

COMM 494
Capstone in Communication
Fall, 2005

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Course Description:

COMM 494 Capstone in Communication is designed to capitalize on the skills and knowledge students have attained during their time as a Communication Studies or as a Corporate and Organizational Communication major. The goal of the course is to integrate course work, knowledge, skills and experiential learning gained in these majors in order to demonstrate mastery of learning for initial employability and for career development. The student will be expected to analyze and synthesize past learning and relate it to communication and problems in today's society.

**In order to successfully complete this course, the student would have completed 24 hours of the required 27 hours of core Communication courses (COMM 148, COMM 263, COMM 247, COMM 343, COMM 345, COMM 349, COMM 461, COMM 489, COMM 341 OR COMM 346). You may take the remaining required three-hour Communication course simultaneously with COMM 494. You need to retrieve, maintain, and reassemble your notes from these classes as the subject matter from these courses because these courses will not be re-taught in COMM 494. (You may have to reconstruct these materials from these courses should you have disposed of the course notes and/or acquire notes or text from others to study the materials).

**For purposes of quality control, you must have a copy of your transcript to validate the 24/27 hours of core Communication courses required to maintain your standing in COMM 494. Special exceptions require the approval of the Department Head.

General Objectives:

1. Develop and understanding of the connection between communication theory and practice.
2. Develop a theoretical and critical perspective of the communication discipline
3. Explore career opportunities for individuals with a communication degree.
4. Demonstrate communication competency in various situations and contexts.
5. Analyze and apply communication theory and principles to real-world situations.

Required Materials:

*An active electronic mail account (either through WKU or another provider).

Course Assignments:

Pre-Test (self-graded)	→	(No Grade)
Assignment #1 Philosophy of Communication	→	10%
Assignment #2 Written Speech Analysis	→	10%
Assignment #3 Presentation - Issues Management	→	20%
Assignment #4 Case Study	→	40%
Written Exam (Final) (Post-Test)	→	20%

Class Schedule

COMM 494-001 12:45PM – 2:05PM TR
 COMM 494-002 2:20PM – 3:40PM TR

Aug. 30-Sept. 1	Introduction to the Course – The nature and Scope of the Field of Communication.
Sept. 6-8	Assign #1 – Philosophy of Communication (4-6 minute speech and paper, 4-6 sources)
Sept. 13-15	Capstone Pre-Test Assign #2 – Written Speech Analysis Assignment lecture/discussion
Sept. 20-22	Assign #2 – In-class work Assign #2 – continue and conclude
Sept. 27-29	Assign #2 – In-class presentations (both days)
Oct. 4 (TBA)	Assign #3
Oct. 11-13	Careers in Communication – Guests Speakers/Career Services Center
Oct. 18-20	Assign #3
Oct. 25-27	Assign #3
Nov. 1-3	Work Sessions – Assign #4
Nov. 8-10	Work Sessions – Assign #4
Nov. 15-17	Week of Student Interviews
Nov. 22	Week of student interviews
Nov. 29-Dec. 1	Assign #4 - presentations
Dec. 6-8	Assign #4 - presentations

FINAL EXAM

Dec. 16	494-001	10:30 am – 12:30 pm
Dec. 13	494-002	1:00 – 3:00 pm

COMM 494

Pre-Test (not for credit)

You will be taking an exam over the required courses shared by the Communication Studies Major and the Corporate and Organizational Communication Major. Those courses are:

- COMM 148
- COMM 247
- COMM 263
- COMM 341 OR 345
- COMM 349 OR 461
- COMM 343

Test(s) - TBA for each major

Assignment #1 – Philosophy of Communication Speech

You are to prepare and present a 4-6 minute informative speech that outlines your “Philosophy of Communication”. You should use three (or more) theories of Communication to support/detail your three main points.

Your audience may be: 1) a high school audience, 2) an undergraduate honors conference, 3) a Communication Month program.

COMMUNICATION 494
Assignment #2
Written Speech Analysis

Subject: President George W. Bush – Address to Congress – The Nation – World Trade Disaster

Task:

1. View the speech – workshop –
2. Research 4-6 essays on the Bush rhetorical style. 2-3 pages focusing on speech writing staff, style, habits, etc. 2-3 pages focusing on the speech event. Additionally, write a speech critique using the NCA form.
3. New York Times Magazine October 7, 2001
Time November 12, 2001
World Trade Center 2000-2003 (articles)
Vital Speeches 01-15-03 (speechwriting); 02-15-02 (S of U); 12-01-01
These are good “starter” essays
4. These 4-6 pp. paper will be due (TBA)

Comm. 494 Capstone In Communication
RE: President Bush **WTC Speech to Congress – 2001**

1. Briefly outline the steps in the speechwriting process for a major address for President Bush.
2. In what ways does the President participate in the review/edit process?
3. How are the speeches developed and adjusted to match the style of President Bush?
4. What are the daily activities of the speechwriting staff?
5. Outline the steps of the speechwriting process with a specific speech in mind i.e., “State of the Union” or “Address to the United Nations.”

Communication 494 – Assignment #3 Workplace – Issues Management

Each student will present a 4-6 minute presentation that:

- Addresses an emerging issue relevant to a decision-making group in an organization
- The presentation will identify the issue, demonstrate the importance of the emerging issue, depict (visuals) the serious nature of the issue, and recommend/defend a course of action.
- Research should include interviews with 3-5 business leaders engaged with the issues.
- Students should present an 8-10 pp. research paper (8-10 sources) and other print/visual materials relevant to the issue management process. A 3-5 minute class report will be required to share the study with the class.

ISSUES MANAGEMENT

A company plan to mount a public communication plan to a current or emerging issue.

Public communication efforts are classified as internal or external

1. International communication – employee communication may serve:
 - a. orientation
 - b. safety-loss prevention
 - c. compensation-benefits
 - d. explanation of organizational change
 - e. promote employee morale
2. External communication
 - a. influence relevant public
 - b. image building
 - c. constituent relations

Issues management involves a process of identifying and tracking public issues that may affect an organization.

ISSUES MANAGEMENT – ISSUES ADVOCACY – CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Comm 494 – Assignment 4

Case Studies in Business and Organizational Communication: For Profit – Not-For-Profit Organizations

Communication contributes to organizational life a variety of experiences, both widely successful and not so successful members of organizations, both public and private, initiate, enhance, or inhibit effective communication. In terms of people and organizations, there is never just one issue that sufficiently captures organizational phenomena.

Rather than your waiting until full-time employment or discounting your part-time employment as “not the real thing”, a Communication 494 effective case study, can organize the details of a communication situation in organizational life. Case studies can capture real life and illuminate (for our purpose) the role of communication in business development and change.

An effective case study in organizational communication presents situations that have developed over time. Case studies can help us understand the problem in its context. By outlining the series of events that led to present circumstances, a case study can teach real life and real answers.

Among the categories of case studies, “solving organizational communication problems” will serve as the focus of Assignment 4. The best practice model for writing a problem – oriented case study is:

- Identify the problem in company “A”.
- Determine causes.
- Set standards by which to judge the potential success of a proposed solution.
- Propose any and all solutions and recommendations.
- Choose solutions or recommendations.
- Propose strategies for implementing and assessing the chosen solution(s).

In writing your team’s case study, you should:

1. Present a “chunk of reality” – write a narrative of real events in real-life time.
2. Although it is not necessary to write the story chronologically, there needs to be a beginning, middle, and end.
3. In your case study “story”, there needs to be a series of events with a past as well as a present.
4. A time structure should be clear – past, present, future.
5. The “story” should be engaging, suspenseful, and dramatic.
6. There should be sufficient background information, boundaries, and multiple viewpoints.
7. The story should focus on an organizational communication problem and its success potential.

Assignment 4

1. Each team is assigned the creative and cooperative task of writing a case study (see the James and DeWine case study). The case study must be an original – not a copy of an existing case study. Failure to comply means 0 pts. for the task.
2. Your team should complete the process and prepare a set of questions for the consulting team so they can offer a set of responses, recommendations, and then ways to assess their recommendations. Each preparing of the case study team should answer the questions in the ways that they would settle the matters as if they were the consulting team.
3. Each team will have class time to work together on Nov. 1-3 ; 8-10, 2005. By Nov. 15, 2005, each team should deliver their case study to their consulting team. (TBA)
4. Nov. 29 – Dec. 1 ; Dec. 6 – 8, 2005 will be set aside for each team “pair” to present their case and have a consulting team presentation.(TBA)
5. The consulting team should present an oral and written report documenting responses to the questions posed by the case study team.
6. Each case study team member should submit a “work log” of what he/she did to prepare the case study for their consulting team. Moreover, each consulting team member should submit a “work log” of his/her work on the tasks of the consulting team. As members of both tasks, teams, each student should submit a list of sources that proved valuable in building the case study and a list of sources that provided ideas and recommendations that proved useful in the work of the consulting team.

- All work on behalf of the team(s) should bear the signature of each team member – a testimony that each student made a good faith effort to do his/her best work for the team and, that by their signature, every other team member would so agree. –
7. Assignment 4 is a 40% grade equivalent. You should make your best effort.