
SPRING 2018 COURSE SYLLABUS

CMST 5100, SECTION 001 COMMUNICATION THEORY

3 credit hours
MWF 10:30-11:20 am
ANSC 118

"Theories are nets cast to catch what we call 'the world'. ... We endeavor to make the mesh ever finer and finer." - Philosopher of Science Karl Popper

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor	Dr. Kaitlin Phillips
Office	Old Main 002b
Office Hours	By appointment
Phone	435-797-4202
E-Mail	kaitlin.phillips@usu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In-depth exploration of communication theories as they relate to interpersonal, group, public, and other communication contexts. Emphasis on how theories are formulated and evaluated.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will explore communication theories as they relate to interpersonal, group, public, and other communication contexts. Students will participate in various graded and ungraded communication exercises designed to increase students' communication competency in different contexts.

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe the essential features of several important theories of human communication.
2. Articulate to an audience how a real-world or fictional example demonstrates a specific communication theory.
3. Compare and contrast communication theories in order to understand and evaluate communication behavior.
4. Critique communication theory according to the standards appropriate for the theory's metatheoretical tradition (i.e., scientific, interpretive, or both).

REQUIRED TEXT

Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A. M., & Sparks, G. (2015). *A first look at communication theory* (9th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

COURSE POLICIES

Late Papers and Make-up Exams: Late papers are not generally accepted and will only be considered for what I consider to be **emergency** situations. **You must discuss these with me within 24 hours of the due date.** If I choose to accept an overdue paper, it will receive a grade deduction of 10% for each day late (calendar days, including weekends). No late work will be accepted one week after due date. Make-up exams will only be given in the case of an emergency and will be different from the original exam. Make-up exams must be taken within one week of the regularly scheduled exam. **You must contact me within 24 hours of the scheduled exam in order for me to consider a make-up.**

In-Class Etiquette: Your timely presence is required in this course. Tardiness is disruptive to your fellow students and me. Please be sure to turn cell phones off before entering the classroom and avoid talking to your peers during class lecture and discussion. Talking on the phone, reading non-course materials (e.g., the paper, readings for another class), surfing the web, checking Facebook, Instagram, etc., and texting are **unacceptable** behaviors, and you may be asked to leave class if I see you engaging in any of them. These behaviors may also adversely affect your involvement grade. Laptops should only be used for note taking, if at all. If I see that you are using your computer for any other purpose during class I will ask you to stop bringing your laptop to class and to take handwritten notes.

Accommodations: Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435)797-2444 voice, (435)797-0740 TTY, (435)797-2444 VP, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice.

Academic Misconduct: The department is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on exams or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course.

WRITING FELLOWS

This semester we will be using writing fellows. They will be coming to class to introduce themselves, and also to talk about how they will be working with you throughout the semester. More information to follow.

GRADING/ASSIGNMENTS

You final grade will be based on exams and assignments. The grading breakdown is as follows:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Midterm (Oral exam)	125 points
Final (Multiple choice)	125 points
Textbook Chapter	225 points
Application logs (turned in twice)	100 points (5ptx20)
Annotated Bibliography Presentation	25 points
Annotated Bibliography	<u>200 points</u>
TOTAL	800 points

Grades will be based on the following scale:

800-740 = A	739-720 = A-	719-696 = B+	
695-664 = B	663-640 = B-	639-616 = C+	615-584 = C

583-560= C- 559-536 = D+ 537-504 = D 503-480 = D- Below
480= F

Class Involvement/Attendance:

In class, you will have the opportunity to practice the skills that you are learning and apply relevant course concepts and readings. The examples and connections you provide in class will help others to process the information in a useful manner.

Involvement includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Attending class regularly and on time (you are expected to attend all classes for the duration of the class period)
- Being focused and practicing good listening skills
- Participating relevantly and actively in class exercises
- Visiting office hours regularly to talk with me about class concepts, skills, and issues
- Completing homework assigned during class
- Demonstrating your understanding of course concepts as they apply to your in-class communication
- This is your ONLY opportunity for Extra Credit. As long as you attend class, and have NO MORE than THREE unexcused absence and are actively involved in class you will earn 10 points of extra credit in the class.

Annotated Bibliography and Presentation

Throughout the semester everyone will have the opportunity to dive deeper into a topic that interests them. This will include a 10-annotation bibliography, presentation, and discussion. At least one week prior to your presentation you must get your topic approved by me (though I strongly encourage you to have this discussion at least two weeks earlier). The day of your presentation you will submit your annotated bibliography and your power point slides. During class you will give a presentation on your topic, and lead a discussion on your topic. It is important to be present for all presentations, as there will be questions on the exam from the presentations. It is also important to be respectful during presentation, and come to class prepared to participate in the discussions.

Textbook Chapter

Your final project for this class will be to write a theory textbook chapter. Think of this as your opportunity to become proficient in a theory of interest to you. Using your annotated bibliography as a starting point, you will write a textbook chapter that mirrors the way Griffin et al. write their theory textbook chapters.

Application Logs

Over the course of the semester you will apply the theories we study to your life. You will write one application log for 20 different theories. However, you will only turn in your application logs in 2 batches.

Exams

You will complete 2 exams, a midterm and a final. The midterm exam will be an oral exam and you will schedule a time to meet with me to complete your exam. The final exam will consist of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and true-false items. Exams are designed to test your understanding and application of the concepts presented in the text, class lectures, group presentations, and activities.

MODIFICATIONS TO SYLLABUS

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus and schedule at any time during the semester. Adequate notice of changes will be given to all students.

FINAL NOTES ON POLICY

I expect that students will attend class, turn in assignments on time, and relate to other class participants in an ethical manner. I expect students to accept responsibility for their own actions. In turn, I promise to conduct the class fairly and honestly. Students with concerns about any aspect of the course are encouraged to speak with me.