

Communication 3371: Communication Theory and Analysis
CRN: 11533
Fall 2016
LART 318

General Information

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Course Overview

This course is an introduction to various communication theories, spanning rhetorical, mass-mediated, interpersonal, and organizational communication.

Course Goals

1. To build foundational knowledge in the study of communication through an examination of:
 - a. history of the discipline
 - b. contemporary theories of communication
2. To compare and contrast theories.
3. To learn how we can use communication theories in real world communication contexts.
4. To develop writing and research skills.
5. To apply and integrate theories to everyday situations.
6. To generate ability for lifelong learning in writing, researching, communicating, and thinking skills.

Departmental Learning Objectives and Outcomes

- *Objective 1:* To provide high quality instruction to produce students with excellent oral and written communication skills and excellent critical thinking skills
- *Objective 2:* To provide students with current knowledge of the discipline and its theories in interpersonal, organizational, and mediated contexts
- *Objective 6:* To provide students with awareness, knowledge, and application about ethics in multiple communication contexts

Learning Outcome: Competence in research methods used in communication contexts

Learning Outcome: Competence in understanding and applying communication theories in interpersonal, organizational, and rhetorical, and mass mediated contexts

Learning Outcome: Competence in understanding and applying ethics in multiple communication contexts

Learning Outcome: Competence in understanding and applying theories of mass communication

Learning Outcome: Competence in understanding the impact of electronic mass media

Course materials

1. Griffin, E. (2012). *A first look at communication theory*, 8th edition. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

You can also purchase a PDF version of the chapters that we will be using this semester book if you would prefer an electronic copy. Instructions for accessing the PDF version will be posted on Blackboard. PDF versions are approximately \$35-40.

2. Other course materials are available on Blackboard or through the library.

Classroom Expectations

Students are expected to be respectful and supportive of other students. Many different ideas will be welcomed and encouraged. We will discuss some controversial topics, and students must feel that they are comfortable to express their thoughts.

Attendance & Participation:

Class sessions:

Please be on time for class! It is distracting and disrespectful when students come in late and leave early. Your attendance and participation are vital for discussion and assignments, and it is very difficult to get a satisfactory grade in this course if you frequently miss class. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the notes and any additional information given out on the day you missed – check Blackboard for details. Your participation grade will be based mostly on your attendance record and active discussion in class, because if you are not in class, you cannot participate. If you are not prepared for class, your participating grade will be lowered and you will be asked to leave the class to get appropriate materials, such as pen, paper, textbook, readings, etc.

Blackboard sessions:

Your participation is vital for discussion and assignments, and it is very difficult to get a satisfactory grade in this course if you do not visit the Blackboard course shell 2-3 times per week. Assignments will be evaluated not only for completion, but also your willingness to engage your classmates in discussions about communication theories and concepts.

Use of Laptops, Cell Phones, and Other Technologies

Use of laptops, cell phones, iPods, iPads, and other technologies during class is not permitted, unless prior permission is granted. The necessity of classroom interaction in this course negates the usefulness of these technologies as note-taking devices. The use of these technologies during class can also prove distracting to your classmates, so please refrain from using them during class, unless you are looking at a reading assignment for a team discussion activity or have prior permission from me to use such tools.

Course Assignments and Evaluation. There are several assignments in the course designed to meet the objectives of the course:

1. Quizzes. There will be 6 team quizzes throughout the semester during the in-class sessions. Quizzes will be multiple choice in format. Quizzes will be taken as a team effort for a group grade. Each team will consist of 4-5 people. Quizzes will cover readings and handouts (available in the Griffin textbook and on Blackboard). Because the quizzes are designed to test for effective reading and studying, it will be very important for you to keep up with reading assignments. Expect to spend several hours reading course materials before each team quiz.

Purpose: The purpose of the team quiz process is help you learn materials by encouraging students to read before class and through team discussions. These quizzes will help you to build foundational knowledge in communication (course goal #1) and to learn to work well with others (course goal #3). Research literature suggests that after reading, you should retain about 50% of the material. The team quizzes will encourage you to work with other students to maximize retention of material. After the team quiz, your retention of the material should be about 70%. Research also indicates that team efforts outperform the top student as an individual by 12-15%, so your team quiz grades should be higher than if you were to take the quiz alone.

Team Quiz Process:

- a. At the beginning of class, each team meets to discuss what questions they have about the reading material. Each group will be allowed to ask one question about the reading material before the quiz.
- b. Students will take the quiz individually, and turn in their answer sheet. If you have seven or more (out of twelve) correct answers, you will receive two points per quiz for your individual quiz score. If you have less than seven of the questions correct, you will receive no individual credit. You should write down your answers on a separate sheet of paper, as individual quizzes will be collected before the team meetings.
- c. Each team will meet to discuss the questions on the quiz, and will submit a team answer sheet. Each quiz is worth 3 points, and the points received are based on the percentage of questions that are correct on the team quiz. You should write down your answers as team quizzes will be collected before we go over the answers.

12/12 = 3.0 points	9/12 = 2.25 points	6/12 = 1.5 points	3/12 = 0.75 point
11/12 = 2.75 points	8/12 = 2.0 points	5/12 = 1.5 points	2/12 = 0.5 point
10/12 = 2.5 points	7/12 = 1.75 points	4/12 = 1.0 points	1/12 = 0.25 point
- d. We will go over the answers in class after each team sheet is handed in.
- e. Students will have an opportunity to write an appeal for any question they feel should have had a different answer.

Other quiz policies:

- a. Each person will receive a team quiz grade (the grade that your team receives on each quiz), an individual quiz grade, and a participation grade (the participation grade is also based on other class activities).
- b. Each person will be asked to complete a midterm and final evaluation of each team member (available on Blackboard). These will be used to evaluate how each person is contributing to their teams. Poor individual efforts to contribute to the team discussions and quizzes will result in loss of class participation points.

c. Quizzes cannot be made up, unless you have an extreme and extenuating circumstance that prevents you from attending class. If you need to make up a quiz, you will take the quiz individually rather than as part of your team. The individual score will count as your grade for that particular quiz.

2. Analysis/Integration/Participation Activities.

Your participation and group discussion grades will be based on completion of in-class and online activities that might include (but is not limited to) small group discussions, case studies, and one to two paragraph short essays. Your participation grade will also be based on attendance, discussion board posts, and participation for in-class assignments. Activities will be completed both individually and in team discussions, depending on the activity. Peer evaluations are also counted in this category. **Every day except quiz days will have some discussion, analysis, or reflection activity. If you are not in class, you cannot make up the assignment unless you have a university-approved absence.**

Your participation grade will also be based on the quantity and quality of your discussion board posts. Each week you should:

- a. Analyze the case studies and/or respond to discussion questions: due by 11:59 pm, of at least 150 words, on days that are marked as online sessions.
- b. Respond to at least two people's case studies/discussion questions posts, due by 11:59 pm, the following day of the online session, of at least 50 words. **Total posts per online class session should be at least three times for EACH discussion board prompt.**

Purpose: The purpose of these activities is to engage each student in more active and significant learning rather than passive learning (e.g., lectures). The activities are designed to help you better understand each theory (course goal #1), compare and contrast theories (course goal #2), work well with your team (course goal #3), apply and integrate theories into your everyday life (course goal #5), and to help you develop critical thinking skills for use outside of the classroom (course goal #6).

Participation and Class/Online Activities Evaluation:

Excellent – active participation, completion of all activities; student comes to class prepared, contributes to the discussion without trying to dominate it, participates fully in online sessions, makes thoughtful contributions, and shows interest in and respects others' views.

Good – some participation, completion of all activities; student comes to class prepared and makes thoughtful comments when called upon, contributes occasionally without prompting, participates in online sessions, and shows interest in and respects others' views.

Satisfactory – some participation, completion of some activities; student does not always come to class prepared and does not voluntarily contribute to the discussion and gives only minimal participation in online sessions. A student might also receive a grade of "Satisfactory" if the student participates frequently in discussion, but is regularly unprepared for class.

Poor – little or no participation in large and small groups, completion of few activities; student often does not participate, does not routinely come to class prepared, rarely posts on the discussion board, and/or is not engaged when in class or with team.

3. Communication Analysis Paper: Theme: Elections

For this research paper, you will choose some aspect, event, or artifact of communication related to the general theme of elections to analyze using a communication theory. The chosen theme will be discussed in analysis exercises in class several times throughout the semester, which will help you to think about your analysis essay. You will pick a communication event (e. g., speech, television program, film, radio show, magazine article, organizational analysis, interpersonal exchange, etc.) and use this event as the basis for theoretical analysis. The three page assignment description has more details ("CT paper assignment" on Blackboard).

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is threefold: first, to develop your writing and research skills in an academic setting (course goal #4), to analyze and apply communication theory to a communication event (course goal #5), and to establish a critical framework from which to use to better understand human communication and to develop skills that can be used outside of the classroom, such as critical thinking and writing (course goal #6).

Peer review: Each of you will exchange papers with other students, so that everyone can receive more extensive feedback on their papers before the final paper is due. When you evaluate another person's paper, you should provide address: strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement. You should use the grading criteria outlined in the "CT paper assignment" (on Blackboard) to help your classmate improve the overall quality of her/his draft, in addition to your written comments on your colleague's paper.

4. Final Exam

The final exam will consist of one question for each part of the course (see course calendar). Each section will ask you to define and give an overview of a communication theory from that section of the course, to apply that theory to a communication event, and to explain why you find this theory useful or interesting. These questions are short essay in format.

Purpose: The purpose of the final exam is to review the theories that we have studied during the course to build retention of foundational knowledge (course goal #1), to compare and contrast theories (course goal #3), and to think about how to apply and integrate theories into everyday life (course goal #5).

Grading

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>
1. Team Quizzes (3 points each)	18 points
Individual Quizzes (2 points each)	12 points
2. Analysis/Discussions/Peer Evaluations	20 points
3. Communication analysis paper	35 points
Part 1 (7 points)	
Part 2 (8 points)	
Part 3 (10 points)	
Final draft (10 points)	
4. Final exam	15 points
<hr/> Total points	<hr/> 100 points

*****Make sure to keep all assignments until the end of the semester!***** Sometimes grades are not recorded correctly, so it is wise to keep all materials until the end of the semester to double check your final grade. Note on rounding: When calculating your final grades, I will round up. For example, 89 ½/100% is an “A-” but an 89/100% is a “B+.”

Late Assignments and Incomplete policy

Late written assignments will receive a **one point deduction for each twenty-four hour period** (including weekends) the assignment is late. If you are unable to attend class on the day that an assignment is due, you must contact me before the due date to arrange to hand in your assignment. Generally, I find it unacceptable for students to turn in late assignments, unless there are extreme and extenuating circumstances.

Late final papers will not be accepted. If your final paper is late, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

A grade of incomplete will not be given for any reason, unless there are **EXTREME** extenuating circumstances **AND** you have talked to me in advance. An incomplete will only be given if some extenuating circumstance prevents you from completing the final paper by the deadline specified in the course schedule.

Academic Misconduct

The University of Texas El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence and students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submitting work for credit that is attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act that gives or attempts to give unfair advantage.

Accommodations

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

Letters of recommendation policy

Letters of recommendation should be written by someone who knows you well, thinks highly of your work, and has had you in class before. For these reasons, I will only write letters of recommendation for students who I have had in two or more classes, and received grades of B or better. If you plan on asking me for a letter of recommendation, you should provide me a copy of your resume, UTEP transcript (unofficial is acceptable), the addresses and names of the people to address the letters, and descriptions of the programs to which you are applying. I will need approximately two weeks advance notice for writing letters of recommendation. This policy is also a good guideline to follow when asking anyone for a letter of recommendation.

Liberal Arts Honors Program Course

This class has been designated as a Liberal Arts Honors Program [LAHP] course. It has received this designation because it features at least five of the Honors course criteria, which include student leadership, advanced readings and/or reviews, opportunities for intensive writing, opportunities for intensive research, opportunities to utilize technology, opportunities to make extensive use of campus resources, community-based experiences, pre-professional opportunities, and development of critical thinking. In broader terms, this course is honors-designated because of its creativity and/or intellectual rigor, both of which are integral components of the Liberal Arts Honors Program. No additional coursework is necessary for this course to count towards the LAHP Honors minor. If you are not a member of the LAHP, and are interested in the program, please visit the LAHP website at <http://academics.utep.edu/lahp>.

Syllabus Schedule

Reading assignments are listed by author's last name, and can be found on Blackboard with the exception of readings from the Griffin textbook. I will also post weekly discussion assignments on Blackboard as well.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic/Activity</u>	<u>Readings and assignments due before class</u>
Part I: Introduction to communication theories		
Week 1: Introduction to the course		
Tuesday, August 23	introduction to course & syllabus	Syllabus (Blackboard)
Thursday, August 25	introduction to assignments	Reading tips (Blackboard) CT paper assignment (Blackboard) APA style sheet & electronic citations (Blackboard)
Weeks 2 - 4: Overarching communication theories		
Tuesday, September 30	introduction to teams practice quiz: syllabus and assignments	bring syllabus to class
Thursday, September 1	Quiz #1 overview to discipline	Griffin, chapters 1-3 Lucaites & Condit (Blackboard) Bizzell & Herzberg on Plato & Aspasia (Blackboard) Philosophical approaches (Blackboard)
Tuesday, September 6	discussion: modernism & postmodernism case study	Discussion board post/response due
Thursday, September 8	discussion: rhetoric & feminism case study continued	
Tuesday, September 13	discussion & application foundations in communication:	paper topics due: Elections (bring one copy to class)
Thursday, September 15	discussion & application foundations in communication preview of postmodern/pragmatist rhetorical theories	Discussion board post/response due

Part II: Rhetorical theories

Weeks 5 & 6: Contemporary rhetorical theories

Tuesday, September 20	Quiz #2	Griffin, chapter 23 (Burke) Burke (Blackboard) Richard Rorty (Blackboard) Cornel West (Blackboard)
Thursday, September 22	discussion & application: Burke: terministic screens and language	Discussion board post/response due
Tuesday, September 27	discussion & application: Rorty and liberal ironism	Paper #1 due: Elections bring two copies to class bring Rorty reading to class
Thursday, September 29	application and review West and prophetic pragmatism Preview of feminist rhetorical theories	Discussion board post/response due

Weeks 7 & 8: Feminist rhetorical theories

Tuesday, October 4	Quiz #3	Griffin, chapters 34, 35, 36 (gender chapters) Foss & Griffin (Blackboard) Overview to feminist theories (Blackboard)
Thursday, October 6	discussion & application: muted groups, invisibilities	Peer evaluation of paper #1 due
Tuesday, October 11	discussion & application: invitational rhetoric	Discussion board post/response due
Thursday, October 13	application and review preview of postmodern media theories	Midterm team evaluations due (forms on Blackboard; submit to smuption@utep.edu)

Part III: Introduction to media theories

Weeks 9 & 10: Postmodern media theories

Tuesday, October 18	Quiz #4	Griffin, chapters 26 & 27 (Barthes, Hall) Hall (Blackboard) Gunn (Blackboard) Chavez (Blackboard)
Thursday, October 20	discussion & application: semiotics	Discussion board post/response due
Tuesday, October 25	discussion & application: ideologies	Bring Hall article to class
Thursday, October 27	application and review preview to modernist media theories	Discussion board post/response due

Weeks 11 & 12: Modern media theories

Tuesday, November 1	Quiz #5	Griffin, chapters 29 & 30 (cultivation, agenda setting) Kiouisis & McCombs (Blackboard) Mutz & Nir (Blackboard)
Thursday, November 3	discussion & application: agenda setting theory	Discussion board post/response due
Tuesday, November 8	discussion & application: cultivation theory	Paper #2 due: Elections (bring two copies to class)
Thursday, November 10	application and review preview of interpersonal and organizational theories	Discussion board post/response due

Part IV: Introduction to interpersonal and organizational communication

Weeks 13 - 15

Tuesday, November 15	Quiz #6 review for final exam/paper	Griffin, chapters 9, 12, 15, 20, 21 (org, interpersonal) Peer evaluation of paper #2 due
Thursday, November 17	discussion & application: organizations as cultures & power	Discussion board post/response due
Tuesday, November 22	discussion & application: Cognitive dissonance & social judgment	Paper #3 due: Elections (bring two copies to class)
Thursday, November 24	Thanksgiving – no class	
Tuesday, November 29	discussion & application: social penetration & relational dialectics	Discussion board post/response due Final team evaluations due forms on Blackboard: submit to smuption@utep.edu Peer evaluation of paper #3 due
Thursday, December 1	review for final exam final evaluation of course	Final paper due (bring one copy to class)

Final exam: Thursday, December 8, 1:00 pm - 3:45 pm

Team members:

Name

Telephone Number

Email Address

Name

Telephone Number

Email Address

Name

Telephone Number

Email Address

Name

Telephone Number

Email Address