

Communication Studies 352 – Section 1
Communication Theory
Fall Semester, 2020

Meeting Days: Tuesday and Thursday
Meeting Time: 2:50p – 4:05p
Meeting Place: Zoom
Instructor: Michael R. Kotowski, Ph.D.

Course Description

This course is designed to present theories of human communication fundamental to an array of communication processes and contexts. Attention is also given to philosophical perspectives upon which the theories are based. Through this presentation, three major goals of the course will be met. The first goal is to attain a greater understanding of the perspectives guiding communication theory and research. The second goal is to develop the ability to apply communication theory to communication questions pertinent to one's life. The final goal is to develop further the ability to critique communication theory and research.

Contact Information

Given the size of this class, I will likely learn most of your names over the course of the semester. Thus, I will refer to you by your first name. If you are uncomfortable with that level of informality, let me know and I will adapt accordingly.

Office: 293 COM

I am willing to meet at places other than my office. If you prefer to meet elsewhere, such as a coffee shop, the library, etc., it can be arranged.

Office Phone: (865) 974-0696

You can leave a message for me at the above number. I cannot, however, guarantee that I will be in the office everyday to check my messages. Consequently, if you leave a message for me it may be a day or two before it is retrieved.

Email: mkotowsk@utk.edu

Email is the best way to contact me.

Office Hours: by appointment

Contacting me by email is the best way of making one of these appointments.

Please do not see office hours exclusively as a time to address problems with the course. You can use them to clarify points you do not understand, to get additional reading material, to talk about the subject matter in relation to your other interests, to review work in progress, to offer feedback

or input about the course, to talk about employment or research possibilities, or for other reasons. In other words, you do not need a crisis to make productive use of this time.

Text

West, R., & Turner L. H. (2018). *Introducing Communication Theory: Analysis and application*. (6th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Whenever you have comments about the text, I would appreciate the feedback.

In addition to the text, some readings may be posted online because they are unpublished manuscripts, published articles, or small portions of text books.

Evaluation

There are a series of reading questions due throughout the course. Your responses to these reading questions will serve as an examination of your understanding of and ability to analyze course content. Reading questions will be sent out Thursday after lecture and will be due before class on Tuesday. You ought anticipate writing approximately two pages per reading question. Your responses will be evaluated based upon accuracy as well as how well you integrate textbook and lecture content into your response. In total, the reading questions are worth 100 points.

The research paper component of the course is worth 100 points. The paper should be ten to twenty pages of text in length and should focus on one communication-related topic that interests you. Your assignment is to choose one specific line of communication research; find, synthesize, and critique (include both strengths and limitations) academic research related to that line of communication inquiry; choose one theory that could guide research related to this topic; and generate a set of research questions or hypotheses that could be researched in the future. Essentially, you are building the rationale for a research study using what you know about theory, the importance of your topic chosen to the scholarly and general communities, and previous research to generate a study of your own that may be completed in another class. To aid this process, pieces of the assignment are due throughout the semester. APA format required.

The percentage of the sum of the points earned across these assignments to the total points possible will be transformed to your letter grade according to the following scale.

Table 1. *Grading Scale*

Percent	Grade
90 – 100	A
85 – 89	B+
80 – 84	B
75 – 79	C+
70 – 74	C
60 – 69	D
0 – 59	Failure

Policy

Attendance is optional. I do not take roll. I shall, however, pass on the benefit of my experience. There is a substantial positive correlation between attendance and course performance.

Generally, I do **not** give make-up examinations, accept late work, or give incompletes. I realize that in **rare cases** they are necessary. If circumstances should arise that cause you to miss an examination, submit a paper late, or need an incomplete, then it is your responsibility to contact me and make the request. In the absence of a request you will receive a zero on the examination or the paper, and receive a grade in lieu of the incomplete.

If caught engaging in academic dishonesty in this course you will receive a zero in the course. Lest there be misunderstanding, the University of Tennessee policy on academic dishonesty is reproduced in subsequent paragraphs from Hilltopics.

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.

Students are also responsible for any act of plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the intellectual property or product of someone else without giving proper credit. The undocumented use of someone else's words or ideas in any medium of communication (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge) is a serious offense, subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in a course and/or dismissal from the University. Specific examples of plagiarism are:

1. Copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
2. Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
3. Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
4. Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor's approval;
5. Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

Faculty members also have responsibilities which are vital to the success of the Honor Statement and the creation of a climate of academic integrity within the University community. Each faculty member is responsible for defining, in specific terms, guidelines for preserving academic integrity in a course. Included in this definition should be a discussion of the Honor Statement.

Student classroom conduct, including academic dishonesty, is the immediate responsibility of the instructor. He/she has full authority to suspend a student from his/her class, to assign an "F" in

an exercise or examination, or to assign an “F” in the course. In addition to or prior to establishing a penalty, the instructor may refer the case to an Academic Review Board by notifying the administrative head of his/her academic unit and the Office of the Dean of Students, which shall prepare and present the case to the appropriate Academic Review Board.

For more detail than what is possible here please refer back to Hilltopics.

Table 2. *Important Dates*

Weekly	Reading Questions
13 th May	Paper Topic and Sources Due
20 th May	Paper Outline Due
27 th May	Research Paper Due
<i>Schedule</i>	
Week 1	
20 th August	Introductions and Course Overview
Week 2	
25 - 27 th August	Defining Communication <i>Reading: Syllabus; Chapter 1</i>
Week 3	
1 st – 3 rd September	Paradigms <i>Reading: Chapter 2</i>
Week 4	
8 th – 10 th September	Theory Development <i>Reading: Chapter 3</i>
Week 5	
15 th – 17 th September	Theory Development; Theory and Methods <i>Reading: Chapters 1, 2, and 3</i>
Week 6	
22 nd – 24 th September	Theory and Methods; Symbolic Interaction Theory <i>Reading: Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4</i>
Week 7	
29 th – 1 st October	Coordinated Management of Meaning <i>Reading: Chapters 5 and 6</i> Paper Topic and Sources Due
Week 8	
6 th – 8 th October	Expectancy Violations Theory; Uncertainty Reduction Theory <i>Reading: Chapters 7 and 8</i>

Week 9	13 th – 15 th October	Social Exchange Theory; Social Penetration Theory <i>Reading: Chapters 9 and 10</i>
Week 10	20 th – 22 nd October	Communication Privacy Management Theory; Social Information Processing Theory <i>Reading: Chapters 12 and 13</i>
Week 11	27 th – 29 th October	Groupthink; Structuration Theory <i>Reading: Chapters 14 and 15</i>
Week 12	3 rd - 5 th November	Organizational Culture Theory; Organizational Information Theory <i>Reading: Chapters 16 and 17</i> Paper Outline Due
Week 13	10 th – 12 th November	Agenda Setting Theory; Spiral of Silence Theory <i>Reading: Chapters 21 and 22</i>
Week 14	17 th – 19 th November	Uses and Gratifications Theory; Cultivation Theory <i>Reading: Chapters 23 and 24</i>
Week 15	24 th November	Face-Negotiation Theory; Communication Accommodation Theory <i>Reading: Chapters 27 and 28</i>
Final Exam	8 th December	Research Paper Due