

CM 331 COMMUNICATION THEORY

MW 2:40 - 4:00 PM

SALMON LIBRARY 206

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SPRING 2020

CM 331 SPRING 2020

Communication Theory

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theories help us make sense of the world around us. They shape how we understand reality, relationships, circumstances, and decisions in our lives. This course exposes you to theories of communication to equip you with tools to better understand the communication aspects of your world. You will be introduced to the major communication theories and their histories that are the foundation to the study of communication. These theories can be applied to intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, organizational, intercultural, and mass communication contexts. This course will also prepare you for your senior seminar course in communication theory and research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

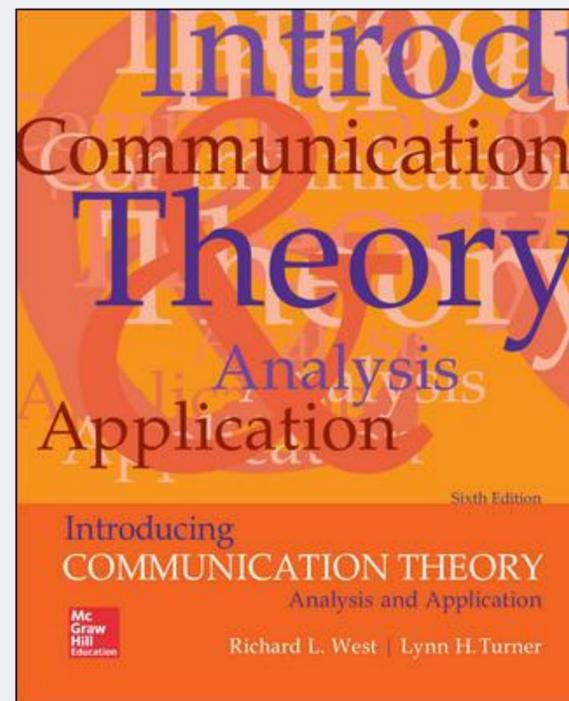
By the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Describe the principles and central idea of important communication theories.
2. Identify a context of each theory and recognize interrelationships among them.
3. Apply the theories in their everyday interactions, situations, or events.
4. Research, analyze, and explain a specific communication theory of interest.

*The structure of this course is modeled after Dr. Pavica Sheldon's. I'm grateful for her insight and support.

REQUIRED TEXT

West, R., & Turner, L. H. (2018). *Introducing communication theory: Analysis and application* (6th edition). Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

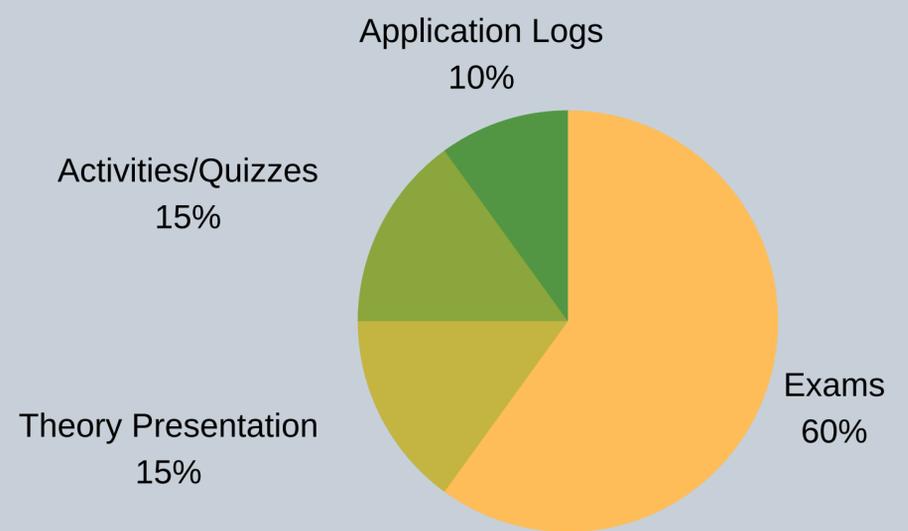


GRADING SCALE

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| 98% – 100% | A+ |
| 93% – 97% | A |
| 90% – 92% | A- |
| 87% – 89% | B+ |
| 83% – 86% | B |
| 80% – 82% | B- |
| 77% – 79% | C+ |
| 73% – 76% | C |
| 70% – 72% | C- |
| 67% – 69% | D+ |
| 63% – 66% | D |
| 60% – 62% | D- |
| 59% and below | F |

ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN



EXAMS | 600 POINTS (60%)

You will take 4 exams at 150 points each, totaling 600 points. Exams are designed to test knowledge and comprehension; therefore, questions will require both recall and application of material. The exam may be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, or essay. This feature of the course supports goals #1 and #2 of understanding the essentials of the theories and the interrelationships among the theories.

ACTIVITIES/QUIZZES | 150 POINTS (15%)

There will be 15 (un)announced class or out of class activities or quizzes during the semester. Each activity/quiz is worth 10 points. This feature of the course supports Goal #1 of understanding the essentials of the theories. You may not make up missed activities or quizzes.

APPLICATION LOGS | 100 POINTS (10%)

After each of the four learning units covered in class, you will write a log consisting of 2-4 paragraphs explaining an application of those theories in your own life. Each unit will cover 4-6 theories. You only need to choose 3 theories and write a log about them answering these questions:

- What is the central idea of that theory?
- What insight does it provide to help you understand previous communication behavior?
- What advice does it offer for the future?

The logs will provide an opportunity for you to show that you grasp the theories' practical implications and can apply them in specific situations. You will write 4 logs at 25 points each, totaling 100 points. This feature of the course supports Goal #3.

THEORY PRESENTATION | 150 POINTS (15%)

Everyone will pair up with another student to prepare an oral presentation on one of the theories from our book. A list of topics will be available at the beginning of the semester. Members of the group should prepare a visual presentation and a learning exercise to illustrate points. In addition, group members should write a one page summary (FACT sheet) of their theory that can be used as a handout during the presentation and as a study guide for peers.

The presentation should last approximately 30 minutes. Your presentation will be evaluated based on the clarity and accuracy of ideas presented, adaptation to classmates' interest and existing level of knowledge, organization, and presentation. The oral report and co-teaching role based upon your research supports course Goal #4 of researching, analyzing, and explaining a specific theory.

You will a) Explain the theory; b) Show its relationship to other theories that we are studying; c) Focus on recent (2009-2019) research that supports or casts doubt upon the theory's validity. This means that you will go to the UAH library website – online databases and find 1 article that uses your theory. You will discuss the article with the class; and d) Prepare a learning exercise.

NOTES!

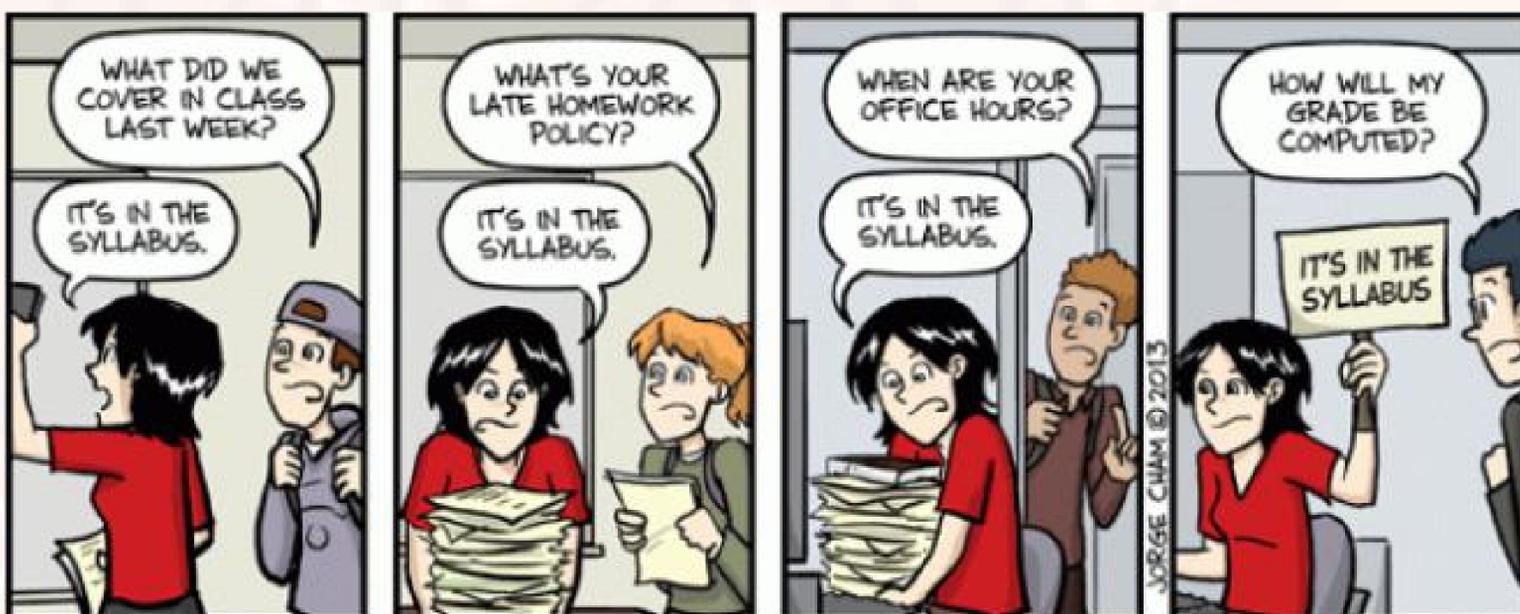
1. Detailed information for all assignments and specific grading rubrics will be provided on Canvas and discussed in class.
2. For all documents submitted electronically, use this file name format: PiyawanC-Assignmentdetails. (Replace my name with yours and assignment details with appropriate information.)

COURSE POLICIES

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- PCK RULES:** By enrolling in this class, you agree to follow the PCK Rules which stand for Professionalism, Communication, and Keenness. PCK are my initials so these rules will be easy to remember. With professionalism, I expect you to approach this course like a professional. Your behavior should reflect maturity and your assignments should be carefully and skillfully put together. With communication, I expect you to communicate positively and constructively with each other and me. Ask when you don't understand something. All questions are good questions. By keenness, I expect you to be proactive and enthusiastic in your learning. Stay on top of things so you can get the most out of this course and earn your desired grade.
- ATTENDANCE:** Because this class seeks to improve practical communication skills, regular attendance and active participation are crucial. You will have missed a class if you stay for only half of the class, come in five minutes before the end of class, or consistently come in 5-10 minutes late.
 - You have **three absences as "vacation days"** after which your grade will be reduced. **Absences beyond this amount will need to be accompanied by appropriate documentation** (e.g., medical certificate or letter from an authority). **An email with no accompanying written document doesn't count as a valid excuse.** These three unexcused absences are allowed on the assumption that occasionally problems getting to class may occur that otherwise are not excused; so you should not skip class lightly in the event that you accidentally sleep late or have an unexcused personal conflict later in the term.
 - Athletes** must present a letter from their coaches to be excused on game days. However, coaches are expected to adapt practice schedules to student schedules to the extent possible (and student schedules are adapted to practice schedules where possible).
- LATE WORK:** If you do not submit an assignment or are not present when scheduled to give your presentations without a legitimate reason, you will receive a zero for that assignment/presentation. All arrangements for late work must be made **at least two days prior** to the time the assignment is due. If such arrangements are not made, then you may not be allowed to make up the speech and you will receive a zero for that presentation. All medical excuses or extreme emergencies must be accompanied by appropriate documentation. **There are no make-up speeches for unprepared speakers.** Even if you make arrangements, your grade on a late assignment may be reduced by **at least** two letter grades.
- ATTIRE:** Public speeches are given in appropriate attire. Students are required to dress professionally for their presentations.
- ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** Cell phones, tablets, and any other electronic devices are to be turned off or silenced in class. This is particularly true while students are giving speeches and during exams. Failure to do so may result in a reduction of your grade.
- CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:** As college students I expect you to be respectful of each other, yourselves, and me. This includes, but is not limited to: silencing your phones/computers, arriving on time, listening to others, being professional, expecting to stay the full class period, etc.
- NETIQUETTE:** Be polite and respectful in your postings. Negative, hurtful comments will not be tolerated. You can disagree civilly, give your reasoning, and offer constructive feedback. Use good grammar, correct spelling, and full sentences. Do not write in all caps (it is interpreted as shouting). In short, present your best Internet self.
- PRESENTATION ETIQUETTE:** If you show up after a presentation has already started, wait until the presentation is over before entering the classroom so that you do not disrupt their presentation. During presentations, listen to the speaker. Do not text, do other work, have side discussions, or do anything that would be disruptive to the speaker. You would like the audience to be attentive and listen during your presentation, so you should be attentive and listen during theirs.
- EMAIL ETIQUETTE:** When emailing me, use a specific subject including your class number. Include a formal greeting (e.g., "Dear Dr. Kelly") and a salutation (e.g., "Sincerely") followed by your full name. Write a clear and concise message using correct grammar and spelling. Do not simply send an attachment with no text. Tell me what your attachment is for. I answer emails within 24 hours during regular work hours (i.e., Mon-Fri 8-5 pm). Ask me early if you want a timely answer.
- COURSE EVALUATION:** Per the Communication Arts Department policy, if the entire class completes the teacher evaluations, every student will receive two (2) percentage points added to the final speech grade (persuasive presentation). At the end of the semester, you can complete the online teacher evaluation on Canvas by going to the Student Instructor Evaluation (SIE) tab.

- **ACADEMIC HONESTY:** Academic misconduct of any form will not be tolerated in this class. Your written assignments, speeches, and examinations must be your own work. Using the ideas of another person – whether the author of a book or a friend – without giving proper credit *for every specific use of that source* (i.e., plagiarism) constitutes academic dishonesty and is strictly forbidden. Themes and papers the student has prepared for other courses should **not** be used to fulfill the requirements for this course. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, please include supporting sources and cite them appropriately in your speeches. Engaging in any academic misconduct or supporting others who do so will result in academic penalties and/or other sanctions. To ensure that you are aware of what is considered academic misconduct, review carefully the definition and other examples provided in Chapter 7, Code of Student Conduct, *Student Handbook* (<https://www.uah.edu/dos/student-conduct/handbook>). If you have any questions in this regard, please contact me without delay.
- **CONSENT TO USE TURNITIN.COM:** UAH is committed to the fundamental values of preserving academic honesty as defined in the *Student Handbook*. The instructor reserves the right to utilize electronic means to help prevent plagiarism. Students agree that by taking this course all assignments are subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com. Assignments submitted to Turnitin.com will be included as source documents in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents.
- **DISABILITIES:** The University of Alabama in Huntsville will make reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you need support or assistance because of a disability, you may be eligible for academic accommodations. Students should identify themselves to Disability Support Services (128 Wilson Hall, 256.824.1997) and their instructor as soon as possible to coordinate accommodations.
- **UALERT:** UAH has implemented the UAlert emergency notification system. UAlert allows you to receive time-sensitive emergency messages in the form of e-mail, voice mail, and text messages. Everyone who has a UAH e-mail address will receive emergency alerts to their campus e-mail address. In order to also receive text and voice message alerts, you are asked to provide up-to-date phone contact information. Participation in UAlert text and voice messaging is optional, but enrollment is strongly encouraged. **You can't be reached through UAlert unless you participate.** The information you supply is considered confidential and will not be shared or used for purposes other than emergency notification. To review your UAlert account, add or update phone and alternate e-mail addresses, and set the priority for your contact methods, please visit the UAlert web site: <http://ualert.uah.edu>.
- **STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER:** UAH has an excellent Student Success Center (located in Salmon Library) that can provide additional assistance with outline creation, speech practicing, or just a quiet place to study. For more information about the Student Success Center visit <http://www.uah.edu/ssc>.



IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

This message brought to you by every instructor that ever lived.

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TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

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Important Notes: Please keep in mind that this schedule is subject to change. Any changes made by the instructor take precedence over this schedule. It is your responsibility to keep abreast of all changes and to come to class prepared.

| Week | Dates | Topics and Assignments | Chapters |
|------|--------|---|----------|
| 1 | 6-Jan | Course Overview/Thinking About Communication | Ch 1 |
| | 8-Jan | Thinking About Communication (cont.) | Ch 1 |
| 2 | 13-Jan | Thinking About the Field: Traditions and Contexts [Last Day to Add/Drop] | Ch 2 |
| | 15-Jan | Thinking About Theory and Research | Ch 3 |
| | 19-Jan | Sign up for group presentation | |
| 3 | 20-Jan | Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday – No Classes | |
| | 22-Jan | Symbolic Interaction Theory | Ch 4 |
| 4 | 27-Jan | Coordinated Management of Meaning | Ch 5 |
| | 29-Jan | Cognitive Dissonance Theory | Ch 6 |
| 5 | 3-Feb | Expectancy Violations Theory/ Application Log#1 | Ch 7 |
| | 5-Feb | Exam 1: Chapters 1-7 | |
| 6 | 10-Feb | Uncertainty Reduction Theory | Ch 8 |
| | 12-Feb | Social Exchange Theory | Ch 9 |
| 7 | 17-Feb | Social Penetration Theory | Ch 10 |
| | 19-Feb | Relational Dialectics Theory | Ch 11 |
| 8 | 24-Feb | Communication Privacy Management Theory | Ch 12 |
| | 26-Feb | Groupthink/ Application Log#2 | Ch 14 |
| 9 | 2-Mar | Exam 2: Chapters 8-12 & 14 | |
| | 4-Mar | Structuration Theory | Ch 15 |
| 10 | 9-Mar | Organizational Culture Theory | Ch 16 |
| | 11-Mar | Organizational Information Theory | Ch 17 |
| 11 | 16-Mar | Agenda Setting Theory - Last day to Withdraw | Ch 21 |
| | 18-Mar | Spiral of Silence Theory | Ch 22 |
| 12 | 23-Mar | Uses and Gratifications Theory / Application Log#3 | Ch 23 |
| | 25-Mar | Exam 3: Chapters 15-17, 21-23 | |
| 13 | 30-Mar | Spring Break | |
| | 1-Apr | Spring Break | |
| 14 | 6-Apr | Cultivation Theory | Ch 24 |
| | 8-Apr | Face-Negotiation Theory | Ch 27 |
| 15 | 13-Apr | Communication Accommodation Theory | Ch 28 |
| | 15-Apr | Muted Group Theory | Ch 29 |
| 16 | 20-Apr | Feminist Standpoint Theory - Last Day of Class/ Application Log#4 | Ch 30 |
| | 22-Apr | Study Day – No Classes | |
| 17 | 27-Apr | Exam 4 (Final Exam) 3:00 – 5:30 PM: Chapters 24, 27-30 | |

I have read the syllabus for CM 331 and understand its contents:

Signature & Print Last Name

Date