

Marshall University

Course Title/Number	Introduction to Communication Theory CMM 303
Semester/Year	Fall 2013
Days/Time	Tuesday /Thursday 11 AM-12:15 PM
Location	SH 232
Instructor	Cam Brammer, PhD
Office	Smith Hall 244
Phone	(304) 696-2810 Home Phone: (304) 522-2194
E-Mail	brammer@marshall.edu
Office/Hours	Monday through Friday from 10:00 to 12:00 and 3:00 to 4:00
University Policies	By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy at www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies Students with Disabilities • Affirmative Action • Computing Services Acceptable Use Excused Absence (undergraduate) • Academic Dishonesty • Inclement Weather • MU Alert

Course Description: From Catalog

CMM 303(3 Hours Undergraduate Credit). Analysis of the process of communication and its constituent elements, with emphasis upon traditional and contemporary theories, their validation, and their use as a tool in diagnosis and remediation of communication problems.

Program Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the BA in Communication Studies students will:

1. Understand basic concepts associated with the primary theories of communication.
2. Write a clear, concise, and reasoned paper on topics dealing with the concepts of communication.
3. Understand the research literature underlying the discipline of communication.
4. Demonstrate speaking competencies by composing a message, provide ideas and information suitable to the theory and audience.
5. Basic understanding of the nature of scientific inquiry, as applied to human behavior.
6. Familiarity with four research methods commonly used to study human communication behaviors.
7. Greater skill in analytical thinking and writing.
8. Demonstrate 'sense-making', the ability to apply knowledge to lived experience.

Degree Profile Outcomes

1. Knowledge: Specialized knowledge
2. Broad Integrative Knowledge
3. Intellectual Skills: Analytic Inquiry
4. Intellectual Skills: Use of Information Resources
5. Intellectual Skills: Engaging diverse perspectives
6. Intellectual Skills: Quantitative fluency
7. Intellectual Skills: Communication fluency
8. Applied Learning
9. Civic Learning

Relationships among Course, Program, and Degree Profile Outcomes

Course Outcomes	How Practiced in this Course	How Evaluated in this Course	Program Outcomes	Degree Profile Outcomes
Discuss the basic concepts associated with the primary theories of communication.	We begin the course with an overview of the theories most often used in Communication	Questions and activities that deal with real-world data and how those data are researched.	1, 3,6,8	• Broad, integrative knowledge • Analytic inquiry • Use of information resources • Communication fluency
Write a clear, concise, and reasoned paper on topics dealing with the concepts of communication.	We devote several classes to developing proposals for projects and discuss the components of these.	“Reel Paper” Literature Review Final paper	1,2,3,5,6,7,8	• Broad, integrative knowledge • Analytic inquiry • Use of information resources • Communication fluency • Applied Learning
Understand the research literature underlying the discipline of communication.	Several classes dedicated to analyzing whether we should believe a statistical study. Students learn the basics of statistics. Students practice ungraded homework.	Class discussions and evaluation of written papers.	1,3,5,6,8	• Broad, integrative knowledge • Quantitative fluency • Analytic inquiry • Use of information resources • Communication fluency • Applied learning

Suggested Texts, Additional Reading, and Other Materials

West, R. & Turner, L. H.(2010). *Introduction to communication theory: analysis and application (4th ed.* Mountain View, CA: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Perrin, R. (2007). *Pocket guide to APA style (2nded.)*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Course Requirements / Due Dates in Bold

1. There is quite a bit of reading associated with this course. The primary focus is on the text. Students are responsible for all readings and any miscellaneous readings assigned at the discretion of the instructor.
2. Lectures will complement and supplement textbook material. Not all material in the text will be covered in class. There will be material presented in class from other sources. **The student remains responsible for all material assigned from the text not covered in class.**

3. Communication Theory Note cards (5 x 7 or 4 x 6 ONLY)

For each theory that is discussed in class, students must create a note card on which they do the following:

1. Identify the scholar/theorists responsible for developing the theory.
2. In their own words, briefly summarize each theory.
3. Identify and define key vocabulary pertinent to the theory.
4. Identify the paradigm/perspective associated with the theory and articulate why they believe it to be so.
5. Evaluate the theory according to the criteria discussed in Chapter 4.
6. Share an example of an instance in which they can apply this theory to their lives.

On the day of the midterm examination and again on the final examination, note cards will be collected for evaluation. Each set of note cards will be worth 10 points. The following criteria will be used to assess these cards:

1. The student's ability to address each of the six elements listed above
2. The comprehensiveness of the responses to each of the six criteria.

4. Theory Research Paper (200 points)

For your final project, each student should select a contemporary communication event – for example, a book, movie, organization, advertising campaign, social movement, political campaign, or news program. Then you should select one of the metatheoretical approaches to employ in analyzing the chosen event. Within the chosen approach, you should identify a specific theory that would provide a foundation for the analysis. The final research paper should include the following:

- An introduction that gives a clear statement of the event, metatheoretical approach, and specific theory
- A detailed description of the event (or communication act within the event) to be analyzed
- A brief description of the metatheoretical approach used, followed by a detailed description of the theory used
- An analysis of the event (applying the chosen theory)
- A discussion of the major outcomes of the analysis (What was learned? What improvements would be recommended for the communication event? What insights did the theory offer to the communication event?)
- A conclusion summarizing the major points identified in the research
- 10 plus sources (limited to 2 internet sources)
- APA style

5. "Reel" Theory Paper (75 points)(4 to 5 pages)

The "Reel" Theory Paper is an opportunity for you to display a practical understanding of communication theory in "reel" life. Select a film that is rich in themes and scenes ideal for analysis (for example, any of the films listed in the video section). ADVANCE 4 This paper should be centered on the general theme of communication and theory with specific comments addressing a number of the themes and topics identified in class discussions and/or the text. Papers should explicate various theories and/or theoretical elements from the text. For those looking for a template consider the following:

- Section One: Briefly address the essence of the movie. In this part of the paper, the goal is to clarify your general understanding of the movie, perhaps by explaining what you see as the director's intentions [or those of the writer(s)]. In this section of the paper, you should identify both the thesis and the paper's preview.
- Section Two: Identifying specific dialogue, explain the themes of the movie; use the theory chosen to guide this discussion. The goal of this part of the paper is to demonstrate the applicability of a theory to the mediated example. You may use any theory or combination of theories in the paper, taking care to find specific instances to support your thesis. You should include an analysis of the movie's scene. You should not simply describe the film without also analyzing how the scene relates to the concepts.
- Section Three: You should conclude the paper by briefly reiterating the main points and an overall assessment of the movie (good, bad, okay, and so forth) and why you evaluated it in a particular way. This is a very brief part of the paper and not much detail is needed.
- APA style

Uses and **Films: Video Suggestions**

The following is a list of films that can be used to complement a discussion of the theories listed. This list is only a beginning suggestion for your reference. You will find many films and videos that are useful in making the concepts of a theory come alive for your paper.

Symbolic Interaction Theory *Nell* (1994) Jodie Foster, Liam Neeson (PG-13)
Coordinated Management of Meaning *Boyz n the Hood* (1991) Larry Fishburne, Ice Cube (R)
Cognitive Dissonance Theory *The Piano Lesson* (1995) Charles S. Dutton, Alfre Woodard
Expectancy Violations Theory *Pumping Iron* (1977) Arnold Schwarzenegger (PG)
Uncertainty Reduction Theory *Strangers on a Train* (1951) Alfred Hitchcock (unrated)
Social Penetration Theory *Dangerous Minds* (1995) Michelle Pfeiffer (R)
Social Exchange Theory *Prince of Tides* (1991) Barbra Streisand, Nick Nolte (R)
Relational Dialectics Theory *The Sunshine Boys* (1975) Walter Matthau, George Burns
Communication Privacy Management Theory *Tender Mercies* (1983) Robert Duval, Tess Harper (PG)
Groupthink *Twelve Angry Men* (1957) Henry Fonda, Lee J. Cobb (unrated)
Adaptive Structuration Theory *A League of their Own* (1992) Tom Hanks, Geena Davis (PG)
Organizational Culture Theory *Gung Ho* (1986) Ron Howard, Michael Keaton (PG-13)
Organizational Information Theory *Working Girl* (1988) Melanie Griffith, Harrison Ford (R)
The Rhetoric *Malcolm X* (1992) Spike Lee, Denzel Washington (PG-13)
Dramatism *My Favorite Year* (1982) Peter O'Toole (PG)
The Narrative Paradigm *The Joy Luck Club* (1993) Kieu Chinh, Ming-Na Wen (R)
Cultural Studies *Broadcast News* (1987) Holly Hunter, William Hurt (R)
Cultivation Analysis *Bowling for Columbine* (2002) Michael Moore (R)
Uses and Gratifications Theory *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985) Mia Farrow, Jeff Daniels (PG)
Spiral of Silence Theory *Bob Roberts* (1992) Tim Robbins (R)
Medium Theory *Network* (1976) William Holden, Faye Dunaway (R)
Face-Negotiation Theory *My Family/Mi Familia* (1995) Jimmy Smits, Esai Morales (R)
Communication Accommodation Theory *Grease* (1978) John Travolta, Olivia Newton-John (PG)
Muted Group Theory *The Piano* (1993) Holly Hunter, Harvey Keitel (R)
Standpoint Theory *Do the Right Thing* (1989) Spike Lee, Danny Aiello (R)

6. EXAMS: MID TERM (approx. ½ the text) **100 points FINAL EXAM** (comprehensive) **150 points**

Grading Policy

90.00 – 100	A
80.00 – 89.00	B
70.00 – 79.00	C
60.00 – 69.00	D
Below 60.00	F

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend each class. Unexcused absences from **three** classes will result in a reduction of one letter grade for the semester; unexcused absences from **four or more** classes will result in an F. To obtain an excused absence, please go to the Dean of Students' Office in the MSC. Attendance is required for all class sessions.

Additional Policies:

Students are responsible for any information or handouts that they miss during an absence.

Please silence cell phones immediately upon entering class. DO NOT text or read texts during this class.

Students are not to leave class to answer a phone call. If you feel the need to do so, please do not reenter.

This will be the only paper copy of the syllabus that will be distributed. Please hold on to it.

NOTES

Course Schedule Fall 2013

Week	Sections
Aug. 27& 29	Introductions The discipline of communication Chapters 1 & 2
Sept. 3 & 5	What is theory? What is research? Chapters 3 & 4
Sept. 10 & 12	Theories about the Self and Messages Chapters 5 & 6
Sept. 17 & 19	Theories about the Self and Messages Chapters 7 & 8
Sept. 24 & 26	Theories about Relationship Development Chapters 9 & 10
Oct. 1 & 3	Theories about Relationship Development Chapters 11 & 12
Oct. 8 & 10	<u>Review & Midterm (Note cards Due)</u>
Oct. 15 & 17	Theories about Groups Chapters 14& 15
Oct. 22 & 24	Theories about Organizations Chapters 16 & 17
	<u>"Reel Paper" Due</u>
Oct. 29 & 31	Theories about Public Communication Chapters 18& 20
Nov. 5 & 7	Theories about Media Chapters 21& 22
Nov. 12 & 14	Theories about Media Chapters 23& 24
Nov. 19 & 20	Theories about Culture Chapters 26& 27
Nov. 26 & 28	<u>FALL BREAK: THANKSGIVING</u>
Dec. 3 & 5	Theories about Culture Chapters 28& 29 Future Directions and Review for Final Exam Chapter 30
	<u>Research Papers Due</u>
	FINAL EXAM Thursday, December 12, 2013 10:15 AM –12:15 PM