

Communication Studies Capstone Course Fall 2015 / CMST 5800

Professor Brad Hall
Office Hours: Wed from 4:00-5:00
(Or just drop by)

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General Course Overview

Welcome to the capstone course in Communication Studies. At this point in your major you have come to fully appreciate the idea that the quality of our lives depends upon the quality of our communication. This course is designed to help you reflect on and synthesize the knowledge you have gained in your communication studies courses in order to articulate that knowledge to others and make that knowledge more meaningful to yourself. This course is designed to build on the wide variety of communication knowledge you bring to the class and make this knowledge usable for you in everyday life. This course assumes that you are an experienced and committed student of communication. Therefore, the course is designed to get you thinking about what you have learned throughout your program of study in communication and will involve reviewing and applying concepts covered in your previous classes.

Learning Objectives:

1. You will be able to make practical connections between concepts you have learned in a variety of different Communication Studies courses.
2. You will be able to articulate to external audiences (1) the purpose of Communication Studies as an academic discipline, and (2) key concepts and principles you have learned in the Communication Studies program.
3. You will understand how to apply communication concepts to productively deal with everyday challenges and problems.

Grading

What I Have Learned Paper (2 parts)	= 80 points (30 points on part 1 and 50 points on part 2)
Concept Teaching (20 minute presentation)	= 60 points
Final Interview	= 10 points
Application Papers	= 20 points
Participation	= 30 points
Total	= 200 points

End of semester grades will be assigned based upon the following percentages of the total number of points:

A = 93 - 100%	B = 83 - 86%	C = 73 - 76%	D = 60 - 64%
A- = 90 - 92%	B- = 80 - 82%	C- = 70 - 72%	F = 59% or less
B+ = 87 - 89%	C+ = 77 - 79%	D+ = 65 - 69%	

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**** Regular attendance in a capstone course is expected.** Anything over two absences for the semester will have a negative impact on your overall grade and five absences will result in an 'F' for the course.

*** What I Have Learned Papers. The **first part (Due Sept. 16th in class)** of this paper is a review of your coursework in past communication courses. You need to select five specific concepts that you feel are particularly important. You may not use more than two concepts per course, so you must reference at least three CMST courses. Make sure each concept is clearly tied to a specific course. Each concept should be explained and illustrated through a specific example from your life (either that you have experienced or observed). In a way you are making a case for why these are such useful or important concepts or ideas. References for each concept (even if it is just from class notes) should be included. This portion will need to be at least seven pages, one page for the introduction (make sure you preview your five concepts) and at least a half page for the conclusion and at least one page (often just a bit more) for each concept covered. The **second part (Due Dec. 9th in class)** of this paper is to do any revisions I may have suggested on the first part and then add three items. The first is a sixth concept (to go along with the five covered in part one) based on something presented by another student in this class; the second is a two plus page explanation of your personal philosophy of successful communication. It may address such issues as what you feel is important to understand or be aware of in a given situation, what people should do to communicate in effective or appropriate ways, or what standards communication should be held to. Provide some context about what types of situations your theory is applicable to. The third is a one page “resume” summary of key skills or knowledge that you have obtained during your time as a CMST major accompanied by a brief sentence supporting your claim to have this skill.*

*** The concept teaching assignment requires you to teach to the class at least two of the five concepts you have identified as important in your “What I Have Learned” paper to the class. I will assign you which two you do. You will have 20 minutes. The presentation should connect the two+ concepts from different courses to show how they connect and build on each other in order to help us have greater competence or solve specific problems. You need to have a presentation plan for the class sent to me at least **five days before you teach**. Your plan should clearly indicate your learning objectives for the presentation and have an outline of how you will achieve these. Learning objectives are audience focused goals, what do you want the audience to know or be able to do after your presentation. Everything in the outline should be clearly connected to your objectives. In some cases I will have suggestions for you to consider. This assignment should demonstrate your ability to communicate challenging, but important concepts. This is a capstone course and I am looking for EXCELLENCE, not just the usual class presentations. You are communication majors demonstrating your ability in the capstone course and in my mind the bar is seriously raised for these presentations (typical B+ or “good” class presentations that we see so often should expect a C grade; however, I expect to see from each of you top-notch, “A” presentations). Your presentations should be informative, engaging, and memorable.*

*** Your final interview (10 minutes) will involve a few questions related to the major and what you have learned. The key will be that you know concepts well enough that you can just talk to me about them in an accurate and clear manner without using notes.*

*** Application papers are short, one page applications of a concept covered by one of your fellow students in their concept teaching presentation. There will be four of these (5 points each). These papers should focus on a specific application of the concept into your own life. Don’t just review the concept; demonstrate that you can succinctly apply it to your own life. You may only choose one concept presentation from any one day (two concept presentations will be covered each day). In addition, the concepts you select may not be any of the five you wrote about in the first part of your “What I Have Learned” paper. The application papers are **due the class period after the concept has been presented**.*

*** Included in the participation score is active participation in class discussions and activities as well as following through on requests for examples, doing the in-class reflection/question papers, and so forth. Attendance and attention to during the presentations is crucial (cell phones and laptops can be really hurt during the presentations).*

Students Accommodation Notes: Students with ADA-documented impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. Accommodations are coordinated through DRC in Rm 101 of the University Inn, 7-2444 voice, 7-0740 TTY, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact DRC as early as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice.

Course Schedule

Sept.	2	Introduction and overview of course
Sept.	9	Communication Concepts
Sept.	16	Graduate School and Career Planning
Sept.	23	Effective Presentations (Ken Bain Reading in Canvas)
Sept.	30	Concept Presentations
Oct.	7	Concept Presentations
Oct.	14	Concept Presentations
Oct.	21	Concept Presentations
Oct.	28	Concept Presentations
Nov.	4	Concept Presentations
Nov.	11	Concept Presentations
Nov.	18	Concept Presentations
Nov.	25	Thanksgiving
Dec.	2	Concept Presentations
Dec.	9	Concept Presentations
Dec.	14	Finals Week – Interviews (3:30-5:30)