

# Basic Communication Course Annual

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## Contents and Abstracts

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## Contents and Abstracts

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Delivering 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in the Basic Course. .... 1  
Stephen K. Hunt, Cheri J. Simonds,  
Brent K. Simonds

*In this manuscript we argue that the communication discipline's pedagogical content knowledge should be expanded to include educational strategies for advancing students' critical thinking, information literacy, and political engagement skills. Further, we argue that the discipline should explicitly position itself as uniquely qualified to address these skills. By doing so, those affiliated with the basic communication course can leverage a substantial amount of political capital on their home campuses and go a long way toward delivering the critical skills students need in order to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

- Student Misbehaviors, Instructor Responses,  
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Karen K. Dwyer, and Marshall Prisbell

*The concept of connected classroom climate focuses on student-to-student communication behaviors that are paramount in creating the climate of a class, especially in the basic course. While previous studies have focused on the positive and cooperative behaviors of students and instructors that may contribute to per-*

*ceptions of classroom connectedness, the role that incivilities may play in detracting from or undermining a connected classroom climate has not been investigated. This study examines perceptions of a connected classroom climate and its relationships to student misbehaviors and instructor responses. A total of 542 university students enrolled in 30 sections of the basic public speaking course completed the Connected Classroom Climate Inventory (CCCI) and scales measuring student misbehaviors and teacher responses to student misbehaviors. Results showed that student perceptions of a connected classroom climate were inversely related to both inconsiderate and harassing student misbehaviors. The results also revealed a possible relationship between classroom connectedness and the manner in which instructors respond to students when they misbehave. These findings suggest that basic course instructors need to consider how to reduce student inconsideration and harassment misbehaviors in their classes, and how to positively respond to these behaviors when they do occur so that classroom connectedness is not diminished.*

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Stephen K. Hunt, Brent K. Simonds

*As a critical component of many general education programs, the basic communication course is at the forefront of many assessment efforts. Five years after conducting extensive program assessment using student portfolios, and after implementing revisions to the instructor training program, course directors at Illi-*

*nois State University conducted another round of portfolio assessment. The present study reveals progress in the specific areas originally targeted for improvement. Additional areas for future revisions to the instructor training program are suggested. Implications for assessment efforts at other institutions are discussed.*

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*Problem-based learning (PBL) is an instructional strategy designed to foster student engagement. This study examined the effectiveness of PBL to actively engage students in a basic public speaking course. An adapted version of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) was administered to students in 47 sections of the public speaking course at a medium-sized midwestern university. Students in the PBL-enhanced sections were significantly more engaged ( $\mu = 33.6$ ) than those in the conventionally taught sections ( $\mu = 32.2$ ). Further analysis examined three variables embedded in the survey: a cooperative learning variable, a cognitive level variable, and a personal skills variable. A multivariate analysis of the three variables revealed significant differences between the PBL-enhanced and conventionally taught section students with relation to cooperative learning,  $p < .01$ . No significant difference in cognitive level or personal skill development was revealed between the PBL-enhanced and conventionally taught courses, although the PBL means were slightly higher.*

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Ana M. Cruz

*Most research on the association between classroom climate and student learning has emphasized the instructor's role in creating a positive learning environ-*

*ment. However, the role students play in fostering a classroom climate that promotes learning has received less attention, particularly in the basic course. This study examined the relationship between perceptions of a connected classroom climate and students' cognitive and affective learning involving 437 freshman and sophomore university students enrolled in the basic public speaking course. Students completed the Connected Classroom Climate Inventory (CCCI) and scales measuring affective and cognitive learning. Results showed significant relationships between student perceptions of connected classroom climate and cognitive learning, affective learning, and affective behavioral intent.*

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**Sandra L. Pensoneau-Conway**

*In this narrative essay, I use my experiences as a communication educator to theorize the roles of desire and passion within the classroom. Extra-classroom encounters with several students inspire questions I feel are fundamental to the vocation of an educator in general, and a communication educator specifically. I argue for a shift in pedagogical practice from resisting desire and passion as feelings potentially destructive, to embracing such emotions as affirming, creative, and relationship-building pedagogical influences. I aim to illuminate the tensions and contradictions young and/or beginning communication instructors sometimes face when questions of personal and professional boundaries arise. I offer a pedagogy of the erotic as a pedagogical orientation that is fitting for the introductory hybrid course, as it promotes (1) the affirmation of*

*personhood; (2) the cultivation of creative capacities; and (3) the nurturance of relationships. These implications of a pedagogy of the erotic may be useful both within introductory communication course classrooms, as well as within orientation programs that train introductory course educators.*

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