

**SCOM 341: Introduction to Communication Theories**  
**Syllabus**  
**Spring 2007**

TIME/LOCATION: W 5:30-8:15FAC 137  
PROFESSOR: Dr. Angela M. Jerome  
OFFICE: FAC 145  
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OFFICE HOURS: 10-11:30 and 1-2:30 M; 8:30-9:30 Tuesday and Thursday  
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**Student Disability Services:**

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in DUC A-200 of the Student Success Center in Downing University Center.

Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

**Required Text:**

Wood, J. T (2004). *Communication Theories in Action*. Thomson Wadsworth Publishing: United States.

**Course Goals:**

This course is designed as a survey of communication theories. In this regard, this course is structured so that students will:

- Understand the history and development of communication theory.
- Be able to discuss the main components of a variety of communication theories.
- Be able to apply theoretical principles to “real world” situations, interactions, and messages.

The assignments in this class are designed to achieve these goals. Assigned readings, class lectures, in-class activities, assignments, exams, and presentations will not only provide you with information about major concepts, but will also allow you the opportunity to experience the concepts. Therefore, your attendance and participation in class are of utmost importance.

## Course Requirements and Policies

### Attendance:

**Regular attendance in this class is necessary for students to become knowledgeable in the area of communication theory. Therefore, students are allowed only one unexcused absence before they begin losing points.** Note that coming to class late and leaving class early will also be counted as absences and are subject to the designation of excused or unexcused as outlined above.

**Every absence after one may result in a two percentage point deduction from the student's final course grade.**

Absences may be excused for illness of student or serious illness of an immediate family member, death of a family member, or required participation in an official university function. For any absence to be excused, students must:

- Notify me (via voicemail or electronic mail) on or before the day of the class missed.
- Provide me with written documentation regarding the absence.

NOTE: IF YOU ARE TOO SICK TO COME TO CLASS, YOU ARE SICK ENOUGH TO ACQUIRE A DOCTOR'S NOTE!

### Assignment Due Dates:

All assignments must be completed by the class period in which they are due for full credit (unless the absence meets the excuse policy above). **If a student turns in a paper more than 15 minutes after the class period begins, it is considered late.** Late papers will be accepted, but will be subject to a penalty of a one letter grade deduction per day the assignment is late. If a student accrues an unexcused absence for the class period in which the paper is due, the paper will not be accepted!

Presentations may not be made up!!!!

It is not OK to miss class and e-mail me an assignment. I must receive all assignments hard copy.

### Written Work:

**All written work, unless otherwise specified in the assignment, must be typed in Arial 11 point font with 1" margins on all sides. All source citation must follow the APA Publication Manual (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a poor grade.**

### Grading Criteria:

Grading criteria for each assignment will be explained throughout the course.

### Cheating and Plagiarism:

Cheating/Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If a student is caught cheating or plagiarizing, the student may be assigned an F in the course, and his/her name may be turned over "to the Office of the Dean of Student Life for disciplinary sanctions" (Hilltopics, 1994).

**Note: The taking of an exam from the classroom will also be considered cheating; all exams remain the property of the professor.**

## ASSIGNMENTS

<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>POINTS POSSIBLE</u>	<u>POINTS I EARNED</u>
Reflection Journals (8@ 25 points)	200	
Exam #1	150	
Exam #2	150	
Quizzes, Activities and Participation	100	
Final Paper/Presentation	225	

## GRADING SCALE

A=90% & Up  
B= 80-89%  
C= 70-79%  
D= 60-69%  
F= 0-59%

## **Assignment Descriptions**

**Reflection Journals:** During the course of the semester, the instructor will pose reflection topics/questions. Topics/Questions will be relevant to the concepts/theories that have been discussed in prior class periods. For each reflection, students must provide a thoughtful, typed, double-spaced, 1 ½-2 page reflection on the topic/question posed. On many occasions, more than one reflection topic will be offered, allowing each student to pick the topic/question that most significantly resonates with his/her own experiences/thoughts. Reflection due dates are listed on the daily schedule.

**Quizzes, Activities, and Discussion:** The professor intends for this class to be interactive. For it to be so, all course readings need to be completed by every student. Your input is expected for both course discussions and activities. While your grade in this area may be assessed through participation in class activities and discussion, the professor reserves the right to administer pop-quizzes on course readings if she suspects students are not reading!!! Quizzes and in-class activities may not be made up by an absent student regardless of excuse!!!

**Final Paper:** Specific guidelines for this assignment will be made available to students by week #2.

**Exams:** The make-up of course exams will be discussed in-class.

COMS 341  
TENTATIVE DAILY SCHEDULE

January 24	Introduction to the Course Syllabus Introductory Speeches	Ch. 1
January 31	Communication as a Field of Study Understanding Communication Theories/Assumptions Building and Testing Theory	Chps. 2 & 3
February 7	Theories of Rhetoric and Persuasion Classical Rhetoric Dramatism Narrative Theory Cognitive Dissonance Social Judgment Theory <b>Reflection #1 due</b>	Ch. 5 pp. 97-113
February 14	Theories of Symbolism and Meaning General Semantics Theory Symbolic Interactionism Constructivism Exam #1 Review <b>Reflection #2 Due</b>	Chps. 4, 5 (pp. 89-96), & 7 (pp. 152-159)
February 21	Exam #1/Theories of Interpersonal Communication Interactional Theory	Ch. 8, pp. 161-171
February 28	Theories of Interpersonal Communication Uncertainty Reduction Relational Dialectics Social Exchange Theory Developmental Theories <b>Reflection #3 Due</b>	Ch. 8 pp. 172-182 Ch. 9
March 7	Movie and Analysis <b>Reflection #4 Due</b>	
<b>March 14</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
March 21	Theories of Organizational Communication Organizational Culture and TBD <b>Reflection #5 Due</b>	Ch. 10, p. 226-233
March 28	TBA	

April 4	Theories of Mass Communication Technological Determinism Cultivation Theory Agenda Setting <b>Reflection #6 Due</b>	Ch. 11
April 11	Critical Theories Standpoint Theory Muted Group Theory <b>Reflection #7 Due</b>	Ch. 10, pp. 212-219 Ch. 12, pp. 267-273
April 18	Movie and Analysis <b>Reflection #8 Due</b>	
April 25	<b>Presentations/Final Papers Due</b>	
May 2	<b>Presentations/Final Exam Review</b>	
May 9	<b>Final Exam</b>	