

COM 207 – INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION INQUIRY
Hugh Downs School of Human Communication

INSTRUCTOR:

Office:

Office Hours:

Email:

Required Materials:

Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., & Sparks, G. (2015). *Communication: A first look at communication theory (9th ed)*. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill

- Course Readings on our Blackboard site
- Other readings as assigned
- Access to Blackboard and ASU email
- APA guidelines: <http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPA.html>
This website is a very useful resource and provides a very handy, six-page overview of APA style and several useful links for quick reference.

Recommend Materials:

APA style manual (6th ed.)

Course Description

This is the foundational course for all communication majors. Thus in this course you will be given a basic foundation for writing, reading, and evaluating communication research from the social scientific, interpretive, and critical paradigms. This course will introduce you to a variety of new terms, concepts, and ways of thinking so that you understand the language of human communication. This course will be both rigorous and fun. We will address the following kinds of questions: Why and how do we study human communication? Who is asking what types of questions and why? What types of questions should we be asking? How does theory translate into effective research agendas? How and where can we find theory in our everyday lives? What are my research agendas and how do we get from idea to theory to research? Why do we need to write in APA style and how do we comply with all the rules?

Course Goals

- For students to understand the basic paradigms of human communication inquiry
- For students to recognize and describe a broad range of communication theories
- For students to locate, read, and critically summarize communication research studies
- For students to explore the relationship between communication theory and practice in the context of everyday life.

Course Objectives

- To define epistemology, ontology, and axiology, and how they differ in the social scientific, interpretive, and critical paradigms.
- To understand several communication theories and identify to which paradigm they belong
- To be able to find communication research articles at the library or through the library's website and be able to select what is important in those articles in order to summarize them.
- To take research and turn it into a well-written literature review that would be the foundation for your own research project.
- To find ways to apply communication theory to our everyday lives through personal examples, popular culture, and current events.

An Important Reminder

You realize that you must meet all grade point average (2.5 of 4.0 scale) and pre-requisite requirements to get into this class and remain in this class. If you do not meet the grade point average or pre-requisite requirements, the Hugh Downs School retains the right to remove you from the course whether or not you have completed any assignments, exams, or work. We will remove you administratively if you do not withdraw from the course on your own.

Academic Integrity Policy:

In the "Student Academic Integrity Policy" manual, ASU defines "Plagiarism" [as] using another's words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Plagiarism is defined in this class as intentionally or unintentionally using another's work as outlined above

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), Course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

Academic dishonesty, including inappropriate collaboration, will not be tolerated. There are severe sanctions for cheating, plagiarizing and any other form of dishonesty. All projects in this class will be turned in on *SafeAssign* through the Blackboard site.

In addition: Please note that the work you do in this class may **not** be used in your 308 class **unless** your instructor gives you explicit permission. Please ASK your instructor whether you can use the work you do in this class in your assignments in COM 308.

SafeAssign: All assignments in this course must be submitted through SafeAssign, a plagiarism detection service integrated within Blackboard. *Attention MAC and Office 2007 users: Assignments must be formatted in either (.doc) or (.txt) format. Submitting to SafeAssign does not constitute turning in your assignment! You MUST turn a hard copy in to me on or before the day that it is due and submit assignments to SafeAssign.* Assignments not submitted to SafeAssign will not receive a grade.

Grading Scale

A+= 582-600 A=552-581 A-=540-551 B+=522-539 B=492-521 B-=480-491 C+=468-479 C=420-467 D=360-419 E=359-below

Grade	Percentage	Points
A+	100%	600-582
A	93-99.9%	581-552
A-	90-92.9%	551-540
B+	87-89.9%	539-522
B	83-86.9%	521-492
B-	80-82.9%	491-480
C+	77-79.9%	479-468
C	70-76.9%	467-420
D	60-69.9%	419-360
E	0-59.9%	0-359

While percentages are useful in keeping track of your grade, grades are assessed based on the point scale on the left. Final grades will not be rounded. By staying in the course you agree to the point scale as a determinant of the grade you earn.

Expectations for Graded Work

Meeting the requirements of an assignment is considered *average* work. Therefore, the grade earned by meeting the basic requirements is a "C." Grades are not assigned for effort, though

hard work is likely to earn you a better grade. Following University policy, I utilize the following grading scale:

- An **A** is given to excellent work. Excellent work includes all of the requirements of the assignment and shows a superior understanding of the material. A assignments are creative in presentation of thoughts and opinions as well as in the application and evaluation of those concepts. A assignments are precise and well thought-out, go above and beyond requirements and are free of stylistic errors.
- A **B** is given to good work. Good work includes all of the requirements of the assignment and shows a valid understanding of the material. B assignments are clear in presentation of thoughts and opinions as well as in the application and evaluation of those concepts. B assignments are accurate and thought-out, exceed assignment requirements and have very few stylistic errors.
- A **C** is given to average work. Average work simply meets the requirements of the assignment. C assignments show an understanding of the material, and in general how to apply and evaluate it. Demonstrating basic competency in organization, spelling, grammar, and structure is meeting the average expectations of a college student.
- A **D** is given to below average work. Below average work misses and/or fails to meet the requirements of the assignment. D assignments show the student has not demonstrated a grasp or utilization of concepts. D assignments will not show competency in basic fundamentals expected by college students.
- An **E** is given to poor work. Poor work indicates a student has no grasp on the material or the assignment, or does not care. Failure to turn in assignments, follow directions, or participate in class on a consistent (more than once) basis will result in an E.

Course Assignments

General Format: All assignments should be typed and in APA format. All written assignments will be graded on spelling, grammar, and writing style. Assignments not typed will not be accepted unless otherwise indicated.

- **Electronic copies of assignments (via email) are not accepted unless specified.**
- **Assignments must be turned in to me in hard copy form and through SafeAssignment.**

Exams: There will be 3 exams that cover the material from the textbook, class discussions, and in-class activities. Exams will be multiple choice, true/false, matching, and short answer. Please remember to bring a #2 pencil on the exam dates.

Paper Proposal: In 1 ½ to 2 pages, please explain the topic and/or theory you would like to examine for your literature review and provide the rationale (why this topic is worthy of investigation). **You must provide 2 (two) sources, 1 (one) must be from a communication journal, both must utilize your chosen theory and explain how these sources support your topic.** *You must turn a hard copy of your proposal in to me at the beginning of class and submit in electronic form as a Word document to SafeAssign through the link provided on our Blackboard site by the due date.* Papers will NOT be graded if they are not submitted to SafeAssign. Details about the assignment will be provided later and made available on our course website.

Coding Sheets: Coding sheets outline the key aspects of a research study. This assignment requires that you code 4 research articles. Coding sheets **MUST** include the APA citation; purpose/rationale/justification of the study; hypothesis/research questions; subjects, site, or text(s) studied; research methods and methods of data analysis; findings and most importantly the implications or meaning of the research findings.

All four articles or studies must be published in communication journals. All four articles must utilize the theory or theories you have chosen to study. All articles should contain each of the elements listed above. DO NOT use meta-analyses or theoretical pieces for these assignments. If you use meta-analyses or theoretical pieces for these assignments you will receive a zero (0). *You must turn a hard copy of your coding sheets in to me at the beginning of class and submit in electronic form as a Word document to SafeAssign through the link provided on our Blackboard site by the due date. Coding sheets must also include a copy of each articles abstract.* Coding sheets will NOT be graded if they are not submitted to SafeAssign. Details about the assignment will be provided later and made available on our course website.

Annotated Bibliography: We will focus on developing your familiarity and comfort with writing in an academic style, namely APA. **You will complete a five-source (four must be from communication journals, utilize your chosen theory or theories, and all five must be peer-reviewed, research studies)** annotated bibliography of articles that you think might assist you in writing your final paper. For each entry, you will provide the appropriate source citation and a short (4-5 sentence) description containing specific information about the article. *You must turn a hard copy of your annotated bibliography in to me at the beginning of class and submit in electronic form as a Word document to SafeAssign through the link provided on our Blackboard site by the due date.* Bibliographies will NOT be graded if they are not submitted to SafeAssign. Details about the assignment will be provided later and made available on our course website

*** If you have questions about the appropriateness of your article, please see me.***

Extended Office Hours: All students are encouraged to visit office hours regularly in this course. Wrapping your head around the concept of the literature review can often be both confusing and frustrating. Students who attend office hours regularly always do better in this class. All students should meet with me during the weeks designated in the calendar for extended office hours to talk through their exemplary writing and literature review assignments. Office hour visits are one metric used in the calculation of your final participation grade.

Exemplary Writing Sample Assignment: Prior to the due date of your Literature Review, you will turn in 1 page of the Literature Review Assignment. The goals of this assignment are twofold: (1) it ensures that you have started your Literature Review with sufficient time to complete the assignment and (2) it provides me an opportunity to review your writing and offer you feedback and direction on your Literature Review. This sample of writing may be from any of the required sections of the Literature Review Assignment (Introduction, Theoretical Overview, Synthesis) and should demonstrate your BEST writing. This assignment, if completed correctly, will provide you with the tools necessary to successfully complete your Literature Review.

Literature Review/Synthesis of Scholarship: You will write a 5-7 page literature review on a communication topic or phenomena utilizing a communication theory and at least 8 scholarly research articles, 4 of which must be from communication journals and 4 of which must utilize your chosen theory or theories. In the literature review, you need to describe, synthesize, and explain the research you have selected. *You must turn a hard copy of your literature review in to me at the beginning of class and submit in electronic form as a Word document to SafeAssign through the link provided on our Blackboard site by the due date.* Literature reviews will NOT be graded if they are not submitted to SafeAssign. Details about the assignment will be made available on our course website.

Participation/Activities: Please come prepared to participate in class discussions and activities. In order to receive credit for participation, you must be present AND engaged. We will hold between 5-10 in class activities and writing workshops. These activities are essential to your success in the course and your ability to adequately complete course assignments. **Please note that activity credit CANNOT be earned if you are absent, whether the absence is excused or not!** If you are absent, you cannot make up participation points. Frequent tardiness or inconsiderate behavior (surfing on laptop, reading the school paper, sleeping, being disruptive,

texting, IMing, etc.) will lower your participation grade; you will be fined 5 points per incidence. Your participation will be determined by self-evaluation, instructor evaluation, and in-class activities.

Assignments

Exams (3)	150 points (50 points each x 3)
Annotated Bibliography	50 points
Coding Sheets (4)	100 points total (25 points each x 4)
Exemplary Writing	50 points
Literature Review	200 points
Participation/Activities	50 points

Total Points **600 points**

Classroom Policies

Attendance/Absences

Attendance in this class is required. You are allowed three (3) unexcused absences. After 3, you will lose five (5) points per day you are absent. If a student reaches six (6) absences (including the 3 allowed) he/she will fail the course. This course is fundamental to your success as a communication major and as such, attendance is mandatory. **Please note that activities may not be made up if you are absent, even if the absence is excused.** Being present and prepared for class is the first step in ensuring your success not only in this course, but also as a communication major. In order to qualify as an excused absence, one of the following must apply:

- Documented illness or emergency (e.g., car accident, death in the family)
- Religious holiday
- University-sponsored event, i.e., athletic teams, debate, etc.

Exams cannot be made up without official documentation as approved by the instructor. Make-up exams are at the sole discretion of the instructor. No exceptions can be made for the final exam. Please plan your holidays accordingly.

Student Conduct:

I want to build a classroom climate that is comfortable for everyone. In a communication class, it is *especially* important that we (1) display respect for all members of the classroom—including fellow students and the instructor, (2) pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities, and (3) avoid any unnecessary disruption during class time. In addition, it is important that we respect the beliefs, values and ideas presented by one another, even if we do not agree. It is for this reason that I will not tolerate racist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus or this classroom. I will not tolerate the degradation of another person on the basis of race, sex, age, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, or religion. For additional information on The Hugh Downs School of Human Communication's policies on student conduct please visit <http://asu.edu/aad/manuals/usi/usi201-10.html>. **It should also be noted that the time prior to and immediately following our class are not appropriate times to ask me questions. If you have a question you should utilize office hours. I will not respond to inquiries made before or after our scheduled class time.**

Laptop Computers

While class is in session, students **MAY NOT** use laptops. I have instituted this policy for a number of reasons that are substantiated by educational research. First, emailing, instant messaging, game playing, and web surfing frequently distract students who use laptops in the classroom. As a result, laptop users provide less eye contact and participate less in class discussion. Second, technology use distracts other students in the class. Communication and technology experts Kinzer and Lohnes find that students are distracted by the sound of typing and sight of screen glow. Finally, the use of laptops inhibits feelings of community in a classroom, because several in-class laptop users are dually and only partially committed to two simultaneous contexts: the world of the classroom and online space.

Cell phones & Text messaging

Cell phones must be turned off or in the silent position during class (silent does not include vibrate) and put out of sight. Students who get up to answer a call during class will be asked to leave class and will not receive credit for that day's participation. If for a serious reason you are on call during class, please inform me at the beginning of class.

I have a 0 Tolerance Policy regarding text messaging and cell phone usage.

As such, please be aware of the following policies regarding text messaging and cell phone usage:

Cell phone use during class makes you the HSIC – Head Student in Charge!

Overwhelmingly, communication and education scholars have shown that using cell phone technology in class interferes with learning (Williams, et al., 2011), promotes incivility (Schroeder & Robertson, 2008), is disruptive, and results in increased errors and decreased academic performance (Monk, et al., 2008)

Once class starts, you may not use your cell phone. If I see you using your phone, you will become the "HSIC or Head Student in Charge." One space at the front of the room will be reserved for the HSIC of the class. If I see somebody using a phone in class, I'll ask him/her to sit in the space designated for the HSIC. For the rest of the period, the HSIC will regularly be called on to answer questions that I would normally direct to the entire class. After all, people who text during class must already be so comfortable with the material that they have the luxury to disengage in lecture and discussion. They are, in a manner of speaking, the "HSIC – or the Head Student in Charge" of the class. If the HSIC fails to correctly answer two questions, he or she will be asked to leave for the rest of the period. Once asked to leave, the student forfeits his or her participation and/or activity credit for the day. (Policy adapted from Fox, R. C. 2012).

Disability accommodation and needs:

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the Disability Resources for Students office by contacting them at 965-1234 or www.asu.edu/drs. Thereafter, you are invited to schedule appointments to see me during office hours to discuss accommodations. The following campus resources offer other forms of assistance: Writing Center (asu.edu/duas/wcenter/), The Learning Resources Center (www.asu.edu/vpsa/lrc/), and Counseling/Consultation (www.asu.edu/counseling_center/).

Email

Please feel free to email me if you have questions or concerns that I can address adequately via email. **Note, however, I do NOT accept any assignments via email.** Period. Email correspondence should only be used when you are unable to locate the answer to your query elsewhere. If I have not responded to your email, it is likely that I either did not receive it, or that the answer to your inquiry can be found in the syllabus, on blackboard or an assignment sheet. Emails that simply declare (e.g. "I was sick...") rather than inquire (e.g. "I read the assignment sheet but still have a questions regarding...") will not be answered. I usually check my email daily. Please allow me 48 hours to respond. I teach 4 classes every semester and am enrolled as a student in 3 classes of my own. As such, I ask that you include the course number (COM 207) in the subject line and your Last Name so I am quickly able to discern you as a student in this course. Failure to include the course number and your last name in the subject line of the email will likely result in your email not receiving the immediate attention I strive to provide my students.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due, turned in to me in hard copy form, on or before the scheduled due date at the beginning of class. (Submitting to SafeAssign is not a substitute!) Late assignments will be penalized 20% of the point value of the assignment per calendar day, including weekends. Assignments not turned in by the class period following the due date will receive no points. Assignments submitted via email will not be accepted. Assignments not stapled will be assessed the 20% late deduction.

Grading Appeals: Follow the "24-7 Rule." You must wait 24 hours after receiving a grade and appeal within 7 days. No grade will be discussed on the day an assignment is

returned. If you receive a grade that you believe to be unfair, please provide a written response to me either via email or on paper, no later than 7 days after the assignment has been returned, identifying the assignment, test question, etc. and showing how you believe the grade did not reflect your fulfillment of the assignment. I will then assess your written response and reassess your grade, if warranted. Keep in mind that you must provide a well thought-out appeal. Claims such as "I worked so hard" or "This is unfair" are unlikely to lead me to reassess your grade, so put some thought into your request.

****This syllabus is considered a contract between you and me. If you cannot accept the terms outlined in this contract, you should consider enrolling in a different section.**

Syllabus references on cell phone and laptop use:

- Lohnes, S. & Kinzer, C. (2007). Questioning assumptions about students' expectations for technology in college classrooms, *Innovate*, 3. Retrieved August 3, 2012 from <http://www.innovateonline.info/index.php?view=article&id=431>. The article is reprinted here with permission of the publisher, The Fischler School of Education and Human Services at Nova Southeastern University.
- Monk, C. A., Trafton, J. G., & Boehm-Davis, D. A. (2008). The effect of interruption duration and demand on resuming suspended goals. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 14, 299-313.
- Schroeder, J. L., & Robertson, H. (2008). Civility in the college classroom. Association for *Psychological Science Observer*, 21. Retrieved August 2, 2012 from <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/2008/november-08/civility-in-the-college-classroom.html>
- Williams, J. A., Berg, H., Gerber, H., Miller, M., Cox D., Votteler, N., Carwile, D., & McGuire, M. (2011). "I get distracted by their being distracted": The etiquette of in-class texting. *Eastern Educational Journal*, 40, 48-66.