**COMM 2010: Communication Theory**

**Course Syllabus**

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| Instructor: Mr. Scott Chappuis |
| **Email: ScottOC@bgsu.edu\*** |
| **Office Location: West Hall 219B** |
| **Office Hours:**   * **Mondays from 3:00 – 5:00 pm** * **Tuesdays from 4:00 – 5:30 pm** * **And by appointment** |
| **Office Phone Number: 419-372-3437** |

**\*Instead of emailing me through Canvas, please send all emails directly to ScottOC@bgsu.edu**

**Course Readings & Materials**

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

* We will be using the ninth edition. The textbook’s cover is *green*; you can purchase it at BGSU’s bookstore or online (e.g., [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)).
  + Alternatively, the textbook’s publisher created a BGSU version of our textbook. The BGSU version is identical to the 9th edition, except (a) its cover design is different and (b) it is less expensive than the regular version.
  + Also, a reserve copy of our textbook is available for free at Jerome Library.
* Our textbook has a free companion website ([www.afirstlook.com](http://www.afirstlook.com)) with supplemental information.
* Additional readings and materials will be posted on our COMM 2010 Canvas site.

1. **Each student will also need 12 blank index cards (3x5 inches).** With the exception of the first day of class, students are responsible for bringing a blank note card to each class meeting. Throughout the semester, each student will use a maximum of 12 note cards.
2. **Finally, each student will need two folders.** These can be manila folders or two pocket folders. These will be used to turn in materials for each of the group projects for this course. Every student will need two folders, as you will be submitting peer evaluation forms throughout the semester and I would like for those to remain anonymous.

**Course Description**

This course will introduce you to the study of communication and many of its theories. Throughout the semester, we will embark on a journey that explores the diverse field of communication. This course specifically focuses on the approaches to communication inquiry taken by the faculty of the Department of Communication at Bowling Green State University. Along the way, you will gain valuable knowledge about communication concepts, scholars, theories, and research findings. In addition, you will be challenged to apply and demonstrate your knowledge by completing exams, class activities, quizzes, written assignments, and a group project. I look forward to working with you this semester!

**Course Objectives**

1. Increase students’ *knowledge* about core communication concepts, theories, research, and applications.
2. Challenge students to critically *evaluate* and *utilize* communication theories and research findings.

Empower students to *apply* their knowledge and skills from this course to produce an annotated bibliography and integrated communication theory project.

**Course Overview**

Throughout this semester, we will cover a broad collection of communication theories and concepts.

Here is an overview of this course’s major units:

**Unit 1: Introduction to Communication & Communication Theories**

* What is communication, and why should we study it?
* What are the major areas within the communication discipline?How do people study communication?
* What is a theory? What do communication theories aim to do? How do we study, use, and evaluate theories?
* How does perception affect communication?

**Unit 2: Relational Communication**

* Interpersonal Communication
* Small Group Communication
* Organizational Communication
* Gender & Communication

**Unit 3: Intercultural and Global Communication**

* Identities and Social Perceptions
* Communication Across Cultures
* International Communication
* Health Communication

**Unit 4: Advocacy**

* The Rhetorical Tradition
* Political Communication
* Communication & the Media
* Communication & New Technologies

**Course Policies**

1. **Attendance**: Regular attendance is vital for *your* success in this class! You are expected to attend *all* class meetings. Throughout the semester, we will complete a variety of in-class activities and quizzes; these points *cannot be made up at a later date*. Furthermore, if you miss a class, you are responsible for collecting any missed materials, assignments, and notes.
2. **Grading:** If you have questions or comments about your grade, please schedule a private appointment with me. In general, grades are only changed due to a miscalculation.
   1. **Grading Policy:** The grading scale for this course is based on a points system. Therefore, grades will NOT be “rounded up.” If a student has a concern about his/her grade on an assignment, activity, quiz, or exam, he/she has 14 days (after the score is posted on Canvas) to email me.
   2. **Missed Class Activities and Quizzes:** Throughout the semester, you will complete activities and quizzes in class. If you are not in class, you cannot complete them (regardless if your absence was “excused” or “unexcused”). ***Points associated with missed class activities and quizzes cannot be made up.*** Also,students who fail to turn in their activity note cards in class—or fail to put their names on their note cards—will receive zero points. Students who submit their activity on time—but fail to use a 3x5 note card—will receive a 1 point deduction on the corresponding activity. Therefore, please remember to bring 1 blank note card (3x5 inches) to each class meeting.
   3. **Missed Exams:** In the event of an extenuating circumstance, you may be able to reschedule an exam. Please note that catching a plane to fly home early during our final exam week is NOT an adequate reason to reschedule an exam. Our final exam will be held from **6-8 pm on Tuesday, May 3, 2016**.

**In order to reschedule an exam, the following three criteria must be met:**

* + 1. You must notify me PRIOR to the exam via email,
    2. You must give me official written documentation that justifies the rescheduling of your exam, ***and***
    3. I must deem the reason for the rescheduled exam to be justified, extenuating, and acceptable.

If your absence on a test date does not satisfy these three criteria, you will receive a zero on that exam.

* 1. **Late Work Policy**: **All assignments are due at the *beginning* of their designated class meeting. If you arrive late to class, your assignment will be late.** 
     1. Late assignments will receive a 10 point deduction for EACH 24-hour period it is overdue (including weekends). If you plan to be absent on an assignment’s due date, please arrange to submit your work directly to me *before* the missed class.
     2. Assignments will NOT be accepted by email unless you have made special arrangements with me ahead of their due dates.
     3. **Students are responsible for submitting the *correct* file of their assignment to the *correct* Turnitin location on our Canvas site.** For example, if a student submits a draft (instead of his or her final paper) to Turnitin, we will grade his/her draft. Students who fail to submit their files through Turnitin on Canvas will receive a late penalty. (See the course’s late work policy for more information). Therefore, it is VERY important to submit your assignments well ahead of their deadlines! Technical difficulties, computer crashing, and faulty internet connections are NOT grounds for an extension.
  2. **Final Grades:** Your final semester grade will be tabulated in accordance to a points system. Students can earn a maximum of 500 points in the semester. **Grades will NOT be “rounded up.”** For example, earning 449.9 points is a “B” and not an “A.” ***Similarly, earning 349.9 points is a “D” and not a “C.”*** 
     1. **If you need a particular grade to raise your GPA, join a major, stay in school, or graduate, then we strongly recommend you to commit yourself to working hard in this class!** Students will receive the grades they earn; we cannot magically transform grades.
     2. **A small amount of extra credit will be available in COMM 2010. Details about the course’s extra credit opportunity will be made in class.**

1. **Cell Phones and Classroom Distractions:**
   1. **Phone conversations, emailing, using Facebook, web browsing, text messaging and side conversations are prohibited during class meetings; doing so may result in a reduction to your class grade, 0 points for the class meeting’s activity, and you may be asked to leave the classroom**.
      1. Please turn off all cell phones, music players, and disruptive electronic devices before class. Unless explicitly instructed to use your cell phones, please put them AWAY (e.g., in your school bag, purse, or pocket) before each class meeting begins.
      2. Simple outlines of our PowerPoint slides will be made available on Canvas after each lecture.
      3. Laptops and tablets are permitted during class meetings for course-related note-taking purposes only. I employ a “Tech Up” and “Tech Down” class policy. In general, the class operates in a “Tech Up” mode, meaning that students may use their laptops and tablets to take notes during lectures. However, there will be certain points in the semester when students are NOT permitted to use technology (e.g., during quizzes, exams, and some class activities). At this time, I will make an announcement that the class is operating in a “Tech Down” mode. Students will need to stow away their laptops and tablets at this time.
      4. Please refrain from taking photos and video/audio recordings during our class meetings.
      5. Please refrain from reading newspapers and other unrelated course materials during class.
   2. Please do NOT pack up your belongings early or hold side conversations with classmates.
2. **Academic Honesty:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course! Plagiarism, cheating, or the committing other forms of academic dishonesty will result in a minimum of a failing grade on the assignment or exam and may result in more serious consequences. For more information about BGSU’s academic dishonesty policy, please visit: <https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/catalog/academic-honesty/official-policy.pdf>.
   1. Each component of the Communication Theory Project must be submitted to Turnitin (through our COMM 2010 Canvas site) as a Microsoft Word document (.doc or .docx) or PDF file *before* the assignment’s deadline.
   2. **Students are expected to submit their original workfrom *this semester*. Students who resubmit work that they had done in a previous semester for COMM 2010 or any other class will receive a zero on that assignment.**
3. **Equal Access and Disability Services:** If you have special needs or require special academic accommodations, please notify me as soon as possible, as accommodations cannot be made retrospectively. I am happy to make reasonable accommodations as needed. If you seek disability services from BGSU, you can find more information at their campus location (38 College Park Office Building), online at <http://www.bgsu.edu/disability-services.html>, or by phone at (419) 372-8495.
4. **Contingency Plan for Catastrophic Events**

In the unlikely event of a major campus emergency, I will post information about any course/schedule changes to Canvas as soon as possible. I will also email the information to you. Please make sure to check your BGSU email account daily this semester.

1. **I am here to help!**

Your educational growth and success are very important to me. I want to see each student perform well in our class. Therefore, please know that we are here to help! You are encouraged to stop by my office hours or make an appointment if you have any questions.

Email is another great way to get in touch with me!

* Please include “COMM 2010” in your email’s subject line and your name in the body of your email. I will respond to all emailed inquiries within 24 hours. I may not be able to answer emails instantaneously, but I will make sure to send you a response within 24 hours.
  + I respond to emails Monday –Friday between 9:00 am and 10:00 pm. If you contact me after 10:00 pm or on the weekend, I will respond on the next business day.
* Please email me directly (using my@bgsu.edu address) instead of contacting me through Canvas, as Canvas messages can get lost easily.

**Course Requirements**

**1**. **Readings:** Students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to participate! That means that you will need to complete the assigned readings *before* each class meeting. We simply cannot cover everything in class. Basically, our textbook provides you with foundational readings for the course while our class meetings provide you with the opportunity to clarify, assess, and *apply* information from the assigned readings. Moreover, I use our class meetings to *extend* your knowledge of various class topics, so we will usually go *beyond* your assigned readings. Therefore, it is important to complete each assigned reading before its due date.

**2. Exams**: Students will demonstrate their mastery of our course material by completing two exams. The exams will cover material from our readings, class meetings, and assignments. In order to perform well on exams, it is important to complete the course’s assigned readings *and* be an active learner during class meetings. Please note that special technologies, such as Google glasses and Apple watches, are not permitted in class on exam days.

**3. Class Activities and Reading Quizzes**: Throughout the semester, students will have the opportunity to complete 12 class activities and reading quizzes. The activities and quizzes are designed to help you master course material and reward those who complete the reading assignments. Activities and quizzes will not be announced in advance. You will be evaluated by the quality of your performance on class activities and quizzes. Students who simply show up may not necessarily receive full points; however, you must be present in class to get credit for completing the activities and quizzes. Your top 10 scores will be calculated as part of your semester grade. Therefore, your lowest 2 scores on activities/quizzes will be automatically dropped at the end of the semester. Students will not receive extra points for their lowest 2 scores.

**4.** **Group Theory Presentation**: During the semester, you will have the opportunity to work in a group and develop a 30-minute presentation of a theory, which you will use to teach your peers. This project will challenge you to learn about a theory in such a way that you will be confident enough to teach it. You may use videos and activities to help further understanding. As you develop your presentation, you may come to me if you have any questions, if you need any suggestions, or if you want to run your presentation by me. I will evaluate your presentations using the following criteria:

* Do you clearly define and explain all elements of your theory?
* Do you use a variety of relevant examples to help your peers to understand the theory?
* Are you able to keep the attention of your peers?
* Do you each contribute equally to the class presentation?
* Are you able to meet the time requirement?

**5. Communication Theory Project:** Although we will cover a variety of theories, it would be impossible to cover *all* communication theories in one semester. This project will challenge you to select and study one communication theory that is not covered extensively in our class. Consisting of a sample annotation exercise, a formal annotated bibliography, and an educational video clip, this project will help you expand your knowledge of communication and develop new research skills. In addition, students’ video projects will help future COMM 2010 students learn about communication theories. Dr. Hanasono (the COMM 2010 Course Director) and I will maintain digital copies of students’ video projects and share them to help others increase their understanding of communication theories and their applicability in everyday contexts.

**6. Communication Application**: This assignment will help you apply your knowledge of communication outside of our classroom. Students will be asked to complete a short reflection paper (2 pages with at least 2 sources in APA format) where they explicate a communication concept and explain how they used it in their personal or professional lives. Alternatively, students can participate in ONE official research study. The research study’s Principle Investigator must be a member of the School of Media and Communication. Announcements about official research studies will be made in class and posted on Canvas. More information about this assignment will be provided in class.

**Grading Scale**

Final grades are tabulated in accordance to a point system and reflect BGSU’s grading scale. Students can earn a maximum of 500 points this semester. Grades will not be “rounded up.”

**Course Work:**

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| Course Requirement | Points  **Grading Scale:**  **A 450-500**  **B 400-449.9**  **C 350-399.9**  **D 300-349.9**  **F 299.9 or lower** |
| Exams (2 @ 100 points each) | 200 |
| Class Activities and Quizzes | 50 |
| Group Theory Presentation | 50 |
| Communication Theory Project |  |
| Sample Annotation Exercise | 10 |
| Annotated Bibliography | 50 |
| Communication Theory Video | 130 |
| Communication Application | 10 |

**Total: 500 points**