

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Division of Communication

Communication 240: Introduction to Organizational Communication

Section 1: Tuesday/Thursday 2pm – 3:15pm, CAC 237

Instructor: Cade Spaulding, Ph.D.
Office: CAC 323
Email: cade.spaulding@uwsp.edu
Office Phone: 715-346-3925
Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 11am -12pm (noon), and by appointment

Course Introduction and Description:

All people live in a web of interlocking and overlapping relationships. Some relationships involve two people (dyads), others involve several people (small groups), and still others involve larger collections of small groups (organizations). Communication within these relationships links people together and gives them a sense of something “bigger-than-themselves”. Communication binds people together in a shared identity and purpose. Some scholars believe communication is something that happens inside organizations, while others take it a step further and argue it brings organizations into existence. In either case, communication maintains the taken-for-granted culture, routines, and norms of daily work life. Organizational communication is at the heart of management, leadership, employee motivation, hiring, layoffs, training & development, production & profit, networking, change, decision-making, planning, and many other processes. Finding ways to better understand how these patterns of communication come into being, how they function, who they impact, and how changing them can help or hurt production and human satisfaction is what organizational communication is all about.

This course provides an introduction to organizational communication theories and workplace practices (UWSP Course Catalog).

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of organizational communication concepts, theories, and practices.
- Recognize and describe the role of workplace communication in maintaining and changing organizations.
- Use communication theories and concepts to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of businesses, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations.

Required Materials

Miller, K. (2011). *Organizational Communication: Approaches and Processes* (6th Edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Course Assignments and Grading

Exams	30%
Midterm	10%
Final	20%
Class Citizenship	10%
Final Project Presentation	60%

Final Grade Percentage Distributions

(Final letter grades will be assigned using this percentage scale)

A	= 95% and up
A-	= 90 – 94.9%
B+	= 88% - 89.9%
B	= 85%-87.9%
B-	= 80% - 84.9%
C+	= 78% - 79.9%
C	= 75% - 77.9%
C-	= 70% - 74.9%
D	= 60 - 69.9%
F	= 59.9% or less

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance at each class is mandatory. You must be present to learn this material.

To ensure attendance, I will take roll at the start of each class. Students who walk in more than 15 minutes late to class will be counted as absent. Any activities missed for being late cannot be made-up.

Students who have 4 or more absences (excused or unexcused) will receive one (1) full letter-grade deduction on their final grade in the course for the 4th absence, and an additional 1/2 letter-grade deduction on their final grade for each successive absence. Exceptions to this rule are rare and handled on a case-by-case basis based on the causes for excessive absences, review of previous course assignment performance, class participation, and overall effort.

Make-up Work: If you miss class you miss any activities scheduled for that day. Avoid missing class. It is your responsibility to contact another student from class to get discussion notes or calendar updates if you are absent.

Meet some people in class and fill out the following contact information early in the semester so you can get notes/homework etc. from someone if you miss class:

Late Work: I generally don't accept late work. If you know you will be missing class on a certain day – turn in your work before the day you will miss class to get credit. Assignments must be submitted in D2L drop box by 11:59 pm on the due date to be accepted.

Written Material Guidelines

All assignment material in this class must be typed and conform to the following written guidelines. Material turned in that does not follow these guidelines will not be accepted and will receive a "0":

1. **.PDF or .docx files**
2. Times New Roman,
3. 12pt. font,
4. 1" margins,
5. double-spaced formatting,
6. page numbers,
7. APA citation style for source material (in-text citations and References page) – no in-text citations and/or References page = "0" on the assignment.

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Office of Disability Services, Student Services Center Room 103, call 715-346-3365, or email disserv@uwsp.edu.

Academic Integrity

Be honest in what you do in this class. Do your own work and hold yourself to the highest standard of integrity and hard work. Plagiarism is a big deal and is not tolerated in my classroom. Those caught plagiarizing will face charges of academic misconduct which may result in any of the following:

1. failing grade on the assignment
2. failing the course

Talk with me or refer to Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code: “Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures” (<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf>) if you have any questions.

Community Rights and Responsibilities

As a UWSP student you have the right to receive fair and equitable evaluations based on course objectives outlined in the syllabus and without reference to personal or political views. You have the right to expect timely and accurate information and feedback about your progress and achievements in this course. You also have the responsibility to participate fully in the learning experience and to complete all course requirements. Please refer to the following link for more specific rights and responsibilities afforded to you as a UWSP student: <http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsCommBillRights.pdf>.

Course Assignment Descriptions

Exams

You will take two (2) exams in this course. The first exam (Mid-term) will cover everything up to mid-semester and the second exam (Final) will be comprehensive. It is your responsibility to take good notes during class, ask questions, and keep up with the reading.

Class Participation

One full letter grade of this course will come from your active participation and positive contributions in class and online each week. Participation will be determined based on your:

- 1) attendance and participation each week
- 2) positive contributions to class discussion during our face-to-face meetings AND during online discussions/activities
- 3) demonstrated preparation, desire to learn, etc.

Final Project Presentation

The final project of the course is a 5-6 minute presentation on a current communication-centered problem facing a business, nonprofit, or government organization of your choice. This organization may be one you’ve worked in or it may be one you’ve read about in the news. You may choose to do this final project individually or with one other person from the class. If you choose to partner with another student, you’ll lighten your load and benefit from two perspectives but your grade will be tied to the work and performance of your partner.

COMM 240 Course Calendar

* Assignments/reading **due** on the day scheduled below

Wk	Day	Topic	Assignments Due/Reading
1	01/22	Introductions & Overview of Course	
	01/24	What is Organizational Communication?	Reading Assignment: Ch 1
2	01/29	Classical Approach	Reading Assignment: Ch 2
	01/31	Classical Approach	Reading Assignment: Ch 2
3	02/05	Human Relations Approach	Reading Assignment: Ch 3
	02/07	Human Resources Approach	Reading Assignment: Ch 3
4	02/12	Organizations as Systems	Reading Assignment: Ch 4
	02/14	Organizations as Systems	Reading Assignment: Ch 4
5	02/19	Values and Culture	Reading Assignment: Ch 5
	02/21	Values and Culture	Reading Assignment: Ch 5
6	02/26	Critical	Reading Assignment: Ch 6
	02/28	Test Review Day	review notes & Chapters 1-6 prior to class
7	03/05	Mid-term Test	
	03/07	Assimilation Discussion: Final Project	Reading Assignment: Ch 7 Final Project Topics Due
8	03/12	TBA	
	03/14	No Class – Work on Final Project	
9	03/19	Spring Break	
	03/21		
10	03/26	Decision-Making	Reading Assignment: Ch 8
	03/28	Decision-Making	Reading Assignment: Ch 8
11	04/02	Conflict Management	Reading Assignment: Ch 9
	04/04	Conflict Management	Reading Assignment: Ch 9
12	04/09	Change Management	Reading Assignment: Ch 10
	04/11	Leadership	Reading Assignment: Ch 10
13	04/16	Emotion at Work	Reading Assignment: Ch 11
	04/18	Communicating with Technology	Reading Assignment: Ch 13
14	04/23	Final Project Presentations	
	04/25	Final Project Presentations	
15	04/30	Final Project Presentations	
	05/02	Final Project Presentations	
16	05/07	Final Project Presentations	
	05/09	Review for Final Exam	
17	05/13 – 05/17	Final Exam opens in D2L Monday, May 13 at 12am and closes Friday, May 17 at 11:59pm	