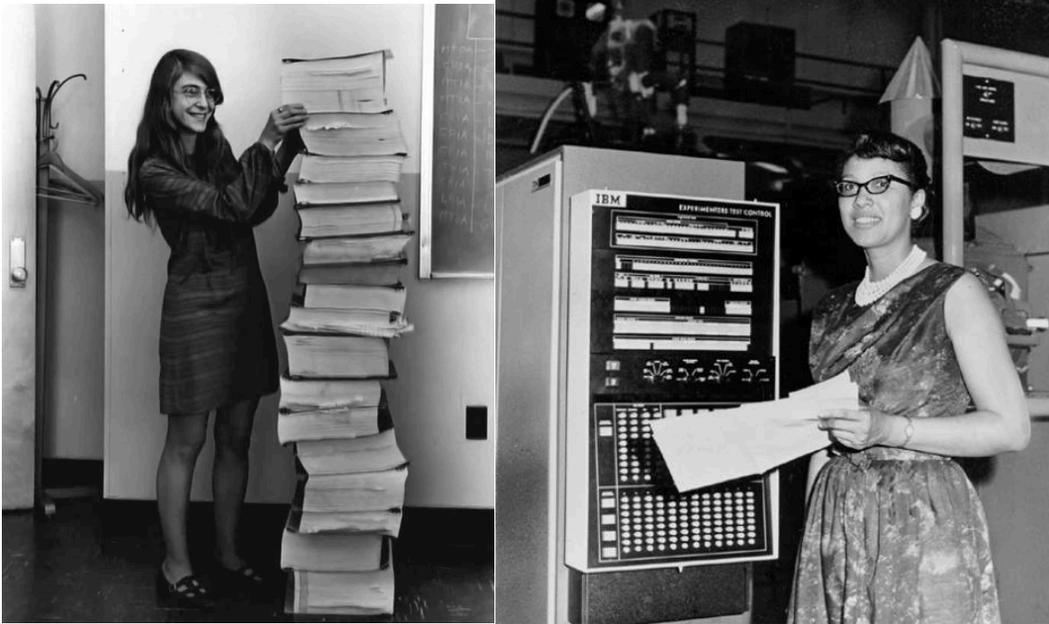# CMS 480: Gender Communication
Course Syllabus
Spring 2018 ~ January 22 to May 11
3 Credit Hours ~ Online Course

Left photo: Margaret Hamilton, lead software engineer for the Apollo Project, stands next to the computer code she wrote by hand that was used to take humanity to the moon, 1969.

Right photo: Katherine Johnson, who calculated the flight trajectories of the Apollo Project. Her calculations were so accurate that when NASA switched to computers, they would call her to confirm the calculations.

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Please feel free to contact me via email or Blackboard.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Gender is a central organizing principle in our society and the ways in which gender and ideas about gender in society are expressed and operate is through communication processes. What social and cultural factors influence gender identity and contribute to its development? What biological factors? What roles do media play in gender? How is language and communication gendered? What does current research say about gender in the workplace and in educational settings? These, as well as other topics, will be explored with the goal of helping students to develop an increased awareness of gender communication in their lives and to understand the central role of communication in our

understanding and enactment of gender in society.

Topics addressed include:
- Theories of gender identity, e.g. biological, social, and cultural

- Feminist theory, critical theory, queer theory

- Gender and mass media

- Gender and social media

- Gender and the body

- Gendered language

- Gender and relationships

- Gender in the workplace

- Gender communication in educational settings

LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
The course focuses on the following areas of student learning:

1. Students will identify, compare, contrast, and critique various methodological and theoretical approaches to the study of gender communication.

2. Students will identify and analyze episodes of gender communication in their own lives as well as in social and cultural representations of gender communication.

3. Students will apply and evaluate key theoretical approaches and practices used in gender communication to instances of gender communication.

4. Through exercises and learning activities, students will develop skills for carrying out explorations in gender communication.

5. Students will assemble ideas and communicate effectively in written and visual form for assignments and presentations.

REQUIRED READINGS
1. Mock, Janet. (2014). *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love and So Much More*. Simon and Schuster.

2. Lerner, Gerda. (1993). *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness: From the Middle Ages to Eighteen-seventy*. Oxford University Press.
Free pdf of the book is available here:
https://theeye.eu/public/Books/Radical%20Feminist%20Literature/Gerda%20Lerner/The%20creation%20of%20feminist%20consciousn%20%28119%29/The%20creation%20of%20feminist%20consci%20-%20Gerda%20Lerner.pdf

3. Nagoshi, Julie L., Nagoshi, Craig T. and Brzuzy, Stephan/ie. (2014). *Gender and Sexual Identity: Transcending Feminist and Queer Theory*. Springer Publishers.
Free pdf of the book is available here: https://link-springer-com.ursus-proxy-

1.ursus.maine.edu/book/10.1007%2F978-1-4614-8966-5

4. Nydia Pabon-Colon, Jessica. (2018). *Graffiti Grrlz: Performing Feminism in the Hip Hop Diaspora*. NYU Press.

5. Palczewski, Catherine Helen, DeFrancisco, Victoria Pruin, and McGeough, Danielle Dick. (2019). *Gender in Communication: A Critical Introduction,* Sage Publishers.

6. Risman, Barbara J. (2018). *Where the Millennials Will Take Us: A New Generation Wrestles with the Gender Structure*. Oxford University Press.

7. Titus, Megan L. and Walker, Wendy L. (2015). *Gender: A Reader for Writers*. Oxford University Press.

Recommended Readings
1. Goodwin, Marjorie. (2006) *The Hidden Life of Girls: Games of Stance, Status, and Exclusion*, Blackwell.

2. Holmes, Janet and Meyerhoff, Miriam. (2003). *The Language and Gender Reader*. Blackwell Publishing. Free pdf of the book is available here: https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/files/mKmsm6yRsA

3. Weiss, Penny A., (2018). *Feminist Manifestos: A Global Documentary Reader*. NYU Press.

4. Joseph, Ralina. (2018). *Postracial Resistance: Black Women, Media, and the Uses of Strategic Ambiguity*. NYU Press.

In addition, we will draw upon a variety of Open Educational Resources (OER) including articles, websites, blogs, videos, and other materials and texts. These will be available on our class site in Blackboard.

These books are available at the USM Bookstore http://usm.maine.edu/books or online at Amazon and other booksellers. They may also be rented from online book sellers for a reduced price, compared to purchasing the print version.

ASSESSMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS

"As learners, we retain only 10% of what we read and 20% of what we hear, but we comprehend 90% of what we say and do."

Reflection #1	20 points
Reflection #2	20 points
Reflection #3	20 points
Gender Comm. in Society Presentation	25 points
Online Discussions/Moderator	15 points
	100 Total

Reflection Essays (20 points each). Students will complete three reflections worth twenty points each. The reflections relate to concepts and issues covered in class. Each

reflection will have several different parts, with a variety of questions and activities to engage you in thinking about gender communication. This includes having students undergo mini-research projects about gender communication. Reflections will be evaluated based on page length, timely submission, and your efforts to engage with issues and concepts from class lectures and discussions and apply them to the questions and mini-research activities.

Gender Communication in Society Presentation (25 points). You will work on a gender communication in society topic, and give a "class presentation" via Prezi, Google Presentation, or Slideshare (or the like) worth 25 points. The topic will relate to aspects of gender communication that we are covering in class and in the readings. The purpose of this assignment is to offer an opportunity for students to apply the concepts that we are learning about gender communication to the creation of their own analysis about the ways in which gender communication operates in society. Grading will be on an individual basis. Points are based on: 1) depth of research, 2) accuracy of information and analysis, 3) clear organization, and 4) overall quality of the presentation.

Online Discussions/Moderator (15 points). Online discussions are an important part of this class. The discussion questions and prompts are supplied by me. Beyond, this, each student will take a turn at moderating an online class discussion. This entails responding to classmates' posts, adding additional relevant information and links where appropriate, posing follow-up questions, etc. You will write a short (1-2 pages) paper in which you reflect upon your experiences as an online discussion moderator. What were the greatest challenges? What aspects did you find interesting? What, if anything, would you do differently if you were to moderate an online discussion again in future?

Note: It is critical to keep up with the readings so that you are able to contribute to class discussions in an informed and constructive manner.

COURSE POLICIES
- ✓ **Late assignments will not be accepted.** All students are expected to complete work on time

- ✓ **Grades for assignments are final.** If you feel there has been an error in grading, contact me <u>within one week</u> of the assignment grade being recorded in Blackboard. After that week, I will not review grades that have been assigned. You are responsible for keeping track of your graded work in a timely manner.

- ✓ Make it a priority to **check Blackboard and your USM email** for announcements, notices, additional resources, etc.

- ✓ Feel free to e-mail me at any time with questions, observations, suggestions, and concerns.

- ✓ No incomplete grades will be given.

DISCUSSION GUIDELINES
In general, you should know that it is important to participate and post your information and comments in a timely fashion for the discussion to be successful. While these are asynchronous discussions, we must still all be participating on the same days to ensure

a lively exchange of ideas.

I post detailed information about discussion expectations and requirements as they relate to specific assignments.

GRADE SCALE
Grading is based on a total of 100 points. Students will accumulate points as the semester progresses. If extra credit opportunities were to be provided they would be available to all students.

Grades will be based on the following scale:

92.50-100.00	A
90.00-92.499	A-
87.50-89.999	B+
82.50-87.499	B
80.00-82.499	B-
77.50-79.999	C+
72.50-77.499	C
70.00-72.499	C-
60.00-69.999	D
0.00– 59.999	F

General Grading Standards

- A—Exceptionally well-prepared and executed completion of assigned work indicating effort, individualized style, and demonstrating a thorough grasp of the course material.

- B—Creative, well-prepared work, demonstrating unusual effort, talent, or grasp of the material that is distinctly superior to an "average" effort.

- C—Satisfactory completion of assigned work at a level of effort and competency normally expected of the majority of students (basic completion, average performance, and reasonable effort).

- D—Unsatisfactory completion of work, indicating misperceived objectives or failure to grasp key concepts, even with reasonable effort.

- F—Failure to complete assigned work through lack of reasonable effort or failure to attain a passing average on either exams or assignments.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Plagiarism–whether intended or not–is a serious academic violation of intellectual property rights, and may earn your assignments, essays, and other writings an automatic failing grade. To avoid plagiarizing the works or words of others, be sure to cite all sources, documentation, ideas, and quotes, etc. that you use.

Plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of information are violations of academic integrity that will not be tolerated in this class. Please check the USM Office of Community Standards website for official definitions of these practices.

ADAPTATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS
At any point in the semester, if you encounter difficulty with the course or feel that you could be performing at a higher level, consult with me. Students experience difficulty in courses for a variety of reasons. The following resources are available on campus for students.

For writing skills or time management, you can make an appointment to see a student tutor at the Learning Commons located in both the Portland and Gorham libraries. For more information, visit **http://www.usm.maine.edu/learningcommons**.

The Writing Center at LAC is also available to all USM students and is a great option for students living in the greater Lewiston/Auburn area. For more information, please visit **http://usm.maine.edu/writingcenter**.

If you need accommodations due to a disability, please contact the Disability Services Center for confidential assistance and accommodation authorization. Timely notification of accommodations is essential. For more information, visit, **http://usm.maine.edu/dsc**. The Disability Services Center can be reached by calling 207-780-4706 or by email at **dsc@usm.maine.edu**.

University Health and Counseling Services is a student resource that promotes the health and well-being of the USM community. More information can be found at **www.usm.maine.edu/uhcs**.

Blackboard is compatible with the JAWS screen reader. According to the company, "Blackboard® is committed to ensuring that our platform is usable and accessible. The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) recently awarded Blackboard Learn™, Release 9.1 with a Nonvisual Accessibility Gold Certification, making it the first and only learning management system to achieve certification. Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility levels using two sets of standards: Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued from the United States federal government and the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Audits of our software releases are conducted by a third party to ensure the accessibility of the products." (www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Learn/Resources/Accessibility.aspx)