

## **Course Syllabus**

COMM 200 Communication Theory  
Summer 2016

**Professor Mark Tolsted**            Comm Arts Center #228  
   346-3920  
   mtolsted@uwsp.edu

I will be monitoring the D2L site for this class several times a day. I can be reached by phone in my office most mornings, Monday through Friday. I will check my emails regularly in the afternoons.

### Course Description:

Introduction to contemporary communication theories. Application of theories to communication problems.

As readers of--and participants in--culture, we attempt to sort out what role we play and just how we participate in our daily lives. To do this, we interpret, we make meaning, we examine, we question. We evaluate and express our evaluation. This is the process of understanding our world and there is no better way to understand our world than to use and understand communication theories. Looking at and understanding such theories are what this class is about.

### Course Objectives:

--to demonstrate a comprehension of communication theories by  
--composing articulate, grammatically correct, and organized pieces of writing with properly documented and supported ideas, evidence, and information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience; and to  
--evaluate others' writing to provide effective and useful feedback to improve their communication.

### Required Textbooks:

*Connect for Griffin, A First Look at Communication Theory, 9e.*  
ISBN: 9781259301056

URL to purchase access to *Connect for Griffin*:

<https://connect.mheducation.com/class/m-tolstedt-summer-2016>

Class name and Student Sign Up Information:

Class name:           COMM 200 Communication Theory  
Section Name:        Summer 2016

About This Class:

This is an online class administered through two different sites: UWSP D2L and the McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook location for Griffin, W., Ledbetter, A., and Sparks, G. (2014). *A First Look at Communication Theory Ninth Edition*. McGraw-Hill.

D2L is where you will take your unit examinations, deposit the engagement activity, provide peer evaluations, and keep track of your point totals (grades)—through the gradebook. The SmartBook is where you will read the book AND complete required practice sessions.

I expect that all of the work you complete in/for this class is your own.

This is an online class. I will be in my office on Monday through Friday mornings and will be available via phone and email during those hours. You can email me at any time and I will respond within 48 hours.

Course Requirements and Grading:

There are four (4) areas where your performance will be evaluated to determine final grades for this course: An engagement activity, SmartBook readings and Practice session work, participation in peer evaluation of written work, and online examinations.

*SmartBook readings and Practice Sessions:*

You are required to use the SmartBook for Griffin, W., Ledbetter, A., and Sparks, G. (2014). *A First Look at Communication Theory Ninth Edition*. McGraw-Hill. This is available through McGraw-Hill Connect. I am using this as a guided reading. The SmartBook allows you to read through the material in which key portions (concepts/ideas) have been highlighted. It also allows you to “practice” what you have learned by asking questions and guiding you through the answers. **Certain chapters have been assigned to units**, each of which have two possible due dates: a due date for “bonus” points (see course schedule below) and a “must be completed by” due date”.

--The SmartBook portion of Connect allows me to monitor your progress with the chapter readings and practice. There are points (2 per chapter) assigned to this activity. Points will be awarded accordingly, depending on your progress through the chapters. In other words, if you don't use the SmartBook, you don't earn points. If you complete the Practice sessions by the final due date, you earn points and IF you complete the Practice sessions by the bonus deadline, you will have an additional 5 points (per unit) added to your total.

--I have set the Connect location and the SmartBook to open on May 24<sup>th</sup>. You must have created your Connect account and logged onto the SmartBook by Tuesday, May 31<sup>st</sup>. I strongly recommend that you purchase access to Connect and then spend some time looking at and learning how the SmartBook functions. This is not a difficult task, but learning and understanding the interface might take a bit time. The Unit 1 deadline for bonus points is 11PM on Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

--Once in Connect, to access the SmartBook, click on the book icon.

--In each of the SmartBook Chapters, you will find Read---Practice---Recharge options. Access the Read when you are ready to read the text. **Print off the PowerPoint presentations for the chapter you are about to read** (these are in the Content area of D2L). **As you read, take notes onto the printed PPT slides**. After you have read the chapter, access Practice and the questions/review session starts. Recharge allows you to go back and review, from a slightly different perspective. When you have finished working in each chapter, **make certain to log out**...this will preserve your completion percentages which I access to assign points per chapter earned. I have set up the system with the expectation that each chapter will take you between 20 and 30 minutes to read and each practice session should take another 20 minutes. If you are finding that it is taking significantly longer for you, please let me know and we can talk about the process. A final note concerning the SmartBook assignments in this class: these activities are a precursor/set-up for your examinations. Completing the Read and Practice for each chapter, will help you significantly on the unit examinations.

### *Online examinations*

There are four (4) unit examinations in the class for a total of 100 points (25 points each). **The exams open on Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>**. Unit exams 1, 2, + 3 are due on Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup> by 11PM. To earn bonus points,

Unit 1 is due by 11PM on Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>

Unit 2 is due on Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> by 11PM

Unit 3 is by 11PM on Monday, June 13<sup>th</sup> (see class schedule below).

The Unit 4 exam is due on Friday, June 17<sup>th</sup>.

-You are allowed only one (1) attempt on the exams. Once you start the exam, you have 120 minutes to complete the exams. Each exam is comprised of multiple-choice (MC) and true-false (T/F) questions. D2L will automatically grade the questions. After the exams close, I will go in and review your answers to make certain D2L graded them correctly. I try to do this within 24 hours of the closing time.

--Please know that you can use the SmartBook when you take the exams (it is an open book exam—and the book has both an index and a glossary). However, you may NOT work together on the exams.

--The exams are set up to randomly distribute questions...so when you open the exam, a set of questions is randomly generated. When another student opens the exam, another set of questions is randomly generated of which, some may be the same but most will not (be the same).

*Engagement Activity:*

In addition to the SmartBook and D2L exams, I am also asking you to engage with some of the communication theories you are learning.

--You need to apply one of the theories discussed in the book to a movie clip or clips identified for this exercise. You should write an application essay to the Discussion Topic Forum for peer evaluation. This essay will be roughly two to three pages in length and is due in Discussion Topic Forum by 11PM on Thursday, June 9<sup>th</sup>. Sometime on June 10<sup>th</sup> and June 15<sup>th</sup> (before 11PM), each of you are to access your assigned group and provide a peer evaluation of the other group members critical application essay. See the Content area of D2L for suggestions of writing peer evaluations. The final revised essay is due in the dropbox by 11PM on Friday, June 17<sup>th</sup>. A final note: refer to the content area of D2L for more detailed instructions on how to do this and what I am expecting.

Point Totals and Grading Scale

SmartBook engagement work:	2@19	38
Online quizzes:	4@25	100
Engagement Essay	1@40	40
Participation and contribution: (online group work)	1 @22	22
Total Points Possible:		200

NOTE: if you complete the SmartBook work and Unit examinations by the bonus point deadlines indicated in the course schedule below, you will earn an additional 5 Points each for Units 1, 2, + 3.

91%+	=	A	182-200
90%	=	A-	180-181
89%	=	B+	178-179
81%-88%	=	B	162-177
80%	=	B-	160-161
79%	=	C+	158-159
71%-78%	=	C	142-157
70%	=	C-	140-141
69%	=	D+	138-139
61%-68%	=	D	122-137
0%-60%	=	F	0-121

### **Other Relevant Information:**

I will be using email to contact you individually as needed. I will be posting updates and other information to the news item area of the D2L site for this class on a regular basis. It is expected that you monitor D2L for this class on a regular, if not daily, basis.

### *Dates due are deadlines.*

- The online exams close on the date and at the time indicated in the course syllabus. I will allow you to reschedule the date and time ONLY for reasons related to a death in the family, a conflict with another university activity, or a significant illness. In all cases, you must inform me in a timely fashion, in advance of the schedule exam. Please note: I may very well refuse to allow you to reschedule the date and/or time.
- The engagement activity has scheduled due dates and times. Again, I will allow you to reschedule the date and time ONLY for reasons related to a death in the family, a conflict with another university activity, or a significant illness. In all cases, you must inform me in a timely fashion, in advance of the schedule exam. Please note: I may very well refuse to allow you to reschedule the date and/or time.
- Please refer to the schedule in the course syllabus AND to the calendar in D2L for due dates and times.

*Academic dishonesty:* Using material from another source (book, journal, internet site, a faculty member, another student, etc.) without proper acknowledgment is not acceptable. Period. The University has policies that govern academic dishonesty. You should be familiar with them. You will find a statement of my views on plagiarism appended to this course syllabus. If you violate these policies on any of your course work, you will receive a grade of **Fail** for that assignment/exam. You may also receive a grade of **Fail** for the class and be subject to University procedures on academic dishonesty. YOUR WORK HAS TO BE YOUR OWN.

### *Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities*

UW-Stevens Point values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to success, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. Read more here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. Don't do it! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RIghtsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

### *Assistive Accommodations*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

For more information about UWSP's policies, check here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can.

For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

### *FERPA Disclaimer*

This course requires posting of work online, that is viewable only by your classmates. None of the work submitted online will be shared publicly. Your academic records (grades, student IDs, personal identification information) will not be shared by the instructor of this course. Confidentiality of student work is imperative, so you should not share the work of your peers publicly without their permission. By participating in these assignments you are giving consent to sharing of your work with others in this class and you recognize there is a small risk of your work being shared online beyond the purposes of this course. If you elect to not participate in these online assignments due to confidentiality concerns then an alternate assignment will be offered to you.

### *Netiquette*

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Your instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course community.

--The following netiquette tips will enhance the learning experience for everyone in the course:

- Do not dominate any discussion.
- Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
- Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
- Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- Popular emoticons such as ☺ or / can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them.
- Avoid using vernacular and/or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
- Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write.
- Share tips with other students.
- Keep an "open-mind" and be willing to express even your minority opinion. Minority opinions have to be respected.
- Think and edit before you push the "Send" button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.

- Using humor is acceptable

### Course Schedule:

**Note:** when a Unit is indicated as due, this means that you must have completed the SmartBook Practice sessions for each chapter in the Unit AND the D2L Unit examination by 11PM on the date indicated.

Tuesday, May 31	Must have access to Connect
Wednesday, June 1	
Thursday, June 2	Unit 1 Due: Deadline for <u>Bonus</u> Points by 11PM ( <u>SmartBook Practice Sessions</u> and <u>Unit Quiz</u> in D2L)
Friday, June 3	
Monday, June 6	
Tuesday, June 7	Unit 2 Due: Deadline for <u>Bonus</u> Points by 11PM ( <u>SmartBook Practice Sessions</u> and <u>Unit Quiz</u> in D2L)
Wednesday, June 8	
Thursday, June 9	Engagement Exercise: Post to <u>discussion topic</u> by 11PM
Friday, June 10	
Monday, June 13	Unit 3 Due: Deadline for <u>Bonus</u> Points by 11PM ( <u>SmartBook Practice Sessions</u> and <u>Unit Quiz</u> in D2L)
Tuesday, June 14	
Wednesday, June 15	Peer evaluations of Engagement Exercise Due by 11PM
Thursday, June 16	<b>FINAL DEADLINE FOR Units 1, 2, + 3 by 11PM</b>
Friday, June 17	Unit 4 Due: <u>SmartBook Practice Sessions</u> and <u>Unit Quiz</u> in D2L Revision to Engagement Activity due in Dropbox by 11PM

### SmartBook Chapters by Unit:

Unit 1: Overview and Setting the Field

Chapters 1, 2, 3, + 4

Unit 2: Interpersonal Communication



Chapters 6, 8, 10, 14, + 16

Unit 3: Group and Public Communication

Chapters 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, + 24

Unit 4: Mass Communication

Chapters 26, 27, 34, + 36

### Plagiarism

A major problem facing both professors and students is the practice of plagiarism, which is defined as “the deliberate or accidental use of ideas, research, or words of another person without fully attributing them to their original sources.” As a student in this course, it is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism. A student who plagiarizes work in my class will receive a failing grade for that assignment, possibly for the course and may be subject to additional academic misconduct sanctions.

The following paragraph offers advice on paraphrasing, a major aspect of plagiarism: Clearly attribute ideas that you have paraphrased to their authors, both directly in your text and by providing reference citations. Do not try to paraphrase by changing just a few of the author’s words (that’s plagiarizing): **paraphrasing** involves substantial change in the order of words and ideas, usually to condense them. **Paraphrasing**, in other words, involves putting someone else’s thoughts into your own words, not just rearranging the words and ideas or combining, but shortening, someone else’s sentences. To avoid unintentionally writing a plagiaristic paraphrase, carefully mark the notes that you take on your references where you use exact or nearly exact, words of the source.

The following guidelines are offered as additional hints on what plagiarism is:

--Every paper or report submitted for credit is accepted as the student’s own work. It may not, therefore, have been composed, wholly or partially, by another person.

--The wording of a student’s paper is taken as his or her own. Thus he or she may not submit work that has been copied, wholly or partially, from a book, article, essay, newspaper or another student’s paper or notebook, or any other written or printed source (including speeches, WWW sites, news reports, etc.). Direct quotes or ideas from outside sources may be used, but they must be properly cited. Thus, do not simply change a few words within a sentence from a source, put it in your paper, and drop a footnote by it without using quotation marks. Doing so represents the sentence as your own, when it is not, and this is plagiarism!

--As a student, you may incorporate in your paper ideas that have arisen from discussion or lectures when you incorporated these ideas into your own thinking. However, be careful to either cite properly the source of the ideas or cite other sources that reinforce the ideas you are using.

- You may, as a part of the good writing process, give your work to someone else for suggestions. However, having someone else totally correct and revise your work constitutes that person's work, not your own, and thus constitutes plagiarism.
- You may of course submit a paper to be typed by another person, provided that typist has not sought to change the wording, ideas, organization, or any significant aspect of the paper in any way. If you submit such a paper, be sure to proofread carefully.
- No paper may be submitted for credit that has been or is being used to fulfill the requirements of another course, in whatever department, unless permission to coordinate work has been granted by both professors.
- Students in my courses are expected to utilize the APA stylebook, which provides guidelines for proper citation.

# Did I Plagiarize?

## The Types and Severity of Plagiarism Violations

