Classroom Communication

(adapted and modified to be more culturally inclusive from *Classroom Communication Tips*, Sheridan Center for Teaching & Learning, Brown University)

Rhetorical strategies for Delivering Communication:

Verbal: help your audience understand what is being said.
- *Vary the speed & tone of your voice* to keep your voice interesting to listen to.
- *Project your voice* to be clearly heard.
- *Pause* to gain attention, emphasize transitions in material, and allow students the opportunity to consider and reflect.

Non-Verbal: help your audience be receptive to what you are saying.
- *Engage* with the audience and stand comfortably (but solidly).
- *Use movement* to convey energy and enthusiasm but avoid excessive gesturing or distracting motions, because they can divert attention from your message.
- *Project excitement and energy* (in a manner that is natural or comfortable for you) to hold your audience's attention.

Media helps to explain complex ideas. Use it to enhance, not distract, from your message.
- *A chalk board or dry-erase board* can be very adaptive to student feedback, and can be used to show a process unfolding or articulate the reasoning behind a derivation.
- *Slide presentations* are useful for organizing a variety of visual, audio or animated information and can be used to emphasize key points and summarize ideas.
- *Video clips or animations* can be used to illustrate dynamic processes and prove a sense of scale.
- *Audio clips* can introduce a new voice into the classroom (often from another time/place) and illustrate the sounds of physical processes.
- *Artifacts* bring elements of the "real" in the classroom.
- *Handouts*, whether paper or electronic, are an effective way to share detailed information and images with students.

Rhetorical Techniques for Structuring Communication

Get the students interested
- *Connect the day's topic to the student's interests, experience, and prior knowledge* to spark the students' curiosity and explain why its valuable or useful for them.
- *Provide an engaging example or anecdote* that the students can connect to – they can often be memorable years after the class.

Organize the class
- *Structure the class in a logical way*; e.g., frame the topic as a story or provide the big picture, present a problem then develop its solution, describe events and processes chronologically or show the relationship of interconnected ideas to an overarching theme.
- *Share an outline* to help the students organize and assimilate their learning.
- *Make explicit transitions between topics* to help students follow along; e.g., use verbal signposting such as mini-summaries or link a new topic to the one prior.