# UT logo

# CMST 342: Survey of Organizational Communication

# Fall 2019

# Tuesday/Thursday 12:40-1:55

# Humanities & Social Sciences Building RM 108

**Faculty Contact Information:** Victoria **(**Tori) Bertram, M.S.

Office: 125 Communication and University Extension

E-mail: vbertram@vols.utk.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-10:30 or by appointment (please email before visiting)

## Course Description: Overview of how people in for-profit and non-profit contexts interact both internally and externally. Prerequisites: 201 or 207. Registration restriction: Communication Studies majors/minors or consent of instructor.

### Texts/Resources/Materials:

Miller, K. (2015). *Organizational Communication: Approaches and Processes* (7th ed.).

Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson.

Additional readings/instructions/videos provided on Canvas.

### Student Learning Objectives: The central goal of this course is to extend your knowledge about the structure and communication processes within and constituting organizations. We will work to understand organizations from a theoretical and a practical perspective, then discuss ways of applying this information to your organizational experiences.

To accomplish this, we will focus on the following objectives:

1. Theoretical understanding:
   1. We will explore different ways organizations are conceptualized, studied, and structured.
   2. We will investigate the nature of organizational communication, including its forms, processes, and functions.
   3. We will analyze current issues facing today’s for-profit and non-profit organizations.
2. Practical understanding:
   1. We will examine some communication issues facing organizations through case studies, readings, and exercises.
   2. We will assess different situations to determine what communication principles and practices may be best suited. Recommendations for solving these issues will be made through in-class exercises and written work.

### Course Communication: This class requires you to regularly check your email and Canvas for updates. Please be sure to keep an eye on both of these for information about class. If you have issues with your email or with Canvas contact OIT: <http://help.utk.edu/footprints/contact>

### Course and University Policies:

1. **Instruction Style:** We all have experience working in or visiting organizations, meaning each person has valuable insights to provide. Therefore, most of class time will not only rely on lecture but will include group activities, discussion, interaction, and other ways to engage with material. The nature of this course is such that your consistent, active involvement is required. Thus, I expect we all will come to class having completed the reading and any assignments. When a classmate is speaking, please afford them the same courtesy you would prefer to be shown. Especially during presentations, make sure you are listening attentively.
2. **Responsibility:** Part of getting a college degree is preparing for the “real world”, a world in which you must take responsibility for yourself and accept the consequences of your actions (positive or negative). This means we should all be prepared to: (1) obtain information from classmates due to absences; (2) checking the syllabus and Canvas closely for readings, assignments, and questions; (3) keep track of exam dates and deadlines for the course; and (4) keep track of grades throughout the semester.
3. **Technology:** Class time will be spent in lecture and collaboration, and I expect everyone to be fully engaged in our discussions. If you would like to use a laptop or other electronic device during class to take notes, I will allow it unless you use it for non-class-related activities. If you are using any electronic device during class in a way that is distracting, I may ask you to put it away, so be prepared to take notes by hand if you appear to be distracted. There are other times I may ask you to put laptops away when we are having class discussion. Phones must be on silent.
4. **Punctuality:** Make a habit of being on time for class (which really means early). This is a great way to prepare for class and gives us time to discuss issues or concerns before class time. Excessive lateness is disruptive to class and will result in a point deduction from your overall grade.
5. **Attendance:** Based on UT Academic Policy, academic success is built upon regular class attendance. At the University of Tennessee, students are expected to attend **all** their scheduled classes. If you must miss class due to extenuating circumstances, please contact me. Your attendance will be taken with a sign-in sheet at the beginning of class. If more than 2 absences occur, 10 points will be deducted from your overall grade for every absence after the first two.
6. **Civility:** Please check out UT’s policy on civility: <http://civility.utk.edu/>. For this class, I expect we all will treat each other in a respectful and professional manner. This does not mean you cannot disagree with me or others (friendly debate is encouraged!) but do so in a polite manner. I reserve the right to ask individuals to leave class who violate this policy.
7. **Late Assignments:** Late assignments will not be accepted and make-up exams will not be given except under extenuating circumstances. If such a situation arises, please contact me as soon as possible. You must provide documentation (i.e. doctor’s note with dates/times, description of university-sanctioned activity, etc.) in order to make up the exam or assignment. Documentation must be provided within two days of the absence or missed deadline.

### Course Assignments: Your grade is based on your performance in the class on exams and a variety of activities. A summary of these is found below (more information will be available on Canvas):

* **Exams (2 @ 100 points each):** There will be a midterm and final exam in this class, which will include multiple choice, true/false questions. I will let you know what type and how many questions closer to each exam.
* **Graded Case Studies (4 @ 50 points each):** The textbook for this course offers numerous case study options for you to examine. Most we will do in class together. Four case studies will be given as an assignment. You will be responsible for writing a 1½-2 page (double spaced, not including cover page) analysis of the case study based on readings from the class and submitting it by midnight of the assigned due date. More information will be provided on Canvas and as we do practice examples together in class.
* **Presentations (50 points):** With your assigned group, you will participate in one 15 minute presentation overviewing organizational communication in a particular context, or applying class concepts to a specific real-life organization or industry. Presentations will be constructed by your group on Google Slides, and work will be shared equally in both preparation and performance (evaluations of group members will be conducted to ensure workload is split fairly). More details on Canvas will be provided.
* **Perspective Essay (50 points):** By the end of the class, you will have written 2-3 pages (not including references or cover page) thoroughly arguing an opinion or posing a question you have developed regarding organizational communication. Basically, tell me what you think about how people communicate within and between organizations.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignments** |  | **Points Possible** | **Points Earned** |
| **Midterm** |  | **100** | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Final** |  | **100** | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Case Study One** |  | **50** | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Case Study Two** |  | **50** | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Case Study Three**  **Case Study Four** |  | **50**  **50** | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Presentation**  **Perspective Essay** |  | **50**  **50** | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Total Points** |  | **500** | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |

**Grading Scale:** The following grading scale will be used to determine final grades for the course.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | 500-465 | B- | 414-400 | D+ | 349-335 |
| A- | 464-450 | C+ | 399-385 | D | 334-315 |
| B+ | 449-435 | C | 384-365 | D- | 314-300 |
| B | 434-415 | C- | 364-350 | F | 300 or lower |

1. **Academic Integrity:** An essential feature of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, it is expected that you will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity. ***Not knowing the definition of plagiarism does not excuse you from consequences***. Students found guilty of academic misconduct are subject to penalties, up to and possibly including suspension and/or expulsion.

Part of academic integrity is citing sources for all of your work. You are required to cite all sources you use in this class (both in text and reference page). This class uses APA format for citations. I encourage you to use a current APA format guide of your choice. Outside of the APA style manual, I recommend the following resource: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

1. **UTK Student Disability Services:** Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact Student Disability Services (SDS) at 865-974-6087 in 100 Dunford Hall to document their eligibility for services. SDS will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you are comfortable discussing any concerns related to accommodations in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me.
2. **CCI Diversity and Inclusion:** CCI recognizes and values diversity and inclusion. Exposing students to diverse people, ideas, and cultures increases opportunities for intellectual inquiry, encourages critical thinking, and enhances communication and information competence. When all viewpoints are heard, thoughtfully considered, and respectfully responded to, everyone benefits. Diversity, inclusion, and fairness unite us with the wider professional and global community.
3. **Helpful Resources:** Supplemental resources provide useful additional support to course material and textbooks, the UTK library is one of the most helpful resources as you seek to obtain your degree. Consider visiting their website: <https://www.lib.utk.edu/>. Additionally, access to Forbes, Wall Street Journal, TedTalks, etc. may provide you will helpful applicable organizational communication information.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 8/22 | Welcome, Syllabus Day |
| 8/27 | Chapter 1 |
| 8/29 | Chapter 2 |
| 9/3 | *Practice Case Study* *& Presentation Prep* |
| 9/5 | Chapter 3 |
| 9/10 | *Practice Case Study & Presentation Prep* |
| 9/12 | Chapter 4 |
| 9/17 | *Practice Case Study\* & Presentation Prep* |
| 9/19 | Chapter 5 |
| 9/24 | *Practice Case Study\* & Presentation Prep* |
| 9/26 | Chapter 6 |
| 10/1 | *Practice Case Study\* & Presentation Prep* |
| 10/3 | Chapter 7 & Midterm Review |
| 10/8 | **Midterm** |
| 10/10 | Chapter 8 |
| 10/15 | *Practice Case Studies\* & Presentation Prep* |
| 10/17 | **Fall Break** |
| 10/22 | Chapter 9 |
| 10/24 | *Practice Case Study\* & Presentation Prep* |
| 10/29 | Chapter 10 |
| 10/31 | *Practice Case Study\* & Presentation Prep* |
| 11/5 | Chapter 11 |
| 11/7 | *Practice Case Study\* & Presentation Prep* |
| 11/12 | Chapter 12 |
| 11/14 | **NCA** |
| 11/19 | Chapter 13, 14, & Final Review |
| 11/21 | *Practice Case Studies\* & Presentation Prep* |
| 11/26 | Presentations 1 |
| 11/28 | **Thanksgiving** |
| 12/3 | Presentations 2 (Perspective Essays Due by midnight) |
| TBA | **Final** |

\*Four Practice Case Studies will be changed to the four Graded Case Studies to be completed and submitted for a grade. The case studies that will be graded will be chosen by the instructor and students will be notified when Practice Case Studies have been changed to Graded Case Studies.