COMMUNICATION 577
Cultural Communication of Terrorism

CLASS GOALS

This course focuses on the communication behaviors of terrorist groups, particularly directed toward the ways in which culture impacts those communication behaviors.

The coursework will concentrate on culture and how it informs communication behavior in the context of groups who exist through and promote terroristic purposes. The course incorporates aspects of student self-directed learning and group work and uses information and concepts collected through internet, media searches, etc. Students should immediately begin to identify sources of learning in addition to the standard written works and utilize them in their writing and thinking. They will also want very quickly to set personal learning and application goals that they intend to achieve during this course.

The class activities will promote critical thinking processes among the students and instructor. We will consider some materials which may seem controversial and part of our learning experience will include practice in assessing information critically in order to arrive at conclusions justified by the best information available and through discussions with other members of the class.

Another goal of this class consists in providing students the opportunities to practice their writing skills in an academic setting while using applicative and theoretical information and data. Please use the APA Stylesheet, Sixth Edition, for all written work submitted. If you have not used this stylesheet, ask questions and get familiar with the guidelines. Also, check the Course Information section of our BlackBoard for specific writing instructions and guidelines. All students will follow the guidelines that appear in Course Information and submit all written work through turnitin.com.

The instructor intends that every activity lead toward student mastery of the following specific learning goals:

1. Understanding the role of culture-general in interpersonal and group communication, specifically in the context of terrorist communication;
2. Understanding the role of co-cultures (sub-cultures) in the practices of communication;
3. Recognizing the importance of cultural influence on communication in the context of terrorism and ways to use that knowledge to assess various qualities and overall validity of those patterns.

To accomplish these goals, please focus on the following objectives:

1. Recognize that terrorism is communication; that terrorism communication strategies depend on cultural context; that terrorists are a part of the society they attack.
2. Develop critical analysis skills for addressing terroristic communication.
3. Understand that terrorist groups are co-cultures (sub-cultures) in the larger culture
4. Enhance written academic communication skills in presenting ideas and conclusions.

Please keep these goals and objectives in mind as you proceed through the various assignments and activities in the course and openly share your ideas and reactions to these activities in relation to reaching your goals and objectives.

TEXT and RECOMMENDED SOURCES:

The required text is:


Additional recommended sources include:


CLASS MEETING TIMES

Attendance is NOT optional. If you have a problem with the assigned meeting times, talk to me immediately about whether or not you should enroll in this class. If you are not able to attend ALL CLASS MEETINGS as scheduled, you may NOT expect to receive credit for this class. So if you recognize now that you have conflicts with personal or professional events, drop this
class and find another one which will fit your personal schedule better. (Please see the Department Position on Attendance at the end of this syllabus—also on line on the Department of Communication webpage).

Since we have relatively few meeting hours and in a very compressed schedule, we will be conducting much work on the internet via our BlackBoard site. Please get familiar with the BlackBoard facility and become at ease in working with its various capabilities. Call me if you have problems accessing the web site. All students MUST have good access to the internet available to them. Students MUST take advantage of the free email service provided by Western and check their email messages daily. It will be the primary source of communication from the instructor between meetings about assignments, requirements, etc.

All written assignments must be submitted through turnitin.com. You can access this site by going to turnitin.com; selecting this class (ID number is _______; password is ________). Set up your account and post your written papers to this site. I will access them from this site and return them with my grades and comments during class periods.

TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

First Assignment

Introduction: Discussion of course contents, syllabus, requirements, etc.
Definition of culture; cultural theories; definition of terrorism; role of each in human communication.
History of terrorism; goals of terrorist groups
Cultural concepts; lecture and discussion on impacts of culture on communication in the context of terrorism
Nationalism and its relationship to terrorism
Model of communication
Critical thinking skills
Writing rules

I will lead the discussion on these topics.

Assigned Reading: Please read the first chapter in Tuman before class and we will use other sources that I post on BlackBoard.

Second Assignment

Critical thinking activities
Systems theory; co-cultural theory; conversation construction theory; AUM; EVT
Communication: objectives, rhetorical devices; oratory as related to terrorism
Motivation: Tactics/Techniques/Process
Typologies of terrorists; audiences; identity (women, stereotypes); targets;
Causes; extremism; symbols
Assigned Reading: Please read Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 in Tuman and other materials which I will post on BlackBoard.
Outside readings chosen by students

Third Assignment

Critical Thinking
Technology and terrorism; media and terrorism; cyberterrorism;
Criminality; justification for terrorism; responses from main culture;
Success of terrorism

Assigned Reading: Please read Chapters 7, 8, 9 in Tuman and other materials which I will post on BlackBoard.
Outside readings chosen by students

Fourth Assignment

Ethical aspects of terrorist communication
Summation and presentations

Assigned Reading: Please read the materials which I will post on BlackBoard and your own chosen readings.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Written Assignments

First short assignment. (Due February 2) A two-three page paper based on your readings and understandings of the topic “How the context of terrorism impacts communication.”
This paper must be submitted electronically to turnitin.com (do NOT send as an attachment to email); follow APA stylesheet, include adequate reference page, follow Writing Guidelines (in Course Documents) exactly as they are stated.
Counts 15% of final grade

Second short assignment. A two-three page paper based on your readings and research of the topic “Cultural impacts on the media communication of terrorism.”
This paper must be submitted electronically through turnitin.com and using APA.
Follow same guidelines as above.
Counts 15% of final grade

Individual term project/paper. Each student will select a topic related to culture and communication in the terrorist context and prepare a final written project. Please consult with
me as soon as possible about developing your project/paper topic. At the final session, students will make a brief oral presentation to the class based on their individual research projects. Counts 25% of final grade.

In addition, short case studies and papers will be assigned and written analyses may be requested both in and out of class.

**Discussion Board Activity**

We will use the Blackboard Discussion Board for class discussions and for students to report on their own research activities/interests and to share their ideas. All discussion board activity (3 in all) will be available as indicated by the schedule below. I will post the topic (called a Forum), open each session, and close each one on the indicated date (archive it). The previous discussion will remain available for viewing but not for contributing after it is archived.

First Discussion Board begins ______; ends _______.
Second Discussion Board begins ________; ends ________.
Third Discussion Board begins ________; ends ________.

The Discussion Board activity will count 15% of the final grade.

**GROUP PROJECT**

An applied group project will be developed and a presentation made to the class on _______. Each group will select a specific terrorist group or activity and focus their research and analysis on that topic. Each group will discuss that terrorist event/movement in class in terms of the topics assigned for that class meeting. Finally, the group will make a formal presentation to the class on the final class meeting which includes a complete assessment of the role of culture on the communication of their target terrorist group. Counts 15% of final grade.

**Opposite Viewpoints Presentation**

Each student will be assigned to a group to present opposite viewpoints on a specific topic. These assignments will be made in the first class and the presentations/discussions will be assigned for the following weeks. This activity will count 15% of the final grade and will be due ______, _____, ______.

**GRADING SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Term Project/Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Board (3 sets)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Short Papers (15 each)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opposite Viewpoints Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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</tbody>
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SUGGESTED TERRORIST GROUPS FOR INDIVIDUAL/GROUP STUDY

Ireland (IRA)
Palestine
  Palestine to Israel
  Palestine vs. Israel
Nazi Germany
Franco’s Spain
Mussolini’s Italy
Kenya Mau Mau
Indian independence
Iran
Algeria/Morocco OAS
Cuba / Che Guevara
Tsarist Russia/Stalinist Russia
Europe prior to WWI
Peru Shining Path
Basque Separatists ETA

CROSS-CULTURAL THEORIES

I/C, UA, PD, MF, Confucian dynamism (Hofstede)
Low/High Context (Hall)
Face Negotiation (Ting Toomey)
Conversational Constraint (Kim)
Expectancy Violations (Burgoon)
Anxiety-Uncertainty Management (Gudykunst)
Communication Accommodation Theory (Gallois,m Giles, Jones, Cargile, Ota)

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION THEORIES

Outcomes:
Cultural Convergence (Barnett, Kincaid)
AUM
Group-Decision Making (Oetzel)

Accommodation or Adaptation:
Communication accommodation theory
I/C Adaptation (Elingsworth)
Co-cultural (Orbe)
WRITING INFORMATION/GUIDELINES

Written communication follows patterns designed to meet specific needs or achieve definite goals. Academic writing fits such criteria; its rules and regulations reflect attempts to meet the needs of the readers for clarity, brevity, significant content, explanation, and contemplation. Academic writing differs from other types, such as creative, journalistic, etc., because the communicator intends to share information or ideas with the readers. These ideas extend concepts based on research data of various types or original thoughts which propose theoretical bases previously unknown.

Creativity in academic prose comes from the content and analysis rather than from new and novel means of expression. When you write academically, please remember that the primary purpose of the exercise provides the reader with new information or new approaches to understanding existing information. In the class, I will ask you to follow these rules in the essays which you submit for credit.

1. Follow traditional grammar rules, i.e., subject-verb agreement, noun-pronoun agreement, no introductory relative pronouns, etc.
2. Create paragraphs which focus on a single topic, usually introduced in the first sentence. Every paragraph must have at least three sentences and should not run too long (a relative point but very important). For example, a single paragraph should rarely extend to an entire page.
3. Eliminate all forms of the verb "to be" from your writing (is, am, are, was, were, be, been, being). This precludes use of passive voice and forces the writer to use a direct style for expressing facts or opinions.
4. Develop a general introduction to the paper, introduce the various points you wish to make through the succeeding paragraphs, and finally, compose a closing section that summarizes your content and brings the reader to a feeling of satisfaction with the organization and content.
5. Remember that your purpose always lies attempting to present your ideas, facts, etc., to the reader (the instructor) in a clear, cogent, and convincing manner. Therefore, avoid overuse of stringing prepositional phrases, too many perfect tense verbs, distracting phrasing, etc. Never use the second person (you) in an essay, unless it comes in a direct quotation.
6. Follow APA style in writing (exceptions require personal discussion with the instructor). If you do not know the APA style, find a manual and follow it exactly in every situation.
7. Study word selection carefully. Choose precise words which will indicate/clarify your intended message. Take care with affect/effect and other such troublesome words. Always use a thesaurus when you write. Painful as these rules may seem, they will greatly improve your writing skills.
Department of Communication Graduate Program Attendance

"The Department of Communication Graduate Program develops student knowledge and skills through a varied curriculum in applied organizational communication. Our courses are special learning communities where professors and students join together to study course-specific literature in the Communication discipline. Students process and evaluate scholarly work through written and oral presentation of information and ideas. Therefore, attendance and active participation are essential for all students’ success.

Punctual attendance at each class is an obligation of the student. By registering for this course, you are indicating that you will be able to attend classes on time and without early departure on the dates published. A student missing a weekend class meeting or more than one semester-long class meeting should NOT expect to pass the course. Students should have their personal or professional schedules well in mind when they choose courses for the semester. If you know that you will not be available for any scheduled class meetings, do not sign up for the class. Graduate faculty may supplement this departmental attendance policy through specific announcements in each course.”

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