Theories of Speech Communication / CMST 5100

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General Course Overview

Welcome to Theories of Communication. The philosopher Kurt Lewin argued that “there is nothing so practical as a good theory.” We all use a variety of informal theories of communication each day as we interact with each other. The theories we will study have simply been more formalized than the ones we typically use. Communication touches on many parts of our lives, so the theories we study will do the same. This course is designed to build on your experiences in a way that makes these theories usable for you in everyday life. Some of the theories may be familiar to you from previous coursework; others may be completely new. Because this course covers so many different situations and theories to address these situations, it will necessarily be quick moving and broad in nature; however, the primary goal is to help you learn these theories well enough that you can use them in making sense of your own experiences and meeting your goals in life. Typically only majors or pre-majors take this course, so it is expected that you are an experienced and committed student of communication.

Course Goals

1. Increase and bring into greater focus your understanding of A: Communication Studies as a field of study and a lens for empowering you to deal with a variety of life situations in positive and productive ways. B: the practical implication of communication theory across a wide range of human activities.
2. Refine your ability to A: connect ideas for successful communication with your lived experiences and observations; and B: communicate potentially complex ideas to others in clear and engaging ways.

This is a live web broadcast course. The expectations for attendance are the same as for a Face-to-face (f2f) course. When you enter the class your video should be on and I expect that you will keep this on so I can see your face, just like in a f2f class. Please leave your correct name on the screen. You may select a virtual background to block out your background if you would like. Your audio will be muted on entering. When you make comments remember to unmute. Generally it will be best to leave your audio muted when others are speaking to avoid background noise and distractions. The following are not allowed:
1. Any recording and transmission of classroom lectures and discussions by Students without prior written permission from the class instructor, and without all Students in the class as well as the guest speaker(s) being informed that audio/video recording may occur (it is not a violation if Student has educational accommodations through the DRC).

2. Uploading any recordings of lectures and/or class presentations to publicly accessible web environments.

Required Text


**Auto Access eBook:** *Applying Communication Theory for Professional Life eBook, 4e by Dainton*

This course requires all-inclusive digital materials that are provided to you at a lower price than traditional printed materials. These materials are paid for through an “Auto Access Digital Materials” charge placed on your student account when you registered for the course. To access the materials, visit the Canvas course site. For more details, including dates, deadlines, and opt-out info, visit your student Auto Access Portal: [https://portal.verba.io/usu/login](https://portal.verba.io/usu/login) (Links to an external site.)

Other sources will be under files in CANVAS or e-mailed to you.

Grading

- **Exploration Discussions** = 60 points
- **Six Application Papers** = 120 points (20 points each)
- **Theory Teaching (30 minutes)** = 45 points
- **Final Exam** = 35 points
- **Participation** = 30 points
- **My Favorite Theory Paper/Presentation** = 25 points
- **Quiz** = 15 points
- **Total** = 330 points

Why I require:

*Elaboration Discussions, the Quiz and the Final Exam:* To encourage a focused review of core concepts and to help you develop the ability to remember and provide examples of core concepts when faced with situations that require timely communication.

*Papers:* To encourage a deeper reflection about how core communication concepts connect to each other and to your life and to help you to refine your ability to communicate effectively in writing.
Presentations: To allow the demonstration and development of oral skills in creating and delivering communication messages to a specific audience.

Participation: To take advantage of the synergies and serendipities which arise from direct engagement with others and to contribute to the growth of relationships and to others’ learning.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 - 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 - 92.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 - 89.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 - 86.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 - 82.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 - 79.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 - 76.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 - 72.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>65 - 69.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 - 64.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>55 - 59.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>= 54.9% or less</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

** The participation score includes active participation in class discussions and activities. Even though this is a broadcast course for Fall, regular attendance is expected. I want to be able to get feedback from your faces, so I am requiring that your video will be on during class time. Your audio should be muted unless you and your group are making comments.

** The quiz and final exam will consist of short answer questions done through Canvas. The quiz will be based on the material we will have covered in class up to that time. The final exam will cover the material from the quiz on and will focus on your ability to explain and give examples from a range of theories. It is to your advantage to keep a record of examples of the ideas tied to the theories as you go along as that will provide a basis for answering the final exam questions.

** Application papers are due through a CANVAS submission by noon of the day those readings are assigned. So for example, the first application paper (tied to the theories in chapter three) is due by noon on September 17. Application papers should be focused on two of the four theories we are covering for that unit (the list of these four for each unit can be found under the "Course schedule" section of this syllabus).

These papers should demonstrate that you can use the theoretical concepts to think about life events you have experienced or observed. You may discuss the pros or cons you see in these theories as they apply to your life, but do not make this simply a review of the theories. The best papers will discuss how the ideas in two of the theories connect to your own life and demonstrate how you can use the concepts to think about life events in new or deeper ways. These papers often involve a mix of personal examples and well-reasoned commentary. You may not do an application paper on the theory you do your presentation on. The papers should mainly be focused on making specific applications of the theories to your own life. The length should be roughly 3 pages with 1.5 spacing. Do not go over 4 pages. Late papers lose 10% of the grade for each day late. The basic rubric is:
Writing is free of errors and easy to follow and understand.

Concrete and well developed personal examples of the theories covered (examples may be based on personal observations or personal experiences).

Well-reasoned commentary on the pros or the cons of aspects tied to the theory.

Insightful discussion of how the theory may be usefully applied to real life.

** The Theory Teaching assignment is done as either a pair or a trio depending upon enrollments. You will be required to teach your assigned theory to the class. You will have 30 minutes. You need to have a lesson plan for the presentation submitted via CANVAS at least one full day before you teach (so if you teach on a Thursday at 12:30, it should be submitted by Wednesday at 12:30). The lesson plan should clearly indicate in sentence outline format how you will help the class understand and apply the theory. This presentation should demonstrate your ability to communicate important concepts. All members of the group presenting should take an active role in the presentation. I or the graduate instructors are very open to visiting with you about your ideas and plans in advance of the presentation. Rubric is below

/3 Lesson Plan (Sentence outline on-time and excellently done).

/7 Clearly cares about and conveys the importance of the theory presented (presentation clearly shows that the person is well prepared and cares about the material presented).

/7 Clear and specific examples to help the class understand the theory (examples and or stories should clearly illustrate the concepts).

/7 Effectively explains how one might apply the material in real life. (accurate explanation of the material and how to use it, along with a connection to why we should care).

/7 Effectively engages the audience (encourages audience involvement through a variety of approaches and questions and activities).

/7 Distractions are avoided (includes things like straight lecturing, over reliance on reading notes or wordy Power Point slides, a feeling of being unprepared, dominated by just one or two members).

/7 General Cohesiveness and overall effect of the presentation (smooth transitions, clear summary, well done outline, using a variety of teaching tools, general clarity).

** Exploration Discussions will involve you working as group to explore the applications and implications of the various eight theories covered in the two weeks leading up to each discussion.
For each discussion the class will be divided into 8 groups (one for each theory). You will not
know until class begins which theory you will be assigned to. You will get that assignment at the
first of class and then you will have 8 minutes in a breakout room with your group to plan your
discussion. Each group will then have 8 minutes to discuss why this is the best theory of the
group by covering the following three ideas: A) how the theory applies to the case study in the
book (these are at the end of each chapter), B) how the theory may apply or be useful in other
situations in real life, and C) providing specific examples of ideas covered in the theory that go
beyond what was discussed in class or in the text. Things will move quickly in order to get all 8
theories covered in the class period. Group will consist of just two or three people so it will be
important that each group member contributes.

** My Favorite Theories paper/presentation includes a 4-5 page paper where you select the
two theories that you believe are the best in terms of application and insight AND then a 3-4
minute presentation where you use examples to help explain why you chose the two theories you
did. The papers are due Dec. 3rd As with other papers late papers, these papers lose 10% off per day late.

Students with Disabilities: 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

Readings are to be read by the day assigned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading (Chapter # or article found in CANVAS under files)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 3</td>
<td>The Nature of Theory</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 8</td>
<td>Theory Development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 10</td>
<td>Neo-Aristotelian</td>
<td>Aristotle's Rhetoric (under files)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 15</td>
<td>Quiz</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Sep. 17-22 | *Cognition Theories | 3
<p>|         | Attribution Theory    |                                                          |
|         | Uncertainty Reduction Theory |                                                |
|         | Expectancy Violations Theory |                                                |
|         | Cognitive Dissonance (by class group one) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 24-29</td>
<td>*Individual and Social Symbolic Interactionism (under files) ; Ch. 4 (skip pages 62-64½)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>Exploration Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 6-8</td>
<td><strong>Interpersonal Theories</strong></td>
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<td>Oct. 13-15</td>
<td><em>Intercultural Theories</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 20</td>
<td>Exploration Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 22-27</td>
<td><em>Persuasive Theories</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oc/Nv 29-3</td>
<td><em>Group Communication</em></td>
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Nov. 5 Exploration Discussion

Nov. 10-12 *Organizational Communication
Organizational Assimilation
Organizational Identification & Control
Organizing Theory
Organizational Culture (by class group seven)

Nov. 17-19 *Mediated Theories
Diffusion of Innovations
Social Network Analysis
Agenda-Setting Theory (by class group eight)
Encoding/Decoding Theory

Nov. 24 Exploration Discussion

Dec. 1-3 Preparation and My Favorite Theories Presentations

Dec. 8-10 My Favorite Theories Presentations
AND Review (No test week)

Dec. 17 Final Exam (12:00)

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Classroom Civility

Classroom Civility

Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read Student Code Article V Section V-3 (Links to an external site.) for more information.

University Policies & Procedures
COVID-19 Classroom Protocols

In order to continue to provide a high standard of instruction at USU, and to limit the spread of COVID-19 during the pandemic, students are asked to follow certain classroom protocols during the fall 2020 semester. These protocols are in place not only for your safety but also the safety of the rest of the campus community. You will be asked to clean your desk area at the start of each class, sit in designated seats, wear face coverings, and follow dismission instructions. There may be individual medical circumstances that prevent some students from using face coverings. These circumstances will be rare, but if they do exist, we ask that everyone be respectful. It is imperative that we each do our part so that on-campus instruction can continue.

Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. Faculty Code Policy #403 (Links to an external site.) further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

Academic Integrity – "The Honor System"

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity." A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

Academic Dishonesty

The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined the University's Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating**: using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity. Unauthorized assistance includes:
  - Working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done “individually,”
Depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;
Submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or engaging in any form of research fraud.

- **Falsification**: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
- **Plagiarism**: representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

For additional information go to: [ARTICLE VI. University Regulations Regarding Academic Integrity (Links to an external site.)](#)

**Sexual Harassment/Title IX**

Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and [USU Policy 339 (Links to an external site.)](#) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting. The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU’s [Office of Equity (Links to an external site.)](#) for available options and resources or clarification. The university has established a complaint procedure to handle all types of discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment ([USU Policy 305 (Links to an external site.)](#)), and has designated the Office of Equity Director/Title IX Coordinator as the official responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.

**Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy**

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term 'extenuating' circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.

**Students with Disabilities**
USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-2444, drc@usu.edu). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Students who are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 or who contract COVID-19 may also be eligible for accommodations.

**Diversity Statement**

Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. If you feel uncomfortable in a classroom due to offensive language or actions by an instructor or student(s) regarding ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, contact:

- Division of Student Affairs: [https://studentaffairs.usu.edu](https://studentaffairs.usu.edu), (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu, TSC 220
- Student Legal Services: [https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services](https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services), (435) 797-2912, TSC 326,
- Access and Diversity: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu](http://accesscenter.usu.edu), (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu, TSC 315
- Multicultural Programs: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture), (435) 797-1728, TSC 315
- LGBTQA Programs: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa), (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145
- Provost's Office Diversity Resources: [https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity](https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity), (435) 797-8176

You can learn about your student rights by visiting:
The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University: [https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode](https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode)

**Grievance Process**

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: Article VII.

**Full details for USU Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:**

- Student Conduct (Links to an external site.)
- Student Code (Links to an external site.)
- Academic Integrity (Links to an external site.)
- USU Selected Academic Policies and Procedures (Links to an external site.)
- USU Academic Policies and Procedures (Links to an external site.)
- Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility Policy (Links to an external site.)
Emergency Procedures

In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of the fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs.

Mental Health

Mental health is critically important for the success of USU students. As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Utah State University provides free services for students to assist them with addressing these and other concerns. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (Links to an external site.).

Students are also encouraged to download the “SafeUT App” (Links to an external site.) to their smartphones. The SafeUT application is a 24/7 statewide crisis text and tip service that provides real-time crisis intervention to students through texting and a confidential tip program that can help anyone with emotional crises, bullying, relationship problems, mental health, or suicide related issues.