people ages 13-24.

Late Night Shuttle Escort Services

Shuttle 44

Shuttle 44 is a free shuttle service, available to members of the SU community in the late evenings. To request a ride from Shuttle 44, call the Department of Public Safety at 443-7233 and the shuttle will be dispatched to your location.

Late Night Orange Express

The Late Night Orange Express is a shuttle service operated by Caz Limo on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights from 3:30 am to 5 am. The service is free but a SU student, faculty, or staff ID is required to board.

Tentative Session Schedule

Session #	Date	Topic	Reading(s) Due	Assignments Due
Week 1: Foundational concepts & issues I				
1	M 12 Jan	Course Overview, Introductions	N/A	
2	W 14 Jan	Intro to Discourse, Conversation Analysis, & Transcription Conventions	<p>1) Handout on transcription (passed out on first day),</p> <p>2) Get your coursepacks printed and bound</p> <p>3) Get a 3 ring binder for this class</p> <p>4) Complete the online transcription module</p> <p><u>Optional Reading:</u> Hepburn & Bolden (2013)</p>	
Week 2: Foundational concepts & issues II				
	M 19 Jan	NO CLASS		
3	W 21 Jan	Key thinkers and ideas related to studying discourse	Heritage & Clayman (2010), Ch 2	
Week 3: Foundational concepts & issues III				
4	M 26 Jan	Action Sequence Organization	Sidnell (2010) - Ch 4	
5	W 28 Jan	Turn Taking	Sidnell (2010) - Ch 3	

		Week 4: Foundational concepts & issues III		
6	M 2 Feb	Talking social institutions into being	Heritage & Clayman (2010), Ch 3	
7	W 4 Feb	Dimensions of institutional talk	Heritage & Clayman (2010), Ch 4	
		Week 5: 911 Emergency		
8	M 9 Feb	Overview of emergency dispatch work	Percy & Scott (1985), Ch 4	
9	W 11 Feb	Requesting emergency help	Whalen & Zimmerman (1987)	
		Week 6: 911 Emergency (cont'd) & Doctor/Patient		
10	M 16 Feb	Displaying one's knowledge about emergency events	Whalen & Zimmerman (1990)	
11	W 18 Feb	Overview of doctor/patient communication	Roter & Hall (2006)	
		Week 7: Doctor/Patient (cont'd)		
12	M 23 Feb	Accounting for the visit	Halkowski (2006)	
13	W 25 Feb	Taking the medical history	Boyd & Heritage (2006)	
		Week 8: Doctor/Patient (cont'd) / Midterm		
14	M 2 Mar	Diagnosis & medical authority + Exam Review	Heritage & Stivers (2005)	

	W 4 Mar	Midterm		
		Week 9:		
		Spring Break		
		Week 10: Broadcast Media		
15	M 16 Mar	Overview of discourse in broadcast news/media	Heritage & Clayman (2002), Ch 2	
16	W 18 Mar	Negotiating turn taking in the broadcast news interview	Heritage & Clayman (2002), Ch 3	
		Week 11: Broadcast Media (cont'd)		
17	M 23 Mar	"Footing shifts" in news discourse	Clayman (1992)	
18	W 25 Mar	Question design in news interviews	Heritage (2003)	
		Week 12: Broadcast Media (cont'd) & Mental Health		
19	M 30 Mar	Evading the question	Clayman (2001)	
20	W 1 Apr	Overview of mental healthcare & formulations in psychotherapy	Antaki et al. (2005)	
		Week 13: Mental Health (cont'd)		
21	M 6 Apr	Advice-implicative Interrogatives on kids help lines	Butler et al. (2010)	

22	W 8 Apr	Comparing discourse in in-person and online counselling sessions	Danby et al. (2009)	
		Week 14: Mental Health (cont'd)		
23	M 13 Apr	Crisis & Suicide Prevention Help Lines	TBD - DiDomenico (2015)	
24	W 15 Apr	GROUP WORK DAY		
		Week 15: Presentations		
25	M 20 Apr	Medical Workshop Group Presentations		
26	W 22 Apr	Medical Workshop Group Presentations		
		Week 16: Conclusion		
27	M 27 Apr	Course Wrap Up & Final Review		

**FINAL EXAM DATE/TIME:
May 1st, 10:15 – 12:15 pm in Sims 123**