

## Comm. 200, Contemporary Communication Theories

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Fall, 2015

Section 1 TTh 11:00-12:15 in CAC 202

Section 2 TTh 12:35-1:50 in CAC 202

**PROFESSOR:** Karlene Ferrante

**OFFICE:** CAC 329

**OFFICE HOURS:** MT 2:00-2:45; TR 10:00-10:45; before and by appointment

**TELEPHONE:** Office: 346-3712; Home (until 9 pm only): 344-7304 (It is ok to call!)

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Introduction to contemporary communication theories and research.

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of this class you should be able to

- 1.) Describe an array of communication theories;
- 2.) Select and use an appropriate theory to analyze and solve a communication problem;
- 3.) Work with a team to teach a class that uses active learning to explore the usefulness of a particular theory;
- 4.) Write an effective business letter/report that is tailored to a particular reader;
- 5.) Speak with poise and confidence;
- 6.) Explain, in your own words, what theory is, and why theory is useful.

### **Program Competencies for the Division of Communication**

*By the time they graduate, students should be able to*

1. *communicate effectively using appropriate technologies for diverse audiences;*
2. *plan, evaluate and conduct basic (quantitative and qualitative) communication research;*
3. *use communication theories to understand and solve communication problems;*
4. *apply historical communication perspectives to contemporary issues and practices; and*
5. *apply principles of ethical decision making in communication contexts.*

<b>GRADES:</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Letter Grades</b>	
Tickets to Class (17 x 4)	68 points	190-200	A
Team Teaching 1	20 points	186-189	A-
Team Teaching 2	20 points	182-185	B+
Qualifying Exam	20 points	174-181	B
Case Study Exam	20 points	170-173	B-
Case Study Exam	20 points	166-169	C+
Case Study Exam	20 points	158-165	C
<u>Participation</u>	<u>12 points</u>	154-157	C-
Total Possible Points	200 points	150-153	D+
		142-149	D
		138-141	D-
		<141	F

*Grades will be posted on our D2L website. You will not turn in tickets on the two days when your team teaches. You should have a grade of zero for those two tickets. You will complete 17 of the 19 total tickets, for a total of 200 possible points.*

### **TEXT RENTAL:**

West, R. and Turner, L.H. (2013). *Introducing communication theory: Analysis and application*. [5<sup>th</sup> Ed.]. Boston: McGraw Hill Higher Education.

### **TICKETS TO CLASS:**

1. When a ticket is assigned, you must turn in your ticket at the door before coming into the class. On the two days your team teaches, you do not turn in a ticket.
2. Your ticket grade rewards both your preparation for class and your presence and participation in class. You must be in class to get credit for a ticket. No exceptions!
3. Please write your class number and name in the upper right corner of each ticket. Numbers are used to speed up the process of recording grades and returning tickets before each class.

***To be in class, you must bring a ticket or use a free pass—except when you are teaching the class.***

### **FREE PASSES**

1. You may skip any three tickets of your choice. Simply write “free pass” on a paper and turn it in with the tickets, or email me that you are using a free pass.
2. You are responsible for material covered on the day you use a free pass. You may need to know about that theory for the case study exam.
3. **You** will decide what constitutes a good reason for using a free pass. I do not need to know why you use a free pass. No extra passes are given for illnesses, funerals, or car problems at the end of the semester; you are urged to save your free passes for real emergencies.
4. At the end of the semester, each unused free pass will be converted to two points.

### **CONCEPT MAPS AND OUTLINES**

1. You will be making concept maps of 10 chapters in your text. Concept maps will be graded based on four criteria:
  - +All main points are included.
  - +All links are appropriately labeled to show how the concepts are related.
  - +Hierarchical structure reflects the structure of the reading.
  - +A cross link accurately shows how a concept in one “family” is related to a concept in another “family.” You need one logical cross link for the grade.
2. Cross links are not required for the first maps. During that time, you will automatically get credit for cross links, since they are not yet required. Beginning with Ticket 7, you must also include at least one accurate cross link. A cross link is a dotted line between any two boxes from two different “families,” with a label that says how the two concepts are related. (Cross links must be labeled!)
3. For your final 3 maps, you may choose to produce a concept map, a **typed** outline, or a creative hybrid of the two. Regardless of your choice, your ticket **must** show: main points, relationships among the main points, hierarchy, and cross links. (The only way to show a cross link on a map or outline is to draw it in and label it.)
4. **If you are not satisfied with the grade you receive for any ticket, you may revise that ticket for a higher grade** if you turn in the revision (stapled to the graded original) within one week of the original due date. After one week, you can get feedback on a revised ticket, but the original grade remains the same.

## **EXAMS**

1. Your first exam will be an objective quiz, which you will take first, on your own, and then with your teaching team for a shared grade. You can prepare for this quiz by reading the text, completing tickets, making notes, and reviewing your class notes. The quiz is difficult.
2. You may take any three of the four case study exams. If you take all four exams, your top three grades will be counted toward your grade, and the lowest grade will be dropped. The final exam will be the fourth case study exam.
3. Each case study exam will include a case study based on real people's experiences, in the form of a written story, news report, or videotape. You will be challenged to summarize the communication problem involved, to select a theory that will help you to best analyze the problem, to explain the theory to a non-expert, and to use the theory to understand the problem and to suggest practical solutions.
4. Case study exams will be "open notes," so it is to your advantage to take good notes and to make clear and useful concept maps and/or outlines. You may not use your text.
5. If you receive a grade lower than 15 on a case study exam, you may opt to rewrite the exam for a grade of up to 15. If you choose to rewrite an exam, you **MUST** get help from the Tutoring Learning Center in the lower level of the library. The rewrite is due one week after exams are returned in class, and you can just drop it in the ticket box. Please attach the original blue book and the form from the TLC signed by the tutor who worked with you.
6. You must pass at least one of the three case study exams with a grade of 16 or more to pass the class.

*You can use each Case Study Forum as a kind of rehearsal for an exam. If you bring your three maps, you'll be able to see how you could use each theory to analyze the case study.*

## **PARTICIPATION GRADE:**

In this class, you learn not only from your instructor, but also from each other. The participation grade reflects your attendance during ticket and non-ticket days, class discussion, your contributions to your teaching teams, and leadership, especially in case study forums. The median grade for participation is 10. Only a few students will get the top grades, which are reserved for those who go significantly above and beyond for the class.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Free passes allow for three absences on theory days. **Three absences beyond those allowed will result in a drop of one letter grade.**

**TEAM TEACHING:** You may have had some bad experiences with group work, but I promise we have a way to set you up for success. You will work with two different teams, to teach the class about two communication theories. Almost always, teams prepare well and do a great job. This is your chance to get to know some of your classmates. You are encouraged to be dramatic, to use humor, interesting video clips, games, role plays, or group activities. Teams are encouraged to be creative. The class will clap and cheer before you start, and they will participate fully in any activities you plan. You may want to use a simple handout or a simple Power Point for your brief overview. The class will understand your explanations because they will have analyzed the reading for their tickets. They will be nice to you because they need you to be nice to them when they teach. This is the best audience you will ever have!

Each group must meet briefly with me at least twice to discuss what you will do. Each team MUST email me a detailed plan for the class you will teach at least 2 days before you teach. I can tell you about strategies that have worked for other groups, and I can tell you when something will probably not work. You are smart to take advantage of my experience with other groups in the past. You will have some class time to work with your group, but you will probably need to collaborate outside of class time. You may be able to accomplish this via email and telephone, but it will also be necessary to meet in person outside of class. All members of the group will receive the same grade for the team teaching projects, though different team members may contribute in different ways to the success of the presentation. For example, one person might coordinate your research efforts, while another produces handouts or power point slides, and yet another explains concepts to the class. Not everyone has to give a speech to the class. Each student must participate in two team teachings to pass the class.

It is important for you to check your email, phone, and texts for messages from your teammates, especially during the week or two before you teach. If a member fails to stay in touch with the group, that team member may become a “road block” to the team as they try to move forward with a plan.

*Tip: Whenever you work in a group, it helps to have someone volunteer to facilitate (be sure everyone gets to talk) and someone else to take notes. You can rotate these tasks so everyone has a chance to do both.*

If a member fails to pull his/her weight, the other members of the team may “fire the freeloader.” If your team is having a problem with a member, or if a member is failing to stay in touch and participate, you should email the problem member, with copies to the entire team and to me, detailing exactly what you need that person to do by a deadline of no later than 48 hours before your class. If the deadline is not met, you should contact me, and I will send the “pink slip” email to the member to be fired. This will still allow the rest of you two days to reshape your plan for the class. This firing process gives your team some degree of certainty that you can go into the class with confidence that you are all on the same page to teach a class that is useful, fun, and relatively low stress.

Some team members may go “above and beyond” for your group, and you will have an opportunity to thank them at the end of the semester. Each team member will have an opportunity to report on who contributed what, and this information will be figured into the participation grades of the group members.

Although this may seem scary at first, you need to know that students have overwhelmingly said the team teaching was the most rewarding part of the class for them. Do give it a chance!

After you finish teaching, I will meet with your team in the “green room.” This will give us all a chance to talk about how it went. If you looked like you were reading word for word, I will ask to see your notes. If you don’t want to read word for word, your notes should include only key phrases to remind you of what you want to say. Do not write it all out! More than anything in the class, this practice will build your confidence for your future leadership role at work.

*Important tip on speaking to the class: Talk to us! Never just read from notes. It is 100 times better to just talk and make little mistakes here and there than to read to us and be perfect but dull! Keep your notes minimal (not whole sentences) and use only basic concepts on handouts or Power Point. A top grade cannot be given to a teaching team if any member reads information that should be simply spoken. Practice before class!*

**CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENT OF GRADES FOR TEAM TEACHING:**

A highly successful teaching team will

- provide an accurate overview of the main points and arguments of the reading;
- explain how the learning activity will work;
- make available handouts, artifacts or props needed for the activity;
- facilitate the activity so that class members are able to better explore the usefulness of ideas from the reading;
- make it possible for class members to discover significant ideas for themselves;
- conclude by summarizing what participants have learned from the activity;
- tie this learning back into the reading and to other aspects of the class; and
- speak—not read—to the class (with or without notes or visual aids).

Grade of C or less: A presentation that accomplishes five or fewer of the goals will earn a grade of 16 or less.

Grade of B: A presentation that accomplishes most of these goals will earn a grade of 17-18 points.

Grade of A: A presentation that accomplishes all of these goals in an exciting and motivating way will earn a grade of 19-20 points.

## Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Read before class
Sept. 3	Your goals and input Set up teaching teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Symbolic Interaction Theory</li> <li>-Social Exchange Theory</li> <li>-Feminist Standpoint Theory</li> <li>-Organizational Culture Theory</li> <li>-Organizational Information Theory</li> <li>-Groupthink</li> </ul>	
Sept. 8	What is communication? How to make a concept map <u>Ticket 1: <b>Typed standard outline</b></u> of Chapter 1 (For standard format, see <a href="http://www.professays.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/MLA-Outline-Format.gif">http://www.professays.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/MLA-Outline-Format.gif</a> .)	Chapter 1
Sept. 10	Thinking about theory and research <u>Ticket 2: Concept Map of Chapter 3</u> (no cross links needed) Steps: -List main points in a rough outline. -Make a rough map. -Make a more refined map that shows <u>concepts in boxes</u> connected by <u>lines labeled to show how the boxes are related</u> , with the <u>bigger, more general concepts on the top of the page</u> . A good concept map reflects visually the structure of the chapter. The top winners in the "Concept Map Gallery" will be awarded an extra "Free Pass!"	Chapter 3
Sept. 15	Multiple Choice Quiz: on everything covered so far. First, you will take it individually, then you will take it with your group for a shared grade. Both your individual and group grade will count. Time to work.	
Sept. 17	Symbolic Interaction Theory <u>Ticket 3: Concept Map of Chapter 4</u> (no cross links needed)	Chapter 4
Sept. 22	Social Exchange Theory <u>Ticket 4: Concept Map of Chapter 9</u> (no cross links needed)	Chapter 9
Sept. 24	Feminist Standpoint Theory <u>Ticket 5: Concept map of chapter 30</u> (no cross links needed)	Chapter 30
Sept. 29	Case Study Forum If you miss this class, you will need notes and handouts to complete the next ticket. Try to be here, but if you can't, do have a classmate get handouts for you and explain the practice exam. Demonstration of how to make cross links on a concept map	
Oct. 1	How to write a successful exam <u>Ticket 6: Practice essay question in blue book</u>	

- Oct. 6 Case Study Exam 1
- Oct. 8 Organizational Culture Theory Chapter 16  
Ticket 7: Concept Map of Chapter 16 (practice making cross links)
- Oct. 13 Organizational Information Theory Chapter 17  
Ticket 8: Concept Map of Chapter 17 (practice making cross links)
- Oct. 15 Groupthink Chapter 14  
Ticket 9: Concept Map of Chapter 14 (practice making cross links)
- Oct. 20 Video documentary
- Oct. 22 Case Study Forum: The Man Who Knew  
Ticket 10: Write a **typed** two page analysis of the video from the perspective of the theory assigned to you.  
 --If you are teaching either Symbolic Interaction or Organizational Culture, use Organizational Culture Theory as a frame for your analysis.  
 --If you are teaching either Social Exchange or Organizational Information, use Organizational Information Theory.  
 --If you are teaching either Standpoint or Groupthink, please use Groupthink.
- Set up groups for team teaching                      Look over these chapters
- Narrative Paradigm
  - Cognitive Dissonance Theory
  - Cultural Studies
  - Face Negotiation Theory
  - Expectancy Violation Theory
  - Communication Accommodation Theory
- Oct. 27 Case Study Exam
- Oct. 29 Ticket 11: Reflection on theory. Write about a specific time you have used theory in some way to think through a practical problem. You may write about a specific theory or a general process of theoretical thinking.
- Nov. 3 Narrative Paradigm Chapter 20  
Ticket 12: Concept Map of Chapter 20 (include cross links)
- Nov. 5 Cognitive Dissonance Theory Chapter 6  
 Ticket 13: Concept Map of Chapter 6 (include cross links)
- Nov. 10 Cultural Studies Chapter 25  
Ticket 14: Concept Map of Chapter 25 (include cross links)

Nov. 12 Case Study Forum

Nov. 17 Case Study Exam 3

Nov. 19 Face-Negotiation Theory Chapter 27  
Ticket 15: Concept Map or Outline of Chapter 27  
If you make an outline or hybrid map/outline, you must draw in cross links.

Nov. 24 Expectancy Violation Chapter 7  
Ticket 16: Concept Map or Outline of Chapter 7

-----**Thanksgiving**-----

Dec. 1 Communication Accommodation Theory Chapter 28  
Ticket 17: Concept Map or Outline of Chapter 28

Dec. 3 Simulation (training and practice)

Dec. 8 Simulation

Dec. 10 Simulation Debriefing/ Case Study Forum: Bafa Bafa  
Ticket 18: Write a two page **typed** analysis of Bafa Bafa from the perspective of the theory assigned to you.  
-If you taught Narrative or Face, please use Face Negotiation.  
-If you taught Cognitive Dissonance or Expectancy Violation, use Expectancy Violation.  
-If you taught Cultural Studies or Communication Accommodation, you are to use Communication Accommodation.

Dec. 15 Ticket 19: Write a two page **typed** reflection on what you have learned in this class. This might include specific theories, practical skills, increased awareness of how you learn or how you prefer to work, your strengths/weaknesses as a theoretician, your reaction to communication theories, etc.

The final exam will be your fourth case study exam. If you took the first three exams and are satisfied with your grades, you need not come to the final. You may take the final at either of the following times. Come to either exam.

**Section 1 (11:00) Mon., Dec. 21, 10:15-12:15. (exam group 14)**  
**Section 2 (12:35) Thurs., Dec. 17, 8:00-10:00. (exam group 5)**



## **A Classroom Culture That Works for Us (Draft subject to revision)**

**Student-centered classroom.** This class is structured for active learning. Instead of listening passively, you can expect to take part in problem solving activities and role plays. Every aspect of the class should be connected to a practical learning objective. If something we do does not contribute to student learning, we should not be doing it.

**Students working together.** As a member of two teaching teams this semester, you will get to know and work with other members of the class. We expect every student to be here (on time), to be prepared, and to participate in every class.

**What is expected of the professor?** The professor is expected to provide a class structure that gets students actively involved in analyzing readings and teaching each other. She is expected to teach and model useful skills in reading, concept mapping, writing, and leading a discussion. She is expected to demonstrate how theories can be useful in understanding and solving a wide range of practical problems in communication. She will grade tickets, using clear criteria, and return them at the beginning of each class. She will grade and return exams within a week.

**Creativity and playful experimentation.** Fun and play not only make this class an enjoyable experience; they actually open our minds to learning and enable us to be creative. Students are encouraged to be creative in planning the classes you will teach. A bit of silliness for a good cause can help people remember your message. (This is not the same as goofing off, which is simply a waste of time.)

**Permission to disagree.** We all have permission to respectfully disagree with other classmates, the professor, and even ourselves (this might be called changing your mind!). It is always okay to ask a question.

**Making it comfortable for students to speak.** We always applaud enthusiastically before and after each student presentation. When someone is speaking, we listen. Little whispered conversations are not allowed.

**Plagiarism.** Plagiarism means taking credit for someone else's work. Turning in a concept map designed by someone else is one example of plagiarism. Plagiarism is not tolerated here, and will result in a failing grade for the course and a report to the Office of Academic Misconduct. This policy protects the integrity of your work.

### **About You**

1. What are some strengths that you bring to this class?
  
2. What are some challenges you will face?
  
3. What would you like to happen in this class?
  
4. What do you not want to happen?
  
5. What questions or concerns do you have?

If you agree to these expectations, please sign here. \_\_\_\_\_  
Please print your name if your signature might be hard to read. \_\_\_\_\_  
What theory will your group be teaching? \_\_\_\_\_