

# ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

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COMMUNICATION STUDIES 3250 - Fall 2015  
Tuesday & Thursday 3:00-4:15, Old Main 203

**Professor:** Elizabeth Dorrance Hall

**Email:** edh@usu.edu

**Office:** Old Main 073 (through the Intensive English Language Institute in 069)

**Office Hours:** Tues 1-3pm and by appointment

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## Course Description:

This course will introduce you to the world of organizational communication, a world you are already deeply embedded in. From the schools you have attended to the places you and your parents have worked, organizational communication has touched your life in more ways than you might realize. In fact, our class is an organization and working with your professor and peers in the classroom setting provides an excellent example of the process of communicating in and with an organization. This class provides an interactive platform for exploring the tenants of organizational communication. You will explore how organizational members have the capacity to create, maintain, and dissolve organizations. This course will help you develop skills to navigate organizational life and enable you to understand complex processes behind everyday communication. Specifically, the course objectives are to:

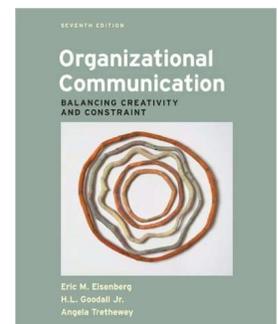
1. Understand the strengths and weaknesses of classical and contemporary approaches to organizational communication and how the approaches apply to today's organizations.
2. Understand how communication works in organizations and why communication is of critical importance to organizations and organizational members.
3. Learn organizational communication terminology, methods, trends, principles, and theories.
4. Develop skills and strategies for navigating a world of organizations and use those skills along with theoretical based ideas to assess and solve organizational problems.
5. Understand the power organizations and organizational members do and do not have to influence individuals, society, the government, the economy, and the world.
6. Connect classroom learning to real world happenings through discussions based around news stories, tweets, and interviews with organizational members in various types of organizations.

## Required Readings:

1. Eisenberg, E.M., Goodall, H.L., & Trethewey, A. (2014). *Organizational communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint* (7<sup>th</sup> ed). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martins.
2. Addition readings and materials posted on Canvas.

## Recommended Readings:

1. The news! Organizations are in the news every day. There is much to learn about communication within and about news-making organizations. If you find an interesting article, please share with the class on Twitter. Follow a few news sources on Twitter if that is easiest, or visit news websites regularly. Here are a few ideas: @wsj, @nytimesbusiness, @nytsmallbiz, @nbcnewsbusiness, @foxnews, @cnnwbt



2. Twitter. Organizations use Twitter for both internal and external communication. This is a communication course and social media are an important part of the changing communication landscape. You are required to participate in class discussion on Twitter. If you do not already have a Twitter account, make one. If you want to make a class specific account, you can do that. Follow and keep up with tweets from at least 5 of the following organizations:

@wholefoods	@lifeatdeloitte	@Cspansusan	@nickspizza
@redcross	@ibm	@pcorpsconnect	@unfoundation
@gm	@googlejobs	@subaru_usa	@orgcominthenews

Let's discuss using our class hashtag: #CMST3250. Ask course related questions and pose discussions. Tweet me directly at @edorrancehall.

### Resources:

- Textbook Companion Website: [http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/orgcomm7e/#t\\_900243](http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/orgcomm7e/#t_900243)
- Utah State University Writing Center: <http://writing.usu.edu/>
- Communication Studies Library Services: <http://libguides.usu.edu/cmst>

### Expectations:

*Attendance and tardiness.* You are expected to attend class and stay for the entire session. Doing so provides you the best opportunity to learn the concepts taught in this course through discussion and activities. Your presence will provide you a chance to learn from other students' perspectives and give them an opportunity to learn from yours. I will also provide important information about assignments, quizzes and exams during class.

*Reading assignments.* Read assigned chapters and articles **before** class meetings. We will not cover all the materials from the book or supplementary readings during lecture but command of all material will enrich class discussion and facilitate mastery of the lecture content. Exams and quizzes will include content from reading assignments, even if not discussed in class.

*Participation.* Actively participate in class! This includes listening when others speak, sharing your opinion (respectfully) and actively taking part in discussion, completing any in-class activities with enthusiasm, etc. Simply coming to class and sitting silently will not be considered participating.

*Courtesy and professionalism.* Please respect yourself, one another, and me. This means that you should not text message, browse the internet, read the newspaper, etc. during our class meetings. You should not need to use a laptop or tablet during our class. Also, please do not pack up materials before class has ended.

*Meeting deadlines.* Submit assignments on time. Late work will not be accepted for a grade.

*Academic dishonesty,* in any form, will not be tolerated in this course. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, excessive collaborating, plagiarism, falsification, deceit, ghost-written papers, copying, etc. Academic misconduct will be handled according to University procedures. Please see the Student Code of Conduct for additional information regarding academic honesty:

<http://www.usu.edu/studentservices/studentcode/article6.cfm>

*Students with disabilities* who need special accommodations should speak with me at the beginning of the semester. Students with special needs are encouraged to register with Utah State University's Disability Resource Center at <http://www.usu.edu/drc/students/gettingstarted/>

In the event of a major **campus emergency**, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control.

### **Assignments:**

- **Exams (500 points).** Four exams will be given online over the course of the semester. These exams are designed to assess your learning and will consist of short answer, true/false, and multiple choice items based on class readings and lectures. The final exam will include a cumulative section, and will be given during the University-assigned final exam period.
- **Participation, Discussion Questions, and Activity Worksheets (100 points).** Up to five worksheets will be assigned over the course of the semester. These worksheets range in topic and format from an online search for organizational culture to surveys. Worksheet grades will be based on careful completion showing a significant amount of thought went into each activity and making connections of course concepts to outside material. Discussion questions will be due the night before most classes (by 11:59pm) via Twitter (make sure to include our hashtag!). Use multiple Tweets to submit all your questions. The questions (2-3 per reading) should reflect thoughts or connections you made while reading the assigned chapter or article due the following class period. Respectful and active participation *in class* will be factored into your grade.
- **Case Studies (150 points).** As part of a small group, you will be responsible for presenting and leading discussion for 1 case study this semester. On days other groups are presenting their case study you will be expected to have read the case before class, answered case questions, and actively participate in the discussion. You will be evaluated based on the quality and quantity of your comments. Assignment details will be posted to Canvas.
- **Organizational Ethnography (250 points).** You will engage in a semester long project to help you understand how the theories and concepts learned in class apply to your life. An ethnographic study consists of careful observation of *communicative acts* within an organization. Throughout the course of the semester you will attempt to answer various questions about organizational communication by observing an organization. You will gain access to an organization, keep observation journals, and analyze the organization's communication practices. Details about this assignment will be posted to Canvas.

**Grading :**

Grading in this course is based on a points system. Each assignment is worth an assigned point value. All assignments will add up to 1,000 points. Please see below for the grade breakdown.

**Grading Scale**

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Exams 1-3 (100 points each)	300
Final Exam	200
Participation & Worksheets	100
Case Studies	150
Organizational Ethnography	250
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,000</b>

<b>A</b>	<b>920 - 1000 points</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>900 - 919</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>870 - 899</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>820 - 869</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>800 - 819</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>770 - 799</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>720 - 769</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>700 - 719</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>670 - 699</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>620 - 669</b>
<b>D-</b>	<b>600 - 619</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>599 and below</b>

Note: Grades will NOT be curved or rounded up. In general, grade changes will only be made due to a calculation error.