

CMST352: Communication Theory

Fall 2019 (Tues. & Thurs. 2:10-3:25PM, HSS #205A)

Instructor

Dr. DaJung Woo

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Office Hours: By appointment

Message from the Instructor: I am here to help you succeed in this class. I encourage students to meet with me in my office if there are any concerns related to this course. The easiest and quickest way to reach me to set up an appointment or ask quick questions is via email. However, remember:

- Please compose your email professionally and include any necessary information I need to know, so that I can give you the best answer. This is a key skill for today's workplace. Check out this information on "How to Email a Professor" <http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>
- It can take up to 72 hours to receive my response, because I am not a 24-hour hotline service! That means, do not send me an email on a Sunday asking "Can we meet tomorrow?" But do send me an email with a request to meet in person, including your available times that are at least 2-3 days away. Sometimes students' emails go straight to my Spam box and I may never see your email. If you don't hear from me within 72hrs, please catch me in class.
- If students' questions can be easily answered by reading this syllabus or assignment info sheets I have already provided on Canvas, I will not respond to the email or send a brief response by saying, "Please read our course syllabus." Effective information-seeking is another important skill that I hope you develop as a Communication Studies major.

Course Description

This course is designed for students to develop an understanding of basic elements in the communication processes, learn to critically think about the use of some foundational theories in the field of communication, and apply abstract theoretical concepts to everyday life. We will first examine concepts and perspectives relevant to the study of human communication, and then cover major theories across a variety of communication topics, mainly in interpersonal and organizational contexts, as our degree program focuses on the two areas of study. This is a required course for all CMST majors, and students need to receive C- or higher to pass this course.

Course Objectives

The School of Communication Studies has established that students in this course will have achieved the following objectives by the end of the semester:

- To connect the scientific, humanistic, and critical/cultural studies ways of defining and studying communication to specific communication theories
- To understand the theoretical perspectives associated with the sub-disciplines in the major
- To practice the principles of effective written and oral communication
- To practice the principles of relationship building and group interaction
- To practice accessing and utilizing available resources
- To practice reviewing/synthesizing the literature on an organizational or interpersonal communication topic

Required Textbook

"Introducing Communication Theory: Analysis and Application" (2017, 6th edition, orange color cover)

By Richard West and Lynn Turner. Students may obtain earlier versions to avoid financial burden, but they are responsible for identifying the gap between the older and newest version of the book, as the exam questions will be based on the 6th edition. I have an extra copy of the textbook I can loan to students for up to 2 hours at a time. Students need to make an appointment via email and visit my office to sign-in and pick up the book.

Course Grading Overview

Exam 1 (20%)	100pts
Exam 2 (20%)	100pts
Exam 3 (20%)	100pts
Group Chapter Presentation (10%)	50pts
Individual Theory Paper (20%)	100pts
CCI Diversity Week Reflection (5%)	25pts
Attendance/Participation (5%)	25pts
Total (100%)	500pts

Grading Standards

While various rubrics will supply specific criteria for individual assignments and projects, the following general standards apply to all work submitted in this course.

“A” work in this course requires student performance “above and beyond” the call of duty. “A” work is truly exemplary; demonstrating a thorough understanding of course material, appropriate application of relevant concepts to the student’s own life, and useful insight into human communication. “A” work is creative and original and shows that the student takes her/his coursework very seriously. “A” work is always turned in on time or early, and has been adequately proofread to prevent spelling/grammatical errors.

“B” work shows above average, with the student completing all assignment in a competent fashion. “B” work is characterized by a good understanding of course material and a demonstrated ability to apply those concepts to the student’s own life experiences. “B” work is turned in on time or early and may have a few grammatical/spelling errors.

“C” work is average and simply meets the minimum requirements of the course. “C” work demonstrates a basic understanding of course material and a fair ability to apply course concepts to the student’s own life experiences. “C” work is turned in on time or early, but may have some spelling/grammatical errors.

“D” work is below average and does not fully meet the minimum requirements of the course. “D” work is characterized by an incomplete understanding of course material and limited ability to apply course concepts to one’s own life experiences. “D” work is turned in on time, but may have multiple spelling/grammatical errors.

“F” work does not meet the minimum requirements of the course in any way. “F” work is characterized by a lack of understanding of course material and inability to apply course concepts to one’s own life experiences. “F” work is late and have multiple spelling/grammatical errors or is not turned in at all.

Final Grade Calculation

(*Note:* I do not round up grades; everyone’s grade will follow this grading system)

A	93—100	B+	87—89	C+	77—79	D+	67—69
A-	90—92	B	83—86	C	73—76	D	63—66
		B-	80—82	C-	70—72	D-	60—62

Course Policy

Checking your email. I will be sending out course announcements, materials, and reminders via email. There may be information that is not announced in class or in this syllabus, so please check your email daily, or at least 24 hours before/after our class meets.

Participation and Attendance. You are expected to actively engage in class discussions to demonstrate what you have learned from reading the course materials and learn from one another. Not being present in class will cost you opportunities to gain knowledge that cannot be learned from just reading your textbook (Important: Exams will include *both* the contents from the textbook *and* information provided in class lectures/discussions only). You will be held responsible for all announcements/information given at class meetings regarding, for example, schedule modifications and exams. Be sure to obtain the information you missed *from your classmate*, as I will not repeat the course content via email or in person for students who were absent.

Tardiness. Please be on time. If you are late, you must check in with me at the end of class so that you are not marked as absent. Continual tardiness or early departure will affect your participation points.

Documentation required for excused absences. Students involved in university activities or in need of observing a religious holiday are required to inform the professor and provide written documentation within the first two weeks of class. Medical notes to excuse absences should show serious illness and be submitted within one week of the absence. The documentations must be authentic, hand-signed, and include contact information.

Unexcused absence. When students do not show up to class without a prior notice or proper documentation, it is considered “unexcused” absence. Every unexcused absence will be recorded by the instructor, and **you will not be able to make up points you missed due to your unexcused tardiness or absence(s) for any assignment or exam.** Four or more unexcused absences will result in zero for the participation points (5%). Four or more *consecutive* unexcused absences (that is, not showing up to class for two full weeks+ without ever contacting the instructor) will indicate that the student is no longer interested in taking the course, thus resulting in a failing grade for the course.

Civility clause. Try to participate in classroom activities and discussions to maximize your learning experience and make the class more enjoyable for yourself. Laptops and cell phones (including other small devices, such as iPad) are NOT needed or allowed, except (a) in case of emergency, (b) if students need accommodations for note-taking due to learning disability. Respect your instructor and classmates, and give your full attention to them during the class period. Disruptive behaviors—such as interrupting presenters or taking pictures of lecture slides during class—will negatively affect your participation points without explicit notices. During class discussions, please be respectful of your classmates and appreciate their diverse viewpoints.

- **College of Communication and Information (CCI) Diversity Statement:** “*CCI recognizes and values diversity. 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 and fairness unite us with the wider professional and global community.*”

Presentation day. If you are absent on the day you are scheduled to present, you cannot reschedule and will receive zero. Failure to pay attention to classmates’ presentations will also affect your participation points.

Late work. Due dates are strict and enforced. Do not turn in your work late. All assignments will be collected at the beginning of class on the day it is due. If a student arrives at class late (after the assignment has already been collected), his/her assignment is automatically considered “late work.” Technological difficulties, such as a broken printer, are not acceptable reasons for late work.

- Late work may be accepted only when the situation meets ALL the following three criteria: the student (a) had a reasonable excuse that can be proved with official documentation; (b) the excuse was communicated *before* the paper due date; (c) bring the paper within one week of the absence.
- If the late work does not meet the criteria, the paper will receive 10% deduction for each day it was late. For example, if you submit your paper a day after the deadline, you will receive up to 90% of the full points even if your paper demonstrates an A+ quality work (the same will apply to papers that were a few hours late). This means if the paper is submitted more than four days late, it will automatically receive a failing grade (60% or less). *****I do NOT receive or grade any assignment via email—so do not send them to me as email attachments, except PPT slides.**

Grades. I am open to discuss your grade given at least *48 hours after you have received it*. It does NOT mean I will change anyone’s grade; it simply means that I will check for any mistakes I may have made, provide additional explanations to help a student better understand the grading procedure, and offer additional suggestions for how to improve future performance. Read my feedback carefully before contacting me. Discussion is to be made only in person, so make an appointment with me via email in advance.

Students with Disability. Any student who has registered with Student Disability Services is responsible for contacting me concerning accommodations. Any student who believes he or she may have a disability that has not been documented should contact the Office of Student Disability Services at 865-974-6087 in 100 Dunford Hall.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class or at the University. Anyone found representing another person’s work as his/her own, or copying or cheating in any way, will receive an F for the course *and* be reported to the University judiciaries for possible suspension. Do not attempt to test this policy. It is far better to receive a fair grade based on YOUR hard work and learn from the experience than committing a serious violation of academic honesty and facing consequences that will affect the rest of your college experience.

- **UTK Honor Statement to which you all agreed as students:** *“An essential feature of the University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.”*

The Use of Class Materials. All course materials (class lectures and discussions, handouts, exams, web materials) and the intellectual content of the course itself are protected by United States Federal Copyright Law. Students shall not record lectures/discussions and distribute or sell lectures notes and all other course materials without the prior written permission of the instructor. Students are permitted to make notes solely for their own private educational use. Exceptions to accommodate students with disabilities may be granted with appropriate documentation.

Tentative Course Schedule

*Please check Canvas and email announcement regularly for schedule modifications.

Week	Date	Topic
Week 1	August 22	Introduction
Week 2	August 27	Chapter 1. Thinking about Communication → <i>Determine Group Presentation Schedule</i>
	August 29	Chapter 3. Thinking about Theory and Research
Week 3	September 3	Chapter 4. Symbolic Interaction Theory (Group Presentation: Names)

	September 5	Chapter 7. Expectancy Violation Theory (Group Presentation: Names)
Week 4	September 10	Chapter 8. Uncertainty Reduction Theory (Group Presentation: Names)
	September 12	Exam 1 Review
Week 5	September 17	Exam 1
	September 19	Chapter 11. Relational Dialectics Theory (Group Presentation: Names)
Week 6	September 24	CCI Diversity Week / No Class Students attend at least one panel/session at the diversity event and write a reflection paper
	September 26	Chapter 12. Communication Privacy Management Theory (Group Presentation: Names)
Week 7	October 1	Chapter 28. Communication Accommodation Theory (Group Presentation: Names) CCI Diversity Week Reflection Paper Due
	October 3	Chapter 27. Face-Negotiation Theory (Group Presentation: Names)
Week 8	October 8	Chapter 14. Groupthink (Group Presentation: Names)
	October 10	Exam 2 Review
Week 9	October 15	Exam 2
	October 17	Fall Break
Week 10	October 22	Exam 2 Debrief; Discuss Final Theory Paper (“Literature Review”)
	October 24	Chapter 15. Structuration Theory (Group Presentation: Names)
Week 11	October 29	Chapter 16. Organizational Culture Theory (Group Presentation: Names)
	October 31	Chapter 17. Organizational Information Theory (Group Presentation: Names)
Week 12	November 5	Chapter 18. The Rhetoric (Group Presentation: Names)
	November 7	Chapter 23. Uses and Gratification Theory (Group Presentation: Names)
Week 13	November 12	Theory Paper Workshop (Bring your empirical articles and outline, 5%)
	November 14	No Class Dr. Woo Travels to the National Communication Association Convention in Baltimore, MD
Week 14	November 19	Individual Paper Due: “Theory Application” Individual Presentation Day 1
	November 21	Individual Presentation Day 2
Week 15	November 26	Exam 3 Review – Last day of class meeting before Exam 3
	November 28	Thanksgiving Break
Week 16	December 3	Exam 3 (in class) Office hours to check/discuss grades: Thursday, December 12, 2:45pm—4:45pm