

**COMM 1170: AAA/Communication and Everyday Life**  
**Spring 2015**  
**Dr. Steve Duck**  
**The University of Iowa**

**TEXTBOOK:**

Duck, S., & McMahan, D. T. (2015). *Communication in everyday life: A survey of communication* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN 9781452259789

**COURSE DESCRIPTION, OBJECTIVE AND GOALS:**

COMM 1170 provides a general overview of everyday life communication and the theories and research used to understand it. The course seeks to accomplish four objectives:

1. Guide students to become aware of the depth and complexity of processes in the communication that occurs in their everyday lives (It's not all just common sense);
2. Teach students the ways in which scholars explain everyday communication and how it works, by introducing students to applications of theoretical thinking to explain processes of everyday communication;
3. Provide students with a broad understanding of diverse theoretical perspectives and a range of types of communication theories;
4. Provide students with opportunities for development of oral and written language communication skills and critical thinking. The assignments and requirements for performance in the discussion sections will reflect this objective. You will produce a weekly TAP (Talk Analysis Paper -- see below) and bring it to your discussion section meeting each week. This is not just busy work! It focusses you on the communication around you and has you analyze it in ways you had previously not learned to do. If you do not find this useful then you are doing it wrong! See your TA or me.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**TAPs (Talk Analysis Papers).** You will keep typed TAP entries in two sets (one set due covering the work up to and including Week 7; the second set covering work up to and including Week 14) and submit one every week it is due via the relevant ICON Dropbox to your Discussion Leader in the weeks noted on the syllabus schedule.

It is your responsibility to do this and **if you do not hand TAPs in properly then we will not grade them.** For the discussion sections in Week 2, you will grade one another's TAP during class so that you all get practice at how to do these. This practice TAPs will not count towards your course grade, but should be submitted through ICON to give you practice and experience of the issues you might face with ICON. Starting in Week 3, turn your electronic copy of the paper in to your Discussion Section Dropbox on ICON (2 pages max per week) before your discussion sections. You will hand in the new TAP each time in order to get credit for that TAP. In Week 7 (TAP Set One), and in Week 14 (TAP Set Two), submit your TAP in the usual way. At this point Week 8 (TAP Set One) and Week 15 (TAP Set Two) you will receive your grade for the packet, though you will be receiving

feedback on particular TAP submissions on ICON as we go along. That way we can give you educational credit for any improvements that take place in your work during the completion of each TAP.

**Exemplars for the TAPs** (Talk Analysis Papers – 2 full pages total as a guide of which one page minimum is analysis) are given at the end of this syllabus. You should briefly report and then discuss instances of communication that you have identified from your own experiences and which fit and illustrate the topic of the week. These should also include your thoughts about the conversation and your analysis based on what we have covered in the course [**1 page MINIMUM for the Analysis**]. You will get points for careful and thoughtful observation of your everyday experience, including relevant selection of material that illustrates the issues discussed in lectures and in the readings. For example, if you hear someone telling a story that fits the *narrative form* and if you correctly identify the type of communication, you will get points; if you report a conversation where someone did *facework* and if you correctly identify the elements that managed the person's face, then you will get points; if you report a conversation that distinguished between *back region* and *front region* of performance, and if you are able to provide a *frame* for the discussion, then you will get points. These are just examples and the important point is that you demonstrate that you are able to listen carefully to everyday communication and to identify theoretically relevant elements of it. If you are able to make intelligent and informed comments about the theories that illuminate the talk then you will score more points than if you simply report the talk. ***The important thing is that you demonstrate in the TAP that you fully understand how to observe and interpret everyday communication and show how theory helps us understand everyday communication.*** Each of your TAPs should contain **one full page of analysis** (see below).

The goal for the discussion sections is to explore and apply ideas from reading and lectures and to use your TAPs (Talk Analysis Papers -- 2 full pages each total, as a guide, with a minimum of one page of analysis). Your TAP should report examples of concepts used in the course and examine their application in your everyday lives. You should be noting examples of communication that a) fit each week's particular topic; b) are drawn from your own experience. In each case you should add your own informed thoughts about them, drawing upon what you have learned from the class at that point (one page minimum of this analysis). Your examples should be taken from your own experience and observation of everyday life. You might use examples of talk, examples from the TV or from print media, or from films as long as these are dealing with the topic discussed in the lectures and readings. The examples must be from your own observation and in your TAP you should not simply discuss the examples from the reading or from the lectures. Of course you might discuss the lecture and reading examples in the discussion section meeting itself, but the TAP must be your own work, based on your own thinking and observation of everyday life communication. **Don't keep using the same terms and examples or you will lose points on the overall set when it is finally graded. REMEMBER one full page of analysis is the minimum expected.**

#### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

##### Week One

What is 'Everyday Communication' and what does it do for us?

Some ways of looking at Everyday Communication and its elements:  
Signs, symbols and types of communication

DISCUSSION SECTIONS WILL MEET FOR INTRODUCTIONS

START TAKING NOTES ON CONVERSATIONS IN THE EVERYDAY WORLD OUTSIDE OF CLASS AS PRACTICE FOR YOUR WEEKLY TAPS

**Week's reading:** *Duck & McMahan Chapter 1: An overview of Communication*

**Week Two**

Making sense of reality: 1) Conversation and performance

Making sense of reality: 2) Narratives and other people

**Week's reading:** *Duck & McMahan Chapter 3: Identities, Perceptions and Communication*

WEEK TWO: PRACTICE TAP DUE IN AT DISCUSSION SECTION and through ICON, so you get the hang of it. Make sure you know how to use it and can submit TAPS to it. You will not get credit for TAPS that are not put through ICON on time.

**Week Three**

How Your Self Depends On Other People

Self Disclosure, Dialectics and Privacy Management

**Week's reading:** : *Duck & McMahan Chapter 3: Identities, Perceptions and Communication (revise or reread it) and SKIM Chapter 6 on Listening, esp "Recognizing and Overcoming listening obstacles" section.*

TAP1.1 DUE TO ICON

**Week Four**

Rules, Rituals and stories in social and symbolic context

Moral accountability in listening to stories and performance of self

**Week's reading:** *Duck & McMahan Chapter 4: Verbal Communication (and revise Chapter 6 on Listening)*

NO TAP: FEEDBACK WILL BE GIVEN ON TAP1.1 IN DISCUSSION SECTION

**Week Five**

Nonverbal Communication and Expectancy Violation Theory

Symbolic Interactionism

**Week's reading:** Duck & McMahan Chapter 5 Nonverbal Communication;

TAP1.2 DUE TO ICON

### **Week Six**

Development of relationships: Stories and Social Exchange

Relational disengagement models: Rituals, Comparisons and social bonding

**Week's reading:** Duck & McMahan Chapter 7: Personal relationships

NO TAP: FEEDBACK WILL BE GIVEN ON TAP 1.2 IN DISCUSSION SECTION

### **Week Seven**

Families and Systems

Family Rituals and Discourse

**Week's reading:** Duck & McMahan Chapter 8: Family Communication

TAP 1.3 DUE TO ICON [TAP 1 Packet Grades will be released on ICON after Spring Break]

### **Week Eight**

OVERVIEW REVIEW FOR EXAM I

EXAM I

### **Week Nine**

**SPRING BREAK. NO CLASS MEETINGS**

### **Week Ten**

Health and Uncertainty

Health Communication: Networks and health

**Week's reading:** Duck & McMahan Chapter 11: Health Communication

TAP 2.1 DUE TO ICON

### **Week Eleven**

Work I: Learning and talking about Work

Work II Organizational Culture and Workplace Dynamics

**Week's reading:** Duck & McMahan Chapter 10: Communication in the Workplace

NO TAP: FEEDBACK WILL BE GIVEN ON TAP 2.1 IN DISCUSSION SECTION

### **Week Twelve**

Inclusion in groups

Group Dynamics: 'Structures' and 'Functions'

***Week's reading:*** Duck & McMahan Chapter 9: Groups and Leadership

TAP 2.2 DUE TO ICON

### **Week Thirteen**

Intercultural communication

Relationships as cultures

***Week's reading:*** Duck & McMahan Chapter 12: Culture and Communication

NO TAP: FEEDBACK WILL BE GIVEN ON TAP 2.2 IN DISCUSSION SECTION

### **Week Fourteen**

Relationships and Media

Managing Long Distance Relationships

***Week's reading:*** Duck & McMahan Chapter 13 Technology and media in everyday life

TAP2.3 DUE TO ICON [TAP 2 Packet Grades will be released on ICON next week]

### **Week Fifteen**

**OVERVIEW REVIEW FOR EXAM II**

EXAM II

### **Week Sixteen**

Theories about Love Styles

GENERAL OVERVIEW AND SUMMATION

## Format for the TAP [Talk Analysis Paper]

Type your paper in Times New Roman 12 point font with margins no greater than an inch

Put the following information in the top right-hand corner every time:

Student name

Date

Communication in everyday life

**COMM:1170 and section number**

In the center of the page identify which TAP it is and underline it:

Talk Analysis Paper 1.3

[YOU WILL LOSE 2 POINTS FOR EACH TAP WHERE YOU FAIL TO INCLUDE ALL THE ABOVE INFORMATION]

Use the following subheadings:

**The context**

**The conversation**

**The analysis [MINIMUM ONE PAGE]**

Write **the context** as follows

Report in single spacing, giving the names of the participants, indicating where the conversation took place and indicating, if relevant, anything that happened just immediately before the conversation or any context which helps the reader understand what is happening.

*For example:* JP and I were having a conversation in the locker room at North Dodge Athletic Club about whether or not she should split up with her boyfriend.

Write **the conversation** as follows:

Report it in single spacing; Give the names or initials of the person as they speak followed by a colon, for example, Jane Doe: KP: "Mighty Man":

Write what the speaker says following the colon: *for example*, KP: I was, like, oh my God!

Start a new line when a new speaker begins; you do not need to use inverted commas.

Write **the ONE PAGE analysis** as follows:

Use double spacing; Type in **bold** any terms or concepts or theories that are drawn from the books or from the lectures, but you get the points for knowing what they mean, not for just putting them in bold. *For example*, KP's comment is performing **face management** (presenting a "self" that is appropriate to the situation and to the other people present).

Cite the source of your term, concept or theory. If it is from one of the books, then give the name of the author and the page where it occurs, like this: **face management** (Metts, 41). If it is from the fourth lecture, then cite it like this: **face management** (Duck, L-4), or if from the third discussion section meeting, like this: **face management** (Seungmin SCA-3); **face management** (Crystal SCB-3); **promotive communication** (Tyler, A03-4).

Remember: the goal of the paper is to show that you can use communication theory to make sense of everyday talk. Tie your observations in with the terms, concepts and theories drawn from this class and from the reading for each particular week. Use the readings to illustrate what you observe and show how you are becoming more able to **understand the undercurrents and social functions of everyday communication**, as the course progresses. Do not continue to use only the same examples or the same theories for different papers, though you can refer to earlier concepts if they are helpful in explaining the conversation.

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**Example for the first TAP [Talk Analysis Paper] that would earn C/B grade level**

Annabelle Lecter

24 February 2015

Communication in everyday life

**COMM:1170 A09**

Talk Analysis Paper 1.3

**The context**

Two friends had just met up at the end of classes as they happen to come out of different rooms in Seashore.

**The conversation**

KT: Hey, what's up, hon?

AL: Not much, just got out of a boring class and I'm going to get some lunch. You?

KT: My class was okay, and I've still got one more. Why didn't you call me last night?

AL: Well, I thought when we spoke last time you said we would just meet today for some fun stuff. I didn't think I needed to call you back then.

KT: OK that's fine. When your next class is over do you want to come to the mall and pamper ourselves with pedicures and manicures for tonight?

AL: Sounds like a plan! Let's go to the OCM to get them done.

KT: Sounds good to me but we need to make an appointment because they get pretty busy.

AL: That's okay, I already read your mind and called to make it for 2.30 after your class.

KT: Ha ha! Cool! I am really excited to have the chance to sit and catch up with you. I want to know about all the stuff you did when your friend was here last week, and I'll bring you up to date with my trip to Illinois. It was so awesome!

AL: Sounds good.

KT: Cool! I gotta run to the next class. See you there at 2.30.

### **The analysis [YOURS SHOULD BE ONE PAGE MINIMUM]**

During this conversation that I had with my friend Kelly, we ended up discussing many topics from these sections and this class. First off, Kelly asked me why I did not call her back last night. I explained to her that I did not think it was necessary to do so. This part of the conversation is referred to as **metacommunication** (Duck, L-1). This is communication about communication (but in this case we are talking about the fact that we did *not* talk). Next, Kelly brings up the idea to go to the mall and do the typical things we girls like to do. This is known as **gendered identities** (Duck, 17). Doing girl things like manicures and pedicures are activities that women are supposed to take part in together. This roots from being a female, at least in this particular culture (Crystal, SCB-1). Also, she asked me to go to the Mall but called it the OCM. This is considered **hypertext** (Duck, 22). To me, I understood what OCM stood for (Old Capitol Mall), but someone that had never heard of that before would not know what the abbreviation means. Use of hypertext indicates that we know one another quite well (Tyler, SCC-2). Another term that came up in our conversation was when I told her that I made an appointment when she got out of classes. This is called **coordinating interaction** (Seungmin, SCA-7). I took the time to synchronize our actions at the same time and suggesting that it would work out perfect! Then she mentioned how excited she is to catch up with what's going on in both our lives. This is referred to as the **relational level of meaning** (Wood, 20). This is showing how we are concerned that our friendship support each other at the same time that our experiences are being shared. Next, with me responding to that idea so confidently this showed one of the routine kinds of communication that provide **relational maintenance** (Wood, 21), known as **positioning** (Wood 21). My behavior was very cheerful and excited. Lastly, when going to get our services done, I relied on Kelly to associate with. This is also another routine operational maintenance called **social networks** (Wood, 21). This explains how we relied on each other being good friends to share our news with one another.

*Evaluator comments:* This example follows the instructions on the layout and presentation on the TAP, and chooses a good example of talk, which it reports in good detail. The analysis uses several of the concepts from the book and also a couple that had been provided in lecture or discussion section. The point about the way gendered activity is carried on in our particular culture is evidently an extra point made in the Discussion section. The writer would get points taken off for wrongly using the word **positioning** instead of **positivity**, which is an



example of relational maintenance, and the example of friends sharing news with one another is not a particularly good example of **social networking**, which is more to do with sharing and mixing with lots of other people.

This TAP would probably end up getting a C+/B-, because it does not go into any particular depth about the way the concepts work, but it does do a good job of identifying them directly from the conversation. In short, it shows that the person can identify the concepts, but not that the writer is able to go further and show deep understanding of how the concepts work.

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### **Example for the first TAP [Talk Analysis Paper] that would earn an A-Grade level**

Carl Uppandye

2 February 2015

Communication in everyday life

**COMM:1170 A01**

#### Talk Analysis Paper 1.2

##### **The context**

I was at North Dodge Athletic Center changing room and a young guy [YG] walked in and an older person [OG] there, looked somewhat surprised but obviously knew the younger one.

##### **The talk:**

OG: Hey ... John, how's it going? I thought you'd left the university.

YG: Oh hi, professor. I'm doing well, thanks. No still here one more semester, as you see. How are you?

OG: I'm doing well too. Are you doing the Graduate Thing now then?

YG: No still the Undergrad Thing but it won't be long now. I'm not really ready for semester to start though.

OG: Yeah, tell me about it. This is my last hard work out before things get really tough, ha! [Leaving the changing room] See ya around, then.

**The analysis:** This appeared to be two people meeting in a **back region** [Goffman, 22] away from the social space where they normally meet (which I assume to be the academic world). The two people spoke in a way that conveyed not only a **content message** but also a **relational one** [Duck L-2] and although they appear to know one another personally there is clearly a **power difference** [Duck, L-7] that is recognized in the **address/speech style** [Tyler SCD-1] ("John" versus "Professor") and also in the way that the younger guy adopts the professor's speech referents and terms ("Graduate Thing – Undergraduate Thing"). The content of the talk is not deep and the two do not seem to know one another well enough to be seen as true friends. The YG's first response is interesting because it exactly follows the sequence of topics raised by the OG before ending with a polite inquiry about OG (How are you?). This is an example of respect for **power and control** in the interaction {Duck & McMahan, p 117}. The talk **punctuates the time** [Wood, 21] between the

professor getting ready for his work-out and actually leaving, and is not done, for example, to deepen the relationship or make a request, but merely to pass the time until the professor is ready to leave – which he does by terminating the interaction abruptly with a prospective RCCU {Relational Continuity Construction Unit, Duck, L-6} again demonstrating his **power and control** over the interaction (“See ya around”). Once again the **power differences** [Duck, L-7] are evident in the fact that the professor terminates the conversation without allowing any long conversation ending **rituals** [Melissa, SCC-5] or **leave taking sequences** [Duck, L9]. The speakers also negotiate **identities** [Metts, 43] as “student” and “Professor” not only in their address styles but also in terms of the topics of conversation, who raises them, the Question-Answer sequence, and the focusing of the talk on the topic of the younger person’s academic status.

*Evaluator comments:* This example follows the instructions on layout and presentation of the TAP, and chooses a good example of talk, which it reports in good detail. The analysis uses several of the concepts from the book and also a couple provided in lecture or discussion section. The talk is reported in detail with attention to surrounding social dynamics, tone and nonverbal behaviors. The analysis brings in several course concepts that are specifically applied to the reported conversation -- and correctly done too -- from a range of different places and parts of the course.

This TAP would be graded in the A range. All the concepts are correctly applied, and are good examples of the terms being used. The writer is able to put the whole thing together even though the talk was really very simple. The writer shows a clear ability to understand how the dynamics of communication in everyday life can be understood from even very small examples and instances of interaction.

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### Example of a Failing TAP

Joe Moron TAP 9

*Context:* A bar in town where I met my friend

*Talk:* J: Hi, BG. How’s it goin’?

BG: Hi Joe. Great I finally hooked up with Joni so I’m feeling good enough to buy you a beer.

J: OK by me. How ‘bout them Hawks?

*Analysis:* The talk was in the **back region** (Faceman) because we were at the back of the bar and we did **metacommunication** because BG told me about Joni. We also did **gender talk** because he told me about Joni and I talked about sports, which is a guy thing.

Reason for Fail: This is a poorly chosen piece of talk that does not give us much to work with. The full information required for each TAP (Name, course section etc) is not provided and the TAP numbering is wrong, so two points get lost right there. The concept of back region is wrongly understood, the reference is not cited properly and is wrong anyway [Goffman, not Faceman]. Metacommunication is misunderstood. It is just possible to argue that there is gender talk here but the analysis should be much more thorough. Basically this is worthless.