

COMM 200 – Foundations of Communication

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Office: FAC 100
Office Hours: T/R 9:00-9:35; 11:00-12:30
And by Appointment

Required Materials:

1. Thompson, B. Payne, H. J., Jerome, A., Mize-Smith, J., Ishii, K., & Chai, S. (2013). *Communication Theory App*. Copyright WKU.
2. Frequent access to Blackboard for assignment instructions, submissions, and feedback.

Overview of the Course:

This course is a survey of the communication discipline. Students will be acquainted with the breadth and depth of discipline as well as the theoretical frameworks that guide communication research in a variety of areas. Students will learn how to use their knowledge of communication theory to analyze and interpret a variety of communication phenomena. Furthermore, students will learn to read academic scholarship and write for the discipline.

Note: COMM 200 counts as a “Writing in the Disciplines” course in the FOUNDATIONS CATEGORY of the Colonnade.

Course Objectives:

Upon successfully completing this course you should be able to:

- Gain a clear understanding of the communication discipline, including its various definitions and paradigms.
- Understand the history and development of communication theory.
- Be able to discuss the main components of communication theories.
- Familiarize yourself with some of the most practical communication theories.
- Be able to apply theoretical principles to “real world” situations, interactions, and messages.
- Understand the communication process and human relational interaction in increasingly complex and diverse environments.
- Understand multiple theoretical and philosophical perspectives of communication as reflected in its history.
- Understand the role of ethics in communication.
- Demonstrate competency in analyzing and interpreting mediated communication (i.e., CMC, organizations, mass media, politics etc.).
- Demonstrate competency in analyzing the role of communication within organizations.
- Demonstrate competency in adapting communication across contexts and diverse communities.
- Use library databases to collect academic scholarship.
- Be able to understand, analyze, and summarize the contents of academic scholarship in the communication discipline.
- Write and edit an academic literature review in a format consistent with the communication discipline.
- Learn proper APA source citation techniques and paper formatting.

Colonnade Objectives:

1. Write clear and effective prose in several forms, using conventions appropriate to audience (including academic audiences), purpose, and genre.
2. Find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare written texts.
3. Identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.
4. Plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.
5. Distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.

Course Policies and Procedures:**Attendance Policy**

Class attendance and participation are important in accomplishing the goals of this course. Readings, class discussions, presentations, and in-class activities increase both your understanding of organizational communication theory and the development of your communication skills. In order to receive credit for attendance you must attend for the **entire** class period. **Failure to do so will result in an absence for the given class session.**

Tardiness

Please arrive to class on time. Tardiness is unprofessional and is not fair to me or to your classmates. Consequently, if you are consistently late or leave early you **can expect to have points deducted from your final grade for EACH tardy or early departure.** Moreover, it is YOUR responsibility to make up any missed work and to make sure I have not marked you absent for that day. This must be done on the day you are late; otherwise, it holds as an unexcused absence.

Excused Absences

An excused absence includes 1. A documented illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student's immediate family. 2. The death of a member of the student's immediate family. 3. Trips for members of student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for University classes, and trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events. 4. Major Religious holidays.

For any officially excused absence, you are responsible for completing an **EXCUSED ABSENCE REQUEST FORM** downloadable in Blackboard, which I will review and approve or deny. You are responsible for attaching official documentation of your absence to the form. For university-sponsored absences, this notification is to be given to me **prior** to the absence; for other excused absences, this documentation must be presented at the next class meeting. If you do miss class, please see a classmate regarding class discussions and assignments. You are responsible for arranging to make up missed individual work. **Missed group work and missed in-class exercises cannot be made up.**

Unexcused Absences

You cannot make up work missed for unexcused absences—you simply receive a zero. **If**

you have absences in excess of one-fifth of the class contact hours, you need to withdraw from the class or you will be assigned a failing grade for the course.

Cell Phone

In our effort to establish a strong classroom communication climate that will enhance our ability to learn about and develop our communication knowledge and skills cell phones **shall not be used** for any purpose during class time other than to access the COMM APP. It's pretty obvious when people use their cell phones for texting or social media browsing, so please refrain from these activities. Any use of a cell phone for activities other than accessing the course material will result in a **5 point deduction from exam grades per offense**. Each offense will be recorded during class time and you will be notified via email with the total number of points. If the problem becomes recurring, you will be asked to leave class and will be counted absent for that day. This policy applies during student presentations as well as during lecture and discussion. Any student using a cell phone during an exam will receive a zero on that exam and may be subject to other university discipline.

Student Academic Assistance

If you have serious problems with writing (and many people do), I advise you go to the Writing Center. Trained writing instructors are there most weekdays and on weekends to assist you in the writing process. The Center takes appointments (745-5719) and drop-ins. The university provides this service for students, so take advantage of it!

Also, consider going to The Learning Center (TLC) (located in the Academic Advising and Retention Center, DUC-A330). TLC tutors in most major undergraduate subjects and course levels throughout the week. To make an appointment, or to request a tutor for a specific class, call 745-6254 or stop by DUC A330. Log on to TLC's website at www.wku.edu/tlc <<http://www.wku.edu/tlc>> to find out more.

Academic Integrity

I expect that all of the individual assignments you complete for COMM 200 (and in all of your other courses) are always your own work. However, many students are not sure exactly what "your own work" means, so, please read again the information on plagiarism and cheating from your student handbook. Aside from copying work, plagiarism includes incorrectly citing sources or presenting someone's information as your own, without crediting the source. To avoid this, you should carefully make notes to keep track of where your information came from. In written form, you must use quotation marks when referring to another's work. In a speech where you are paraphrasing, you can say "According to.....(give name).....". It does not take much effort to make sure you follow the rules for using another's thoughts.

Penalty for Academic Dishonesty

Western Kentucky University and the Department of Communication are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on an exam, or purchasing papers, speeches, or other assignments will immediately receive a failing grade on the assignment and in the course, and will be reported for disciplinary action. Falsified medical excuses and presenting another student's work as your own fall within the guidelines of this academic integrity policy.

PLAGIARISM DETECTION

In this course we will be using an electronic plagiarism detection tool, Safeassign (through Blackboard),

to confirm that you have used sources accurately in your papers. Students agree that by taking this course all assignments are subject to submission for textual similarity review to SafeAssign. Assignments submitted to SafeAssign will be included as source documents in SafeAssign's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. I will provide specific instructions in class on how to submit your speech outlines for electronic plagiarism review.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center, A-200. The phone number is 270 745 5004. If you have a special need that may require an accommodation or assistance, please inform the instructor as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second class meeting.

Course Assignments:

The following is a general description of the course assignments. Specific instructions will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.

Audio Essay:

As a way for you to apply and explain a communication theory, you will write and record an audio essay telling a story of a life experience which directly applies to the theory. This assignment is a great way for your classmates to hear about others' experiences and to learn about communication theory from a different perspective. There will be five rounds of audio essays addressing the specific theories covered in a particular unit (Interpersonal, Intercultural, Organizational, Persuasion, or Computer-Mediated Communication). Your assigned due date can be found in Blackboard. Each essay will provide a story or example and an application of a theory we're studying. You will post the audio files to Blackboard for the class to listen and respond to. You will create, perform, and record a 5 minute (approx. 500 word) audio essay. Use audio to tell a story, create some commentary, or offer insight into the topic. Help the audience reflect on what they are hearing. Be creative! Tell a story, be brief, be positive, be personal, and make clear and direct connections to the theory under examination. Provide us with commentary on a communication theory through the use of stories, quotes, and analysis. This assignment will be graded based on your completeness, introspection, clarity, and conceptual foundation.

Comprehensive Writing Project:

You will select a communication theory or topic to study throughout the course of the semester. A list of potential topics will be provided and discussed in class.

There are THREE parts to this project:

(A) Reference Page and Article Analysis Worksheets

In order to write a research paper, you have to be able to collect and analyze a vast amount of literature on your topic that follows a historical trajectory. The first part of this assignment requires you to: 1) Collect 6 scholarly sources on your topic, 2) Complete an Article Analysis Worksheet on 6 sources, and 3) Prepare a References page in APA format. ACADEMIC SOURCES refers to essays in peer-reviewed, scholarly communication journals or academic books. Further directions for this assignment will be given in class.

(B) Outline of the Paper

You will create an outline for your paper detailing the important components of the Introduction, Body, and Conclusion. An outline template will be provided in class to assist with this process. An outline will direct you back toward your article analysis worksheets and will help you in formulating the best organization pattern for your review. The last page of your outline should include a References page in APA format. You can use more than the six sources you reviewed in your Article Analysis Sheets depending on whether you need additional information.

(C) Final Literature Review

You will write a 5-6 page final literature review paper using at least six total academic sources. Your textbook does NOT count as one of the six required sources. A grading rubric for the paper will be posted on Blackboard later in the semester.

Exams:

There will be **three** exams. The exams will assess your understanding of communication concepts and theories, as well as your application and integration abilities. The exams will include a mixture of multiple-choice, true-false, and short answer questions.

Homework & In-Class Activities:

Participation is essential for success in this class! Participation starts as a function of attendance, but participation is more than just being in class. You are expected to come to class prepared and to participate in classroom activities and discussions, clearly demonstrating you have kept up with the course material. I will administer a series of in-class activities and small assignments that will be completed individually or in small groups. This is an opportunity to earn your participation points. But frequent tardiness or inconsiderate behavior (reading paper, sleeping, being disruptive, etc.) will lower your participation grade. *You cannot make up participation points, in-class activity or small assignment sheets if you are absent.*

Grade Allocation

Exams (3)	150
Audio Essay	25
Part A: Article Analysis Sheets	50
Part B: Outline	25
Part C: Final Literature Review	100
Class Activities & Participation	100

Grading Scale

A = 100-90%

B = 89-80%

C = 79-70%

D = 69-60%

F = 59% and below

COMM 200 – Tentative Daily Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading	
1/24	Tuesday	Introduction to the Course Defining Communication Models of the Communication Process	1
1/26	Thursday	Scope of the Discipline	1
1/31	Tuesday	Introduction to Communication Theory & Research Elements of a Research Article Research Day—Communication Databases and APA	2 & 3
2/02	Thursday	Basics of Writing a Literature Review	
2/07	Tuesday	Introduction to Interpersonal Communication	
2/09	Thursday	Relational Dialectics (Audio Essays Round 1)	6
2/14	Tuesday	Communication Privacy Management (Audio Essays Round 2)	7
2/16	Thursday	Introduction to Intercultural Communication	
2/21	Tuesday	RESEARCH PROJECT PART A: ARTICLE ANALYSIS WORKSHEETS DUE	
2/23	Thursday	Face Negotiation Theory (Audio Essays Round 3)	12
2/28	Tuesday	Communication Accommodation Theory (Audio Essay Round 4)	13
3/02	Thursday	Gender and Communication	
3/07	Tuesday	Exam 1 – Bring Scantron Form to Class	
3/09	Thursday	Introduction to Organizational Communication	
3/14	Tuesday	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	
3/16	Thursday	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	
3/21	Tuesday	Organizational Culture (Audio Essay Round 5)	9
3/23	Thursday	RESEARCH PROJECT PART B: OUTLINE	
3/28	Tuesday	Organizational Assimilation (Audio Essay Round 6)	Blackboard
3/30	Thursday	Group Communication	Blackboard
4/04	Tuesday	Groupthink and Conflict	
4/06	Thursday	Exam 2 – Bring Scantron Form to Class	
4/11	Tuesday	RESEARCH PROJECT PART C: LITERATURE REVIEW DUE Peer Review Workshop	
4/13	Thursday	Lasswell's Model of Persuasion	
4/18	Tuesday	RESEARCH PROJECT PART C: FINAL LITERATURE REVIEW DUE	
4/20	Thursday	Elaboration Likelihood Model (Audio Essay Round 7)	5 Blackboard
4/25	Tuesday	Narrative Paradigm Theory (Audio Essay Round 8)	
4/27	Thursday	Media Richness Theory (Audio Essay Round 9)	14
5/02	Tuesday	Social Information Processing Theory (Audio Essay Round 10)	12
5/04	Thursday	Hyperpersonal Model of CMC	
Final		Exam 3 (Final Exam)	