2004

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ENGAGED PEDAGOGY IN HUMAN COMMUNICATION
AT CSU MONTEREY BAY:
A CASE STUDY

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Communication Studies

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

By

Jessica Janine Smiley

May 2004

UMI Number: 1420429

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ABSTRACT

ENGAGED PEDAGOGY IN HUMAN COMMUNICATION AT CSU MONTEREY BAY: A CASE STUDY

By Jessica Janine Smiley

This ethnography analyzes the pedagogical methods used in the Human Communication Department at CSU Monterey Bay through participant observations and interviews. This study supports the suggestions made for alternative pedagogical models described as critical, engaged, and feminist pedagogy in the 1996 edition of *Communication Education*, exist at CSU Monterey Bay in the Human Communication Department. Four Human Communication courses were observed over the course of three weeks, and eight interviews were conducted with faculty, students, and the department chair. From the observations and interviews, it was discovered that the pedagogical methods used in the Human Communication Department reflect emergent themes of feminist, critical, and engaged pedagogy.

Acknowledgements

Many important people in life contribute to the growth and development of a person's viewpoints and decision making, who guide a person toward certain goals or ways of life. I am lucky to have such a support group of family, friends, and colleagues who all contributed to the growth and development of this thesis, as well as my own viewpoints on feminism and social justice.

I would like to thank each of the participants in this study who willingly shared their classrooms with me, their honest feedback, and their very personal experiences during class discussions and interviews. Your time, feedback, willingness, and guidance are very much appreciated. I hope I can return the favor one day.

Thank you to my faculty and peers in the Human Communication Department at CSU Monterey Bay. You each brought me to a new awareness of issues surrounding social justice, feminism, community, multiculturalism, and diversity. You motivated me to obtain my Master's Degree. Our discussions shaped me into an independent woman dedicated to deconstructing patriarchal systems in society that oppress women and minorities. You are the foundation of this thesis.

Thank you to my faculty and peers in the Communication Studies Department at San Jose State University. Your continued support throughout the program is the reason I got to the end of this thesis. Early morning talks in the T.A. office kept me sane, kept me calm, and kept me motivated. Thank you for the opportunity to become a Teaching Associate. It was the most positive, rewarding, and memorable experience I will take

away from the department.

Very significant to the development of this thesis is the support and feedback of my advisory committee: Dr. Shawn Spano and Dr. Wenshu Lee. You helped with the overall direction and purpose of my project. Our discussions were very meaningful and influential in the thesis experience. Your time, wisdom, and guidance are very much appreciated. To my adviser and chair, Dr. Deanna Fassett, you have been a solid source of encouragement, positive energy, and wisdom. This document would not be readable without your knowledge and help. I hope that with the accomplishment of this document, you too feel some accomplishment for being the most engaged professor I know. Truly, you are a role model of effective teaching and guidance. Thank you, more than you know.

And finally, without the unconditional love and support of my family and close friends, I would have given up a long time ago. You keep telling me how proud you are, but I am the one who is proud. The only reason I continued my education was for my family. Each of you was my motivating factor to finish. I dedicate everything I have accomplished in school to my Mom, my Dad, Wyatt, Lindsay, Julie, Jason, Grandma, and Grandpa. Our entire family just received their Master's Degree- congratulations! I love you, thank you, appreciate you, and dedicate this thesis to you!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Authors such as bell hooks (1994), Adrienne Rich (1979), and Paulo Freire (1970) explicitly and implicitly suggest a plan for a new university that adopts and implements a pedagogical model that calls for an “education revolution” (Kramarae, 1996, p. 315). This revolution breaks all traditional models of teaching and learning in the university classroom. The revolution changes “the center of gravity of the institution” from “a breeding ground not of humanism, but of masculine privilege” to work toward a woman-centered university (Rich, 1979, pp. 127-128). Adrienne Rich (1979) believes:

As women have gradually and reluctantly been admitted into the mainstream of higher education, they have been made participants in a system that prepares men to take up roles of power in a man-centered society, that asks questions and teaches “facts” generated by male intellectual tradition, and that both subtly and openly confirms men as the leaders and shapers of human destiny both within and outside academia. (p. 127)

Rich, and others, demand a shift in educational priorities from a man-centered university “toward a woman-centered university,” (1979, p. 125) which implements engaged models of pedagogy. This shift includes an education that can be experienced by both men and women from all races, classes, ages, abilities, sexual orientations, religions, political beliefs, and personal standpoints. The goal is to create a diverse curriculum where the “challenge would be to continually move those from the margin to the center of the learning experience and vice versa” (DeFrancisco, 1996, p. 332).

In her essay entitled “Toward a Woman-Centered University,” Adrienne Rich dared to envision a university where collaborative learning, holistic approaches, and connected knowledge were the vision for change. In 1979, Rich called for a change in traditional curriculum of banking model methods to critical, engaged, and feminist pedagogical ideals. After reading Rich’s essay, and taking part in SCA panel discussions on “What We’d Want: Communication Studies in a Women’s University,” Cheri Kramarae put together a symposium of essays by five authors, asking each to respond to the idea of a woman-centered university and what this university would look like for communication studies. Each author provided her own interpretation of this new campus in the October 1996 issue of *Communication Education* entitled: “The Women’s University: A Symposium,” and includes vision statements, new curriculum, pedagogical models, faculty, staff, and student needs, learning outcomes, and goals (Houston, Jenefsky, Johnson, 1996). Kramarae’s (1996) rationale for putting together the symposium is the same rationale for completing this ethnography. She states:

Women students still have difficulties in many if not most of their classrooms, reporting problems with having their voices or ideas heard, sexual harassment, poor advising, and little professional encouragement. Women faculty, in every type of institution and every field, earn less than men (even when age, degrees, experience, and publications are taken into account). Tenure is awarded less frequently to women, and takes them longer to get. Many women faculty report a lack of community on campus (Bernice Sandler and Roberta Hall, 1996, document many of these problems). (p. 316)

By envisioning a new curriculum for communication studies and challenging existing methods of teaching and learning, women faculty and students are encouraged to break traditional models of learning to bring more awareness to women's experiences.

Through awareness and change, women faculty will not earn less than male faculty, they will not face tenure obstacles due to sex, and they may find a greater sense of community in education. Kramarae (1996) further argues, "Even as the funding challenges have been made increasingly clear to us, the past twenty years of feminist theorizing and research told us that *major changes* are needed (Spender, 1992) in women's education, and thus in men's education. We can call these 'extensive policy and institutional changes,' or we can call them collectively 'an education revolution'" (p. 316). Each author in the symposium accepts Kramarae's challenge for envisioning a new curricula and suggests major changes for this educational revolution in communication studies.

After reviewing each essay in the symposium and exploring Adrienne Rich's, bell hooks's, and Paulo Freire's visions for a new campus, I discovered that every suggestion made by these eight visionaries was made possible and currently exists at a university in California. Fifteen years after Adrienne Rich wrote her essay, "Toward a Woman-Centered University," the 21st campus for the 21st century opened and became CSU Monterey Bay (CSUMB). This campus enacted a vision that reflects the ideals of each of these authors. The outcome came fifteen years later, but the end result is a university campus that is creating a body of students who are critically trained, globally competent, technically skilled, and community oriented to become productive citizens and community builders (CSUMB Vision Statement, 1994).

CSUMB is located in Seaside, California on the Monterey coast and was established in 1994. Doors opened on August 28, 1995. The campus population grew from 654 students in 1995 to 3,551 in 2002 (<http://csumb.edu/faq.html>). The school prides itself on the diverse combination of ethnic backgrounds and equal gender representation of its students, staff, and faculty. Most importantly, CSUMB established a community where students, staff, and faculty believe in their vision statement that provides an atmosphere of collaborative development and learning.

Rationale

This study supports the suggestions made for engaged pedagogical models described as encompassing both critical and feminist pedagogy, by exploring how they exist at CSU Monterey Bay in the Human Communication (HCOM) department. The term “engaged pedagogy” is used throughout this thesis as an overarching theme that encompasses and builds upon both critical and feminist forms of pedagogy. The goal was to demonstrate how the HCOM department implements the suggestions made by the five visionaries in the symposium. To accomplish this, a comparative analysis of the current literature to the actual teaching that exists in HCOM was completed through participant classroom observations, personal interviews, as well as an autoethnography of personal experience as a student in the HCOM department. Four courses in HCOM were compared that are similar to courses offered at San Jose State University. This ethnography aimed to serve as a resource of awareness for institutions and faculty who desire a change in traditional communication studies pedagogy. A study such as this that

aimed to challenge traditional communication studies pedagogy is critical to the body of communication research to demonstrate that engaged pedagogy in communication studies is useful and possible. The methods used in HCOM served as a positive example of engaged pedagogy for communication scholars at any institution. This study was written as a response to the symposium of writers and scholars who wrote their individual pieces, while their visions were unknowingly taking place in HCOM. Further, this study aims at informing more scholars about the teaching and learning that took place in the Human Communication department at CSUMB.

Two research questions helped identify common themes in the observations and interviews. These common themes outline the major components of the study. RQ1: How does the Human Communication faculty at CSU Monterey Bay demonstrate a feminist, critical, and engaged pedagogical model of teaching in the communication classroom? RQ2: How do the professors and students respond to this type of pedagogy in their communication classes? These research questions are later discussed and outlined in more detail.

This thesis strived to add awareness to the field of communication education specifically, and feminist research in general. This study sought to enlighten those engrossed with the desire to implement engaged forms of pedagogy into the communication classroom. This study worked to provide an effective example to universities that engaged pedagogy is useful and possible. This information is presented and written from a feminist standpoint that takes into consideration feminist theory. Feminist theory argues that everyday communication practices tend to exclude,

marginalize, or distort the true interests of women as well as men, because these practices serve the interests of a patriarchal social system.

In the following study, a review of the literature on critical, feminist, and engaged pedagogy is provided, along with what these theories mean, and what they look like in the engaged classroom. An in-depth analysis is presented about the symposium and each characteristic scholars believe to be crucial in the classroom are articulated. The misconceptions of these new teaching models are discussed and their strengths and limitations are shown. The methods chapter describes the techniques and models used to complete the study, as well as provide support for why these models prove to be most effective. The findings chapter goes into depth on the results from conducting participant observations and interviews in the HCOM department. This chapter makes larger connections from the themes that arise after completing the interviews and observations to the themes that develop throughout the literature review.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In the existing pedagogical literature, many scholars have important messages to convey about traditional models for teaching, and more importantly, these scholars have constructive opinions to add for progressive models of teaching. Most critical scholars agree that a need for new models of teaching in the classroom is long overdue (Freire, 2000; hooks, 1994; Rich, 1979; Shor, 1992). Scholars provide strong arguments for doing away with traditional models of learning in the classroom and demand a shift in the ideals educational institutions use to build their curriculum and institutional syllabi. In this literature review, these arguments are explored and the limitations with traditional

models of teaching are discussed, along with the concepts of new pedagogical models, and the reasons why institutions and teachers are reluctant to change their pedagogical ideals. A theoretical list of what a feminist classroom looks like based on the aforementioned symposium of ideas by five authors in the October 1996 issue of *Communication Education* is further explored. Then, a discussion of the misconceptions regarding new methods for teaching, and the advantages and limitations to adopting a new method in the classroom are revealed.

Traditional models of teaching

In families and cultures, traditions are described as the sacred act of passing down stories, beliefs, and rituals. In this sense, tradition keeps a generation or a group of people alive throughout time. History is passed down through traditions and significant people are rarely forgotten. hooks (1994) agrees that, “Tradition should be such a wonderful work, a rich work. Yet it is often used in a negative sense to repeat the tradition of the power of status quo. We could celebrate the tradition of teachers who have created a curriculum that is progressive. But such a tradition is never named or valued...” (p. 142). When describing tradition in an educational or learning environment, scholars envision histories and stories passed down from one perspective and one tradition—a white, patriarchal tradition. hooks (1994) describes this partial tradition:

If we examine critically the traditional role of the university in the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge and information, it is painfully clear that biases that uphold and maintain white supremacy, imperialism, sexism, and racism, have

distorted education so that it is no longer about the practice of freedom. The call for a recognition of cultural diversity, a rethinking of ways of knowing, a deconstruction of old epistemologies, and the concomitant demand that there be a transformation in our classrooms, in how we teach and what we teach, has been a necessary revolution—one that seeks to restore life to a corrupt and dying academy. (pp. 29-30)

Traditional classrooms provide students with history and knowledge from a white perspective. Critical scholars, such as bell hooks, recognize how tradition is incorporated into the classroom to represent only one history, and one way of seeing the past.

In a traditional classroom, traditional classroom conduct is also present. Students are accused of cheating or plagiarizing if they are “caught” asking their peers for help. Collaborative learning and teaching does not occur and students are forced to work individually:

Despite many academics’ commitment to collaborative teaching and learning, the structure of the academy is resistant to collaborative work, with the exception of peer tutoring. For example, Bruffee points out that students have internalized “long-prevailing academic prohibitions against collaboration” because such “collaboration skates dangerously close to the supreme academic sin, plagiarism (26-27).” (Leiby & Henson, 1998, p. 178)

Feminist theorists also recognize how traditional classrooms privilege competition over collaboration and argumentation over discussion (Leiby & Henson, 1998, p. 178). Other models of traditional teaching place students in rows so it becomes harder to collaborate

with peers. This can create a classroom environment that becomes very competitive as opposed to collaborative among students. The learning environment becomes a place where students become objects in the learning process and take part in what Paulo Freire (2000) defines as the banking concept of education.

Banking concept of education

In 1970, Paulo Freire first published his idea of what traditional pedagogy comes to look like in the classroom:

Education...becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the “banking” concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits. (2000, p. 72)

In this kind of learning environment, teachers talk *at* their students instead of *with* them to create a mutual place of understanding for the concept at hand (Shor, 1992, p. 85). In this environment, Ira Shor (1992) believes that students become passive learners without finding a meaningful connection to their own needs, interests, or community cultures (p. 18). Teachers merely teach skills and information without relating them to society or to students’ experiences. Education then turns into, “an authoritarian transfer of official words, a process that severely limits student development as democratic citizens” (Shor, 1992, p. 18). To be a democratic citizen, one should develop an opinion and the

necessary critical thinking skills to vote, or make informed decisions, in order to create an improved and changing society. When students are not given skills to become their own thinkers, the banking concept of education takes precedence and then becomes a very dehumanizing act of education, instead of a liberating experience for students.

Dehumanizing vs. liberating education

When students feel dehumanized in an educational setting they are also made to feel like objects, or as “others.” Students feel “other” to the kind of leadership roles that exist at the university or academic setting. Adrienne Rich (1979) describes this act of dehumanization in terms of gender roles:

What we have at present *is* a man-centered university, a breeding ground not of humanism, but of masculine privilege. As women have gradually and reluctantly been admitted into the mainstream of higher education, they have been made participants in a system that prepares men to take up roles of power in a man-centered society, that asks questions and teaches “facts” generated by male intellectual tradition, and that both subtly and openly confirms men as the leaders and shapers of human destiny both within and outside academia. (p. 127)

Traditional gender roles in the classroom are seen through the men who teach the classes, the men who make up the administration, and the patriarchal ways that traditionally make up education. Freire (2000) believes these traditional patriarchal methods for teaching serve the interests of “the oppressors (an egoism cloaked in the false generosity of paternalism) and makes of the oppressed the objects of its humanitarianism, itself

maintains and embodies oppression. It is an instrument of dehumanization” (p. 54). In other words, by continuing to use patriarchal ways of teaching, traditional patriarchal ideals are perpetuated so that men remain in power. When men in power perpetuate their own ideals as truth onto groups other than white males, then an act of dehumanization results. Gendered and racialized beings learn to be second in society by constant reminders of class privilege and hierarchical roles ingrained in education. Freire further goes on to explain how a humanizing pedagogy does not consist of a leadership that can manipulate the students, the oppressed, because a humanizing model acknowledges the consciousness of the students (2000, p. 68-9). A pedagogical model that is consistent with bringing student experiences to the center of discussion is one that strays from dehumanizing students to objects, who are assumed to have no real knowledge or experiences to contribute.

Another form of dehumanization in education is created in the form of alienation. Alienation, in this sense, is the act of transferring the ownership of meaning and truth from people in power (teachers or men) to those with less power (students or minorities). Ironically, alienation is used by educators who believe in liberation but have been products of banking methods. Freire (2000) explains:

Those who espouse the cause of liberation are themselves surrounded and influenced by the climate which generates the banking concept, and often do not perceive its true significance or its dehumanizing power. Paradoxically, then, they utilize this same instrument of alienation in what they consider an effort to liberate...But one does not liberate people by alienating them. Authentic

liberation—the process of humanization—is not another deposit to be made in men. Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it. (p. 79)

When teachers are taught by banking models instead of liberating methods, it is much more common to relay those same methods to their own students in the future. This process continues until the teacher makes the first step in realizing the dehumanizing power that traditional pedagogy has on students.

Not only are teachers and scholars instilling alienation and dehumanization in the classroom, but current instructional communication research produces these same dehumanizing effects. In her work, Jo Sprague (1992) poses a significant question in regards to instructional communication research, “Does our current approach to scholarship have a liberating or a dehumanizing effect of students and teachers?” (p. 5). She observes that critical questions are not raised in regards to who is being served by our educational institutions: “Do they in fact work to actualize the American Dream or do they perpetuate existing social and economic inequities?” (p. 6). Sprague addresses the extant literature, pointing to a gap in instructional communication research that reflects traditional models of teaching and perceiving education in general. Sprague believes:

With its long heritage of dialectical inquiry, this discipline should be leading other teacher educators in developing sophisticated communication-based forms of pedagogy that would elevate the teacher’s role. Instead, we seem to be lagging behind and investigating technical variables that perpetuate the notion of the

teacher as a mere presenter of information or manager of classroom behavior.

(p. 9)

Sprague's work echoes hooks' (1994) and Rich's (1979) claims that curriculum is set up to favor a specific group of people. Sprague describes alienation taking place in the research, "The politics of the general school curriculum more often than not favor the interests of White, middle-class, male, English-speaking students. Research that is valuable to corporations or the military is far more likely to be funded than feminist scholarship or peace studies" (p. 12). Sprague argues that not enough research is done to ask the critical questions: Why is research valuable to corporations or the military far more likely to be funded than feminist scholarship or peace studies? Who is being served by keeping traditional models of teaching and traditional curriculum in universities? By answering these questions, universities can begin to move away from traditional models of teaching that dehumanize students and begin to create liberating classrooms.

Power

Power in the traditional classroom seems very unilateral, with the teacher holding most, or all of the control over his/her students. All teachers hold power in the classroom whether or not they work under a traditional teaching model. The important message for educators is to be aware of the power one holds in the classroom and to use that power ethically and effectively. hooks (1989) states, "...We must acknowledge that our role as teacher is a position of power over others. We can use that power in ways that diminish or in ways that enrich and it is this choice that should distinguish feminist pedagogy from

ways of teaching that reinforce domination” (p. 52). Even in the most liberating of classrooms, that educational space will always be political in the choices a teacher makes. However, Shor (1992) encourages educators to ask critical questions when making those choices, “Is there a negotiated curriculum in class, or is a unilateral authority exercised by the teacher? Is there student, teacher, and parent co-governance of the institution or an administrative monopoly on power?” (p. 15). It is essential for teachers to know who holds the power in the classroom and how that power can be distributed among students to create a liberating curriculum that challenges traditional, often dehumanizing, banking pedagogy. This power should also be distributed to parents to continue the learning experience at home, or with individuals outside the academy. Weiler (1988) believes, “A society so shaped by racism, sexism, classism, and with great economic, political, and military power in the hands of a few cannot be transformed by the most dedicated and critical teaching alone” (p. 153). Support must emerge from parents, administrators, academic leaders, scholars, and society members.

Importance also exists for students to see all types of people—people of color, women, homosexuals, and people with disabilities—in positions of power. Women and men are socialized to see White males in positions of power. Weiler (1991) agrees, “Women students, after all, are socialized to be deferential, and both men and women students are taught to accept male authority. It is instructive for students to see women assert authority. But this use of authority will lead to positive social change only if those teachers are working also to empower students in a Freirean sense” (p. 461). By distributing power to those who less often receive the authority, students have a chance to

feel more liberated when those in power reflect their own qualities, ideals, or physical traits.

Oppressor/oppressed false dichotomy

There is much importance in understanding power in the classroom and who is entitled to hold that power. There is also importance in understanding how power is used and defined in terms of oppressor (those who hold power) versus oppressed (those who do not hold power). Freire (2000) introduces this concept of oppressor versus oppressed in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. He crafted this book *with* the oppressed in the constant struggle to regain their humanity (p. 48). Though Freire does not make a clear distinction between the terms oppressor and oppressed (a subject that will come up later as a limitation), he does make an earnest attempt to defend the need for a pedagogical revolution:

The object in presenting these considerations is to defend the eminently pedagogical character of the revolution. The revolutionary leaders of every epoch who have affirmed that the oppressed must accept the struggle for their liberation—an obvious point—have also thereby implicitly recognized the pedagogical aspect of this struggle. Many of these leaders, however (perhaps due to natural and understandable biases against pedagogy), have ended up using the “educational” methods employed by the oppressor. They deny pedagogical action in the liberation process, but they use propaganda to convince. (p. 67-8)

Freire's argument is based on the idea that once an underprivileged person or society comes to a position of power, it is more common to take on the traditional models of treating the underrepresented as they have always been treated. It is not enough to place an underprivileged person in power without engaging in self reflection and then implementing change to the traditional, dehumanizing models of learning. In agreement with this position, Lewis and Simon (1986) state, "One cannot simply donate freedom from a position that does not challenge privilege. As is the case for any oppressor group, for men to ally themselves with the oppressed, they must understand the power of their privilege and the privilege of their power, and self-consciously divest themselves of both" (p. 470). Any person in a position of power must recognize the power he/she holds, and decide to use that power to liberate and practice pedagogy of critical awareness.

To further articulate Freire's argument, Kathleen Weiler (1991) argues that taking a feminist approach in order to implement Freirean goals of liberation "questions whether the oppressed cannot act also as oppressors and challenges the idea of a commonality of oppression. It raises questions about common experience as a source of knowledge, the pedagogical authority of the teacher, and the nature of political and pedagogical struggle" (p. 451). Weiler addresses here the issue of how an oppressor also maintains a role as oppressed, and vice versa. Every oppressor is oppressed at some time, and further, each person who feels oppression is in a position of power at some time. She further states, "What is not addressed is the possibility of simultaneous contradictory positions of oppression and dominance: the man oppressed by his boss could at the same time oppress

his wife, for example, or the White woman oppressed by sexism could exploit the Black woman” (p. 453). There does come a time when every person plays the role of oppressor and oppressed, and this can even happen simultaneously. This argument is important to acknowledge for those who struggle to break out of traditional models of teaching that oppress, dehumanize, and deposit, and move toward new critical, feminist, and engaged pedagogies that call for an education revolution in order to be aware of the duality that occurs inside and outside the classroom.

Alternative pedagogies

Scholars such as bell hooks (1994), Paulo Freire (2000), and Adrienne Rich (1979) created and advocated new forms of pedagogy that break traditional models of teaching. These new models call for collaborative learning, student and woman-centered learning, multiculturalism and diversity awareness, and new forms of class engagement. Each pedagogical revolution, though different in name, demands a new curriculum that encourages students to become liberated, engaged members in the classroom. In this section critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, and engaged pedagogy as they are articulated by different scholars, is defined and discussed.

Critical pedagogy

Elizabeth Ellsworth (1992) defines critical pedagogy as a way for students and teachers to fight oppression, injustice, and inequality. She states:

“Critical pedagogy” supported classroom analysis and rejection of oppression, injustice, inequality, silencing of marginalized voices, and authoritarian social structures. Its critique was launched from the position of the ‘radical’ educator who recognizes and helps students to recognize and name injustice, who empowers students to act against their own and others’ oppressions (including oppressive school structures), and who criticizes and transforms her or his own understanding in response to the understanding of students. (p. 92)

In a critical learning environment, teachers ask “problem-posing” questions to begin class discussions (Shor, 1992, p. 43). Teachers ask questions rather than give answers, which begins the process of participation. Students critically examine social issues in classes and compare them to the larger society. Jenefsky (1996) defines critical pedagogy in terms of communication courses:

“Critical pedagogy” provides theoretical inspiration for generating new ideas about the ways we teach communication courses...Critical pedagogy is a philosophy of education devoted to the development of educational curricula, methodologies, and policies designed to assist students in becoming critical thinkers—in contrast to their usual role as passive depositories for accumulating data—and to empower students to become agents in social change. (p. 344)

Critical educators try to move away from what Freire (2000) defines as the banking concept of education where students are passive learners. Critical pedagogy allows students to take over class periods with questions or to facilitate discussions, and work to break oppression and injustice. Feminist pedagogy is similar to critical pedagogy in that

it holds the same teaching ideals; however feminist pedagogy extends by asking teachers and students to engage in critical awareness in regards to gender.

Feminist pedagogy

Scholars define feminist pedagogy in many ways. A common theme that is emergent from each interpretation is the idea of gender justice in the classroom and beyond. Gender justice advocates equality among gender lines both inside and outside the classroom. Shrewsbury (1993) states, “At its simplest level, feminist pedagogy is concerned with gender justice and overcoming oppressions. It recognizes that genderedness of all social relations and consequently of all societal institutions and structures” (p. 9). Feminist pedagogy also devises models for teaching and learning that allow alternative ways of dealing with difference. Leiby & Henson (1998) state that within “feminist pedagogy, we can begin to acknowledge the reality of tensions that result from different histories, from privilege, oppression, and power as they are lived by teachers and students in classrooms. By admitting to our students how we ourselves fall into these oppressive patterns, we can move students toward an understanding of these patterns in themselves” (p. 176). Teachers provide the models for change in education and the way students understand gender equality. Teachers take the first step in the process of shifting patriarchal values in education to become more gender neutral.

In a feminist classroom, traditional concepts of power, authority, and difference are seen as empowering when embodied as “energy, capacity, and potential rather than as domination” (Shrewsbury, 1993, p. 9). Just as with critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy

is interested in collaborative learning, moving power and authority from teacher to student, and helping students in creating a sense of identity through open discussions.

Weiler (1991) agrees:

In the actual practice of feminist pedagogy, the central issues of difference, positionality, and the need to recognize the implications of subjectivity or identity for teachers and students have become central. Moreover, the question of authority in institutional settings makes problematic the possibility of achieving the collective and nonhierarchical vision of early consciousness-raising groups within university classrooms. (p. 460)

Weiler (1991) believes feminist pedagogy to be grounded in a vision of social change. Teachers validate student experience and consciousness as truth claims and use these experiences to provide social change movements (p. 456). Students then in turn apply these concepts at work, home, and social settings. Teachers encourage students to integrate critical thinking skills and collaborative development. Feminist pedagogy strives to help students and teachers learn and think in new ways that create a space for social movements in regards to gender and oppression (Shrewsbury, 1993, p. 9). A feminist classroom takes the traditional male-centered environment of patriarchal values and moves toward a place of progressive development. Adrienne Rich (1979) supports this by saying:

At this point we need the university, with its libraries, laboratories, archives, collections, and some—but not all—of the kind of trained thinking and expertise it has to offer. We need to consciously and critically select what is genuinely

viable and what we can use from the masculine intellectual tradition, as we possess ourselves of the knowledge, skills, and perspectives that can refine our goal of self-determination with discipline and wisdom. (Certainly we do *not* need the university to continue replicating the tradition that has excluded us, or to become “amateur males.”) The university is by no means the only place where this work will be carried on; nor, obviously, can the university become more woman-centered and less elitist while the society remains androcentric. (p. 134)

Both critical and feminist pedagogy are alternative ways for teaching and learning in the classroom that provide students a starting place for social movement and change.

Students apply resistance to oppression, injustice, and inequality toward men and women in society. This resistance has the ability to bring about social movements and change against oppression and is the reason why pedagogy needs to change from tradition to something more progressive.

Engaged pedagogy

Another form of pedagogy bell hooks (1994) developed is engaged pedagogy. Engaged pedagogy builds on the ideals of critical and feminist pedagogy but adds an emphasis of self-actualization:

To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of

our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin. (p. 13)

hooks (1994) believes engaged pedagogy to be “more demanding than conventional critical or feminist pedagogy” (p. 15). When engaged pedagogy is present in the classroom not only will students feel empowered by the process, but teachers have the opportunity to take part in that empowerment as well. “Engaged pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process. That empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risks” (hooks, 1994, p. 21). Taking risks and becoming part of a new pedagogical model that is invested in breaking traditional models simply is not enough. A transgression is needed in order for students to feel empowered, engaged in learning, and invested in education, but this transgression must come from the practice of a liberatory philosophy. Without these learning components, education is a banking concept that does not give students intellectual or personal growth.

Reasons traditional pedagogy needs to change

Many scholars agree traditional pedagogy needs to change. hooks (1994) argues a need for a pedagogical shift best when she says:

Despite the contemporary focus on multiculturalism in our society, particularly in education, there is not nearly enough practical discussion of ways classroom

settings can be transformed so that the learning experience is inclusive. If the effort to respect and honor the social reality and experiences of groups in this society who are nonwhite is to be reflected in a pedagogical process, then as teachers—on all levels, from elementary to university settings—we must acknowledge that our styles of teaching may need to change. (p. 35)

Other than the fact that traditional pedagogy dehumanizes students who become receptacles to be filled with facts to be memorized, pedagogy needs to change. Pedagogy needs to change because learning in a traditional environment is not producing a body of students who are critically aware and prepared to work collaboratively in a working environment. Teachers need to change their teaching models to provide students with effective examples of teaching and learning. Kathleen Weiler (1991) quotes Susan Stanford Friedman when she argues:

What I and other women have needed is a theory of feminist pedagogy consistent with our needs as women operating at the fringes of patriarchal space. As we attempt to move on to academic turf culturally defined as male, we need a theory that first recognizes the androcentric denial of *all* authority to women and, second, points out a way for us to speak with an authentic voice not based on tyranny. (p. 461)

Because curriculum and institutions were designed by men and taught by men, it is imperative to provide students with effective examples of different gendered and racialized people in teaching positions (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986, p.190). Belenky, Clinchy, Golgberger, and Tarule (1986) describe the traditional theme

that occurred for generations of white men in positions of power through teaching. Generations ago, women were taught that men have greater power of rationality than females because women saw more men in teaching positions. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) further support:

When a male professor presents only the impeccable products of his thinking, it is especially difficult for a woman student to believe that she can produce such a thought. And remember that in the groves of academe, in spite of the women's movement, most of the teachers are still male, although more than half of the students are now female. Women students need opportunities to watch women professors solve (and fail to solve) problems and male professors fail to solve (and succeed in solving) problems. They need models of thinking as a human, imperfect, and attainable activity. (p. 217)

Traditional pedagogical models need to change in order to provide students with effective teaching, learning, and diverse examples of power in the classroom. Students will never imagine their lives in a position of power if they do not see that same power mirrored in academic role models. Students will continue to be passive learners and not gain the critical thinking skills needed to resist domination. Many of these examples and arguments for change seem rational and effective. Then why are there so many professors still holding onto their traditional forms of pedagogy?

Reasons teachers choose not to change

Endless reasons exist as to why professors choose not to change their methods of teaching. Scholars have their own points of view and argue that professors are either fearful of change, their ways of teaching are prosaic, or the institutions are so set in tradition, that it becomes almost impossible to evoke change. This is not to say that conventional pedagogy does not hold any value, however. Lecture models that include collaboration and interaction become necessary during many situations throughout a course period; the issue is the ends to which these methods are used. Engaged pedagogy aims to break away from traditional models that implement banking methods of lecturing, and/or teaching that result in dehumanization and alienation.

Fear

In the literature, a strong argument exists that professors are fearful of change. Teachers may not have the desire to expand their knowledge to new forms of pedagogy, and instead keep their old methods of teaching. bell hooks (1994) strongly believes that fear exists because, “many professors have intensely hostile responses to the vision of liberatory education that connects the will to know with the will to become” (p. 18). hooks would even describe this act of refusing to de-center Western civilizations or the white male canon, an act of cultural genocide (1994, p. 32). Freire (2000) says that the oppressed internalize the image of oppressor and adopt those guidelines in the classroom because they are fearful of freedom. He believes that, “Freedom would require them to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility” (p. 47). The fear could

also be a deep-seated issue of identity that holds professors back from changing their ideals. If professors change their pedagogical practice they would also be questioning their identity (hooks, 1994, p. 135). Having this fear of changing one's pedagogical practices is somewhat common among professors. bell hooks (1994) further describes, "I continuously thought about the fact that I know so many professors who are progressive in their politics, who have been willing to change their curriculum, but who in fact have resolutely refused to change the nature of their pedagogical practice" (p. 141). A large number of professors are allowing fear of the unknown to prevent them from changing their styles of teaching.

This fear comes from a divided consciousness—described by Weiler (1991) and hooks (1994)—between oppressors and oppressed. Weiler (1991) believes:

Attempting to implement these pedagogies without acknowledging the conflict not only of divided consciousness—what Audre Lorde calls "the oppressor within us"—but also the conflicts among groups trying to work together to name and struggle against oppression—among teachers and students in classrooms, or among political groups working for change in very specific areas—can lead to anger, frustration, and a retreat to safer or more traditional approaches. (p. 451)

This is true in the field of communication studies as well when those professors who voice their objection fear ridicule by traditional institutions or professors within a department (Johnson, 1996, p. 323). This fear is the result of not attaining tenure or having the ability to move higher in the department. It seems as though fear is quite common when deciding to change one's pedagogical model. Unfortunately, a professor

may also have a hard time changing if the institution or department is very set in traditional models of learning.

Historical institutions

The older, or more established, university is likely to be very set in their methods of teaching and learning. Everything from curriculum to building structures is old, traditional, and has very little room for change. In this situation, professors may have a hard time trying to move the curriculum, or methods of teaching in the classroom to embrace new, possibly more effective, perspectives. Cheris Kramarae (1996) explains one obstacle for professors is time constraints (p. 316). Professors are kept to very strict schedules of grading and preparing that brushing up on new perspectives and planning out a new curriculum is near impossible. But it is not completely impossible. Institutions established more recently have the opportunity to build a university with curricular and institutional processes and structures dedicated to critical, feminist, and engaged pedagogies. More established universities are fortunate to have expert faculty that have strong backgrounds in teaching who can implement new styles with current support from their departments. Freire (2000) agrees, “In the revolutionary process, the leaders cannot utilize the banking method as an interim measure, justified on grounds of expediency, with the intention of later behaving in a genuinely revolutionary fashion. They must be revolutionary—that is to say, dialogical—from the outset” (p. 86). It is much easier to be revolutionary and dialogical from the outset when an institution is able to build a

department devoted to critical awareness from scratch. One very recent example of this kind of institution is California State University, Monterey Bay.

California State University, Monterey Bay

CSU Monterey Bay, established in 1995, built a new curriculum that broke traditional methods because of the innovative ideals that shaped this brand new university. The school set up new teaching methods and vision statements that almost exactly reflect the definitions of critical, feminist, and engaged pedagogical models. This new university and communication curriculum reflects the characteristics and ideals of a woman-centered university described in the symposium of writers in the *Communication Education* journal. The symposium details critical and feminist pedagogy in the general classroom to more specific examples of engaged pedagogy in communication studies.

Symposium

A special issue of *Communication Education* in 1996 created a symposium of writers dedicated to introducing a woman-centered university and communication curriculum. Cheris Kramarae begins the symposium by asking four other authors to envision a university dedicated to breaking traditional methods of teaching and learning and then challenges each author to respond to what this new curriculum might look like for communication studies. Each author has her own ideals and suggestions for implementation into communication studies. It becomes evident that these women

describe a model that reflects critical, feminist, and engaged pedagogy discussed earlier in this literature review.

Characteristics of a feminist classroom/curriculum

If an institution has the opportunity to create a brand new curriculum interested in bringing together new forms of pedagogy, then there are many aspects to be aware of beforehand. Clare Bright (1991) suggests, “To those considering instituting a course in feminist pedagogy, I caution you not to underestimate the pervasive effect patriarchal education has had even on the most feminist of your class members. As student and as female, the training to be passive, malleable, modest, inactive, and differing is extremely potent” (p. 99). To be aware of how much tradition is embedded in students’ minds is important. Students are taught in a traditional way since kindergarten and to suddenly implement a new form of learning in college may create resistance or confusion. First, teachers must decide on what aspects of basic classroom conduct to keep or take out of the curriculum. This may include whether to, “deviate from or follow the official syllabus, teachers make numerous decisions—themes, texts, tests, seating arrangements, rules for speaking, grading systems, learning process, and so on. Through these practical choices, the politics of the classroom are defined, as critical or uncritical, democratic or authoritarian” (Shor, 1992, p. 14). Teachers must then ask themselves a set of critical questions that Shor (1992) provides as crucial in the changing process:

Whose history and literature is taught and whose ignored? Which groups are included and which left out of the reading list or text? From whose point of view

is the past and present examined? Which themes are emphasized and which not?

Is the curriculum balanced and multicultural, giving equal attention to men, women, minorities, and non elite groups, or is it traditionally male-oriented and Eurocentric? (p. 14)

These questions are essential because they determine whether this new curriculum will follow traditional models of teaching one history, or rather engage new concepts of multiculturalism and diversity. By answering critical questions, professors begin to move away from tradition. Marsha Houston (1996) attempts to imagine specifics of the new curriculum and institution by paraphrasing some of Adrienne Rich's (1979) questions about teaching in a manner that "takes women students seriously" (pp. 391-92):

1. How can this new university counter students' prior experiences of education in schools that reward reticence and passivity (particularly in women and people of color), that define an independent, questioning mind as a behavior problem (particularly in women and people of color), and that continue to indoctrinate boys and girls in stereotypic sex roles?
2. How can this new university help women of all races and ethnicities to develop a positive sense of self, despite a social order that ignores, marginalizes, or devalues the accomplishments of women and ethnic minorities, denies the uniqueness of female and ethnic minority experiences, and continues to produce discursive and visual representations that validate physical violence against white women and women and men of color as acceptable behavior?

3. How can this new communication studies curriculum connect learning to communicate well (to speak and interpret oral discourse skillfully) with women students' own reality, and not simply teach women how to tell acceptable lies?
4. How can we teach women of all races and ethnicities to move beyond the desire from male approval and getting "good grades" and encourage them to discover and to speak their own truths that the dominant culture has distorted or made taboo? (p. 338-9)

If implemented, the answers to these questions not only change traditional curriculum but give students a place to feel empowered and self reflective. Students feel liberated and engaged with the idea of learning. Paulo Freire (1970), Adrienne Rich (1979), and bell hooks (1994) termed a "pedagogy of liberation" that enables students to develop a crucial consciousness, a world view that opposes acquiescence and conformity to societies built on hierarchy, domination, and unearned privilege (Houston, 1996, p. 338). After the critical and crucial questions are answered, it is time to apply them to communication studies.

Communication studies

The field of communication, like most disciplines, has the opportunity to implement new pedagogies that create ideal learning environments for teachers and students. Fern L. Johnson (1996) believes, "The field of communication has progressed reasonably well, albeit slowly, in broadening the curriculum and range of scholarship to

include both gender and feminist issues” (p. 322). Communication studies holds great potential in influencing other disciplines to take on similar ideals because of its importance across disciplines. Freire (2000) agrees, “Authentic thinking, thinking that is concerned about *reality*, does not take place in ivory tower isolation, but only in communication” (p. 77). Because communication is an extremely significant part of daily life, its departments have a large influence on other departments. DeFrancisco (1996) suggests:

It seems a contribution Communication Studies could make is to help students use course material to inform them about the communicative realities of their daily lives and vice-versa. Areas such as rhetoric, argumentation, interpersonal communication, persuasion, organizational communication, interpersonal influence, and conflict, have yet to place women’s experiences as central. When we do so, we legitimize women’s experiences with, for example, rape, sexual harassment, self-esteem, menstruation, and child-birth, and in turn, we better inform our current disciplines. (p. 335)

Communication studies is guilty of using traditional models in its teaching and learning process. Multiple perspectives from diverse opinions do not make up standard education in communication. Johnson (1996) explains:

The growth of women’s studies in communication has moved along a path familiar throughout women’s studies in general. The focus in teaching and inquiry has been progressing from a homogenous sector of white women’s lives and extrapolating patterns from them, to recognizing that multiplicities in the

more complex issues of race, ethnicity, social position, affectional orientation, and culture are critical to a valid and comprehensive universe of discourse about women. (p. 323)

The focus in communication studies is on Eurocentric-white experience, similar to most traditional education. Communication studies also has a responsibility to move away from a white woman's experience in literature and class discussions, toward a diverse curriculum that includes, not excludes, any gendered or racialized person. This process is possible and can be accomplished through communication studies. In order to accomplish this goal Johnson (1996) suggests:

In our new university, novel insights about human communication that grow from feminist theories, methodologies, and critical perspectives would pervade formal courses, discussions, and personal relationships. We might redesign our courses on contemporary public address and rhetorical criticism to include greater emphasis on women's roles as speakers and social critics. In doing this, we will also want to consider the rhetorical situations and strategies of women engaged in grassroots advocacy and women in other countries and cultures...The courses we teach in organizational communication should, as a matter of course, focus on reality that organizations are usually constituted by women and men and are increasingly sites for multicultural communication. We would investigate library and internet resources; we would engage in field studies to better understand the many situations in which communication exists; and we would draw on networks of people to ground that which we seek to understand. The pull of gravity would

be women centered, with modes of feminist inquiry guiding and creating the way in a continuing project which has no end point. (pp. 325-6)

These are very specific and effective ways for implementing critical, feminist, and engaged pedagogy into communication studies. Similar to Adrienne Rich's (1979) suggestions, communication must move away from male authority and experience to give new voice to all gendered and racialized persons. Most importantly, now that the suggestions are made and are very applicable, professors and institutions must find a way to combine theory and practice into the classroom.

Theory and practice

Because so many scholars created effective theoretical ways to change the status quo, it is now essential that educators put those theories into practice. If education does not change, institutions continue to supply banking methods of education. hooks (1994) agrees:

...Those critical thinkers working with issues of pedagogy who are committed to cultural studies must combine "theory and practice in order to affirm and demonstrate pedagogical practices engaged in creating a new language, rupturing disciplinary boundaries, decentering authority, and rewriting the institutional and discursive borderlands in which politics becomes a condition for reasserting the relationship between agency, power, and struggle." (p. 129)

Several suggestions and implementation strategies are used by scholars in their own critical, feminist, and engaged classrooms. Implementation can be done by allowing

students to create their college courses including syllabi, assignments, and grading criteria. Bright (1987) did something very similar in her class:

...We attempt to integrate theory, practice, and personal assimilation. The first area is course creation. I introduce this topic at the beginning of Feminist Pedagogy by asking students to put together the syllabus for the course...I have in the past let the students also decide what requirements would be appropriate for Feminist Pedagogy and how their work should be graded. (p. 97)

Providing students with the opportunity to create their college courses students begin to feel as if they play an empowering role in their education. Students begin to claim their education and treat it as something important and unique. Students see how the power roles in the classroom are distributed and how each student becomes responsible for creating his/her educational future.

Mission statement

A mission statement can be a powerful source for keeping faculty and students aware of their responsibilities and goals at a university. A mission statement reflects an institution's pedagogical practices, priorities, and reasons for existence. Without such a document, faculty practice any form of education they see applicable, including traditional models of teaching and learning. Marsha Houston (1996) created a mission statement for a new women-centered communication studies program that states:

The goal of this university is feminist education which has a commitment to the political, intellectual, spiritual, sexual, and social well-being of girls and women.

The curriculum is women-centered; every course is primarily, centrally, a course about women. Experiential as well as academic knowledge is valued; attention is given to emotional as well as intellectual growth. Cooperative rather than competitive learning is fostered, and every class is a collaboration between students and faculty.

The university endeavors to graduate students who thoroughly understand women's diverse histories, women's contributions to world civilizations, the politics of women's contemporary lives, and the possibilities for the lives of women in the future. The study of communication concepts and skills is at the academic core of this university; as a result, graduates are not only knowledgeable about the politics of women's past and present, they are prepared to be the most articulate spokespersons for issues of human liberation in the future. (p. 340)

This example takes all that communication studies has traditionally fostered, and changes the center of patriarchal teaching toward woman-centered learning. Men can also grow from such a mission statement because even men know more about patriarchal learning than any other type of teaching or experience. This mission statement takes all that traditional teaching reflects—competition, individual learning, male centered—and changes the core to reflect the exact opposite. This is only one example of how a mission statement reflects the ideals and goals of an institution. The point is the importance a mission statement is to the students and faculty who choose to attend an institution. Many traditional programs and schools do not have a mission statement, which allows faculty to maintain their unprogressive ways of teaching.

Collaborative learning

One of the more common suggestions for change in a traditional classroom is collaborative learning. DeFrancisco (1996) argues for a collaborative learning environment where the instructors work more as facilitators, rather than as “experts.” Instructors purposefully select topics to cover in class, which are new to them as well as to students. During group discussions, the facilitators take a back seat and ask questions as any other participant might ask. Professors encourage students to share information, to take each other seriously by developing a cooperative rather than a competitive learning environment (p. 333). In a collaborative learning environment, students are responsible for taking turns at lecturing and facilitating discussions (Bright, 1998, p. 98). Making facilitation an ongoing task during the course encourages students to begin imagining themselves in the educator role (Bright, 1997, p. 97). Topic discussions can include employing “feminist pedagogy in non-women’s studies courses or in non-classroom settings, envisioning an ideal education, and integrating feminist pedagogy into the current educational system” (Bright, 1987, p. 99).

Without collaborative learning, some scholars argue that traditional models breed violence. DeFrancisco (1996) understood traditional teaching models to breed violence through such things as encouraged competition, grade distributions, distrust of others, and greater ego involvement. DeFrancisco quoted Sherry Candee who explained the link between collaboration and safety: “[This women’s university] has to be a place where women feel safe enough to allow themselves to be vulnerable-open to learning” (p. 333). In a collaborative learning environment, students feel safe asking questions in class. In

traditional classes the act of asking a question becomes a risk for students, whereas in a collaborative environment asking questions is the norm, not merely reciting answers. In a collaborative, holistic environment students need to feel important, worthy, and again, safe, but not complacent. Students need to feel less fear that they are “wasting a teacher’s time” (DeFrancisco, 1996, p. 334). This is reflected during a professor’s use of office hours. DeFrancisco (1996) believes that professors need to hold office hours with no other obligations spread on their desk waiting for their attention once the student leaves (p. 334). Collaborative learning places students first and allows students to create and apply their ideal education in the classroom. The idea of collaboration is also applied across disciplines and departments.

Interdisciplinary studies

To further apply collaborative learning in communication studies, scholars want to see more collaborative development among disciplines and departments. The competitive aspect that exists among disciplines would be diminished so students can understand the importance and existence of many fields. Johnson (1996) envisions:

I would want us to think of ourselves neither as in a discipline called Communication nor in a discipline called Women’s Studies. We would be learners and scholars interested in communication events, processes, and impacts from the vantage point of feminism. We would easily interact with those who, like ourselves, were once in structured disciplines. There would be no struggles about whether one were doing communication or sociology, communication or

history, communication or psychology, communication or philosophy, communication or literary criticism because we would organize around common interest in questions about communication phenomena and their implications. We would be completely interdisciplinary, in fact *transdisciplinary*. (p. 327)

At a “transdisciplinary” university, students are encouraged to study outside of communication studies and form relationships with individuals, groups, communities, agencies, and organizations as an integral part of the learning process (Johnson, 1996, p. 327). Johnson (1996) further suggests, “In our transdisciplinary university, we will investigate from all angles, fusing science and art, minutiae and megatrends, numbers and intuition, realities and fantasies into a new coherent web of knowledge and action” (p. 327). By incorporating interdisciplinary studies, professors encourage and allow students to major in several fields or create their own major by incorporating two to three disciplines of interest (CSUMB, 2003, para. 6). By allowing students to cross over disciplines, students transgress boundaries and apply diversity in the classroom.

Diversity and transgressing boundaries

Probably one of the biggest suggestions for changing tradition in the classroom is to apply diversity into the curriculum. Scholars want to see students transgressing boundaries among all power groups—race, gender, class—that exist in learning. Scholars suggest ways for allowing more view points and experiences to be heard in class. More importantly, scholars want to see these experiences taken seriously and used as effective learning tools. DeFrancisco (1996) states:

...The challenge of diversity in the university would mean more than equal opportunity. The challenge would be to continually move those from the margin to the center of the learning experience and vice versa. In fact, participants at the center may learn more by moving to the margins...To call for diversity means shifting ethnocentric views of what is center. (p. 332)

As discussed earlier, traditionally the center of education is given by a white, male point of view. Scholars argue to move this center of gravity to include all races, classes, and genders. In Johnson's (1996) view, "changing the center of gravity would mean both redressing skewed traditional perspectives on communication by bringing women from silence or marginality into the center and redressing the territoriality of the discipline by opening its boundaries" (p. 324). Johnson calls for an abandonment of the boundaries that traditionally define academia (1996, p. 326). By removing the boundaries, but not the distinctiveness among different social groups, education moves away from patriarchy.

However, it would not be useful to replace patriarchy with a woman-centered elitism either (Johnson, 1996, p. 327). To replace patriarchy with, say, matriarchy, teachers are still sexist and education still remains oppressive. To change the current curriculum requires an all inclusive learning environment. "Integrative scholarship that draws from differing traditions, methodologies, and discourses should increasingly gain a holistic flavor rather than revealing its roots in amalgamation. We must be cautious to ensure that our structures do not create boundaries of exclusion" (Johnson, 1996, p. 326). Transgressing boundaries can be done most effectively by engaging in dialogue (hooks, 1994, p. 130). When teachers, scholars, and critical thinkers begin to form dialogue, they

begin to cross boundaries created by race, gender, class, professional standing, and other social differences (hooks, 1994, p. 130). By choosing to explore these differences and understand feminist issues in the classroom, students and teachers feel as if they can transgress boundaries (hooks, 1994, p. 115). Once these differences are discussed, Weiler (1991) states the importance of then respecting difference. “An acknowledgment of the realities of conflict and tensions based on contradictory political goals, as well as of the meaning of historically experienced oppression for both teachers and students, leads to a pedagogy that respects difference not just as significant for students, but for teachers as well” (p. 462). If there is no respect for difference, then education has not taken the necessary steps for revolution and change.

Another way to include diversity into the classroom is to be aware of the different ways students learn and succeed in the classroom. Traditionally, education relied primarily on standardized, multiple-choice, true/false, short answer tests to measure a student’s awareness or understanding for a subject. Shor (1992) suggests a change in the testing policies. He states, “Moreover, testing policies are political choices, whether to use student-centered, multicultural, and portfolio assessments, or to use teacher-centered, tests or standardized exams in which women and minorities have traditionally scored lower than men and whites” (Shor, 1992, p. 15). Shor argues that by using short-answer exams and standardized tests, students are intellectually drained. He defines this process as “endullment, the dulling of students’ minds as a result of their nonparticipation” (p. 20). Students then lose enthusiasm for intellectual life and education in general. By

allowing students the creative opportunity to present what they know in the form of group presentations or portfolios, this creative edge is maintained.

Multiculturalism

Another form of diversity in the classroom is multicultural teaching and learning. The multicultural classroom challenges the subordination of social groups and orients the curriculum toward equality (Shor, 1992, p. 48). Multiculturalism is accomplished by allowing students to develop a curriculum around student culture by researching local issues in the surrounding communities (Shor, 1992, p. 46). Giving students more power develops classroom discourse from students' cultural diversity. Houston (1996) adds, "At this university, all persons and their work are valued. There are formal mechanisms for assisting faculty, students, and staff to become involved in the surrounding neighborhood and the city as a whole" (p. 340). Students have the opportunity to apply their multicultural learning from the classroom to the larger community. Departments encourage students to volunteer at community centers, convalescent hospitals, after school programs, and tutoring centers to become more aware of the social issues that exist outside of academia. By doing so, students gain a real life perspective and experience to share in the classroom and for the rest of his/her life.

Margins to center

As Johnson (1996) mentioned earlier, an important aspect of critical, feminist, and engaged pedagogy is to change the center of education. Experiences left on the margins

of education are traditionally students from socially underrepresented groups. bell hooks (1994) describes her high school experience that moved from engaged learning where her experience and that of her African American peers were central to classroom discourse, to integrated schools that resulted in the Black experience being moved to the margins of education. “We were certainly on the margin, no longer at the center, and it hurt” (hooks, 1994, p. 24). Those on the margins are traditionally oppressed and treated as “other” (p. 74). Freire (2000) describes, “The truth is, however, that the oppressed are not ‘marginals,’ are not people living ‘outside’ society. They have always been ‘inside’—inside the structure which made them ‘beings for others.’ The solution is not to ‘integrate’ them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become ‘beings for themselves’” (Freire, 2000, p. 74). His suggestion attempts to tackle the larger problem of curriculum structure to incorporate those left on the margins of education. The entire structure must be destroyed and re-constructed in order for diversity and multicultural learning to take place. Every student must be given a voice and a safe space for their experiences to be understood.

Voice

Voice, dialogue, and communication can be the most powerful tool for deconstructing education and moving toward revolutionary change. If students and teachers have voice, then dialogue and communication begin the process of understanding the realms that need restructuring. Giving voice to students who have not traditionally had that kind of power in the classroom will change the center of learning,

will add diversity and multicultural experiences to discussions, and begin to move pedagogy toward feminist, critical, and engaged alternatives. bell hooks (1994) states, “Feminist and critical pedagogy are two alternative paradigms for teaching which have really emphasized the issue of coming to voice” (p. 185). She suggests one way to build community in the classroom is to recognize the value of each individual voice (hooks, 1994, p. 40). Through dialogue and voice, power roles are diminished, and more importantly, distributed amongst students. Freire (2000) agrees:

Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers.

The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach.

They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. (p. 80)

In this respect, voice is used as a form of empowerment. And more specifically, public speaking classes provide a space where students are encouraged to become change agents. Cindy Jenefsky (1996) argues how public speaking can be used as a form of empowerment at a woman centered university. She states:

The priorities in this course are to provide resources to foster critical awareness of the forces that (threaten to) silence those in subordinate groups, and to empower students to speak with authority about their own lives both within contexts that feel like home and those that feel more alienating. Students will cultivate strategies that honor, rather than efface, the many facets of their identities and that enable them to communicate across the social divides that hinder the formation of

productive alliances. Ultimately, my hope is for students to use these skills for effecting social change within their own lives and within the communities that matter to them. (p. 352)

Creating a classroom with a democratic setting where everyone feels a responsibility to contribute is a central goal to feminist, critical, engaged, and transformative pedagogy (hooks, 1994, p. 39). This democratic setting may not always feel “safe” for students, but bell hooks (1989) argues that coming to voice in an atmosphere where students may be afraid, or see themselves at risk, should be encouraged as well (p. 53). In a connected classroom, no one apologizes for uncertainty. It is assumed that learning is a process that takes time and patience (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule, 1986, p. 221).

Several authors discuss voice in terms of self reflection in the classroom. These authors ask teachers to ask themselves pertinent questions about their teaching styles and how they welcome voice in the classroom. Lewis & Simon (1986) ask: “How can we fix the way women feel silenced in the classroom? We must ask ourselves: does our teaching, our use of particular sets of practices and forms of discussion, subjugate?” (p. 468). Ira Shor (1992) uses problem-posing methods to discuss how voice can be used to determine power in the classroom. He challenges teachers to ask:

How much open discussion is there in class? How much one-way ‘teacher-talk’?
Is there mutual dialogue between teacher and students or one-way transfers of information from teacher to students? What do teachers say about the subject matter? Do students feel free to disagree with the teacher? Do students respond to each other’s remarks? Do they act like involved participants or like alienated

observers in the exchange of comments in the classroom? Are students asked to think critically about the material and to see knowledge as a field of contending interpretations, or are they fed knowledge as an official consensus? Do students work cooperatively, or is the class a competitive exchange favoring the most assertive people? (pp. 14-15)

One-way teacher talk limits dialogue and engagement in active questioning. Professors tell students what things mean instead of using critical thinking skills and asking critical questions. Ira Shor (1992) argues passive discourse gradually makes students lose their childhood joy of learning. They also lose confidence in their thoughts and language, making them silent in the classroom (p. 93). To overcome the silencing of students in the classroom, Kay Caldwell (1998) advocates a form of discourse called jazz talk.

Jazz talk

The idea of incorporating “jazz talk” into the classroom involves the analogy that when musicians play together, they are creating a conversation by what the other is playing, or saying, through the music. In class discussions, it is important to respond to the other comments or musical instruments to create song, music, and most importantly, meaning. During this time, students not only understand the importance of participating but they also understand the importance of listening. By engaging in more listening, women may feel less silenced in discussions. Caldwell (1998) quotes Gilligan (1982) and states:

The patriarchal power behind the obsession with autonomy is pervasive, and yet invisible. Patriarchal oppression unbalances us by its disapproval of the “less serious” notions such as personal experience, emotive thinking, and reshaping events by the use of conversation. Faced with these tasks, it is no wonder that women struggle to speak by beginning with an apology or a disclaimer. (p. 59)

It is important for teachers to learn about the power of collaboration in women’s lives. Jazz talk provides reciprocal action where every student is a part of the music making.

Problem-posing method

To overcome silence in the classroom and traditional teacher-talk models, Ira Shor (1992) introduces a questioning method called problem-posing. He describes:

First, the teacher would ask students what questions they have about the subject matter. Their questions or issues are the starting points for discussion...By posing problems rather than by giving answers, their approach begins in a participatory way. By including an action phase, they make action a legitimate result of learning. Further, by defining the learning process as problem-posing rather than as problem-solving, their teaching goes beyond simplistic questions and short answers...*Problem-posing* goes deeply into any issue or knowledge to indicate its social and personal dimensions. (pp. 36-43)

Professors use critical thinking and questioning when teaching new subject matters. This technique is used outside the classroom and applied to real life settings. Problem-posing moves away from banking education and asks students to take part in their learning

processes. Some problem-posing questions about good writing are, “What is good writing? How do you become a good writer? What questions do you have about good writing? What are the hardest and easiest things for you as a writer?” (Shor, 1992, p. 37). Students free-write on these questions and bring their answers into the class discussion.

Team teaching

Another characteristic of engaged pedagogy is the idea of encouraging teachers to teach courses in pairs or small groups. Houston (1996) envisions, “All courses are team taught by at least two faculty members so that students frequently are afforded the perspectives of an academic and an activist or practitioner simultaneously” (p. 340). Houston believes this adds increased perspective in the classroom and allows students to more critically analyze the subject.

Class size

hooks (1994) strongly argues for classrooms to accommodate fewer students to most adequately accomplish engaged pedagogy. “Even the best, most engaged classroom can fail under the weight of too many people. That’s really been a problem for me in my teaching career” (hooks, 1994, p. 160). Larger classrooms can not accommodate each student’s voice in the room. It may be harder to have large group discussions because there are too many students and not enough class time. hooks (1994) agrees:

If classes became so full that it is impossible to know students’ names, to spend quality time with each of them, then the effort to build a learning community fails.

Throughout my teaching career, I have found it helpful to meet with each student in my classes, if only briefly. Rather than sitting in my office for hours waiting for individual students to choose to meet or for problems to arise, I have preferred to schedule lunches with students. (p. 204)

Many traditional schools have large lecture halls that hold over 400 students. In this setting, it is almost impossible not to teach as a mere lecturer. Small group work does not seem to be as effective if the groups do not have time to share their findings with the larger group. Smaller classes, with smaller teacher-student ratios, allow teachers an ideal setting for engaged pedagogy and for getting to know students by name.

Misconceptions

Some misconceptions exist about the purpose, goals, and ideals of what constitutes feminist pedagogy. Even feminist professors have concerns regarding this new teaching model. Maher & Tetreault (1994) suggest:

A central concern for the feminist professors whom we observed is the source of their authority with regard to their disciplines, their students, and the institutions in which they work. Traditionally, professorial authority comes from superior knowledge of the academic discipline; it is lodged in the hierarchical relationship of expert to teacher to student, and enforced institutionally by the power and duty to assign grades. (p. 127)

Professors struggle with the power they hold in the classroom. Assigning grades is just one of those forms of power that must take place in order for students to pass their classes

and move along in their college courses. Even if teachers allow their students to assign their own grade, a power relationship still exists when teachers assign tasks and assignments.

One of the biggest misconceptions of feminist pedagogy is feminist teachers desire a matriarchal curriculum that excludes men all together. This is simply not true. Feminist scholarship is not about exclusion, but instead inclusion of all people, men and women, of all races, classes, sexual orientations, and so on. Adrienne Rich (1979) supports:

It will be objected that this is merely “reverse chauvinism.” But given the intensive training all women go through in every society to place our own long-term and collective interests second or last and to value altruism at the expense of independence and wholeness—and given the degree to which the university reinforces that training in its every aspect—the most urgent need at present is for women to recognize, and act on, the priority of recreating ourselves and each other, after our centuries of intellectual and spiritual blockading. A by-product of such a shift in priorities will of course ultimately mean an opening-out of intellectual challenges for men who are emotionally mature and intuitively daring enough to recognize the extent to which man-centered culture has also limited and blinded them. (p. 128)

Feminist pedagogy aims to recognize exclusion of any kind—race, gender, class—from higher education is oppressive. To exclude men from their ideology would be hypocritical and regressive.

Men's place in feminist pedagogy

A misconception of feminist pedagogy is men do not have a place in feminist scholarship or teaching. The stereotype still exists: a man cannot be a feminist teacher. This statement, of course, is false. Men are gendered beings just as females. Maher & Tetreault (1994) support:

The first issue of voice raised in feminist classrooms concerns the development of students' identities as gendered individuals, which for female students means the emerging consciousness of themselves as women. Male students, too, had to come to see themselves as gendered, as they confronted, through their encounter with the experiences of females, their own positions as men. (pp. 90-91)

Because of the common stereotypes, men do not feel they hold a place in feminist pedagogy. Male teachers want to support feminist scholarship or even practice feminist teaching in the classroom, but feel apprehensive. Cataldi (1995) would agree. Men need to learn about oppression of women. They need to learn to stop it, but men will not want to join in the experience of consciousness-raising or in the struggle against sexism if they can be led to believe that feminism is just "male bashing," or that they will be bashed in women's groups simply for being men (p.81). To describe feminism as male bashing, "is a ploy on the part of those who would maintain the status quo to frighten us with a word, with a powerful word, with a word that no 'nice woman,' no 'good man' wants to be associated with" (Cataldi, 1995, p. 80). Men describe feminism this way because they are afraid of the unknown. To understand feminism results in their masculinity to come into question by other men. If men knew the goals and purpose of creating a feminist

movement, there would be no need for words like “male bashing.” Men are apprehensive to get involved, to find out the facts, to accept responsibility and help the cause for fear of their own sexuality being bashed or questioned.

Limitations

Feminist pedagogy has many positive aspects discussed in the literature above. However, with these strengths also come some limitations. The most common limitation in the literature is the sexist language used when scholars try to envision a new pedagogy. The most popular, and most widely discussed, is Paulo Freire’s use of sexist language in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. When Freire (2000) talks about education as a revolutionary act, he seems to only use examples about men, for men. Leiby & Henson (1998) support: “...Paulo Freire terms ‘the banking model of education’ (58) and wanted to ensure that students could freely and equally present diverse viewpoints. However, his concern turned out not to be for all students, but for ‘the men’” (p. 180). Even bell hooks (1994), who holds Paulo Freire as an educational revolutionary icon, spoke on his sexist language when he wrote *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. When hooks was a student and teacher at UC Santa Cruz, Freire was invited to present a workshop with third world students and faculty. After a struggle to get into the workshop due to lack of space, hooks explains:

Even though I was allowed to participate when someone dropped out at the last minute, my heart was heavy because already I felt that there had been this sexist attempt to control my voice, to control the encounter. So, of course, this created a

war within myself because indeed I did want to interrogate Paulo Freire personally about the sexism in his work. And so with courtesy, I forged ahead at the meeting. Immediately individuals spoke against me raising these questions and devalued their importance, Paulo intervened to say that these questions were crucial and he addressed them...He spoke then about making more of a public effort to speak and write on these issues—this has been evident in his later work. (p. 55-6)

Another critique of Freire's work is his use of the terms oppressor and oppressed. Many scholars (Maher, 1987; Weiler, 1991; Kenway & Modra, 1992) challenge Freire's idea and ask critical questions, "What about people, such as many men, who occupy the position of both oppressed *and* oppressor? More broadly, what about differences of power, authority, and perspective within the feminist (or any other) classroom?" (Maher & Tetreault, 1996, p. 154). In literature that continues to use sexist language and examples that contradict the point of moving away from sexist stereotypes, one message exists and continues to perpetuate:

The implied message remains that girls should be more like boys if they wish to get on. Undoubtedly the strong emphasis in curriculum has been on encouraging girls' and young women's access to and success in the higher status male knowledge domains of Math, Science and Technology, in order that their post-school opportunities for work, and thus for financial autonomy, may be enhanced. (Kenway & Modra, 1992, p. 142)

It is not enough for scholars such as Paulo Freire, though brilliant in his ideas, to continue to exclude women in their scholarship through language. While Freire strives for some kind of change in his writing, he remains contradictory with his use of sexist language. If women are not included in that change, it is not change; it is perpetuation of tradition. In these regards, feminist scholarship and pedagogy are limited and misperceived. When these areas are addressed, some form of feminist pedagogy has potential to be found across all disciplines.

Chapter 3: Methods

In this study theories and suggestions made by Adrienne Rich, bell hooks, and Paulo Freire suggest a woman-centered university aimed at breaking traditional pedagogical models of teaching and learning can exist, and do exist. These methods are in effect in the integrated communication department at CSUMB called Human Communication (HCOM). A comparative analysis provides the suggestions made by the authors from the symposium to the vision statement and current teaching model at CSUMB. Two research questions drove the study to create common themes among interviewee responses and participant observations. Primarily, RQ1: How does the Human Communication faculty at CSU Monterey Bay demonstrate a feminist, critical, and engaged pedagogical model of teaching in the communication classroom? Secondly, RQ2: How do the professors and students respond to this type of pedagogy in their communication classes? This last research question became secondary because this thesis is primarily interested in defining the methods HCOM professors used to break traditional methods of pedagogy. Students were interviewed to gain their perspective on

the engaged pedagogical methods used in their HCOM classes, and to demonstrate students accept engaged pedagogy. As well, because HCOM is student-center oriented, students' voices are imperative to providing a rich picture that engaged pedagogy, according to the students, is effective. After visiting with students during interviews and class time, it is clear students enjoy this type of learning and find it to be meaningful.

The analysis begins with an autoethnography as a starting point to the ethnography. Because I am a graduate of CSU Monterey Bay in Human Communication in 2001, I share personal experiences from classes I took, professors I talked to, and most importantly my understanding of the CSUMB Vision Statement. Goodall (2000) supports this decision by stating, "At some point it will become clear to you that new ethnographers have an obligation to write *about* their lives. I say 'obligation' because new ethnographic texts require that your observations and evaluations of others be firmly rooted in a credible, self-reflexive 'voice,' which is to say a believable, compelling, self-examining narrator" (p. 23). Because of my history and knowledge from CSUMB, my personal statement is considered valid and true and should be understood as a reliable voice on this topic (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). The reflective and self-reflexive moments that form the basis of my autoethnography were taken from journal entries and reflection papers written as a student in HCOM. As well, I often found myself recording recollected past experiences in field notes as I was reminded by actions and experiences during participant-observation. I, of course, welcomed and elicited comments and interviews of faculty, staff, and students from the department.

Over the course of the fall 2003 semester, a total of four HCOM classes were observed. One upper division and five lower division HCOM class periods a week were observed for three weeks. The courses chosen to be observed were similar to courses offered at San Jose State University. By choosing similar courses, educated and informed comparisons and decisions were made about the pedagogical models in each classroom. Two of the lower division courses offered in HCOM were somewhat equivalent to the lower division Public Speaking and Argumentation courses at San Jose State. The upper division course observed in HCOM was somewhat equivalent to the upper division Argumentation course at San Jose State. The third lower division course observed in HCOM has no similarities to any course offerings at San Jose State, but it does provide another example of the integrated methods used in HCOM that makes the department's pedagogical methods unique.

Each class was observed either once or twice a week for three weeks because this length of time was sufficient to provide an observable pattern of the pedagogical methods in each class without being too imposing on the usual classroom environment that does not have an outside observer in the room. As well, some professors were concerned the students may feel uncomfortable with my presence any longer than three weeks. Three weeks was sufficient because I too was part of the same teaching methods as a student in HCOM and I found not much changed in terms of pedagogical techniques used over the last two years.

Data was collected in the form of field notes and transcriptions of what students and teachers said and did during a class period. Once I had completed my observations, I

created a coding scheme that entailed finding similar patterns of engaged pedagogical characteristics in each class. Those themes were highlighted throughout the field notes, which in turn became the major themes that formed the outline for the analysis chapter. The field notes consisted of general observations about the room arrangement and structure, the number of students present, the ratio of women to men in the room, the layout of furniture, and the overall classroom climate. As well, behavioral patterns were noted in regards to student feedback and voice, teacher response and conduct, discussion periods, classroom activities and assignments, and how each class implemented engaged pedagogical models of learning.

During visits, I did not just spend short moments in each of these classes; I spent a lot of time in the department conversing with students and faculty. I attempted to move along the day as a student and immerse myself in the role of an HCOM student again. I visited the campus restaurant, university center, and bookstore with the other students on campus to become a part of their university life. It was important for me to spend as much time on the campus with other HCOM students as possible, because the number of my visits was somewhat minimal.

My visits consisted mostly of participant observations, which each student and teacher gave consent and permission (see Appendix C for consent forms). Participant observations allowed me to become a part of the classroom culture and present evidence that described the current teaching and learning methods that existed in each classroom. This means of gathering data through participant observation is valuable and “is the preferred means of experiencing and recording events in social settings. It entails being

in the presence of others on an ongoing basis and having some status for them as someone who is part of their lives” (Lindlof, 1995, p. 135). Taking a qualitative approach in gathering data for the purpose of becoming a part of the culture is described by Lindlof (1995) as being more effective than using quantitative methods:

We have glossed the cultural and historical variation of events of social participation, and failed to understand the profound ways in which communicating constitutes the rituals, functions, and power arrangements of contemporary life. Objectivist science and quantitative methods have been insufficient to perform those tasks—not because these modes of inquiry are faulty, but because they advocate views of the world that do not value the study of situated, emergent, and reflexive human phenomena. (p. 22)

As well, Ron Pelias (2000) argues the significance of using a qualitative approach when analyzing issues of gender:

You read the abstracts and shake your head, not because you are confused by the content, but because you cannot understand how the scientific model continues to thrive in the discipline given the number of arguments that show why the heart needs to accompany the head, particularly with such topics as communication apprehension, intimacy, compliance gaining strategies, communication competence, gender relational maintenance, and empathy. (p. 223)

A qualitative approach for this project attempts to connect students’ and teachers’ experiences with their feelings of engaged pedagogy.

In addition, five key faculty and three students in the department were interviewed (see Appendix B for interview guides). Each of the professors from the four classes observed was interviewed to discuss personally the pedagogical methods used in their classroom. As well, the department chair was interviewed who provided intense insight on her own pedagogical ideals as well as some insight to the department as a whole. It was a primary goal to focus specifically on the pedagogical methods used in HCOM and so it became a priority to contact each of the course professors and department chair. While the number of interviews only accounts for 17% of the total faculty in HCOM, and, therefore, the results from these interviews can not be strongly generalized to the entire HCOM faculty population, it is important to note the interviews still show some understanding on the successes and struggles faculty face teaching under engaged pedagogical ideals. As well, there was an interest in understanding how the students responded to engaged methods used in HCOM and so three students were contacted from various classes. Also, one larger group interview/discussion was incorporated. These responses gave a small insight into the feelings of how the students reacted to engaged pedagogy. If students did not respond well to engaged pedagogy, the pedagogical methods used were obviously not effective. Student response was not a major priority in this study and so only a few students were contacted for an interview. The responses remain consistent among the students and do offer some interesting findings, but can not be generalized to the entire HCOM student population.

Interviews from active people in the department provided a personal view and first hand experience about the learning that took place in the department. These

interviews provided strong evidence to support, or possibly challenge the pedagogical models used in the classroom. Wolf (1992) would argue "...cleverly marshaling all the voices who support one's interpretation and silencing those who do not, the ethnographer can present the voices of all her informants, including those who disagree" (pp. 121-122). By gaining multiple perspectives on the type of teaching that took place in the Human Communication Department, the rich picture and each participant's understanding of the department's teaching methods was provided. Common patterns in responses or behaviors that either legitimized characteristics of an engaged pedagogical model or that contradicted those characteristics came about as outlined by scholars in the literature review. This project sought to observe pedagogical behaviors that demonstrated collaborative learning, interdisciplinary studies, and multiculturalism. It was anticipated that students and teachers would describe learning materials, class activities, and teaching models that reflected an engaged method of pedagogy.

Semi-structured interviews were recorded by cassette tape with signed approval from each interviewee (see Appendix C for consent forms). The faculty interviews were conducted in each of their offices, while student interviews took place in the University Center living room that consisted of resting chairs, tables, a fireplace, and a comfortable, quiet atmosphere. Each of the interview tapes were transcribed for data collection. The transcriptions were reviewed and coded by recurring themes throughout each response. These themes outline the analysis chapter. The gender and racial representation of each interviewee consisted of three white female professors, one Mexican American female

professor, one white male professor, one white female student, and two Mexican American male students.

By observing four different classes, the same patterns across each class increased reliability. Lindlof (1995) argues that the question of reliability has to do with the stability of observations, “whether a research instrument, testing the same thing in the same way, will yield the same results time after time” (p. 237). The use of triangulation adds more support to the project’s claims. By not only completing participant observations but including several interviews, evidence is verified with more support from student and teacher reflections (Lindlof, 1995, p.239).

As mentioned before, this ethnography was written from a feminist standpoint that takes into consideration feminist theory. Feminist theory argues that everyday communication practices tend to exclude, marginalize, or distort the true interests of women, because these practices serve the interests of a patriarchal social system. Lindlof (1995) further agrees:

Feminist research seeks to document these practices, their effects in gender relationships, and how creative resistance to them can occur. In accord with their beliefs about women’s culture and interpersonal styles, feminist researchers often use a collaborative approach that involves close relationships with participants in defining and exploring the research problem. (p. 52)

An alternative to traditional pedagogy is provided that has the potential to create a body of students devoted to fighting oppression and deconstructing prejudice, instead of excluding historically underrepresented groups in society.

The goals of this thesis is similar to how Wolf (1992) describes the goals of feminist theory: “Our agenda, whether we are engaged in adding to the descriptive material on women’s experience or in building theory, is to expose the unequal distribution of power that has subordinated women in most if not all cultures and discover ways of dismantling hierarchies of domination” (p. 119). As a student seeking to represent feminist theory, and as an outsider going into a place to study human behavior, I was aware of the authority, voice, and power I held while doing participant observations and interviews.

I must first recognize the difference between myself and my participants.

An important difference between participants in an ethnographic interview is that one of them—the researcher—will write about the interview for the purpose of dissemination. Not only does the position of researcher connote authority and, typically, higher social status relative to research subjects, but in writing for dissemination researchers also exercise the power of representation. (Kauffman, 1992, p. 187).

Throughout the analysis, a conscious decision was made in effort to write *about* the participants, not *for* them, and their voices were used to tell the whole story (Wolf, 1992, p. 11). The decision to write about the participants was made in an effort to support the research by showing how professors and students responded to engaged pedagogy.

Unlike Margery Wolf’s research on Taiwanese women (1992), no attempt was made to use their voices to speak *for* the participants, or *with* them. Although Wolf makes the mistake to use her power as a researcher to speak for her participants, she does suggest

the importance of building upon feminist research that exposes the unequal distribution of power, key to this research.

It was recognized that this study was based upon what I came to know as truth. Stewart (1998) defines, “truth is what is right to believe, provisionally and critically, based upon our best means of understanding the reality of the subject at hand” (p. 14). This study was completed with the hope that the participants acted and told their own truths about the pedagogy that existed in the Human Communication Department. Stewart further describes truth:

Statistics-oriented researchers and ethnographers share an ultimate epistemic value. Whether or not they define themselves as ‘scientists,’ they both adhere to the fundamental purpose of science: to try to learn the truth about the world. Certainly, it is difficult to see why people would put up with the tribulations of participant observation, would bother to be there, if they did not hope that their accounts would be more or less true. (p. 12)

I also recognized that by using observations, an “other” was created as the result of this project. I created, interpreted, and described culture as I know it to be true (Wolf, 1992, p.12). However, I feel very close to this “other” because I too was once in my participants’ position as a student in these communication classes. I was aware of the responsibility I held as authority in this thesis. I strived to create a study determined to deconstruct oppression and inequality in the classroom in regards to power, privilege, and traditional values. I used this power to move traditional pedagogy toward progressive forms of education that seeks to liberate rather than dehumanize.

Chapter 4: Findings

In this section I describe, re-tell, and affirm the findings I discovered in the four Human Communication (HCOM) classes I observed, as well as the interviews I conducted with students, faculty, and the department chair. I begin my understanding of what pedagogical methods are used in HCOM by first completing an autoethnography of my own experience as an HCOM student. The autoethnography allows me a starting place and self reflexive piece to add my own voice regarding the effects the HCOM teaching had on me as a student. From there, I go into more detail about the field observations and interviews I completed. Common themes emerge from each class that describes engaged pedagogy in each classroom. I begin each section with an overview of the course description as stated in the course catalogue. Then, I provide an “on the surface” type of description in terms of the classroom environment, including class size, class set-up, and a description of the actual room. I further explain the pedagogical methods used in each class and how each professor responded to these methods described previously in the symposium. Common themes emerge as an answer to the first research question: How does the Human Communication faculty at CSU Monterey Bay demonstrate a feminist, critical, and engaged pedagogical model of teaching in the communication classroom? Those themes include: collaborative learning, interdisciplinary studies, diversity and transgressing boundaries, multiculturalism, voice, problem-posing, and power distribution. I provide professor and student responses and reactions to those pedagogical methods, which answers the second research question:

How do the professors and students respond to this type of pedagogy in their communication classes?

The discoveries I made from my field notes and interviews are my own interpretations of classroom culture. These interpretations represent conclusions drawn from my partial truth, or perspectives, and methods of asking questions (Goodall, 2000, p. 92). I provided each of my participants with a letter of consent prior to the study, which apprised them of their rights to confidentiality and anonymity. In keeping with HSIRB guidelines, I have chosen not to provide participant names.

Autoethnography: Experiencing Fusion

Entering CSUMB right out of high school was a smooth transition for me. The first thing I made certain to do was find a campus map and a course catalogue and begin finding my way around. The campus population had only 1,958 students back in 1997 anyway, so it was really hard to get lost (csumb.edu). During orientation, we had junior and senior volunteers to help us pick our classes and so I enrolled, and began my journey at CSUMB as a science major.

Wait a minute! Did you say science major? Yes, yes I did. I entered CSUMB as a science major, like most first years, because we all wanted to become marine biologists. During my very first college course, called Freshman PRO Seminar, one of our assignments was to research the major in which we were interested. When I discovered that it takes a majority of science majors no less than five or six years to complete their schooling, I said, “See ya! I don’t think I’ll pass chemistry anyway!” So I researched

two other majors on campus, and found that Human Communication suited me like an otter in the Monterey Bay. Everything the HCOM description stated addressed my interests and desires in some way. The thing I liked the most was the multiple avenues I could take after graduating with an HCOM degree. Because the major is a fusion of interdisciplinary studies, an HCOM graduate will have the skills to go into a successful career as a lawyer, negotiator/mediator, high school English teacher or counselor, professor of literature, ethnic studies, history, communication, interdisciplinary studies, or women's studies, a poet, novelist or essayist, journalist, editor, copywriter, publisher, public relations or advertising professional, oral historian, museum specialist or librarian, community spokesperson, women's advocate, or nonprofit leader. I liked even more that I could gain a concentration in the major in women's studies, which is my true passion. I could get all this from HCOM and I had no idea about the university's vision statement or their pedagogical methods.

As I entered the HCOM major as a first year student, I noticed how abundant the classes were to satisfy my general education requirements or, as CSUMB calls them, University Learning Requirements (ULR). So I began my HCOM journey very early and took an average of two HCOM classes per semester. Of course as a first year I did not realize how unique the school was and how unique my classes were going to be. But, after reflecting on my HCOM experience as a student, these are the things I recall.

Very early in my college career I was exposed to diverse authors such as Sandra Cisneros, Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Monica Sone, Toni Morrison, Elizabeth Bishop, and Sylvia Plath. In my very first college class, our professor gave us

works by Michael Rodriguez, who advocates claiming an education, and Paulo Freire, who discusses banking models of education. Adrienne Rich was even invited to speak at CSUMB, which was an amazing experience now that I reflect back. In fact, events outside of class such as lectures, writer's series presentations, musical events, and campus protests were part of my curriculum.

For example, in my Creative Writing through Social Action class, we became very familiar with the story of Mumia Abu-Jamal who was imprisoned and sentenced to death after being wrongly accused of killing a white Pennsylvania police officer who had beaten Mumia's brother. After reading Mumia's anthology, analyzing his pieces written from prison, and writing our own reflections, we were given the chance to attend an on-campus event held by Mumia's family. Mumia's family, including children and grandchildren, hosted the event to spread the word about Mumia's trial. I specifically remember sitting at the event and coming to a deep realization of the vital meaning of human rights and social action. I felt deep sadness and frustration for Mumia's situation. I had never been exposed to the existence of such an injustice, but I remember vowing to myself, to try to the best of my ability, to get more involved in issues of social justice, even if it meant coming to terms with my own racism. I could not have made any of these self discoveries without attending the event on campus.

My education, or learning process, occurred most often outside the classroom in engaged ways, such as attending the Mumia forum. Further, my text books were never hard bound, hard to handle, or cost hundreds of dollars. I learned from novels, essays, articles, reading packets, and from my own self reflection journals. For the end of

semester “exams,” I never took a scantron test or multiple choice/true false/fill in the blank and regurgitate what you memorized test. I had portfolios, which contained all of my writing throughout the semester. I was asked to demonstrate what I knew through writing. This was called outcome based education. I had to prove what I learned in class during individual and group presentations. I made at least one presentation in every single HCOM class I was enrolled. Circle discussions (which I jokingly called circle time), small groups, and group projects were the norm. Class sizes were no larger than fifteen to twenty students. I was required to meet with each of my HCOM professors during their office hours at least once, even twice, during the semester. Even if I never had a question about the class, the one-on-one time was spent getting to know one another’s lives outside of school. I cherish those times now that I have graduated. My professors were so inspirational and welcoming. I would give anything to be back in their offices discussing novels and books on socially significant issues.

Not only was the curriculum unique to HCOM, so was the titles of classes I took. They were titled: Ways of Knowing, Cooperative Argumentation, Literature Film and Culture, Women and the Law, and Senior Capstone. The capstone experience is very unique to CSUMB in general. Every graduate of CSUMB took with them a culminating work that reflected what they learned from their college experience. The business majors left campus with a well developed business plan that was ready to start the day after they graduated. The science majors worked at least one year developing their capstone with topics that included ice plant Olympics, where the students’ goal was to pull up as much ice plant on the campus grounds as possible. Ice plant kills most of the natural plant life

around it, you know. The film majors created their own short length film that they wrote, directed, produced, and acted. And the HCOM majors tended to choose issues of social justice to research and write. For example, my capstone discussed gender construction through the media, family, and peers. Each student in my graduating class developed a power point presentation to be played during the oral presentation we gave to the public community, family, friends, and faculty at our Capstone Festival held in our university's World Theater. The capstone was a larger piece of work that most students took much pride in, not to mention a lot of time developing.

Another example of a unique HCOM class is called Ways of Knowing. When I entered Ways of Knowing for the first time, I was dumbfounded as to what we would be studying. It only took the first thirty minutes of class for me to realize how important it was for me to learn about my own ways of knowing, in order for me to better understand how people of other cultures learn and live in society. The professor spoke of subjective knowing, using instinct, intuition, emotion, and experience to draw conclusions about how we come to know truth. The professor used a vocabulary and soft tone of voice that was new to me, alien in many ways, but I felt eager to learn my own ways of knowing and that of my classmates. I realized early that class day, the curriculum in this particular class would be essential to my success in each of my other HCOM classes.

Generally, I remember aspects of my college experience that broke down traditional models of learning. First, I never sat in a desk in any of my HCOM classes. All of our classrooms had tables and comfortable office style swivel chairs that could be adjusted on the bottom and on the back portions for more comfort. The tables were large

enough to fit all of my books and notebooks and even a coffee, tea, or water. When we were not sitting in our comfy chairs, we could be found sitting in a circle on the floor, or even outside in the sunlight having even more engaged discussions because of the changed classroom atmosphere. Every classroom was considered a “smart classroom” equipped with a computer with campus e-mail and internet access, and a projector system that displayed the computer screen so the entire class could view the internet or a relevant film. As mentioned earlier, my classes were encouraged to attend events outside of class either held on campus or in the community. Community resources were always available for my use. For example, I took many fieldtrips to the Monterey Public Library to enter their California room, which contained original books, artifacts, and memorabilia that displayed the history of Monterey and California. As well, to fulfill our service learning component, which required thirty hours of community service as a lower division student and thirty hours of community service as an upper division student, I assisted at a community center as a preschool aide, and I documented the lives of first generation college students. The surrounding community was a place that I learned from as well as offered my services as a student. Community based learning was integral to HCOM.

So far my experiences in HCOM might sound surreal. However, like most students at CSUMB, I too resisted the unusual teaching methods. When I first arrived at CSUMB, I had no idea how important issues of diversity and multiculturalism would be in class discussions. It was only after reading the vision statement my first semester that I soon realized how integral these issues would become. As I lingered in one of the hallways during my observations for this thesis, I remember seeing a poster on a bulletin

board that read, “Harassment or discrimination because of race, color, ancestry, religious creed, national origin, physical disability...is prohibited by law.” Posters such as these are regular displays on campus. The vision statement alone was placed in every single building or office across the campus. Students were deliberately forced to see it wherever they went.

Going back to my resistance, it began because I felt attacked, singled out, and guilty for being a white woman in society. I felt as though all the negative histories and experiences of this country were due to actions made by white people. I felt as though I was blamed for something white men did hundreds of years prior. I clearly recall when my resistance began. It started in one of my first classes: Service Learning. This class was created to fulfill the thirty hour community service requirement for undergraduates. Not only did the class connect each student with a destination to fulfill the hour requirements, but it also challenged each student to live outside of his/her comfort zones and interact in a world unfamiliar. Class time was spent discussing issues of race and class. I remember one class session in particular, as a very naïve freshman, my roommate and I got into a long argument with two other girls in the course. The other two girls were Mexican American; my roommate and I are white. The argument resulted from the other two girls, with support from the white professor, stating that all white people, and only white people, were racist. Not completely understanding that statement at the time, my roommate and I took major offense. We tried to explain how that statement could not be possible, and was not possible because we were not racist, but in fact the next twenty minutes resulted in us making small racist comments without full realization. I learned

more in that class period than at any other moment at CSUMB. However, I could not have been in that learning environment and still felt safe to express myself freely if I was not at CSUMB.

These feelings of frustration and resistance were due to the lack of discussion of diversity that existed in my prior educational experiences, and the fact that I did not know how to deal with those feelings. By the time I was a junior in HCOM, and after many many discussions and crying episodes from frustration, I realized that I could not be blamed for events that took place hundreds of years prior. I realized that because I am white, I do have privilege in this society, and because I am a woman, I do experience oppression as well. This transition took two years, and it was hard emotionally and academically. There was a time when I was prepared to transfer schools. I stayed with it though and I am so thankful I did. I would have never made that emotional transition if it were not for the pedagogical methods in HCOM and the goals of the university.

After graduating from CSUMB, I made another transition from a learning environment that welcomed discussions of diversity and multiculturalism to a learning environment where I struggled to find issues of gender and power in the curriculum. My first semester in graduate school became just as hard as my first semester at CSUMB, only this time, I was eager to get to know my professors, I was eager to find even more enlightened discussions, and I was eager to bring my HCOM experiences to this new university. I was met with great disappointment and once again with great frustration and crying episodes. I did not see any learning outcomes on my syllabi that required collaborative learning or multicultural awareness. I did not see any group projects or

presentations. I even took my first scantron test at the university level. The biggest struggle I encountered, however, was finding issues in communication studies that spoke to my passion, issues of sex/gender. I could not justify how issues of gender, race, class, and power did not come up in discussions, or in the literature. Do these issues not exist in communication studies? Well that is not right, of course they do. I just did not hear anyone talking about them, as privileged as they were in HCOM.

I felt very intimidated by my professors, scared to attend office hours, and disappointed to see faculty quickly walk away from me so as not to make conversation. (Now, I know I took classes with only eight professors, which is only a small portion of the faculty in the Communication Studies department, but these initial experiences, while not generalizable, were still alienating.) Working out paper topics and ideas for final papers was hard to do on my own. I craved feedback from my peers and my professors. I was met with minimal conversation and busy professors. I even found the entire university so decentralized of student experience and learning that faculty and staff across disciplines and departments lacked effective communication. As a student, I rarely found a definite answer, deadline, or even tuition cost. The campus was constantly changing and developing without ever making those changes aware to its faculty and students. I spent most of my time at this university running around campus trying to jump through administrative hoops in order to graduate. And unfortunately, I graduated one semester late due to a change in a deadline that was not made aware to my department, its faculty, and most importantly, its students.

Of course my graduate experience was not all a disappointment. I do have a small cohort of professors and peers who enjoy getting together often to talk over dinner. And I assume the department is only caught up in the traditional standards that created the university. It is very hard to change an entire curriculum when the standards have been set for so long. Still, all in all, I am excited to create this thesis that spotlights a kind of learning environment that can be influential to other communication departments.

After completing this thesis, I have come to realize that this body of work is the greatest positive outcome from my graduate studies work. Important discoveries were made from my field observations, interviews with students, faculty, and the department chair. I can sum up the existing pedagogical methods used in HCOM as an experience of fusion. Fusion means blending, or a coalition of several elements to create something new and innovative. The best way I can describe HCOM is a fusion of teaching that is deeply committed to issues of diversity, multiculturalism, interdisciplinary studies, collaborative development, student led learning, equality, technology, and shifting the center of learning from constant teacher talk to student experience and voice. All of these themes make up the teaching mission in the HCOM department.

Human Communication teaching mission

Foremost, understanding the department's teaching mission is key to appreciating why they perform under engaged methods. In my interviews with the professors and the department chair, each gave his/her own definition of the HCOM teaching mission. I

give those definitions here as professors state them. First, the HCOM 212 professor defines:

We do teach [students] in a multicultural perspective, we do everything to accommodate all students whether it's a question of money, social class, diverse background, language barrier, we do everything in our power to accommodate those students, to level the playing field so they all have the same opportunities to learn the skills to read, write, to engage, and ultimately, to reach out to their community and be successful in the workplace. (September 18, 2003).

The HCOM 312 professor adds to that statement, "We're very deeply committed, all of us as a group, we talk about this quite often, to prepare our students for a meaningful and successful 21st century life and most particularly to fostering the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required for leadership in a multicultural society" (September 25, 2003). Even further, the HCOM 225 professor adds, "We are committed to the concept of interdisciplinary and we are committed to the concept of interactive teaching and learning and we're also committed to community based programs, community based learning" (September 23, 2003). And finally, the department chair explains the HCOM mission as follows:

Related to the vision of the entire university, which is first and foremost to make sure that public higher education at a comprehensive four year university is available and accessible to all students, especially students who are first generation to college, who are of various groups who have been disenfranchised from a college experience previously but who are now being beckoned and

welcomed into the university and I think our mission is to develop pedagogies that work for everyone. (September 18, 2003)

The common themes found in each of these statements are a vision that works toward developing an engaged model of teaching directed to serve historically underprivileged members of society. The vision aims to prepare its students for their future as positive providers of their own communities by helping them become aware of issues of diversity and multiculturalism. With that said, I encourage the reader to take a look at the university's vision statement included in appendix A of this document. To really understand CSUMB, and to fully understand HCOM, it is vital to understand the underlying messages and goals of the university's vision, and the HCOM mission. These visions were created carefully and skillfully by the faculty and the surrounding community of Monterey. These two visions direct each HCOM class toward a desired outcome that potentially produces a diverse spectrum of students deeply committed to living out these visions in their future lives. As described earlier in the symposium, the purpose of these vision statements is to allow faculty and students to fully understand the goals of the HCOM department, including the pedagogical ideals and desired learning outcomes. It is because of these two influential documents that I find myself back at CSU Monterey Bay, in the HCOM department, attempting to complete my graduate studies from San Jose State University. The first class I found myself in is equivalent to an English 1A course given at any other university. The course is titled Human Communication 211: Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking.

Human Communication 211: Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking

The course catalogue description states, “Through portfolio assessment, introduces students to college-level reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Further develops reading skills through a focus on divergent perspectives. Emphasizes the writing process to develop writing and a research paper. Develops empathic and critical listening skills through class discussion, peer workshops, interviews, and group presentations within a collaborative, interactive, and intercultural environment” (CSUMB Catalogue, 2002-2003, p.258). This course was designed as a lower-division, freshmen or sophomore level, interdisciplinary communication course. HCOM 211 is the prerequisite for the HCOM 212 course discussed in the succeeding section.

On the surface

I observed this class a total of five separate class periods that lasted between 90-120 minutes. On average, fifteen students attended this class with an approximately equal ratio of men to women. This class met in the “Multimedia Learning Complex” (MLC) in a room with no desks, but rather tables and comfortable desk chairs in its place. The tables were set up in a “U” formation with chairs dispersed on the inside and outside of this formation. This kind of set up was much different than the traditional classroom with hard desks and chairs formed in rows. The students and professor in this class had more open discussions with increased eye contact and the ability to see each of their peers as they participated in dialogue. At the front of the class sat a larger office style desk with a computer. The walls were blank white with one large whiteboard at the front

wall and a projector screen attached diagonally from the front wall to one of the side walls. A large window took up the other side wall that allowed all of the needed light in the room. The professor remained at the front of the room for the most part with occasional pacing through the center of the “U” formation during discussions. The class atmosphere seemed comfortable, relaxed, and engaged. One student described the atmosphere as a, “really interactive class, you walk in the room and you automatically feel comfortable, the teacher is just warm and smiling and always greeting you and things like that. She takes the time to learn everybody’s names, and it just makes you feel comfortable. You’re in an environment where you don’t mind standing up in front of all your other classmates and saying personal or sad things even. It’s one of my favorite classes actually, one of the better ones” (September 11, 2003). This type of atmosphere was apparent in each class period I observed and was created by the professor’s willingness to create a welcoming space for every student to learn.

Pedagogical methods

The HCOM 211 professor created class activities, discussions, and assignments that directly reflected the department’s mission and the university’s vision statement, which takes pride in creating outcome-based education where professors use interdisciplinary standards to bring students to the center of the learning experience. For instance, the professor used discussion models rather than lecture modes to foster learning and awareness. She encouraged her students to keep a journal of self discoveries, reflections on class discussions, and everyday thoughts of their learning

process. The professor asked her students to write essays and reflection papers using personal experience of what they know. She encouraged students to use personal experience as a valid voice in supporting their own thoughts and reactions to certain topics. Students gave many oral presentations to give their voices an active forum to share thoughts and reactions. After these presentations, students were met with support, applause, and challenging questions to help them open their minds and viewpoints even further. The professor challenged her students in a positive way using questioning techniques, and open dialogue in a relatively supportive, safe environment. These pedagogical methods encouraged students to come to deeper realizations about their personal viewpoints and challenge their own views to learn from others’.

Human Communication 212: Reasoning and Communication

The course catalogue description states, “Introduction to practical reasoning and argumentation. Students develop empathic and critical listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills for cooperative deliberation and problem solving practices; they anticipate and assess various perspectives, alternatives, and their consequences for all who are affected by the decision-making process” (CSUMB Course Catalogue, 2003-2004, p.258). This course was designed as a lower-division, freshmen or sophomore level, interdisciplinary communication course. HCOM 212 is the second portion of the HCOM 211 course discussed previously.

On the surface

I observed this class twice a week for three weeks, for a total of six observations. This class lasted between 90-120 minutes and had on average a total of fourteen students present. The ratio of female students far outweighed the male students by sometimes seven to two. In fact, the general campus population as a whole contains 60% more women than men, as stated on the campus website (9/02 statistics, csUMB.edu). The class met twice a week in one of the instructional buildings on campus. The classroom held about twenty five desks, contained one large white board at the front of the room, two other blank walls, and one wall with two smaller windows. At the front, and pushed all the way to the side was a larger office desk with a computer. A pull down projector screen was situated above the white board. All the walls were blank except for a few reminder notices to faculty to turn off all lights after dismissing their classes. The students always sat in rows with a few occasional scattered desks on the sides of the room. Interestingly, as students entered the room they tended to fill the scattered side desks before sitting in the desks arranged in a row. When students needed to form groups, they gathered their desks together to make conversation more feasible. The professor remained at the front of the class either standing or seated at the computer desk during discussions and activities. During group work, the professor was found wandering from group to group to facilitate work or answer questions. The energy in this class seemed slow at first with some tired students struggling to stay awake at 8 AM. However, the atmosphere was comfortable, relaxed, and very sharp during class discussions. Students always felt free to answer questions or join in discussions, without

raising their hand or getting permission to begin. Group work seemed very engaged and every student seemed to be up to date with reading assignments so as to contribute to the group work. Students were given the option to work with one another outside in the rare hot Monterey weather.

Pedagogical methods

The HCOM 212 professor incorporated major themes from the department's teaching mission and the university's vision statement in the activities, readings, and writing assignments he gave. In general, this professor was committed to the learning outcomes of the course and whenever possible, wrote them on the board, re-read them from the syllabus, and talked them over with the class. He frequently reminded students of the purpose to each assignment. He discussed how the students should be completing the course's learning outcomes such as the expectations regarding research and ethical and effective deliberation. The professor used a portfolio assessment at the end of the semester so students had a culminating packet of the work they completed throughout the semester. The positive effects of using a portfolio assessment as opposed to final exams are numerous. The department chair highlights those effects:

The purpose with the portfolios is multi-fold. We're constantly learning more about what portfolios do for students and do for us. People put their original reflection essay, a small thing about a course they're about to take, what do they think is going to happen in the course, what are their goals, what is their agenda? And typically that first reflection is rather vague, you know, they're taking a

course because it's required or because they're kind of half interested, but the title in the catalogue copy only tells you so much, but in the process of writing the reflection they realize they do have intellectual desire. But students get to look at multiple drafts of their cognitive and intellectual growth and it's displayed for them and it's collected for them. And inevitably at the end of the class they can look at their own learning and the emphasis is not on what you taught me, but more they have a portfolio and will giggle sometimes, oh my god that writing that first time is so embarrassing and then, you know, look toward the end and say, now I'm with it, and they have evidence. They really have evidence that the learning has occurred. That's pretty marvelous. (September 18, 2003)

The portfolio process can be extremely effective. Instead of a standard test or exam that requires students to memorize and regurgitate information, a portfolio requires students to explain what they know in writing and to see how their writing has grown over the course of a semester. The 212 professor preferred the portfolio process over test taking in his course.

Human Communication 312: Cooperative Argumentation

The course catalogue description states, "Introduction to cooperative argumentation. Students develop empathic and critical listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills for cooperative deliberation and problem solving practices; apply and assess reasoning and argumentative skills in oral and written communication contexts on various topics. Offers built-in assessment in HCOM Major Learning Outcome #1 or the

concentrations in Pre-Law or Practical and Professional Ethics” (Course Catalogue, 2003-2004, p.260). This course is designed as an upper-division, junior or senior level, interdisciplinary communication course. HCOM 312 is the upper division equivalent to HCOM 212.

On the surface

I observed this class once a week for three weeks for a total of three class periods. This class met twice a week for two hours and had on average nineteen students present. The ratio of women to men was approximately four to one. This class met in the same room as HCOM 212, so the room was set up exactly the same. However, this class changed the formation of the desks into a larger group circle. The professor joined that larger circle and was not always found at the front and center of the circle. During smaller group work, the professor made her rounds to each group, answering students’ questions and joining discussions. This class was different than the other three classes I observed mainly due to the fact that it was an upper division course. The students seemed much more involved in the discussions and often took over class time for twenty to thirty minutes. Every student was far more engaged in class time and interested in helping one another clarify their debatable group topics for a future roundtable discussion. At this point in their education, the students were comfortable with the pedagogical methods used in HCOM and throughout the university. The instructor spent less time reviewing class assignments and due dates, and more time working on activities and group work. The students seemed focused on getting their work done. The

department chair describes the significance of group work and how students become less resistant as juniors and seniors in the following way:

I think once folks are juniors and seniors they love it and you can see the difference, I can't generalize, there are always some people where it drives them crazy, but I think you can see the difference in folks that don't resist it as juniors and seniors, or when I give opportunities I say look, you can do this alone or work with groups, the grand majority will swing over to someone to get that second or third head involved. They're not competing for my attention and it becomes pretty clear that I'm the one, by the time they're juniors and seniors, I'm trying to interject myself because they're getting things going with each other, and I do think that's rare, it's rare. (September 18, 2003)

In HCOM 312, I saw the students emphasize helping one another with their topics and clarifying definitions or terms. In smaller groups, I saw an emphasis on using the time they had together to work diligently and cooperatively to get their task done. They strived to do well on their projects and this was clear by observing their discussions and small group work.

Pedagogical methods

The pedagogical methods used in this class clearly reflects the teaching mission of the department as well as the university's vision statement. The professor created clear learning outcomes for each of the assignments and made those outcomes available on paper and in discussions. In our interview, the HCOM 312 professor agrees:

I feel it's terribly important that, one, I hand out to students an assignment, and on the assignment itself are criteria of assessment of that assignment [that] to the best of my ability, align directly with the published learning outcomes from the class so that there's an alignment from beginning to finish, at least ideally and it's certainly something we're aiming for. And one way that I can hold myself accountable is to make those public, transparent. (September 25, 2003)

Making the learning outcomes of the course apparent was only one way this course used engaged pedagogical methods. Another way was to create a deeper connection between the students and their required texts. In most traditional classrooms, students read texts from authors they are not familiar with or have never heard. In this class, the required text was actually written by the professor and another HCOM colleague. Not only were students given the opportunity to discuss the reading with the author every class period, but they asked her questions about her writing and about the text. The students began to notice an even bigger connection between the course topic and the larger community.

Human Communication 225: Literature, Film, and Culture

The course catalogue description states, "Introduces literary analysis through readings of selected American writers. Examines these writers' cultural heritage and traditions. Develops analytical and critical reading ability of literature through discussion of themes, characters, techniques, images, and structures. Explores the symbiotic relationship between literature and film in transmitting cultural values" (CSUMB course

catalogue, 2003-2004, p.259). This course is designed as a lower-division, freshmen/sophomore level, interdisciplinary communication course.

On the surface

I observed this class once a week for three weeks for a total of three class periods. This class met twice a week for two hours and had, on average, thirteen students present. The ratio of women to men on average was three to one. The class met in an instructional building large enough to fit approximately forty desks situated in rows. The entire back wall had open windows and the side walls were blank white. The front wall had a large whiteboard. To the front and pushed to the side wall was an office desk with a computer. Just like all the classrooms, this one was equipped with a pull down projector screen and projector system for viewing films or the internet from the class computer screen. The classroom environment was usually slow and tired due to its late meeting time of 8-10 PM. The students usually took some time adjusting to class discussions and engaging in the learning process. After they were warmed up, the environment was open and comfortable. The students seemed eager to discuss the exciting films and novels on their agenda. The professor either spoke from the front of the room or seated at the computer desk. During small group work, the professor walked from each group to facilitate and answer questions.

Pedagogical methods

The HCOM 225 professor used very similar exercises and assignments in class to fulfill the department's teaching mission and the university's vision statement. She describes her pedagogical methods: "combines a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary with an emphasis on interactive learning, of student led learning" (September 23, 2003).

In the HCOM 225 course:

There are two different kinds of disciplines that students have to become familiar with. They have to become familiar with the ideas and terminology around culture studies and ideas and terminology around literary analysis. Even there however, this is culture studies with an emphasis on looking at multiple cultures and drawing comparison and then going beyond that and examining the students' own lives and experiences and cultures and using that as a foundation for developing an understanding around culture studies. (September 23, 2003).

To accomplish this kind of interdisciplinary learning, the professor used a lot of interactive exercises that portrayed many of the common themes used throughout each of the HCOM classes. For example, the professor encouraged students to work in groups to discuss issues of race and culture viewed in each film. Students shared findings with the larger class through presentations. The professor assigned multiple essays throughout the semester to allow students to demonstrate what they learned in each film through writing. These essays allowed students a way to voice their concerns, questions, and understandings of the films. Mainly, this course was active in dialogue as a larger class to work out the details from each film. It was more beneficial for students to engage with

the larger class to hear multiple viewpoints and versions of the same film. This forum gave students active voice in the classroom.

Voice

Student voice was a major underlying theme in each course. For example, the 211 professor asked students to keep an ongoing journal of self reflection pieces about different themes happening in class. For instance, on September 11th, students completed a free- write in their personal journal that shared where they were on that day of infamy and what they remembered. This assignment was then tied to a poem by Judith Ortiz Cofer entitled, “Anniversary;” a poem published in 1993 but so closely related to an event that took place years later.

For their second writing assignment, the 211 professor required students to write a 3-4 page paper using “I” while drawing from personal experience. The topic was based on any influences essential to their development as individuals. Students chose any person or experience that shaped who they are as humans. They were first required to give a three minute presentation to their classmates on their chosen paper topic. The 211 professor encouraged the students to ask one another questions and applaud one another before and after each presentation. These presentations not only allowed students to get to know one another more deeply, but it allowed for increased collaborative learning through peer questioning, empathic listening, and transgressing boundaries to become more aware of diverse perspectives and experiences. bell hooks (1994) suggests one way to build community in the classroom is to recognize the value of each individual voice (p.

40). The individual presentations accomplish that effectively. Some of the diverse paper topics included: one woman's encounter with the Dalai Lama, a single mother and daughter's driving adventure from Kentucky to California with little money to survive, and the death of a best friend after the speaker's father volunteered to donate a part of his lung to the best friend. This professor reflects on the importance of this assignment in the following way:

I know that at CSUMB they focus more on student centered learning, bringing the students' experiences from the margin to the center of learning. There is a huge emphasis on narrative writing versus expository writing, using the 'I' in writing is more encouraged here, which was actually a hard transition for me because I've always been told not to do that, but it is very much supported in the HCOM department, especially the upper division classes. So I try to emphasize it in 211.
(September 11, 2003)

During class, the 211 professor also comments, "Most universities don't support 'I' in writing, but this campus does and that's what I love about this campus. You want to write from your experience. That's where we begin" (September 18, 2003). The 211 professor continuously emphasized voice and ensured each student's voice was a valid place to begin the learning process. From the presentation alone, which exercised oral communication, students were exposed to multicultural experiences by using collaborative skills to clarify each student's writing process and writing skills. So, two separate courses that emphasize oral or writing communication skills were fused together to create one interdisciplinary course.

Giving students a space to express themselves through written communication was a major theme in the 212 class as well. The 212 professor required each student to purchase a composition notebook. In the notebook, students completed an in-class reading response question. An example of a reading response question was, “As far as political correctness, what makes one label more acceptable than the other? Do labels become comfort factors for those who feel they must belong to something? Have you ever disapproved of a particular label that you received? Explain.” The class was encouraged to go beyond race and ethnicity and discover other labels like “nerd” or “jock.”

212 students were also required to complete four essays throughout the semester. So much writing not only exercised the students’ written communication skills but it also gave the students a chance to express themselves through writing. The 212 professor required so much writing because he says, “I think it’s really important, college students as well as universities and all schools, it seems like people are always complaining that college graduates don’t know how to write. And so I do my best to make sure that, not on my watch. I want to make sure that they are writing enough” (September 18, 2003). Writing gives students skills to become future leaders and members of society; as well, it exercises their ability to express their own voices through written form.

Another form of eliciting voice from the 212 students was through peer review workshops. This class had the opportunity to form a cooperative rather than competitive exchange of feedback on a writing assignment by exchanging papers. This exercise fostered critical thinking as a peer reviewer, and skills to deeply analyze the content of

another piece of writing and be able to articulate a constructive form of feedback for their peers. The peer workshop process allowed for collaborative participation, and the reversal of power roles as students now become teachers. Paper topics were open with some guidelines. For example, for their research project, students were able to choose any topic of interest as long as they were able to compile information using library and database sources. As well, for an out-of-class argumentation essay, students were able to create any debatable topic of interest in their groups. By not only choosing topics of interest but allowing students to use his/her own life experiences, HCOM 212 worked to give each student a valid voice in his/her learning process. Allowing students more voice in the classroom is strongly supported by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) in order to increase student power and responsibility in teaching their classmates (p. 221).

The 312 students realized from day one on their syllabi three learning outcomes that gave authority to their voices. For example, the learning outcomes in the 312 course state, “express and critique the feelings, values, and assumptions they have regarding the research question or creative investigation, make multiple and different determinations about the types of disciplinary and interdisciplinary sources necessary to complete the research, and interpret or creatively apply the retrieved material from a variety of perspectives.” The 312 professor encouraged students to use personal experiences to gain and share perspectives. The 312 professor says to her students in class, “Personal experience is a wonderful resource” (September 11, 2003). In smaller group work, I overheard one group using their personal stories to share their own perspectives on why

they agree or disagree with mainstreaming all students in education. The group members validated one another by replying, “I understand. I see your point” (September 11, 2003). In these groups, the students portrayed what Caldwell (1998) described earlier as “jazz talk” (p. 59). Students responded to one another and provided personal experiences to create music, or more in-depth discussions, which led to a richer learning environment.

As well, during larger group discussions, the 312 professor constantly asked for students’ feelings and opinions. For example, before changing the due date of a paper assignment to a later week, she asked permission from the students first. Of course, they all reacted gratefully for the extra time to write. During larger discussions, students often began a response with, “I don’t know if this is right.” The professor responded with, “Well let’s give it a try.” 312 students were encouraged to take risks and feel comfortable doing so with comments such as this by the professor. And after every student commented, the professor commonly replied, “Thank you for bringing that up. I appreciate that.”

The 225 professor continuously asked the students to voice their feelings and opinions through large and small group work. She asks, “How did the book make you feel? How does this process make you feel?” The 225 professor encouraged students to use their feelings and experiences to engage in dialogue. 225 students then had the opportunity to use the dialogue from group work to write three major essays that ask:

them to compare literary elements such as imagery, including sensory detail and figurative language and voice and tone; who the speaker is and who the intended audience is and in terms of tone what kinds of emotions or feelings the author is

trying to elicit in the reader. And then against that I ask them to begin developing a sense of the different cultural institutions or artifacts that are obvious in these three pieces that help them begin giving an additional understanding to everything from character development and voice development and tone to specific use of literary elements. (September 23, 2003)

Student voice was apparent in large class discussions, small group work, and written essays where students identified and explained what they knew. By giving students more voice in the classroom, teachers distributed power roles to students, which in turn allowed students to use that power to take responsibility for their own education.

Power

Power in the classroom is traditionally held by the professor through lectures, one-way teacher talk, individual learning, and hierarchical structures. When professors have the courage to distribute their power to their students, students become responsible learners and contributors to their growing education. Students start to feel as if they have some role in the way their education and learning process takes place. Students feel more challenged in a positive way to create deeper understandings for topics and issues.

The 211 professor encouraged students to take on power roles in the classroom by asking them to create a log of the activities that took place during each class period. Students presented their “class log,” a list of the events that took place from the previous class period, and then were encouraged to develop a class activity that reflected a theme they learned from a previous class period. For example, one 211 student brought in

finger paints and large white paper for her peers to use. The student asked the class to reflect on the current readings and use that inspiration to finger paint. This kind of assignment allowed students to take over class time for 15 minutes and become leaders and contributors to the learning environment. Even though finger painting is considered elementary, the class turned the assignment into something more significant by artistically using an image to explain their own understanding of the class topic. Bright (1998), one of the symposium authors, advocates this type of collaborative development in class and encourages students to have the opportunity to lead class discussions (p. 98). Students begin to imagine themselves in an educator role by taking over class time (p. 97). This 211 student reflects on her chance to present:

[The professor] has us do the log and you can pick whatever you want to do. It's up to you, so when I did mine, I did the finger painting. She ended up using it, she kind of changed it around, but she still used it in the class, which I thought was really fun. And then, the class was following that, and they were using what they made for examples and for the paper they were going to write. So it was nice that I could contribute in such a big way. (September 18, 2003)

For the finger painting activity, the 211 professor asked the students to create a border of paint so later in the class they could try some creative writing in the center of the painting. The class wrote their own poems in the center after their discussion of 9/11 and reading the poem by Judith Ortiz Cofer. It was important to note that the professor always participated in the class activities along with her students. At one point, she even asked her students for clarification on the definition of a word she came across in a

newspaper article. When a professor has the confidence to mitigate her power role as teacher and play more of a student role, it shows the students how important their place is in the classroom. They are not only participants of their education, but they play an integral part in sharing their wisdom as teachers too.

Each teacher encouraged the sharing of power by asking students to participate in peer review workshops. 211 students worked in partners and exchanged rough drafts of their paper assignment. For the workshop, the 211 professor stressed the importance of asking permission to write on each other's papers first, and then each student was responsible for saying one positive comment about the writing, and one clarifying question. By giving the chance for students to, in some way, "correct" another student's paper, a task only a professor is supposed to complete, the students moved into an empowered role as someone who holds the knowledge and then shares that wisdom with another. This activity allowed students to begin to share more responsibility in the classroom in terms of power. The task of giving feedback on a student's paper is not only left up to the professor, but to the students as well.

In terms of power roles in the 212 classroom, the professor showed respect for his students when he trusted to leave them alone during individual work in their composition notebooks. He exited the room for three to five minutes each period and allowed the students to complete their assignments independently. By leaving the room, the 212 students began to understand they played a large part in claiming their education. They had the option to either stay on task or not without the professor in the room. The students remained on task without his presence.

Another form of power role reversal was in the form of performance. The 212 professor created scripts for students to take part in while developing their listening skills. The skits created a way of taking the attention away from the professor and placing it on student led learning. Students now look at one another for guidance and discussion during the exercise. Students took on a shared responsibility to lead and guide the discussion for a time in class, which bell hooks (1994) emphasizes as an example of engaged pedagogy (p. 39).

The 212 professor had the students take over class time in groups as well. After each group discussed their chosen topic, the professor asked the students to facilitate the discussion of each group's response and become responsible for questioning one another, or adding onto the responses. The professor sat in a desk and took notes during this time. DeFrancisco (1996), from the symposium, encourages instructors to become facilitators rather than experts in the classroom to give students more freedom to take an active role in their education (p. 333).

To shift power roles in the 312 classroom, the 312 professor provided students with opportunities to lead discussions. For an entire class period, students conducted a roundtable discussion on their controversial group topic. Their classmates and professor sat outside the roundtable to listen and engage in the discussion. This type of learning puts more responsibility on the students to lead class time. In addition, the assignment alone is one that fosters a cooperative versus competitive learning environment where students will still debate, but do so in a collaborative manner. DeFrancisco (1996) agrees

that by allowing students more space to become leaders and effective group members in class, students gain collaborative skills rather than competitive learning ideals (p. 333).

Also listed on the syllabus were the 312 students' rights and responsibilities. Below each responsibility, the 312 professor clearly stated what her responsibilities and expectations were as their professor. For example, one professor responsibility reads, "The instructor is responsible for being well prepared to facilitate learning through respectful engagement with students and their learning processes, and to provide thoughtful, responsible, and responsive assessment of student learning." These kinds of statements deliver a message to students that the professor is part of the classroom, not only as a responsible contributor to the learning process, but as a member of the classroom environment. Every person in the room, student and teacher, was working toward completing the semester in a collaborative way.

The 225 professor gave students the opportunity to become classroom leaders in small groups. After the groups discussed the chosen topic, each group gave a small presentation at the front of the room to their peers. 225 students gained confidence in oral communication and articulated difficult discussion topics on culture, race, gender, and class. Also, students were welcome to make suggestions about the use of class time. When one group noticed that the remaining fifteen minutes of class time would not be sufficient to complete their assignment, they asked to add additional time to the next class period before making their presentations. The 225 professor welcomed and agreed with the suggestion and so the assignment was moved to the following class period. This kind of suggestion might not be acceptable to a professor who does not share his/her power.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism was a major underlying theme throughout HCOM and across the campus as well. To incorporate this theme into HCOM 211, initially the professor clearly explained her criteria in the course syllabus. The syllabus described in detail the objectives and outcomes each student would meet by the end of the semester. To complete the multicultural objective, students experienced diverse points of view in course readers, novels, and handouts. For example, in their reading packet, the students were introduced to diverse authors such as Amy Tan, Sandra Cisneros, Brad Manning, and Julia Alvarez. Just as bell hooks (1994) explained earlier, this short list of authors is more diverse in perspective than most traditional classrooms allow (pp. 29-30). Students attending CSUMB directly out of high school are more exposed to white, male, traditional, canonical authors in order to satisfy the governmental standards put forth in public education. This data is supported by another HCOM professor from the HCOM 225 course. She adds, "And what can I say except that for twelve years our students have been trained in a traditional, canonical pedagogy and most of the work they have read have been by white writers, most of them male, not many women and not many writers of color" (September 23, 2003). In this course, students explored diverse authors of color and gender in their first and second years. In addition, through group presentations and individual announcements, students engaged multiple experiences and points of view given by their classmates and professor.

The university's vision statement, with its deep commitment to multiculturalism, had a large impact on the professors as well. This 211 professor explains, "The vision

statement is the reason I'm here. I was searching the web one night and the first thing I read was the vision statement and I was amazed. I wondered if what the vision statement said was really happening at CSUMB. And if it was, that is amazing" (September 11, 2003). Students and professors alike were so committed to the vision that its ideals are incorporated into every assignment, discussion, and voice in the classroom. The HCOM 211 classroom is no different. These courses "emphasize the vision statement and the outcome based education, as well as doing self reflections in class. Portfolios are different and are really emphasized in 211 as well" (HCOM 211 professor, September 11, 2003). These assignments reflect the multicultural ideals stated in the vision statement because they encourage students to understand their own reflections, and then learn the ideals from peers outside their own cultural understanding.

The students in the 211 course practice their skills as empathic listeners and discussion leaders. The conversations that took place in terms of race, gender, class or the numerous other societal standards that exist, proceeded with caution, understanding, cooperativeness, and empathy for others. This skill can only be taught by a faculty that is deeply committed "to preparing our students for a meaningful and successful 21st century life and most particularly to fostering the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required for leadership in a multicultural society," which is part of the teaching mission of every instructor in the HCOM department (Interview with HCOM 312 professor, September 25, 2003).

HCOM 212 carried out its multicultural theme by providing students with an array of authors from their required text, *Creating America: Reading and writing*

arguments by Moser and Watters. From the time I was present in class, the students read works by women of color, as well as a very poignant work by John Steinbeck entitled *Cannery Row*. By asking students to read *Cannery Row*, students were able to make a larger connection between their education and the surrounding community. John Steinbeck made an incredible impact in Monterey County and it only seems fitting that the students of Monterey County become aware. Students made connections in class between education and community, or society. Houston (1996), from the symposium, encourages the boundaries between institution and community to be diminished so students have more access to their surrounding community and vice versa (p. 340). The professor worked to transgress those boundaries between the school and the local area. For example, the professor encouraged his students to attend seminars and events regarding Proposition 54 that were held both on and off campus. After completing a write up of the event, the students received extra credit points. It only seems fitting that students become aware of propositions that they will vote on in key elections (such as the recent California gubernatorial recall election). As well, when learning about fallacies, the professor asked the students to go out into the world and bring back an example of a fallacy used in everyday life. They relate real life examples of fallacies to the things they learn in the classroom. The professor encouraged the students to discover multiple forms of finding information outside text book examples.

Another example of an in-class activity that brought forth multiple perspectives and multicultural learning was a game called “Communication Bingo.” One of the questions on the bingo card was: do you get tired of hearing about multiculturalism?

This question potentially fosters diverse points of view and every answer to this question was welcomed in class. Students walked around asking one another questions such as these on their bingo cards and discovered the multiple truths, or answers, that existed from different people. During this activity, one student even felt safe enough to disagree with a comment made previously by the professor. The student disagreed when the professor stated he did not like rap music. The student honestly felt that rap music had a bad reputation and that more existed to rap music than its given stereotypes. The professor graciously accepted the student's opinion, which fostered more open discussion in class.

I was impressed with the group work tasks that the HCOM 212 professor required. At least one time during the students' discussion of *Cannery Row*, each group was given an internet task. The task was to go to the in-class computer and pull up information from the internet to answer a question given by the professor regarding the book. The professor asked students to create a Power Point presentation with as much information as they could find. Not only did students have a short amount of time to complete the task, and complete it efficiently, but they came through with success. These students willingly set to work and created presentations that contained bullet points, titles, sub-headings, pictures, and even citation information. Each student in the group gave a piece of the presentation and the whole class listened eagerly. During this time, students were focused, and working collaboratively; they were engaged and ready to begin open discussions with one another. This was a promising way to integrate new-age technology with a text that incorporated local and community wide issues into the college classroom.

In order to create a multicultural classroom, each 312 student was responsible for contributing to the learning environment in a collaborative way. The entire 312 class collaborated to come up with one broad topic of choice for their roundtable discussion exercise. Amazingly enough, the entire class agreed that educating children is vital. Even deeper than that, the entire class created four separate topics from that general topic and created common places the whole class agreed upon. This took an enormous amount of skill in collaboration, understanding, listening, and open discussion. From this discussion, with assistance from their professor, students began to realize underlying assumptions made by using words like “normal” and “typical” in everyday language. Discussions included issues of mainstreaming, separation of church and state, bilingual education, and the importance of arts education in schools. As well, 312 students worked in their small groups to create one collaborative essay that summed up their own arguments, commonplaces or agreements from both sides, and passion for their chosen topic.

The HCOM 225 course spent much of its class discussions on issues of diversity and multiculturalism. During my visits, the class read and discussed the novel *The Color Purple*. They also watched the movie. The novel was set in the deep south during the early 1900's, a time when slavery had just been abolished. Therefore, many issues were brought to the forefront of discussion. The 225 class went into depth on issues of gender roles performed in the home and society at large, issues of culture and race in the African American culture, characters coming to voice and gaining identity, and the institutions of marriage and ownership over people and animals. These issues were discussed as a

larger class as well as in small groups. The small group work was an integral part to this class. bell hooks (1994) agrees that by forming a dialogue in small or larger groups, students begin to transgress boundaries of difference between cultures (p. 130). Weiler (1991) then emphasizes the need to respect those differences once they are discussed and understood (p. 462). This class accomplished both. The professor describes:

[Group work] does a couple of things, one: they begin teaching each other, they begin learning from each other, they begin recognizing and understanding that their inferences, what they've learned from reading these texts and what they've observed in the film, that these are just as valid as everyone else's and if they don't speak up and offer their examples then the class as a whole will lose. They'll be at a loss for one more example that might help them towards an appropriate comparison later on in the semester. Hearing other students put a word to it, put a face and a name to it, and then among themselves gather additional concepts and examples and quotes, all of that together helps serve the overall purpose of getting them to develop confidence in the skills they're developing and beginning that understanding of using everyone in the group to deepen their own learning. (September 23, 2003)

I noticed the class responded well to group work. Each member of the groups engaged, and listened to one another in order to gain a new perspective on the issues of diversity and multiculturalism. This helped students with their future papers, and it also helped them become more connected members of society.

Another way the 225 professor attempted to make students more aware of culture was by offering them the opportunity to attend a musical and performing artist lecture demonstration held on campus. The musical guest was a Latin jazz pianist named Omar Sosa. After attending the event, the 225 professor asked the students to write a response about their feelings, reactions, and what they observed during the event. This event exposed the students to diverse forms of music that they may not have been exposed to otherwise. The demonstration does not connect to their reading necessarily, but it does provide them with variety and further reflection on culture.

Problem-posing method

The largest portion of each class's dialogue was the professors' use of problem-posing methods for discussions. There were rare times in class that students were not asked to critically think about a topic at hand. Students began that critical thinking process through the questioning techniques used by each professor. For example, the 211 professor was constantly checking in with her students and asking questions like, "Anyone want to share? What jumped out at you? Any thoughts about that? Are there any lines or images that stand out? How is everyone doing?" The 212 professor often asked, "What did you think of the assignment? What did you think of the questions? How does it make you feel?" It was common in the 312 course to hear, "Do these questions speak to the heart of what matters to you? Are there any questions? How can I help?" Some of the types of questions the 225 professor asked were, "What else grips you in the opening setting? How did you respond to the ending? What is the book about

generally?” These kinds of questions allowed students a space to share their thoughts, positive or negative, and gave authority to their own voices. These questions gave students a place to begin class discussions as well as give their feelings voice. The classes always contained open discussions and mutual dialogue between teacher and student. Ira Shor (1992) advocates problem-posing methods in the classroom in order to move away from banking models of education where students are fed answers and not taught to critically think about their own interpretations.

During all student discussions, I was impressed by the well-articulated student feedback and topics that manifested. I heard words like discrimination, equality, immigration, hope, country responsibility, melting pot versus a tapestry, assimilate, duality of human nature, microcosm, and cultural diversity versus cross-cultural understanding. All students demonstrated their cultural understanding of the world, and some of them are only eighteen years old.

Class size

These classes all benefited by small class enrollments. The importance of small class sizes allowed professors to not only learn each of their students' names, but also allowed enough time to get to know each of them. bell hooks (1994) advocates smaller class sizes to allow a more engaged classroom where each student has the opportunity to share and speak (p. 160). Every professor asked their students to meet during office hours at least twice in the semester. The 211 students were handed a blue coupon that gave them the opportunity to attend office hours before a given deadline. When the

students brought in their coupon, they automatically received ten points. The 211 professor explains:

The students get a coupon to come see me and they receive 10 points. I've also seen another professor put at the bottom of the coupon, "bring in this coupon and ask your professor one personal question to receive 10 points," which is another good idea. So many students don't think that they can come up to their professors and have conversations outside of school. So I find that the conferences are a good way to meet the students and have them meet me as well, because students aren't accustomed to getting to know their teachers, meeting them during office hours, hearing personal stories about them or even asking personal stories.

(September 11, 2003)

From these conferences, students felt even more comfortable with their professor, which fostered feelings of comfort during class. bell hooks (1994) agrees that with smaller class sizes, professors should give students more access to individual conferences to not only answer questions regarding the course, but to get to know each of his/her students by name and personality (p. 204). During our interview, the 212 professor stated:

Between November 3-6, I cancel class that week, and I have them meet with me for 15 minutes. A lot of times students don't go to office hours, some do, some don't. But this way I know they all come and visit and we can talk about what's going on in their lives. It's good to talk to the students, and if we show them that they should talk to their professors, a lot of students, especially freshmen, they might be a little intimidated, so it shows them, no, we're people too, come on in,

kick back, and we might be helpful for the future, especially during capstone.

(September 18, 2003)

Similar to the HCOM 211 professor's reaction, the conferences break down teacher/student barriers that tend to exist in a traditional setting and allow students the chance to not only feel like an individual, but to get to know their professors.

Pedagogical struggles

After talking with each professor about their pedagogical methods, I was interested to find out if they discovered any struggles in terms of living up to the department's mission or the university's vision statement. As an outsider looking in, it is easy for me to say that each professor does his/her job with ease, confidence, and success. However, the process to create a seemingly flawless craft of teaching must encounter some limitations. Ironically, none of the professors interviewed encountered any struggles that reflected those discussed in the literature review. None of these professors are fearful of change as expressed by hooks (1994) and Freire (2000). CSU Monterey Bay is not a historical institution; therefore the professors are not met with traditional resistance from more established faculty. The literature never mentioned the struggles and limitations that were expressed in these professor interviews. These struggles could be discoveries covered in critical pedagogical work but not in common literature.

The four and a half year HCOM 211 professor said that one of her teaching struggles was the task of teaching writing. Students struggled to overcome their fears of the writing process. She states, "I find that teaching writing is a struggle because

students fear it, they are uncomfortable with it, especially there is a big emphasis here for English as a second language students and first time college students having to take multiple 211 classes in order to pass, which is unfortunate. Also students feel very personal about their writing, being graded on it, students could feel attacked.” (September 11, 2003). As well, the 211 professor encountered a struggle in terms of allowing students to gain more power in the classroom. She says:

It’s a great idea that students have the power in our classrooms to take over and become responsible leaders; however, it’s hard when those discussions get so in depth. For instance, I had a class, the discussion got so far away from my control that a student ended up crying because of what another student said. So it’s great to give students power but when a teacher is not trained to handle that situation it could be kind of hard. (September 11, 2003)

This 211 professor raised a common concern among faculty. In order to fulfill one of the teaching goals of the department, professors must feel comfortable and equipped to deal with the desired outcomes.

During our interview, the HCOM 212 professor described his own pedagogical methods that challenged traditional pedagogical thinking in the classroom. He made an attempt to change tradition by asking students to engage in an engaged approach from which to learn:

I guess the best way to describe it, and it’s not 100%, but it’s the Bruffee approach. Where it deals with mostly consensus theory, opposed to knowledge theory being transferred. And bell hooks talks about the banking method and

things like that, but the Bruffee approach is the class reaches a consensus on their own and, my ultimate goal, ironically as it sounds, is to remove myself from the classroom as much as possible and let the students teach themselves. However there are a number of other things that go along with that as well, I try new things, I try different things. But that's the best way I can articulate it. (September 18, 2003)

During our interview, the professor also mentioned a few struggles he encountered living out his pedagogical ideals in the classroom. He states:

It is very challenging to teach so called radical pedagogy, and teach the collaborative model where you really separate the gap between student and teacher, where you take the teacher out of the ultimate authority role and where you put them on the same wave length. It's a lot tougher to do that. You do have a lot more social conflicts where as in a traditional class you can just get up there and lecture and assess the relevance. It seems like there are struggles with social conflicts a lot of times between teachers and students and a lot of times between students and other students. And with different materials, when you're trying to accommodate everybody you keep constantly having to go back to the game plan, constantly have to keep changing the game plan and go back to the drawing board, and that's what makes it a lot of fun. (September 18, 2003)

He brought up two very important issues. The first was the struggle to move students away from traditional models of teaching and learning and into a setting that relies on students taking responsibility for part of the teaching process. Less experienced students

especially have a hard time making this transition if they come from a very traditional educational setting in high school. The other issue he raised was professors striving to serve the needs of every single student in the classroom. Specifically the HCOM department has a focus on serving traditionally underrepresented groups of people. In terms of multiculturalism, issues of race, class, gender and so on, are often times discussed in class. This professor saw some struggle in accommodating the needs of every student and keeping communication open between teachers and students, and more importantly between students and students.

During our interview, the HCOM 312 professor explained one major struggle that many faculty in HCOM face; they deal with the issue of sustainability and keeping on top of their craft due to time constraints. As Cheris Kramarae (1996) expressed, one major obstacle for professors is lack of time to plan and prepare lesson plans and to continually educate themselves in their fields. The 312 professor explains:

I think in fairness one of the greatest struggles we're contending with right now is, the short phrase I would use is, sustainability. Just this semester, I'm responsible for twelve credit hours of classroom instruction; two of my classes are intensive writing classes, which require a whole set of heightened responsibility. I have to provide students opportunities to revise and re-submit and provide extensive commentary, to me that's my responsibility or I'm not doing my job well. But I have 83 students this semester. I also have 30 advisees, all of whom are counting on me to be fully present this semester. I also have 3 capstone students, which are highly intensive independent projects for which I am

responsible; I'm chairing a department, I'm on the university wide RTP-Retention Tenure Promotions Committee, I serve on two of the GE committees, I'm on the Bio Ethics Committee of Natividad, and I'm responsible for developing a masters program. And that's just what's on paper. And I have a number of other, not so transparent responsibilities. That's an untenable workload; I'm just being candid. And to do my job really well, to do what I believe the students deserve of me has become increasingly difficult. I haven't even talked to you about research. How can I be a competent professor and not be on the cutting edge of the discipline? I think it's my responsibility to be on the cutting edge. We're on this schedule of 70 hours a week that I've just described to you, it doesn't accommodate reading the literature, consulting with colleagues, attending national conferences, contributing to the literature, writing essays, writing books and so on. It's an extraordinarily untenable structure. I'm now talking about the CSU system, that we're trapped in. And of course with the current budget situation, it's not likely to get a lot better. So the biggest challenge from my perspective is being able to sustain the level of commitment to my students that I feel in my heart, to the fullest of my being, given the constraints that face me. It's just wrenching actually. (September 25, 2003)

This is much to expect from one professor. Even as I sat in our interview, I was speechless for a following comment or reaction. To say this is a struggle is an understatement. Unfortunately, this kind of struggle is not only common among HCOM

faculty, but among faculty at all universities. As professors to remain engaged in their pedagogy, they continue to face traditional structures, ideals, and institutional barriers.

In our interview, the HCOM 225 professor expressed the struggles she encountered achieving her pedagogical goals in HCOM. She encountered much resistance trying to move away from traditional pedagogy to something more engaged while working for a traditional institution:

The first year is a real struggle. And especially in my case, and in the case of some of the older faculty here, we had already been trained in a very traditional pedagogical model. But I think what brought us all here is the same thing that brought me here. Some of what we were trying to do in our classes [from previous universities] were criticized by my chair and by my colleagues. For example, I was criticized for spending too much time in my office hours with students, spending too much one-on-one time with my students, in my writing classes requiring too many revisions and drafts, the small group workshop which is something I started doing from the very beginning was seen as a waste of classroom time when it could have been better spent lecturing instead of talking about issues of social justice. (September 23, 2003)

Not only are students exposed to years of traditional pedagogies, but professors are as well. When professors strive to try new methods, they are met with resistance from colleagues. That is not the case, however in HCOM at CSUMB. Professors support breaking traditional methods of pedagogy to discover new ways of teaching and learning.

The real test is to decipher how students respond to this new way of teaching and learning.

Student response

During interviews, I was curious to discover what kind of student responses each professor encountered in regards to the pedagogical methods used in the HCOM department. How do students feel about the non-traditional teaching methods they see taking place in their HCOM classes? The literature fails to provide this kind of information in response to engaged pedagogy. The HCOM 211 professor explains:

I would say that 90% of the students are positive and have accepted it. I find the students are a lot more self aware at CSUMB, they know themselves inside and out because of all the self reflections and discussions that take place. I have received some negative responses though, mostly from male students. In terms of culture and race, feeling guilty for being white, being very defensive and angry, feeling that the whole race issue and racism is being shoved down their throats. I've heard from a student in the past that this school has a lot of left wing liberal perspectives and teachers, and they don't see much of a diverse spectrum. You know there are still more white professors than not. (September 11, 2003)

When asked where she thought this resistance came from, this professor had to say, "From not being self aware, coming from an educational system where self reflection wasn't a priority. But I think to conquer that struggle it's important for students to hear other stories, it's important for those who are resistant to have a voice as well." And to

remain committed to the vision and department's mission, the HCOM 211 course fostered open discussions where any opinion was welcome, heard, and understood. Even students who did not agree with the professor had a space to make that opinion heard. That was one of the strongest elements to this 211 professor's use of engaged pedagogy.

The struggles that the 212 professor had are similar to the struggles he observed from the students. When asked what kind of response he got from his students in terms of his pedagogical methods, he answers:

Well the biggest struggle, and I've heard this from students, is a lot of times if you really make it a point to make sure that nobody is oppressed and you really focus on multiculturalism, often times you may oppress another group. And I've heard that once and a while it's driven into their heads too much. Other groups may feel on the outside, I don't really belong to this culture, I feel guilty for not being oppressed. And that's why I try to open it up and go beyond multiculturalism and other ideologies. Because it goes beyond just race and gender and ethnicity.

What about the science students and the people who only care about computers, what about the sports players, have you engaged them in the subject matter?

Should we just rule them out or should we really try to teach them, or should we try to engage them? (September 18, 2003)

The goal of HCOM and the university is to serve every single student in the room. That would include students across disciplines and interests. Multiculturalism at CSUMB strives to include all of these students. And just as CSUMB is growing, so are issues of culture and diversity among each student.

In terms of student response to the pedagogical methods used in HCOM 312, this professor saw two kinds of struggles happening. The first struggle dealt with course work load. She explains:

With a few exceptions over the years I've had the following experiences, and this is kind of a funny actually. You're arriving at just about the point in the semester where students start to get a little cranky and I'm pushing very hard and my expectations frankly are very high. And it's not something people are used to and it's frightening. So I'm starting to get "resistance" and you'll start to see some of that today, not a lot. Two weeks from now, if you come back you'll see, [students will react]: "you've got to be kidding me; you can't possibly expect this from us." The expectations, they're very high, they're traumatic in how high they are and students understandably get upset. So I usually get about a three week honeymoon period, a then about a four week, "you've got to be kidding me period," and then some light goes off in some students and it's like, "oh I get why you're making us doing this, I get it now." And it's so beautiful, because I can see it, it's like, "oh god this was really really hard but, wow, oh I'm so glad we had to do it." So that kind of resistance I get every semester across the board. (September 25, 2003).

Students understandably felt overwhelmed when teacher expectations became high. However, as this teacher stated, once the students realize the goals and discover the impact of the lesson, they come to a deeper realization of the expected outcomes and in turn become advanced learners under an engaged pedagogical model. The other struggle

this professor encountered was during discussions of diversity and multiculturalism. The professor had to deal with providing her students with the delicate balance of safety, yet a forum to allow students to passionately and candidly express themselves:

Now on the issue of multiculturalism, there is such wide response. The delicate balance for me that I do sometimes well, and sometimes not so well, I'm just going to be candid with you. The delicate balance is an extraordinarily complex concept of safety. Where on the one hand I feel with the greatest passion that we have to create a loving respectful, deeply loving, deeply respectful environment where everyone is treated with dignity or where everyone feels "safe" in that she or he knows that she or he is genuinely loved. I know that sounds silly but I'm talking in the Freirian/bell hooks sense. I truly believe that with all my heart I believe that, on the one hand. And simultaneously on the other hand create conditions that not only allow but require us to challenge one another on very difficult issues and sometimes people feel very unsafe, unsafe in that they are feeling raw naked. Their questions of power and privilege have to be taken very very seriously. We have to have a deep, we as faculty, have to have the deepest appreciation for understanding of familiarity with intimacy, with questions of standpoint and how they influence power and privilege in the classroom.

(September 25, 2003).

This struggle does seem to be common so far with the HCOM professors. It seems their solution for working out the problem is to ensure students who feel excluded, that they in fact are part of the multicultural discussions. The department chair agrees:

I think we get more of the struggle and more of the resistance from the freshmen and the sophomores because multiculturalism to many white students means not them. And what they begin to learn once they're here is the way we define multiculturalism is that being white is one of the multis- it's one of the manys. So we are going to discuss your story and we are going to discuss your people and your cultures and your struggles, but we are going to discuss all others also. But it's not going to be this binary situation of white literature and multicultural literature. And so I think at first folks who are going to be resistant or are resistant to that, multiculturalism is not me. But if they hang out long enough to see, you know we don't say white people and people of color, we don't like that. We prefer, we're all people, and we're all different. We're all from different places so that multicultural is inclusive of you, not putting you outside. But I think the greatest thing we've learned is that it takes time, it takes years really. (September 18, 2003).

By attempting to include every single student in class discussions, students begin to realize they play a vital role in their own learning process and the learning process of their classmates. The department chair agrees:

Most of HCOM's goal is to make sure that all students feel that if they want to, their voices will be acknowledged and heard. Now we will debate voices and still argue, it's not as if you put your voice out there and everybody lets it sit, it's higher education. We're about weighing the ideas that are in that voice, not weighing the person that delivered the idea but let's take that idea and say, does

the text change if we look at it from this perspective? That's what we like to do, again make sure that everyone has access to an experience that is going to make them knowledgeable.

Without the experiences of the students who resist, or who do not comply with the general consensus, students lose out on another perspective, another idea, and another way of developing their own opinion. Diversity means just that. In class discussions, a diverse amount of perspectives are integral to the development of a body of students who are truly multicultural in their thinking.

The 225 professor gave a similar reason to her own experience that explained where student resistance came from:

I think what happens for our students is they come to see what they've read as the truth to our history and our society and they don't understand that there are many truths. I think of journalism all the time that talks about being accurate and being truthful. Like you can say 5,000 civilians were killed but one of the truths might be 75% of those were children under the age of 10 and pregnant women. Or that the people who fired on them were members of the US military and they were doing a dragnet looking for the 3 or 4 people who had fired on a recent convoy. There are truths and there are truths, and the ability to transmit that concept to students I think is one of our biggest challenges as professors on this campus. Yes, it makes white students, especially white male students, but white students generally feel uncomfortable. They feel as if their own ethnic and racial roots and the experiences of their Irish or Scottish or German or Italian ancestors are being

discounted but those histories have been documented and we've read about those histories. But what we haven't read about are the 100 years of crossing the border from Mexico, central and south America into the United States looking for jobs that are available that people in this country don't want to fill because they're so low paying and so difficult and so inhumane. And it doesn't speak to the experience of Native Americans and African Americans in this country and centuries of abuse and marginalization and for all of those reasons it's absolutely critical to keep the pressure on and it feels hostile sometimes to students, there's no easy way to transmit the information. (September 23, 2003)

It seems as if most of the struggles or resistance that students encountered was because of their traditional educational upbringing. As well, students are taught from one perspective in history and literature and they find themselves very hesitant in HCOM to realize, that not only do the professors teach much differently, but they strive to give their students multiple perspectives and views on one issue.

Student learning

In order to better understand the responses and struggles by the student population, I made an earnest attempt to include their voice as well. I found these voices absent from the literature. I was able to conduct one interview with a student in the HCOM 211 class. This interview is only one perspective but one that I sensed throughout the class. This particular student is a Liberal Studies major in her third semester. The HCOM 211 course is the first HCOM class she took.

Learning style

When asked what style she learned best in the classroom, this student was confident to reply with, “definitely interactive” (September 18, 2003). She goes on to describe:

When the teacher actually wants us to play games and wants to learn our names, and can talk to you like you’re an individual but you’re the whole class, that’s definitely the way I learn very well. You learn more because you’re not held back by anything; you’re not shy to ask, so I like those classes definitely. When the teacher really tries to pick you out as an individual as well as a whole, I think that really works.

More importantly, when I asked this student if the ways she learns best in the classroom were being demonstrated in her HCOM class, she said, “Definitely!”

Without ever reading the pedagogical mission of the HCOM department, I asked her how she might describe the department’s goals for teaching. She described a classroom that makes learning enjoyable and fun, sparks creativity in writing, and allows the students to be more open and able to speak in front of groups of people. She thought the class focused on teaching every student as an individual. When asked if she ever got tired talking about multiculturalism, she had conflicting thoughts:

It kind of depends. I mean when you’re talking about the vision statement, I can understand why you would want to talk about that. But if it’s like, just an everyday conversation and someone brings it up you’re just like, I don’t really want to talk about it. I mean it doesn’t bother me, I think that everybody is just a

person really. I don't think about anybody in terms of race really and that's just how I've grown up, everybody is just an individual. (September 18, 2003)

I asked this follow up question to see how she felt about the multicultural theme that seemed to underline every HCOM class and pedagogical model. Because multiculturalism was so prevalent, I wanted to know if she felt it was too much, or over-examined, if that was possible.

Struggles

When I asked this student if she encountered any struggles in regards to the teaching used in her HCOM class, she responded with, "I'm not feeling struggled in any way." She further explains:

I think it's just letting us choose our own topics and stuff like that really really helps, and it makes things more interesting. I really feel like it prepares you more for the real world. The real world isn't taking tests or studying for exams, it's making speeches in front of large groups of people and being able to write about some big merger and presenting it to your boss. (September 18, 2003)

From her responses, this student seemed to enjoy her HCOM 211 class. She found that the ways she learned best were in this class, and the methods for teaching were even enjoyable and fun at times. Throughout my observations, it seemed as though most of the students in class enjoyed their time with the professor and their peers. I did not sense any resistance or annoyance in terms of activities, discussion, or pedagogical method. With the exception of one class period dismissed early due to a large lack of response by

the tired students, each student responded positively to the professor and her pedagogical methods.

Student learning

I interviewed one student from HCOM 212 who is a Liberal Studies major. This student attended a community college before attending CSUMB and so he was able to compare teaching methods from his previous higher educational experience. This student attended CSUMB in 1997. He took a break and is back to finish his education. He is enrolled in two HCOM classes this semester.

Learning style

In our interview, this student said he learned best in the classroom visually. He states, “I’m very visual so like maybe a presentation. I don’t like lectures; I just won’t retain any of the information, but mostly discussions. I’m really into having discussions with people and hearing what they have to say. A lot of times it helps me out with my own opinions, or just shaping them. So discussions, I like to talk” (September 23, 2003). When I asked him if the ways he learned best in class were demonstrated in his HCOM classes he replies, “Definitely, for sure.”

I asked him to describe the teaching mission of the HCOM department in the best way he could. He believes:

Well, I think that a lot of it is kind of connected to the vision statement where like the content, they provide us with an activity like even the service learning

program where you get to see what's out in the community and relate in that way. Also just to be a diverse person like a lot of the classes, like Cannery Row, just knowing the background of the area and who you're going to be working with because obviously a lot of people graduate from college and would probably stay in the area to probably pursue a career. (September 23, 2003)

I asked if he ever got tired hearing about multiculturalism in his HCOM classes because it was a major theme in the department as well as in the vision statement. He explains:

No, not at all. I think the campus is really diverse. This is a small population so for a small population I think it's definitely diverse. I think we all have something beautiful about our backgrounds and learning about other people and our differences is a way of getting to know who you are personally. Like it really enhances how we learn, and what we're going to teach in the future whether you're going to be a school teacher or you're going to be working with people with other backgrounds. I mean the United States is for all people, so it makes sense that we learn about other cultures.

By discussing diversity and transgressing boundaries in class through open discussions, students were able to get to know people outside their social groupings to discover new things about one another. These lessons are beneficial in the work place, or if a student decides to teach one day. People in organizations and schools must learn to respect their co-workers or peers, and these are skills that can only be obtained by talking to other people, hearing different experiences, and respecting their stories.

Struggles

In terms of struggles, this student said he had not encountered any struggles in relation to the pedagogical methods in his HCOM classes. This was a similar response to the HCOM 211 student. In terms of his peers however, he noticed some resistance to the teaching methods:

Definitely some resistance. We focus too much on maybe one culture or one ethnicity. I think that it's due to the fact that in the population here there is sort of like, there's majorities and there's minorities and we tend to focus on the majorities which are Caucasian and Latino. So there has been some resistance that we're not diverse in that way, where we don't talk about Filipinos or China, some people from China or Germans or Russians. But in favor of multiculturalism, I haven't really heard too many people talk about it; I think they show it more because I think there's feeling about why we're together. And I think that's just because of the vision statement, I know some people criticize it or don't want to read it but I think it is a good vision, it is a good statement and its purpose is to unite us to become a community. (September 23, 2003).

Understandably so, some students felt resistance to the discussions in class when they did not feel engaged as contributors. However, just as the HCOM 211 professor said, it is still just as important for those resistant students' voices to be heard in class. And that is something unique to HCOM. Even if students disagree, they make their voices heard in a relatively safe and comfortable atmosphere.

Student learning

For HCOM 312, I did not conduct an individual interview with a student; however on my second class observation, the class had a guest speaker who completed an equivalent interview with the entire class. I felt as though this group discussion served the purpose of this study well, possibly even provide more rich discussion in the group setting as opposed to a single interview. This guest speaker was on a committee that measured the educational effectiveness at twenty diverse campuses in California. CSUMB was chosen as one of those campuses to be examined. The speaker took the last ten minutes of class time to ask the students the same questions I asked in this project. So this interview was completed by many student responses from the discussion lead by this guest speaker.

When asked to describe the teaching methods in the HCOM 312 course, students responded many of the same themes. The students identified their HCOM 312 class to be, “engaging, interactive, on a first name basis with students and professor, set in a non-traditional setting with interdisciplinary and collaborative work, and emphasized in student voice” (September 18, 2003). Not one student in the class disagreed with these observations, and every student seemed to immensely enjoy the teaching methods used by their professor. They made positive comments about the professor and state, “she is engaging, open, energetic, responsive, she values us, makes you feel good, and is a motivator” (September 18, 2003). By having a wider age range of students, ranging from 19-30, the students felt the generational gaps brought more breadth in perspectives. The students enjoyed seeing many of the same peers in their classes as a way to bond with

one another, to share a source of emotional support, and level of understanding. The small class sizes were a positive means to get to know one another better. Jokingly during one class period, a female student offered to share her text with a peer to “do some collaborative learning” (September 18, 2003). The guest speaker thanked the students for their feedback and closed his discussion with, “You’re lucky to be at a place like this!” (September 18, 2003).

Struggles

In terms of struggles, I overheard one female student telling another student about her struggles as a transfer student to CSUMB. It seemed she had a difficult transition adjusting to the “CSUMB ways” (September 18, 2003). In a course separate from HCOM 312, she struggled with the professor “pushing all her political views onto the class.” She says, “I hate that because I’m really conservative.” This reaction seemed similar to other reactions from students. As stated earlier from the HCOM 211 professor, the university holds very liberal views. A politically conservative student understandably struggled to find his/her place in the classroom. By inviting all of those voices to be heard, the HCOM students gained multiple perspectives to create their own political views of the world.

Student learning

From HCOM 225, I interviewed one student who had been an HCOM major for the past four semesters. In our interview, he described the teaching mission of the HCOM department:

I think their goals are to get students to look at things more critically, to be able to look beyond the surface of what you see and what you read to be able to find the hidden meanings, or not the hidden meanings but the meanings that aren't very obvious to us. I think that's what they want; they want us to not just take things in life as how they're presented to us but to look beneath the surface to find out what they really are. It's almost like they want us to grow for ourselves, and with their help to learn for ourselves. (September 25, 2003)

For this student, he spoke closely to what the professor says earlier in regards to teaching multiple truths. The professors aimed to provide their students with multicultural perspectives on a given issue. From those perspectives, students gained more stories and truths from the issue and were able to form their own opinions that ended up being more well-rounded and informed.

Learning styles

When asked what ways this student learns best in the classroom, he explains:

I think by the class discussion. You get to express your point of view but you also get to see each student's point of view. You might catch things you might not have read into because every one perceives things in a different manner. So you

get to see points of view from the class and you learn as a whole so when you do have to write your paper you can integrate the ideas that you wouldn't have caught on your own. (September 25, 2003)

And similarly to the other student interviews, when asked if those ways were demonstrated in HCOM, the student confidently replies, "Yes."

Struggles

This student had not encountered any struggles due to the teaching mission of the HCOM department. He has, however, been exposed to struggles by his peers in terms of the work load. He states, "I think the general consensus from outside of class, HCOM is way too much writing. HCOM definitely has to be for people that like to read and like to write" (September 25, 2003). And more so, HCOM was designed for students willing to take educational, personal, cultural, and emotional risks in the classroom. By taking these kinds of risks, students faced amazing growth as students and as responsible members of society, as well as the surrounding community.

After reviewing each of the interviews and observations, the evidence is clear that HCOM faculty made an earnest attempt to offer their students something new, something different in regards to pedagogical methods of teaching and learning. Both faculty and students encountered some struggles encompassing engaged methods in the classroom due to their past histories in traditional learning environments and institutions. However, in the end, the faculty interviewed in HCOM still had a strong desire and passion to continue with the ways they teach Human Communication courses. The faculty believes

in engaged pedagogy and the positive outcomes it has on students' learning process and growth.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

After analyzing the results from the observations and interviews in the HCOM department at CSUMB, the answers to the study's research questions are evident. The four HCOM faculty observed, incorporated engaged pedagogical ideals into each of their class sessions. The suggestions made in Cheris Kramarae's (October 1996) symposium were visible in HCOM. DeFrancisco's ideas of collaborative learning took effect through small and large group work in every class observed. Bright's suggestion of power role reversal was evident when students of HCOM 211 gave their class logs, when HCOM 212 students presented their power point project, when HCOM 312 students led roundtable discussions, and when HCOM 225 students presented group findings to the larger class. Johnson's interdisciplinary studies suggestion was found in HCOM 225 that allowed students to analyze culture through the multiple disciplines of film, culture, and communication studies. Houston's suggestion to give students more access to community was seen in HCOM 212 when students used the community to learn about the history of their surroundings. Jeneffsky's emphasis on public speaking in the classroom as a means to come to voice was emphasized in each course through group presentations, writing assignments with the use of "I," and encouraging students to use their own experience as a way of learning about culture, difference, and society.

As well, each suggestion from Ira Shor's problem-posing methods, to bell hooks's coming to voice through personal experience existed in HCOM. When Freire spoke of

bringing student experience to the center of discussions, each professor accomplished this through writing assignments, group work, course learning outcomes, and allowing students to come to voice. Diversity and issues of social justice were a major underlying theme in class when HCOM 211 students read literature by diverse authors, when HCOM 212 students used the community as a starting place for multicultural learning, when HCOM 312 students used collaborative learning to understand one another's diverse experiences, and when HCOM 225 students watched diverse films to understand culture. And none of the classes showed any evidence of using Freire's banking model of education. Each of the suggestions made in the symposium was evident in the classes observed and through each of the testimonies by professors and students.

After reviewing the interview responses, the answer to the second research question was positive. The professors truly believe in engaged pedagogy either in the form of critical, feminist, or engaged models. The professors responded to engaged pedagogy in a positive way, making certain to incorporate techniques into each assignment and discussion. Most professors found it crucial to break away from traditional methods of teaching and use more student centered learning. The students as well responded to engaged pedagogy in a positive way. Each student interview believed the teaching methods to be effective, positive, and useful in their learning processes. Each student found their most effective learning style incorporated in their HCOM classes.

At the completion of this study, it is important to assess its strengths and limitations. An important limitation to address is the lack of discussion on the racial and

gender identification of each participant. A more in-depth personal description of each interviewee and class participant should have been central to the analysis if this thesis was to stay true to bell hooks' (1994) idea of engaged pedagogy. By revealing more about each individual participant's identity and cultural politics, the reader would be able to more fully discern the nuances of how these might play a role in understanding and supporting or resisting multiculturalism and diversity. A reason these issues were left out of the analysis had everything to do with my position as a Caucasian female. Because I have never knowingly experienced racism, I still unknowingly took advantage of my whiteness by not calling out oppression as it existed in this project. I can start to make that change now to confront my own racism by naming it a limitation. This raises another consideration and question for the study: Is it possible to completely break free of all traditional pedagogical models? Or, perhaps more importantly, should we? Even as I strived to call out oppression as it existed in pedagogy with regards to gender, I remained unreflective in the final writing of this study by not making race a central issue. So, while I have attempted to advocate moving beyond critical and feminist pedagogies to engaged pedagogy, I inadvertently and unreflectively overlooked the ways in which I had not fully brought to bear their respective analytical strengths in my own analysis.

The teacher-centered focus in the overall data collection is suggestive of this blind spot. More teachers than students were interviewed and asked to respond to engaged pedagogy. The number of student interviews should have matched the number of professor interviews in order to truly practice engaged pedagogy to give more voice to students. To more fully explore how power functions in these classrooms, the interviews

should have been focused on the students and how they responded to engaged pedagogy. Instead, more emphasis was given to teacher's voice. This decision has much to do with the fact that not only have I been a student, but I have been a college professor as well. I used my experience as a teacher, rather than a student, to gain more teacher perspectives for the project. Were I to undertake a follow-up study in the future, I would more fully foreground these overlooked perspectives in my analysis.

Some limitations lied in the overall methodological choices of this study. A future study would include more student interviews to match the number of professor interviews. A future study would provide a longer observational period of a full semester as opposed to three weeks. A full semester of observations offers more consistent and observable patterns in each course. A future study may have access to more observers in order to immerse in more than four classes. A future study would overall be larger in the number of observations, interviews, and time spent at the institution. With these limitations came much strength to the study. The study provided sufficient information to answer the two guiding research questions.

This was a strong study that provided communication scholarship with direct results of the suggestions made in the symposium. The study provided real life examples of engaged pedagogical methods in existence at CSUMB in their communication department. With that, the strongest piece to this study was its use as a response to what the authors thought to be merely a fantasy, or a far-fetched goal for communication studies. The study answered the questions symposium authors may have had, including: "Is engaged pedagogy possible," "Will engaged pedagogy ever exist in communication

studies?” or “How do professors and students respond to engaged pedagogy?” After the completion of this study, those answers were evident. Engaged pedagogy is possible. Engaged pedagogy can exist in communication studies. Students and professors interviewed, responded positively to engaged pedagogical methods in communication studies.

The directions for future research are exciting. Researchers can take this idea and expand on it in terms of the limitations already discussed. A different twist to this study could focus more on student response to engaged pedagogy in HCOM. This study did not provide enough student reactions to engaged pedagogy in HCOM. The study could even expand to other institutions that use similar techniques in their communication classrooms and compare those to the symposium, or to HCOM. Or, institutions that do not choose to implement engaged pedagogy into the communication classroom could be analyzed as to why they teach under more traditional methods.

When bell hooks, Paulo Freire, and Adrienne Rich began the critical thinking process for envisioning a pedagogical revolution, they may have never envisioned real results. Unfortunately, scholars are still unaware of the good things that exist at CSUMB. This study aimed to provide awareness to scholars who never discovered CSUMB. This document aimed to give voice, identity, validity and authority to the HCOM department in their mission to give voice, identity, validity, and authority to their students. This ethnography aimed to give back a piece of time, work, and energy to the community of CSUMB. This thesis aimed at educating institutions that strive for something alternative, something radical, and something better in their classrooms. This document was a

creation of what the CSUMB vision statement taught me to do, and what my alumni HCOM department denoted was crucial and vital in creating necessary change for pedagogy everywhere. In the words of the HCOM 225 student:

To people looking into our school from the outside, I would say [HCOM] definitely has a good way of applying teaching methods. It gives the students a better chance of growing as a person and as an intellectual because they're not just learning what someone else has already learned, but they get to learn it for themselves. We're not just regurgitating someone else's thoughts; we're learning from their thoughts and creating our own. So I think it's something that other schools should definitely look into. (September 25, 2003)

To conclude, I would like to honor all of the interviewees, faculty, and students who agreed to support this research by being participants in this study and say thank you. Thank you for sharing your experiences, lives, and voices with me. Your experiences will make a deep impact in enlightening traditional institutions to become better equipped educators for the 21st century.

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Appendix A.
 CSU Monterey Bay
 University Vision Statement

California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB) is envisioned as a comprehensive state university which values service through high quality education. The campus will be distinctive in serving the diverse people of California, especially the working class and historically undereducated and low-income populations. It will feature an enriched living and learning environment and year-round operation. The identity of the university will be framed by substantive commitment to multilingual, multicultural, gender-equitable learning. The university will be a collaborative, intellectual community distinguished by partnerships with existing institutions both public and private, cooperative agreements which enable students, faculty, and staff to cross institutional boundaries for innovative instruction, broadly defined scholarly and creative activity, and coordinated community service.

The university will invest in preparation for the future through integrated and experimental use of technologies as resources to people, catalysts for learning, and providers of increased access and enriched quality learning. The curriculum of CSUMB will be student and society centered and of sufficient breadth and depth to meet statewide and regional needs, specifically those involving both inner-city and isolated rural populations, and needs relevant to communities in the immediate Tri-County region (Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito). The programs of instruction will strive for distinction, building on regional assets in developing specialty clusters in such areas as: the sciences (marine, atmospheric, and environmental); visual and performing arts and related humanities; languages, cultures, and international studies; education; business; studies of human behavior, information, and communication, within broad curricular areas; and professional study.

The university will develop a culture of innovation in its overall conceptual design and organization, and will utilize new and varied pedagogical and instructional approaches including distance learning. Institutional programs will value and cultivate creative and productive talents of students, faculty, and staff, and seek ways to contribute to the economy of the state, the well being of our communities, and the quality of life and development of its students, faculty, and service areas.

The education programs at CSUMB will:

- Integrate the sciences, the arts and humanities, liberal studies, and professional training;
- Integrate modern learning technology and pedagogy to create liberal education adequate for the contemporary world;
- Integrate work and learning, service and reflection;
- Recognize the importance of global interdependence;

- Invest in languages and cross-cultural competence;
- Emphasize those topics most central to the local area's economy and ecology, and California's long-term needs;
- Offer a multicultural, gender-equitable, intergenerational, and accessible residential learning environment.

The university will provide a new model of organizing, managing, and financing higher education:

- The university will be integrated with other institutions, essentially collaborative in its orientation, and active in seeking partnerships across institutional boundaries. It will develop and implement various arrangements for sharing courses, curriculum, faculty, students, and facilities with other institutions.
- The organizational structure of the university will reflect a belief in the importance of each administrative staff and faculty member, working to integrate the university community across "staff" and "faculty" lines.
- The financial aid system will emphasize a fundamental commitment to equity and access.
- The budget and financial systems, including student fees, will provide for efficient and effective operation of the university.
- University governance will be exercised with a substantial amount of autonomy and independence within a very broad CSU systemwide policy context.
- Accountability will emphasize careful evaluation and assessment of results and outcomes.

Our vision of the goals of California State University, Monterey Bay includes: a model pluralistic academic community where all learn and teach one another in an atmosphere of mutual respect and pursuit of excellence; a faculty and staff motivated to excel in their respective fields as well as to contribute to the broadly defined university environment. Our graduates will have an understanding of interdependence and global competence, distinctive technical and educational skills, the experience and abilities to contribute to California's high quality work force, the critical thinking abilities to be productive citizens, and the social responsibility and skills to be community builders. CSUMB will dynamically link the past, present, and future by responding to historical and changing conditions, experimenting with strategies which increase access, improve quality, and lower costs through education in a distinctive CSU environment. University students and personnel will attempt analytically and creatively to meet critical state and regional needs, and to provide California with responsible and creative leadership for the global 21st century.

–September 27, 1994

<http://csumb.edu/vision/>

Appendix B. Interview Guides

Interview Guide for Students

My name is Jessica Smiley and I am a graduate student at SJSU in Communication Studies. I am completing my master's thesis on different methods of teaching and learning in the classroom. In this interview, I would like you to reflect on and discuss the kind of learning and teaching that takes place in your HCom classes at CSUMB.

A. Background of Student

- What is your name?
- What year are you in school?
- What is your major at CSUMB?
- How many semesters have you been an HCom (or other) major?
- Have you attended any other universities or junior colleges prior to arriving at CSUMB? Which ones?

B. Teaching methods

- In your HCom classes, can you describe the teaching methods that take place?
- Please give examples of activities or lessons that are used in class that reflect those teaching methods.
- What ways do you learn best in the classroom?
 - i. Are those ways being demonstrated in the HCom department?

C. Department mission

- What would you say is the teaching mission for this department?

- Do you believe that teaching mission is being incorporated in your HCom classes?
- Please give examples of how it is/is not being used in class.

D. University Vision Statement

- Do you believe the university's vision statement is being incorporated in your HCom classes?
- Please give examples of how it is/is not being used in class.

E. Struggles

- What struggles have you encountered in regards to the teaching methods used in this department?

F. Student response

- How do you feel about the current teaching methods used in your HCom classes?
 - i. How do these teaching methods make you feel?
- How do you think other students feel about the current teaching methods used in the HCom department?
 - i. Is there resistance?
 - ii. Acceptance?
 - iii. Why do you think so?

G. Is there anything you would like to add in regards to the teaching styles you see in the HCom department?

H. Thank you for your time and your assistance with my project. Your response will be very helpful.

Interview Guide for Faculty

My name is Jessica Smiley and I am a graduate student at SJSU in Communication Studies. I am completing my master's thesis on pedagogical models of teaching and learning in the classroom. In this interview, I would like you to reflect on and discuss the kind of learning and teaching that takes place in your HCom classes at CSUMB.

A. Background of Teacher

- What is your name?
- How many years have you been teaching?
- What is your area of expertise in teaching?
- How long have you taught in the HCom department at CSUMB?
- Have you taught at any other university or junior college?

B. Pedagogical methods

- In your HCom classes, can you describe the teaching method you use?
- Please give examples of lesson plans or activities you use in class to play out those methods in class.
- In what ways is your technique similar to/different from your colleagues?

C. Department mission

- What would you say is the teaching mission of this department?
- Who does your teaching strive to serve?
 - All students?
 - Particular students?
 - Why?

D. University Vision Statement

- How does the HCom department reflect the university's vision statement in the teaching methods that exist?

E. Struggles

- What struggles have you encountered living up to your department's mission or the university's vision statement?
- What struggles do you encounter in your own teaching methods?

F. Student response

- How do you think your teaching methods make your students feel?
 - i. Is there resistance?
 - ii. Acceptance?
 - iii. Why do you think so?

G. Is there anything you would like to add in regards to your teaching models you use in the HCom department?

H. Thank you for your time and your assistance with my project. Your response will be very helpful.

Appendix C. Consent Forms

Agreement to Participate in Research

Responsible Investigator: Jessica Smiley

Title of Research Project: “Engaged pedagogy at CSU Monterey Bay:
A case study”

I consent to serve as a participant in the research investigation entitled: “Engaged pedagogy at CSU Monterey Bay: A case study.” The nature and purpose of the study has been explained to me by Jessica Smiley from the Department of Communication Studies at San Jose State University.

I understand that the purpose of this research is to explore the pedagogical models that exist in the Human Communication (HCom) department at CSU Monterey Bay. I also understand that the research procedures involve participant observations by Jessica Smiley. Jessica may sit in on my HCom class to observe the behaviors and actions that occur in regards to the teaching and learning environment. I may also participate in an interview to further reflect on and articulate the style of teaching that exists in my classroom.

I understand that one of the potential benefits of participating in this project is that I will have an opportunity to explore the style of teaching that is used in the HCom department. I understand as well that this opportunity may include the risk that I might feel uncomfortable being observed in class.

I understand that my participation is voluntary. I also understand that all my information is confidential, and my identity will not be revealed. If asked, I agree to be audiotaped during a personal interview with Jessica Smiley. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation in this project at any time, without prejudice to my relations at San Jose State University or CSU Monterey Bay.

I understand that I may direct my questions about this research to Jessica Smiley, Department of Communication Studies, at (408) 270-8278. I may direct any complaints I have about this research to Dr. Deanna Fassett, Department of Communication Studies, at (408) 924-5511. Moreover, I may direct any questions about my rights as a research subject or any research-related injury to Dr. Nabil Ibrahim, Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research, at (408) 924-2480.

- **My signature on this document indicates my agreement to participate in this study.**

Human Communication Professor's Signature

Date

Agreement to Participate in Research

Responsible Investigator: Jessica Smiley

Title of Research Project: “Engaged pedagogy at CSU Monterey Bay:
A case study”

I consent to serve as a participant in the research investigation entitled: “Engaged pedagogy at CSU Monterey Bay: A case study.” The nature and purpose of the study has been explained to me by Jessica Smiley from the Department of Communication Studies at San Jose State University.

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***Please retain this information for your records!**

Agreement to Participate in Interview

Responsible Investigator: Jessica Smiley

Title of Research Project: “Engaged pedagogy at CSU Monterey Bay:
A case study”

I consent to serve as a participant in the research investigation entitled: “Engaged pedagogy at CSU Monterey Bay: A case study.” The nature and purpose of the study has been explained to me by Jessica Smiley from the Department of Communication Studies at San Jose State University.

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I understand that my participation is voluntary. I also understand that all my information is confidential, and my identity will not be revealed. If asked, I agree to be audiotaped during a personal interview with Jessica Smiley. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation in this project at any time, without prejudice to my relations at San Jose State University or CSU Monterey Bay.

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- **My signature on this document indicates my agreement to participate in this study.**
- **The signature of the researcher indicates her agreement to include me in the research and attests that I have been fully informed of my rights.**
- **I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.**

Participant’s Signature

Date

Investigator’s Signature

Date