

Comm 3000: Communication Theory
Spring 2015
Dr. Sarah Steimel
Weber State University

TEXTBOOK:

Griffin, E. (2014). *A first look at communication theory* (9th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the major communication theories and their histories that are the foundation to understanding the discipline of communication. These theories can be applied to interpersonal, group, organizational, intercultural, and mass communication contexts. You will be expected to understand the key concepts of each theory and be able to apply them to everyday life situations, events, and/or communication artifacts.

At the completion of this course, you should be able to:

- identify, explain, and compare theoretical concepts (exams)
- apply theories to real-life situations and artifacts (journal & final paper)
- critique theories with class members (class activities & discussion)
- understand, explain, apply, and present one theory in depth (final paper)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Grading. Your final grade will be determined based on your performance on the following:

Self-Introduction Exercise (15 points). Each student will be responsible for participating in both posting and commenting on the self-introduction exercise by

Theory Journals (60 points). On 4 class periods you will apply two concepts from a communication theory (redefined in your own words) to real life situations. You can also relate the concepts to a current event. The 1st journal from every student will be on Chapter 8 / Social Penetration Theory. Each student will be given a schedule of his/her subsequent journals. Subsequent journals must be Posted to your Group's correct Weekly Discussion Page online on the day they are due. Each journal should be roughly 1-2 typed. These journals will provide a jumping off point for class discussions. No late journals will be accepted. Four journals @ 15 points, 60 total. See the assignment sheet and grading rubrics on Canvas for specific instructions.

Discussion Participation (120 points). Each week, students will be expected to provide at least two substantive responses to their group's appropriate weekly discussion pages. Guidelines for substantive responses and more specific requirements can be found on Canvas. Twelve weeks @ 10 points/week, 120 total.

Exams (3 @ 100 points). There will be three multiple choice & essay type exams that focus on application of course material. Each exam is worth 100 points for a total of 300 points possible. Exams will be done in Chi Tester and will have a time limit. Tests must be completed and submitted by the due date. Exams cannot be made up unless there is a medical or school excuse and I have **prior** notification. More detailed information will be given on Canvas.

Analysis of Past Theory Paper (50 points). In a three-four page paper you will analyze the components of a past Comm 3000 final paper posted on Canvas by using the grading rubric for our class's final paper.

Paper proposal (30 points). Submit a paper proposal for your final paper that identifies the theory you plan to use, the communication artifact/situation you plan to apply it to, how you will apply it (basic methods discussion), and your initial reference list.

Paper workshop (15 points). During the 14th week of class, students will be required to participate in a 15 minute meeting with me via phone, Skype, or in-person meetings to discuss their progress on their individual final paper project. Participation in the meeting (including evidence one is prepared for the meeting by having read & revised the paper proposal based on instructor feedback) will be counted towards this score.

Final Paper (125 points). The final paper is a significant, in-depth application of a theory to a communication event or artifact of your choice (minimum 10 pages). The paper will include an in-depth explanation of the theory, a literature review, and application of the theory to a communication event. [*Note: You will want to save your completed paper to help prepare your portfolio for graduation.*] You must turn in the final project to complete the course. See the assignment sheet and grading rubrics on Canvas for specific instructions.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Week 1	Ch 1-3	Introduce Course, Talk about Theory, & Weighing the Words
Week 2	Ch 8, 9	<i>INTERPERSONAL THEORY</i> Social Penetration Theory <i>First Journal Due on SPT</i> Uncertainty Reduction Theory
Week 3	Ch 7, 12	Expectancy Violations Theory Communication Privacy Management
Week 4	Ch 5, 6	Symbolic Interactionism Coordinated Management of Meaning

Week 5 | Ch 16, 15 | Cognitive Dissonance
Elaboration Likelihood Model

Exam 1 will cover the following chapters:

Ch 1-3 - Introduction, Talk about Theory, & Weighing the Words
Ch 5 - Symbolic Interactionism
Ch 6 - Coordinated Management of Meaning
Ch 7 - Expectancy Violation Theory
Ch 8 - Social Penetration Theory
Ch 9 - Uncertainty Reduction Theory
Ch 12 - Communication Privacy Management
Ch 16 - Cognitive Dissonance

Week 6 | Ch 17, 19 | ***GROUP & ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY***
Functional Perspective
Cultural Perspective
Analysis of Past Paper Due

Week 7 | Ch 18, 21 | Symbolic Convergence
Critical Perspective

Week 8 | Ch 23, 24 | ***PUBLIC & MASS COMMUNICATION THEORY***
Narrative
Dramatism

Week 9 | Ch 26, 29 | Semiotics
Cultivation Theory

Exam 2 will cover the following chapters:

Ch 15 - Elaboration Likelihood Model
Ch 17 - Functional Perspective
Ch 18 - Symbolic Convergence
Ch 19 - Cultural Perspective
Ch 21 - Critical Perspective
Ch 23 - Dramatism
Ch 24 - Narrative
Ch 26 - Semiotics

Week 10 | Ch 28, 30 | Uses & Gratifications
Agenda Setting

Week 11 	Ch 25, 27	Media Ecology Cultural Studies Paper Proposal Due
Week 12 	Ch 31, 34	COMMUNICATION AND CULTURAL THEORIES Communication Accommodation Genderlect
Week 13 	Ch 35, 36	Standpoint Theory Muted Group Theory
Week 14 		<i>Exam 3 will cover the following chapters:</i> Ch 25 - Media Ecology Ch 27 - Cultural Studies Ch 28 - Uses & Gratifications Ch 29 - Cultivation Ch 30 – Agenda Setting Ch 31 - Communication Accommodation Ch 34 - Genderlect Ch 35 - Standpoint Theory Ch 36 - Muted Group Theory <i>Paper Workshop Meetings</i>
Final Exam Week		<i>Final Theory Paper due during Final Exam Week</i>