The primary goal of this course is to learn ways of communicating that will create the best learning conditions for students. Think back to the teachers’ classrooms where you were most successful in school, where you felt the most comfortable expressing yourself, where you clearly understood what was expected of you and how you could achieve those expectations. Can you identify the characteristics or behaviors of those teachers that most contributed to your success (or lack thereof)? Can you further define those behaviors? Are these behaviors a list of skills that, if acquired by anyone, guarantee that your students will be able to learn? Will you be able to acquire them yourself?

How can we as teachers raise our awareness of and appreciation for how we communicate with our students so that we make the most of the opportunities we have with them? How can we develop a reflective practice of examining our communication styles, in order to always strengthen ourselves as teachers? Finally, what kind of teacher do you want to be, and how are you going to communicate that with your students?

Answering these questions and many others are the outcomes for this course. As we learn and practice new communication skills, we’ll also refine old ones. We’ll deliberately examine ourselves as learners and teachers. We’ll find answers and create more of our own as we discuss, read, listen, demonstrate, practice, observe and write – all different ways to experience communication. Come to class ready and willing to learn, participate, be challenged, take some risks, and assume responsibility for your own and your classmates’ education.

The Honors Section of G203 includes a service-learning component which will provide the opportunity for you to both observe other adults communicating with children in classrooms and participate yourself. You will reflect on your observations and participation as you begin to focus on how you can be a more effective communicator.

**Course Objectives**

1. Actively engage with readings, classroom discussions, activities and projects, in order to promote personal and professional growth.

2. Learn about, experience and apply counseling skills that facilitate effective communication in the classroom.
3. Examine your attitudes and beliefs about communication, and develop awareness of your interpersonal style.

4. Learn how to create and participate in a classroom community in ways that allow for open and respectful expression of diverse ideas.

5. Enhance your appreciation for how diversity impacts communication in the classroom, and increase your multicultural awareness and competence.

Objectives for the Service-Learning Experience in relation to course content

1. Observe and reflect upon the communication strategies used by current classroom teachers.

2. Apply skills learned in class to real life situations.

3. Develop yourselves as professionals working with children and gain practice in professional comportment.