Intro. to Organizational Communication

Stephen F. Austin State University
Languages, Cultures and Communication
Communication Studies
www.sfasu.edu/commstudies

Professor: R. Tyler Spradley, Ph.D.
2013-2015 Jim Towns Endowed Professor of Mentoring
Associate Professor of Communication
Leadership Minor and Certificate Coordinator
Office: LAN 417
Phone: 468-1381
E-mail: rspradley@sfasu.edu
Office Hours: 9-12 MW, 10 -11:00 TR Also by appointment
Class Times: 11 TR, 12:30 TR, Online

Course Description: The objective of this course is to introduce communication theories and research methods used to better understand organizing. By the end of this course, students should become familiar with the different perspectives on organizing and develop critical skills by which to examine communication processes.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1) To engage concepts and theories relevant to organizational communication.
2) To apply cultural, critical, feminist, rhetorical, structurational and postmodern research lenses to assist in the examination of communication processes.
3) To critically explore biases embedded in theorizing and organizing.
4) To examine what it means to study organizational communication.

Communication Studies Program Learning Outcomes: *PLOs assessed in this course.
1. Theory Knowledge: Students majoring in Communication Studies should display comprehension of major communication theories.
2. Theory Application: Students majoring in Communication Studies will apply the major theories in the field to communicate effectively in a variety of settings. *
3. Research Methods: Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to use and demonstrate understanding of appropriate methodology in critical, humanistic, or social scientific paradigms in examining research questions in communication.
4. Diversity and Freedom of Expression: Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to recognize the central role of diversity and freedom of expression in a global community.
5. Constitutive Nature of Communication: Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the constitutive nature of communication, which includes forces that enable and constrain communication such as technology, ethics, and organizational life. *
6. Higher Order Thinking: Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to demonstrate oral and written competence in logical and critical thinking.

Course Materials: Students will be expected to purchase the following:
• Additional readings will be provided via D2L in PDF format.

Governing Policies: The following policies will apply toward classroom decorum.
1. ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR: Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

2. CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES: Students are expected to appreciate the learning environment and to prevent unnecessary distractions. All phones, MP3 players and PDAs must be off and out of sight during class, unless instructed otherwise. Laptops and tablets may be used; however, it is expected these devices will only be used for taking notes. Disruptive electronic use will result in the entire class losing the privilege to use them for the remainder of the semester.

3. COURSE ADAPTATIONS: To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

4. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism. Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. **Cheating** includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. **Plagiarism** is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

5. D2L/ONLINE COURSEWORK: **ALL** students are expected to use D2L in this course to perform and keep up with graded activities and scheduled readings. Students should sign in at http://d2l.sfasu.edu using the same username and password as MySFA. All graded activities will be turned in or completed via D2L.

6. GRADE WITHHELD POLICY (Semester Grades A-54): **II. Withheld Grades:** Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade
automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/semester_grds.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/semester_grds.asp)

**Attendance, Participation and Make-up Work Policy:** Students are expected to attend every class meeting. Generally, the following policy will apply to absences and make-up work:

1. You will be allowed to make up a missed graded activity only when conditions are clearly beyond your control and are convincingly documented. If you do not have valid documentation for the absence, you will receive a ZERO for the assignment. Even if you are allowed to make up the activity you will still be counted absent for the class day.
2. There is no provision for excused absences for class meetings that do not involve graded activities. You will simply be counted as absent. You must sign the roll sheet when it is distributed to the students at the beginning of class.
3. Attendance can add or deduct points from your final course grade. Students who have perfect attendance will receive bonus points. Students who have excessive absences will receive a reduction in points from their final course grade based on the following scale:
   - 3 absences, - 5%
   - 4 absences, - 10%
   - 5 absences, - 15%
   - 6 absences, - 20%
   - 7 or more absences, -100% (Automatic failure)
4. Students who are dishonest about attendance or provide false documentation will receive an automatic failing grade for the course.
5. Students are expected to be present and participate in activities and discussions. A lack of participation will result in a mark of absence for the day.
6. Tardiness is disruptive of the learning environment and should be avoided. Students who arrive after the roll is taken will be counted as absent.

**Evaluation:** In addition to attendance, students will be evaluated using exams and written work. Each evaluated activity must be completed and turned in by the scheduled class meeting time. Your professor throughout the semester will provide additional instructions.

**Celebrations (the evaluations formerly known as tests/exams):** There will be four celebrations throughout the semester. Celebrations will be mostly multiple-choice. Celebrations are expected to be individual work. Celebrations will be administered through D2L and must be completed on the assigned date and set time provided in the calendar. Celebrations will be worth a total of 400 possible points/ 100 points each.

**Organizational Data Collection:** Students will participate in a class data collection project with an organization determined by the professor. More details will be provided during the semester. The data collection project will be worth 100 possible points.

**Organizational Communication Paper:** Students will complete a simple research paper that examines an organizational communication topic. The topic must be approved by the date indicated in the calendar to receive full credit for the assignment. A 20% deduction will be assessed against the final score for unapproved topics.
Students will use approved journal articles to develop a description of the approved topic. Your professor will help you, if you request help.

Data must be collected from an organization that the student has coordinated with to do the project. Students will collect both quantifiable and qualitative data using surveys and in-depth interviews.

In the paper, students will discuss how viewing organizational communication as organizing enhances the study of the approved subject. The paper will include the following sections:

1) **Introduction/Rationale:** Identify the topic being examined and why it is significant to analyze it using an organizational communication as organizing (ocao) perspective.
2) **Literature Review:** Detail current research on the topic using approved journals.
3) **Data Analysis:** Introduce the ocao perspective using a clear definition and description of the perspective. Using a grounded – constant comparative analysis – identify patterns and provide an argument explaining your position.
4) **Conclusion:** Provide a conclusion that identifies lessons learned that organizations can clearly use to be or become more healthier organizations.

Students will be required to use [APA (6th ed.) formatting for the entire paper](#); however, an abstract is not necessary. The paper will be a minimum of ten pages and a maximum of eighteen pages. The cover page and references are not included in the number of pages to meet length requirements. It is due on the date indicated in the calendar before 11pm on D2L. **The paper is worth 300 points.**

**Organizational Analysis Projects:** Organizational analysis projects will be implemented during class time throughout the semester to apply constructs examined during course readings and lecture. Groups will analyze case studies that reflect similar approaches and processes for the scheduled segment. **Organizational Analysis Power Point Presentations** will include the following four sections that will each be presented in an oral presentation. For each organizational analysis project, groups will discuss the key constructs that relate to and flow from the case studies. Each groups power point must include 1) a brief introduction to the case, 2) definitions of key constructs that are applicable to the case study, 3) discussion points that demonstrate how the key constructs relate to and flow from the case studies, and 4) lessons learned that can apply to everyday organizational life. Presentations will be 15 minutes. **Each case study analysis will be worth 100 points. All projects will accumulate to 200 possible points.**

**Evaluation Summary:** Final grade averages will be determined by an accumulation of each evaluated activity and attendance. **Total Course Points: 1000**

**Course Calendar:** The course calendar should be used by students to see when daily readings and when exams are scheduled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Daily Discussion, Lectures, Readings, and/or Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/28</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/30</td>
<td>Class Activity: What is Organizational Communication? <a href="http://youtu.be/e5oXygLGsuY">YouTube</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>CH 1 The Challenge of Org Communication</td>
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<td>9/6</td>
<td>CH 2 &quot;Classical&quot; Management Approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/11</td>
<td>CH 3 Human Relations and Human Resources Approaches</td>
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</tbody>
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| 9/13 | CH 4 Systems and Cultural Approaches  
                    Weick’s Model of Organizing, Pragmatist and Purist Approaches, & Organization has or Organization is Culture |
| 9/18 | Celebration 1: Online Using D2L – must be completed before 11pm  
                    CHs 1-4 and additional material |
| 9/20 | CH 5 Constitutive Approaches  
                    Structurational Approach  
                    Montreal School and Four-Flows Approaches  
                    Does Matter Matter? |
| 9/25 | CH 6 Critical and Feminist Approaches  
                    Power and Resistance  
                    Corporate Colonization  
                    Disciplinary Power  
                    Fordism to Post-Fordism |
| 9/27 | Organizational Analysis Project 1 |
| 10/2 | Missing and Interesting Approaches that add to the conversation |
| 10/4 | Celebration 2: Online Using D2L - must be completed before 11pm  
                    CHs 5-6 and additional material |
| 10/9 | CH 7 Socialization Processes  
                    Phases and Models  
                    Role Development |
| 10/11| CH 8 Decision-Making Processes  
                    Rational Models  
                    Democratic/Participative  
                    Collective Sensemaking – High Reliability |
| 10/16| CH 10 Organizational Change and Leadership Processes |
| 10/18| CH 10 Organizational Change and Leadership Processes - Continued |
| 10/23| CH 9 Conflict Management Processes |
| 10/25| CH 9 Conflict Management Processes - Continued |
| 10/30| CH 11 Processes of Emotion in the Workplace |
| 10/31| Organizational Analysis Project 2 |
| 11/6 | Conflict and Emotion in Toxic Environments: Bullying In Organizations |
| 11/8 | Celebration 3: Online Using D2L - must be completed before 11pm  
                    CHs 7-11 and additional material |
<p>| 11/13| Organizational Data Collection Discussion |
| 11/15| CH 12 Org Diversity Processes: Work/Life Balance; EEOC &amp; FMLA |
| 11/20| Thanksgiving Holiday |
| 11/22| Thanksgiving Holiday |
| 11/27| Organizational Communication Paper Due |
| 11/29| Life in the Real Org World Presentation: Risk and Crisis Communication |
| 12/4 | CH 13 Technological Processes – Technology and Organizational Life |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CH 14 The Changing Landscape of Organizations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/6 Dead Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Celebration 4: Online Using D2L</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opens at 8am on 12/8 and closes at 12:30pm (NOON) on 12/11</td>
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</tbody>
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Last Day to Register: 8/31
Twelfth Class Day: 9/12
Mid-semester: 10/18
Last Day to Drop or Withdraw without WP or WF: 10/25
Last Day to Withdraw from the University: 11/27
Finals Week: 12/11-15