

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Division of Communication

Communication 240: Introduction to Organizational Communication

Section 1: Tuesday/Thursday 8:00am – 8:50am CAC 204, & Online via D2L

Instructor: Cade Spaulding, Ph.D.

Office: CAC 323

Email: cade.spaulding@uwsp.edu

Office Phone: 715-346-3925

Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 9:15am-10:15am, 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

Tests	20%
Midterm	10%
Final	10%
Class Citizenship	10%
Weekly Online Activities & Discussion	30%
Final Project Presentation	40%

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

Tests

You will take two (2) tests in this course. The first test (Mid-term) will cover everything up to mid-semester and the second test (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.

Weekly Online Activities & Discussion

Approximately one-third of your course grade will come from online participation in weekly activities and discussion focused on applying what we’ve covered in our face-to-face class meetings. Weekly assignments will often require you to visit a business, nonprofit, or government/civic agency (either in person or online) and apply principles, concepts, and theories from class. You’ll then share your experience with the rest of the class online via D2L, uploading a report (written, video, or audio). You’ll be able to see what other class members have found, ask questions, and respond to questions posed to you by other students.

Final Project Presentation

COMM 240 Course Calendar

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

Wk	Day	Topic	Assignment Due/Reading
1	09/04	Introductions & Overview of Course	
	09/06	What is Organizational Communication?	Reading Assignment: Ch 1 Week 1 online assignment via D2L
2	09/11	Classical Approach	Reading Assignment: Ch 2
	09/13	Classical Approach	Reading Assignment: Ch 2 Week 2 online assignment via D2L
3	09/18	Human Relations Approach	Reading Assignment: Ch 3
	09/20	Human Resources Approach	Reading Assignment: Ch 3 Week 3 online assignment via D2L
4	09/25	Organizations as Systems	Reading Assignment: Ch 4
	09/27	Organizations as Systems	Reading Assignment: Ch 4 Week 4 online assignment via D2L
5	10/02	Values and Culture	Reading Assignment: Ch 5
	10/04	Values and Culture	Reading Assignment: Ch 5 Week 5 online assignment via D2L

6	10/09	Critical	Reading Assignment: Ch 6
	10/11	Critical Approach	Reading Assignment: Ch 6 Week 6 online assignment via D2L
7	10/16	Test Review Day	review notes & Chapters 1-6 prior to class
	10/18	Mid-term Test	
8	10/23	Assimilation	Reading Assignment: Ch 7
	10/25	Assimilation	Reading Assignment: Ch 7 Week 7 online assignment via D2L
9	10/30	Decision-Making	Reading Assignment: Ch 8
	11/01	Decision-Making	Reading Assignment: Ch 8 Week 8 online assignment via D2L
10	11/06	Conflict Management	Reading Assignment: Ch 9
	11/08	Conflict Management	Reading Assignment: Ch 9 Week 9 online assignment via D2L
11	11/13	Organizational Change	Reading Assignment: Ch 10
	11/15	Leadership	Reading Assignment: Ch 10 Week 10 online assignment via D2L
12	11/20	Emotion	Reading Assignment: Ch 11 No Online Assignment
	11/22	Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class	
13	11/27	Communicating with Technology	Reading Assignment: Ch 13
	11/29	Open Work Day	No Online Assignment

14	12/04	In-class Final Project Presentations	No Online Assignment
	12/06	In-class Final Project Presentations	No Online Assignment
15	12/11	In-class Final Project Presentations	No Online Assignment
	12/13	Review for Final Exam	
16	12/18 - 12/20	Finals Week – Test available via D2L	