STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

Introduction to Communication Theory
COMM 3305.500 Online
Fall 2023
Dept. of Mass Communication; Communication Studies Program
www.sfasu.edu/commstudies

Professor: Elizabeth Spradley, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Communication
Communication Coordinator

Email: espradley@sfasu.edu (preferred for setting appointments, communicating about class related questions)

Office: Boynton 208E
Hours: TR 11 am - 12:30 pm, 1:45-3:00 pm, Appointments available any day of the week by emailing espradley@sfasu.edu with several proposed times/days

Phone: 936-468-7095

Classes: COMM 3305.500 (online);
SPCH 1318.001 (TR 9:30-10:45, MCKB351)
SPCH 1318.640 (TR 12:30-1:45 pm, BOYT 209)
SPCH 1318.502 (Fall term 1; online)

Course Materials: Students will be expected to purchase the following textbook:
Any additional readings will be provided via D2L in PDF format.

Course Description: Introduction to Communication Theory surveys key foundational concepts in the field of communication.

COMM 3305 “Introduction to Communication Theory” (3 credits) Online delivery contains extensive written content as well as audio-visual presentations and exercises that includes the same information students in a face-to-face lecture course receive, requiring students to engage with the online modules for at least three hours per week. Students have weekly exercises, readings, and discussions, are expected to take regular quizzes and participate in exercises in class and are required to submit two papers. These activities average at a minimum 6 hours each week to prepare outside of classroom hours.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1) To differentiate different approaches to communication theory,
2) To recognize the role of communication theory in advancing the understanding and practice of communication,
3) To understand and recall communication theories across the various sub-disciplines of communication studies,
4) To apply and analyze communication theories to everyday life.

Communication Studies Program Learning Outcomes:
1. Applied Theory in Communication: Students majoring in Communication Studies will apply the major theories in the field to demonstrate their comprehension.
2. Research Methods in Communication: 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.
3. **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.

4. **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.

5. **Higher Order Thinking**: Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to demonstrate oral and written competence in logical and critical thinking.

6. **Presentational Skills**: Students majoring in Communication Studies will demonstrate the ability to present various topics in a professional manner that includes researching, planning, organizing, and presenting with visual aids and/or multi-media technology.

**Governing Policies:**

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. **Student Wellness and Well-being**: SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential. If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
SFASU Dean of Students Office
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
3rd Floor Rusk Building, lobby
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

The Health and Wellness Hub, “The Hub”
Corner of E. College and Raguet St.
To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body, and spirit. Services include:

- Health services
- Counseling services
- Student outreach and support
- Food pantry
- Wellness coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thewhub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

**On-Campus Counseling Resources:**
SFASU Counseling Services
[www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices)
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

**Crisis Resources:**
Burke 24-hour Crisis Line: 1(800) 392-8343
National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-7412

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/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

4. **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one's self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one's own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one's own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.
Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

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](http://d2l.sfasu.edu) using the same username and password as MySFA. *All graded activities will be turned in or completed via D2L/Brightspace.*

6. **GRADE WITHHELD POLICY (Semester Grades 5.5):** 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 coursework 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 to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to [https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf](https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf).

7. **Late Work:** All due dates are posted on the course timeline in D2L. Work ahead to avoid missing a due date. You will be allowed to make up the activity *only when conditions are clearly beyond your control and are convincingly documented through the “Absence Notification” system through the Dean of Students Office.* The Dean of Students Office requires that documentation of the absence is submitted no later than 10 business days after the incident. That means you need an official note. If you do not have valid documentation for the absence, you will receive a ZERO for the assignment. The university recognizes illness/hospitalization, family emergency/death, administrative events, and university sponsored events as excused absences.

**Evaluation:**
Students will be evaluated using exams, quizzes, discussions, and essays. Each evaluated activity must be completed and turned in by the scheduled class meeting time. Your professor provides additional instructions through the D2L tool and assignment, and all due dates are on the Course Timeline in the Getting Started module.

**ALL WRITTEN WORK MUST USE APA STYLE GUIDE FORMATTING.**

**Exams:** There will be two exams throughout the semester. Exams will be multiple-choice. Exams will be administered through D2L “Quiz” tab and must be completed on the assigned date and set time provided in the Course Timeline.

**Quizzes:** There will be quizzes throughout the semester. The quizzes will be much like the exams but in shorter units to assess learning as the class unfolds. Dates are indicated in the Course Timeline.

**Discussions:** Discussions will be associated with module and textbook reading/content and assigned on the Course Timeline.

**Term Paper:** The term paper will be submitted in the D2L Dropbox and assigned on the Course Timeline.
Evaluation Summary: Final grade averages will be determined by an accumulation of each evaluated activity. **Total Course Points: 1000**

**Grading Scale:**
- 900-1000: A
- 800-899: B
- 700-799: C
- 600-699: D
- 599 or less: F

Tentative Course Calendar: See COURSE TIMELINE after the Welcome and Getting Started Module in D2L.