

Communication Theory Syllabus

Important Note: This syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to check Canvas for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be clearly noted in a course announcement and through email.

Course Information

Instructor Information

Instructor: Mark Tolsted
Office: CAC 228
Virtual Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10AM-11AM. I will be in the office during these times and can communicate with you via phone or email.
Office Telephone: 715.346.3920
E-mail: mtolsted@uwsp.edu

Course Information

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 the media give us. 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 look at the role of the media using theories of communication in society to guide us. Looking at and understanding such theories is what this class is about.

Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisite: None.

Textbook & Course Materials

Required Text: Students must have access to *Connect Access for A First Look at Communication Theory 10th edition*; Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., and Sparks, G. 2018.

Other Readings: There are additional readings assigned which are posted and assigned in Canvas.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this class, students will have:

1--analyzed several key communication theories

2--explained one theory by composing an articulate, grammatically correct, and organized piece of writing with properly documented and supported ideas, evidence, and information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience

3--demonstrated the ability to evaluate others' writing to provide effective and useful feedback to improve their communication.

You will meet the outcomes listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

- Writing about theory.
- Completing answers to questions about applying theory.
- Taking examinations
- Participating in online discussion forums.

Student Expectations

In this course you will be expected to complete the following types of tasks.

- communicate via email
- complete basic internet searches
- download and upload documents to the LMS
- read documents online
- view online videos
- participate in online discussions
- complete quizzes/tests online
- submit files to Canvas

Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Canvas you can:

- Visit with a [Student Technology Tutor](#).
"https://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/ComputerGuides.aspx"
- Seek assistance from the [IT Service Desk](#) (Formerly HELP Desk)
 - o IT Service Desk Phone: 715-346-4357 (HELP)
 - o IT Service Desk Email: techhelp@uwsp.edu

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Connect, you can call McGraw-Hill technical support at 1.800.331.5094

Course Technology Requirements

- Minimum recommended computer and internet configurations for online courses can be found [here](#).

Students should have access to a variety of browsers. I have found that Google Chrome and Firefox work well with both Connect and Canvas. Explorer and Edge have had some issues with pop-ups and library resources: streaming videos especially. Be prepared to access things for this class in different browsers.

Expected Instructor Response Times

I will attempt to respond to student emails within 24 hours. Remember some faculty receive as many as 100 emails per day. Yours should be clear, concise, and professional so that I can respond to your issues can be responded effectively. Include the entire thread of an ongoing email conversation. This will help me recall the history of your issue without searching for other emails you have sent. Sign off with your first and last name. I will not open attachments without messages or messages that are illegible.

- If you have not received a reply from me within 24 hours please resend your email. Make certain to include the following in the Topic Line: COMM 200 Fall 2018
- I will attempt to reply to and assess student discussion posts within 48 hours of discussions closing.
- I will attempt to grade written work within 72 hours; however, longer written assignments may take me longer to read and assess.

Grading Policies

Graded Course Activities

Assignment	Brief Description	Points/Percentage	Learning Outcomes Met (#)
SmartBook Practices Sessions	Complete the Practices sessions for each of the assigned chapters in the SmartBook	18@5 = 90 points	#1
Unit/Module Examinations	These online examinations cover the content units/modules	180 points	#1 and #2
Annotated Bibliographies	There are two annotated bibliographies, one each for content Units 3 and 5	2@15 = 30	#1 and #2
Discussion Forum Posting of Question Answers and Clip Comments	As students progress through Unit 3, students will answers posted questions and provide comments on screened video clips. These are posted to the assigned discussion forum.	15	#1 and #2
Response to Peers Posted Answers and Comments	A response to the work of other members of your assigned group.	5	#3
Discussion Forum Posting of Semiotic Screening and Analysis	Posting of a short essay of Semiotics as applied to <i>Cheers</i> .	10	#2 and #3

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Response to Peers Posted Essays on <i>Cheers</i>	A response to the work of other members of your assigned group	5	#3
Response to Peers Critical Application Essay	A response to the work of other members of your assigned group	10	#3
Critical Application Essay	An application essay applying the tenets of a given communication theory to a provided text.	40	#1 and #2

Letter Grade Assignment

Final grades assigned for this course will be based on the percentage of total points earned and are assigned as follows:

91%+	=	A
90%	=	A-
89%	=	B+
81%-88%	=	B
80%	=	B-
79%	=	C+
71%-78%	=	C
70%	=	C-
69%	=	D+
61%-68%	=	D
0%-60%	=	F

Viewing Grades in Canvas

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted to the Grades section of the Canvas course. Look at your recent feedback on the home page or click on the Grades link to view your points. I will update the online grades each time a grading session has been complete—typically 48 hours following the completion of an activity. You will receive a notification from Canvas when new grades are posted depending on your notification settings.

Participation

Students are expected to participate in all online activities as listed on the course calendar.

Complete Assignments

All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Canvas. Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from instructor *before the due date*.

All discussion assignments must be completed by the assignment due date and time. Late or missing discussion assignments will impact your grade.

Late Work Policy

I will allow you to reschedule the date and time of assigned work 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 scheduled work. 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 Canvas for due dates and times.

Outline/Schedule

Note 1: I reserve the right to make changes to the course requirements depending on need. If this happens, you will be notified of any changes in class via CANVAS and through email.

Note 2: Refer to the Canvas course calendar for specific meeting dates and times. Activity and assignment details are explained in detail within each week's corresponding learning module. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Week 1:

Tuesday, September 3: Unit 1: Class Overview

Wednesday, September 4: Work through Unit 1 in Canvas

Thursday, September 5: Purchase and access the *Connect Access for A First Look at Communication Theory 10th edition; Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., and Sparks, G. 2018.*

Week 2:

Unit 2: Understanding Communication Theory

Monday, September 9: You need to be registered and have access by 5PM on Monday, September 10th.

Open and review Welcome to Unit 2 and the Unit 2 Outline.

Thursday, September 12: **McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due**

Friday, September 13: **Unit 2 Canvas Quiz Due**

Week 3:

Unit 3: Theories of Interpersonal Communication

Monday, September 16: Open and review Welcome to Unit 3 and the Unit 3 Outline

Thursday, September 19: **Module 1 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due**

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Friday, September 20:	Unit 3 Module 1 Canvas Quiz Due
Week 4:	
Thursday, September 26:	Module 2 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due
Friday, September 27:	Unit 3 Module 2 Canvas Quiz Due
Week 5:	
Thursday, October 3:	Module 3 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due
Friday, October 4:	Unit 3 Module 3 Canvas Quiz Due
Week 6:	
Thursday, October 10:	Module 4 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due
Friday, October 11:	Unit 3 Module 4 Canvas Quiz Due
Week 7:	
Monday, October 14:	Annotated Bibliography #1 Due
Wednesday, October 16:	Question Answers & Comments on Video Clips Posted to Discussion Forum Due
Friday, October 18:	Responses to peers posted questions and comments on the video clips posted to discussion forum Due (5 points)
Week 8:	<u>Unit 4: Theories of Group and Public Communication</u>
Monday, October 21:	Open and review Welcome to Unit 4 and the Unit 4 Outline
Thursday, October 24:	Unit 4 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due
Friday, October 25:	Unit 4 Canvas Quiz Due
Week 9:	<u>Unit 5: Mass and Mediated Communication</u>
Monday, October 28:	Open and review Welcome to Unit 5 and the Unit 5 Outline
Thursday, October 31:	Unit 5 Module 1 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due

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Friday, November 1st: Unit 5 Module 1 Canvas Quiz Due

Week 10:

Wednesday, November 6: Cheers Comments Posting to Discussion Forum Due

Thursday, November 7: Unit 5 Module 2 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due

Friday, November 8: Unit 5 Module 2 Canvas Quiz Due
Response to Peers Cheers Comments Due

Week 11:

Thursday, November 14: Unit 5 Module 3 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due

Friday, November 15: Unit 5 Module 3 Canvas Quiz Due

Week 12:

Thursday, November 21: Unit 5 Module 4 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due

Friday, November 22: Unit 5 Module 4 Canvas Quiz Due

Week 13:

Tuesday, November 26: Unit 5 Module 5 McGraw-Hill Connect SmartBook Practice Due

Wednesday, November 27: Unit 5 Module 5 Canvas Quiz Due

THANKSGIVING BREAK: November 28 and November 29

Week 14:

Wednesday, December 4: Annotated Bibliography #2 Due

Week 15:

Monday, December 9: Critical Application Essay Draft Posting to Discussion Forum Due

Wednesday, December 11: Peer Review of Critical Application Essays Due

Friday, December 13: Revised Critical Application Essay Due

Course Policies

Netiquette Guidelines

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 ☺ 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 "Post Reply" button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- Using humor is acceptable

Attendance

If you decide to drop a class, please do so using myPoint or visit the Enrollment Services Center. Changes in class enrollment will impact your tuition and fee balance, financial aid award and veterans educational benefits.

During the first eight days of the regular 16 week term, I will take attendance. *Since this is an online class, I will be determining attendance by looking at your Canvas usage statistics and your completion of assigned materials.* If you are not in attendance, you may be dropped from the class. You are responsible for dropping any of your enrolled classes.

- If you must be absent during the term, tell me prior to the work that you will miss. If you cannot reach me in an emergency, contact the Dean of Students Office at 715-346-2611 or DOS@uwsp.edu.
- If you are dropped from this class due to non-attendance, you may only be reinstated to the class section using the class add process. Reinstatement to this class is not guaranteed.

- If you take part in an off-campus trip by an authorized university group such as an athletic team, Student Government Organization activities, musical or dramatic organizations, or another class, and will not be able to complete work by the assigned date and time, make appropriate arrangements in advance with me. If you are absent from classes because of emergencies, off-campus trips, illness, or the like, I will give you a reasonable amount of help in making up the work you have missed.
- If you enroll in this class and cannot begin participating until well after the class has already started, you must first get permission from me...otherwise, you may be required to drop the course.

Absences due to Military Service

You will not be penalized for class absence due to unavoidable or legitimate required military obligations, or medical appointments at a VA facility, not to exceed two (2) weeks unless special permission is granted. You are responsible for notifying me of such circumstances as far in advance as possible and for providing documentation to the Office of the Dean of Students to verify the reason for the absence. I will make reasonable accommodations or opportunities for you to make up exams or other course assignments that have an impact on the course grade. For absences due to being deployed for active duty, please refer to the [Military Call-Up Instructions for Students](#).

Build Rapport with Me and Your Peers

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let me know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise during the semester so that we can help you find a solution.

Understand When You May Drop This Course

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider unenrolling from a course. Refer to the UWSP [Academic Calendar](#) for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons includes: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student's family.

Incomplete Policy

Under emergency/special circumstances, you may ask to work with me for an incomplete grade. An incomplete will only be assigned 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 scheduled work. Please note: I may very well refuse to allow you to give the incomplete. All incomplete course assignments must be completed prior to the mid-point of the next academic semester.

Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed

If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Disability and Assistive](#)

[Technology Center](#) and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of disability to Disability Services and meet with a Disability Services counselor to request special accommodation *before* classes start.

The Disability and Assistive Technology Center is located in 609 Albertson Hall and can be contacted by phone at (715) 346-3365 (Voice) (715) 346-3362 (TDD only) or via email at datctr@uwsp.edu

Statement of Policy

UW-Stevens Point will modify academic program requirements as necessary to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. The modifications should not affect the substance of educational programs or compromise academic standards; nor should they intrude upon academic freedom. Examinations or other procedures used for evaluating students' academic achievements may be adapted. The results of such evaluation must demonstrate the student's achievement in the academic activity, rather than describe his/her disability.

If modifications are required due to a disability, please inform the instructor and contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center in 609 ALB, or (715) 346-3365.

Commit to Integrity

As a student in this course (and at this university) you are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class and also integrity in your behavior in and out of the classroom.

UWSP Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures

Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures

UWSP 14.01 Statement of principles

The board of regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the university of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the university of Wisconsin system. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

UWSP 14.03 Academic misconduct subject to disciplinary action.

(1) Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:

- (a) Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- (b) Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- (c) Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- (d) Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- (e) Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance; or
- (f) Assists other students in any of these acts.

(2) Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to: cheating on an examination; collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course; submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another; submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas; stealing examinations or course materials; submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course; tampering with the laboratory experiment or computer program of another student; knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

Religious Beliefs

Relief from any academic requirement due to religious beliefs will be accommodated according to UWS 22.03, with notification within the first three weeks of class.

Helpful Resources

Tutoring	Advising	Safety and General Support	Health
Tutoring and Learning Center helps with Study Skills, Writing, Technology, Math, & Science. 018 Albertson Hall, ext 3568	Academic and Career Advising Center, 320 Albertson Hall, ext 3226	Dean of Students Office, 212 Old Main, ext. 2611	Counseling Center, Delzell Hall, ext. 3553. Health Care, Delzell Hall, ext. 4646