

## SLHS 1402 The Talking Brain

### Fall Semester 2012

**Lectures:** M, W 8:30 – 9:45 pm (20 Shevlin)

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**Office Hours:** M., W 10:00 – 10:45 am, and by appointment (49 Shevlin Hall)

### Course Overview

Human communication is at the core of social interactions, and communication disorders profoundly affect social relations among people. Within the last decade, new medical techniques have allowed people to examine brain function as it affects human communication and social interaction. We now understand how differences in brain function relate to behavioral and social diversity in people with normal brain function as well as people with brain injury. Speech-language-hearing science researchers from various disciplines, use various modes of investigation to identify the presence of a communication disability and how that disability affects the individual's social structures. This increased understanding has been matched with an increased coverage of this topic in the popular media. Many prominent publications, such as *Newsweek* and *Time*, regularly feature stories about the brain. Popular films have featured characters with brain injury or disease. The increased media exposure reflects increased interest among the general public, from artists interested in how brains process images; to educators interested in techniques to maximize brain potential; to engineers interested in devising computers with human-like speech and language abilities.

This course focuses on how the brain produces and understands speech and language, by exploring scientific information through readings and videos, as well as literature and feature-length films. Students are able to compare and contrast the social science that describes the disability and society's misperceptions of disability. How these misperceptions come about are explored through the social relationships between individuals with communication disability, institutions and their perspectives, and ways in which individuals face and overcome the social barriers associated with the disability. Through a combination of learning formats (reading, lecture, guest presentations, multi-media including film and internet, class discussion), students learn not only the brain science of speech and language development, and brain related speech, language and cognitive impairments but also other social science ways of knowing. Individuals and how their communication disability changes over time with "support" and their roles in society are emphasized throughout the course. This knowledge is then compared and contrasted to the information about brain-related communication disabilities from popular media, film, websites, and literature. Each unit is organized as follows: (a) Introduction to neurological foundation of the behaviors through lecture and textbook (or other posted) readings and websites, and (b) Through lecture, readings and class activities students learn to use the tools of SLHS and social science researchers to evaluate the communication process (rate or count the observable behavior) or disorder and compare/contrast it with examples of mass media and/or literature portrayal of these individuals. The multiple impacts of societal, personal, and sociopolitical influences are also discussed using lecture, and class discussion based on activities include internet, film, TV, internet, literature, etc. These activities are done individually, in small groups, or in pairs, depending on the activity. Students turn in activity sheets with written responses after extensive class discussion.

This course fulfills the following Liberal Education Social Science Core requirements:

- The course demonstrates how social scientists describe and analyze human experiences and behavior and explores the interrelationships among individuals, institutions, structures, events and/or ideas.
- Students manipulate social science data (primary or secondary) using one or more of the primary quantitative or qualitative methods for collecting and/or analyzing these data.
- The course identifies key disciplinary resources and evaluates their quality.
- Students examine the roles that individuals play in their cultural, social, economic, and/or political worlds.
- The course promotes multidisciplinary ways of thinking that can be used to synthesize and analyze local, national, and global issues, and the connections among these.
- Students work collaboratively and individually to construct new knowledge.

## Learning Objectives

1. Students will identify the dominant social and discipline specific theories for identifying, describing and treating persons with brain-related communication processes and disabilities.
2. Students will use sociological, linguistic and anthropological methods to manipulate communication “data” through multiple activities including, content analysis and social stratification through popular media that portray individuals with brain-related communication disorders and differences.
3. Students will identify and describe various brain-related communication disorders and be able to differentiate these disorders from the typical population.
4. Students will compare and contrast scientific “evidence” of communication disorders to the film, internet and literature portrayal of the myths about these individuals.
5. Students will gain understanding of the relationships or connections between individuals with brain-related communication disabilities and services provided through institutions, and changes in policy.
6. Students will acquire skills for life-long questioning of popular portrayals of individuals who have different or disordered communication.

## Organization of Course

**Class Time:** 60% lecture, 40% demos, exercises, and discussion

**Work Load:** reading (20 pages a week); writing (movie review, 3~4 pages long); project (3~4 pages); in-class exercises; exams (one midterm and one final). Please check the dates on the last page of the syllabus.

**Examinations:** Two exams will be given. Each exam will make up 30% of the final grade. Review sheets are provided before each exam. The format will include multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. Each test will cover designated material from lectures, discussions and readings. Make-up exams are allowed if you are ill, notify the instructor prior to the exam and bring in written evidence. If this occurs, the make-up exam must be taken within 1 week.

**Pick-of-the Pictures:** We have accumulated photographs of famous individuals who have some association with a communication disorder. These associations can include having a communicative disorder (CD), playing the part of someone with a communicative disorder in a film or TV show, have a son or daughter with a CD, etc. Your job is to:

- Find out who these people are and what their association with a CD is. We will select some pictures and test your knowledge in class.
- In pairs, show these photographs to a single family member or friend who is at least 6 years older or younger than you and interview them about their perceptions of two photographs of individuals that they recognize and know. Leading interview questions are provided for you and we will practice interviewing and writing down their answers. Questions are related to discovering how interviewees learned of the individual (form of media or literature or other means of communication), the perceptions the interviewee has of the individual and the communication disability, and the impact that this individual has had on the interviewees’ perceptions of those in society with this communication disability. You will turn in interview transcripts, and answers to follow up questions.
- This assignment is worth 15% of your final grade.

**Movie Review:** You are required to view a movie and write a report/commentary (3-4 pages long) which will make 10% of your final grade. We will provide you a list of films to choose from and specific report requirements.

**Class participation:** Your class participation grade will be based on your regular attendance and participation in small activities, rather than the actual content of your participation. That is, you will not be graded on the *accuracy* and *quantity* of what you say; rather, you will be graded on your *active, regular* participation. In class activities will be done on a regular basis and sometimes include small group assignments. There will be 14 class activities. Class participation makes up 15% of your final grade.

**\*LATE ASSIGNMENTS: FOR EACH DAY LATE 10% WILL BE DEDUCTED FROM THE GRADE YOU WOULD HAVE RECEIVED FOR AN ASSIGNMENT**

### **Summary of Grades**

Exam #1	30%
Exam #2	30%
Pick-of-the pictures	15%
Movie review	10%
<b>Class exercises and participation</b>	<b>15%</b>
	100%

### **Course Materials**

1. Textbook (required): Ashlsen, E. (2006). *Introduction to Neurolinguistics*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
2. Textbook (optional): Tanner, D. C. (2003). *Exploring Communication Disorders: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Introduction through Literature and Media*. New York: Allen-Bacon.
3. Moodle web site. Course materials, grades, and discussion board will be accessible on course web site.
4. Some reading materials and handouts will be given to you in class.

### **Expectations for Students**

University of Minnesota Senate Policy states that for each semester credit the average workload expectation is 1 hour of class and 3 additional hours of preparation per week. Therefore, a 3-credit course will involve approximately 9 hours of outside class preparation on your part, plus 3 hours of in-class time. *Students are expected to attend all lectures and to participate actively in exercises and discussion. Each student is responsible for information presented in class and for any announcements that are made in class and by Email sent to their UMN account.*

### **GRADING**

A	93 -100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
A-	90 - 92	
B	87 - 89	
+		
B	83 - 86	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
B-	80 - 82	
C	74 - 79	
+		
C	66 - 73	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
C-	60 - 65	
D	57 - 59	
+		
D	50 - 56	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements
F	<50	Represents failure and signifies that the work was either 1) Completed, but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit, or 2) Not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student for the student to be awarded an I
S		Achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or higher
N	<60	No credit
I		Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, <i>due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization or family emergency, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The awarding of an "I" requires a written agreement between the instructor and the student.</i> Failure to complete assignments or examinations that is not attributable to "extraordinary circumstances" does not justify the assignment of an "I" grade.

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

**Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course.**

Please familiarize yourself with the UMN's policy on Student Conduct:

<http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/StudentConduct.Html> and  
<http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/AcademicMisconduct.html>

**CLASSROOM CONDUCT**

1. Please consult with instructor regarding permission and accommodations for special needs.
2. All students are expected to behave as scholars at a leading research university. This includes arriving on time, not talking during lecture (unless addressing the instructor or in group discussions), and not leaving the classroom before the end of the lecture. Use of cell phone in class is generally not allowed.
3. Disruptive students will be warned and potentially dismissed from the classroom.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

It is University of Minnesota policy to provide on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements.

Please contact the instructor if you would like to discuss your individual needs for accommodations.

**Use of Email and Course Web Site**

In accordance with Academic/Administrative Policy 2.2.3, "A University assigned student email account shall be the University's official means of communication with all students on the Twin Cities campus. Students are responsible for all information sent to them via their University assigned email account and the designated course web site.

If a student chooses to forward their University email account, he or she is responsible for all information, including attachments, sent to any other email account."

As a matter of good practice, *students are urged to check their UMN Email account at least once daily and also at least once over the weekend.*

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***THIS MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS ON REQUEST. PLEASE CONTACT THE INSTRUCTOR IF YOU REQUIRE AN ALTERNATIVE FORMAT.***

*The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.*

## Course Schedule

Date	Lecture Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
9/5	Ch 1: Introduction: Communication disorder, media and society	P 1-8	Activity 1 in class
9/10 9/12	Ch 12-14: Resources: basic concepts and methods Neuroanatomy of Human Communication	P 161-188	Activity 2 in class
9/17 9/19	Ch 2: Theories about brain and language	P 9-34	Activity 3 in class
9/24 9/26	Ch 3: Models and frameworks	P 35-54 <b>Pick-of-the Pictures Assigned</b>	Activity 4 in class
10/1 10/3	Ch 4: Phonetics and phonology	P 55-66	Activity 5 in class
10/8 10/10	Ch 5: Morphology and syntax	P 67-78	Activity 6 in class
<b>10/15</b> 10/17	Ch 6: Lexical semantics	P 79-96,	<b>Pick-of-the Picture Report Due</b> Activity 7 in class
10/22 <b>10/24</b>	Ch 7: Pragmatics <b>Mid-term Exam (in class)</b>	P 97-110	Activity 8 in class <b>Midterm Exam</b>
10/29 10/31	Ch 8: Reading and writing	P 111-120 <b>Movie Review Assigned</b>	Activity 9 in class
11/5 11/7	Ch 9: Bilingualism	P 121-128	Activity 10 in class
11/12 11/14	Ch 10: Evolution and development	P 129-144	Activity 11 in class
11/19 11/21	Ch 11: Multimodality Language development	P 145-160	Activity 12 in class
11/26 11/28	Language and music (Aphasia and Amusia)	Read materials online	Activity 13 in class
<b>12/3</b> 12/5	Autism and other language disorders	Read materials online	<b>Movie Review Due</b> Activity 14 in class
12/10 12/12	Final Review		
<p><b>Regularly Scheduled Final Exam: 1:30 p.m.–3:30 p.m., Saturday, December 15 in lecture room</b>  <b>Alternate final exam date to be announced.</b></p>			

**Note:** The course schedule is tentative and subject to change depending on actual course progress.