

Introduction to Communication

Communication 101
Tue-Thu 11-12:15
4105 Behavioral Sciences Building (BSB)

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Course description

Communication has two meanings: the most commonly understood transmission of information and the perhaps more subtle one of sharing equally in something (from the Latin *communis*). These two different senses of the word point to the broad concerns of the field and to its origins in the very nature of human experience: we are the only species that inhabits a world that is in large part a product of our own making. Max Weber put it this way: “Man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun.” We inhabit a social reality whose contours are the product of shared symbol systems. Unlike bees, wolves, or ants—social creatures all—we are the only species that can change the rules of the game.

This course introduces you to a sample of the research in this fascinating and what I regard as the most important of the social sciences. The course will be divided into two parts: seminal works that represent some of the most important ideas in the field and representative research of some of the faculty in the department.

Course Objectives

- To understand the role of communication in society.
- To be exposed to key communication areas, theories and research.
- To practice, think and write about communication critically.
- To become acquainted with the department of Communication.
- To appreciate what a degree in Communication prepares you for.

Reading materials

Tubbs, S., & Moss, S. (2008). *Human communication: Principles and Contexts*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Other readings are available as pdf's from www.blackboard.uic.edu. Login using your UIC NetID and password, then click on **Spring 2009 COMM 101** and **assignments**.

Requirements

Woody Allen said that “eighty percent of success is showing up.” For this class this means not only coming to class, attending to and participating in the discussion, but also faithfully reading the assigned material. Don't be put off by the statistics in the articles--we will discuss their meaning in class, but please note that the authors always interpret the numbers in a comprehensible discussion

and conclusion. Formal requirements include two critiques of assigned research articles (or a blog, see below), two exams, and half a dozen randomly spaced quizzes that will test your preparation for the day's work. More details on these as the class unfolds.

	Course Grade %
Article critiques (due 2/3, 2/17)	20
Quizzes (best 5 scores of 6)	20
Exam 1	30
Exam 2	30

Article Critiques and Blog

For the article critiques, you will select one of the articles covered in class, and write an in-depth review and evaluation of the article. The article critique should be 3 pages long, typed, in 12-size font (no smaller, no larger), 1-inch margin, double spaced. Do not waste time summarizing the article in detail – the article summary should be no longer than a paragraph or two. Critique the theoretical soundness of the study, its contribution to the field and significance, the methodology, interpretation of results, writing, and organization. *Late assignments will not be accepted.* You all have to complete the first article critique, due 2/3. The first article critique is worth 10% of your grade.

2nd Article Critique or Blog

As part of the class, you will have to start a blog. I recommend you use one of the free blog providers, like wordpress.org or blogger.com. You will be required to blog once a week, starting on the week of February 10. You will be graded on the following:

- You must blog once per week, starting on February 10, with the last blog posted by April 30.
- Your weekly blogs must at be at least one paragraph long (at least 150 words).
- Your blogs must relate to the class.
- Writing should be polished and grammatically correct. Clarity of thought and originality are appreciated.

If you suffer from some type of technological aversion to blogs, you have the option of completing the 2nd article critique instead. It will be due 2/17, and you will also select from one of the articles covered in class. I recommend you take the blog option. Either option is worth 10% of your grade.

Disability Services

Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Please contact ODS at 312/413-2183 (voice) or 312/413-0123 (TTY).

Attendance

Students sometimes assume they disappear in large classes, that professors don't notice absences. This may be true for the opening weeks of class, but in time I begin to notice and record absences. If you miss six classes without permission and I detect it you will be rewarded with an F for the course.

Plagiarism

If you cheat on tests or plagiarize in writings (that is, use someone else's work as your own) at the very least you will fail the course and be reported to the University Judiciary Committee, which has the authority to expel you from the University.

Plagiarism and academic misconduct involves but is not limited to the following: (1) Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, people, or study aids in any academic exercise, or extending to or receiving any kind of unauthorized assistance on any examination or assignment to, or, from another person; (2) Using research that has been used by someone else; (3) Duplicating work that you have done in another class; (4) Allowing others to borrow your work. Whatever your intention, you may be guilty of academic misconduct if another student copies your research; (5) Omitting source citation just because you have put much of the research material “into your own words” and it’s not a direct quotation.

All of the above are remarkably easy to detect, especially because of quantum advances in software designed for that special purpose.

Grading scale:

A = 100-93 **A-** = 92-90
B+ = 89-87 **B** = 86-83 **B-** = 82-80
C+ = 79-77 **C** = 76-73 **C-** = 72-70
D+ = 69-67 **D** = 66-63 **D-** = 62-60 59 and below = **F**

COURSE SCHEDULE

Reading assignments should be completed prior to the date for which they are assigned. You should come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. This schedule is tentative – you will be advised of changes. Readings will be made available online.

DATE	TOPICS AND READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
THE DEPARTMENT, THE COURSE, THE FIELD		
Jan. 13-15	T & M, Chapter 1, “The Process of Human Communication” Baxter & Babbie. (2004). Four social science paradigms: An overview (pp. 47-67). In <i>Basics of Communication Research</i> . Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.	
PERCEPTION		
Jan. 20-22	T & M, Chapter 2, “Person Perception” Zhang & Baumeister. (2006) Your money or your self-esteem. <i>Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin</i> , 17, 881-893.	
VERBAL COMMUNICATION		
Jan. 27-29	T & M, Chapter 3, “The Verbal Message” Jensen, J.D. (2008). Scientific uncertainty in news coverage of cancer research: Effects of hedging on scientists’ and journalists’ credibility. <i>Human Communication Research</i> , 34(3), 347-369.	
NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION		
Feb. 3-5	T & M, Chapter 4, “The Nonverbal Message” Penton-Voak, Pound, & Little (2006). Personality judgments from natural and composite facial images: More evidence for a “kernel of truth” in social perception. <i>Social Cognition</i> , 24, 607-640. Walther, J.B., Van der Heide, B., Kim, S., Westerman, D. & Tong, K. T. (2008). The role of friends’ appearance and behavior on evaluations of individuals on Facebook: Are we known by the company we keep? <i>Human Communication Research</i> , 34(1): 28-49.	Article critique due

DATE	TOPICS AND READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
ETHICS, LYING		
Feb. 10-12	T & M, "Ethics and Communication" Bok, S. (1978). Lying. New York: Pantheon. Ch. 1: Is the 'whole truth' attainable? pp. 3-16. DePaulo, B. M., Kashy, D. A., Kirkendol, S. E., Wyer, M. W. & Epstein, J. A. (1996). Lying in everyday life. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> , 70, 979-95.	
RELATIONSHIPS		
Feb. 17-19	T & M, Chapter 8, "Relationships in Process" Baumeister, R. F., Wotman, S. R., & Stillwell, A. M. (1993). Unrequited love: On heartbreak, anger, guilt, scriptlessness and humiliation. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> , 64, 377-94.	Article critique due
MASS MEDIA		
Feb. 24-26	T & M, Chapter 15, "Mass Communication and New Technologies" Bennett, W.L., Lawrence, R.G., & Livingston, S. (2006). None dare call it torture: Indexing and the limits of press independence in the Abu Ghraib scandal. <i>Journal of Communication</i> , 56, 467-485. Pfau, M., Haigh, M. et al. (2005). Embedded reporting during the invasion and occupation of Iraq. <i>Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media</i> , 49, 468-487.	
REVIEW AND EXAM I		
Mar. 3-5	March 3 – Review March 5 - Exam	
FACULTY RESEARCH		
Mar. 10-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Lecture • Readings TBA 	
Mar. 17-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Lecture • Readings TBA 	
Mar. 24-26	SPRING BREAK	
FACULTY RESEARCH		
Mar.31-Apr. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Lecture • Readings TBA 	
Apr. 7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Lecture • Readings TBA 	
Apr. 14-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Lecture • Readings TBA 	
Apr. 21-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Lecture • Readings TBA 	
Apr. 28-30	April 28 – Review April 30 - Exam 2	