

UC 12355 13F

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

Undergraduate Council
 New Course Course Change
 Core Category: WID Effective Fall 2014

or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council
 New Course Course Change
 Effective Fall 2013

1. Department: Valenti School of Communication College: CLASS
 2. Faculty Contact Person: Julie B. Fix Telephone: 713-743-3728 Email: jbfix@central.uh.edu

APPROVED OCT 02 2013

M.M.

3. Course Information on New/Revised course:
- Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:
COMM / 1302 / Introduction to Communication Theory
 - Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)
COMM / 1302 / INTRO TO COMM THEORY
 - SCH: 3.00 Level: FR CIP Code: 09.0101.00 01 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0

RECEIVED SEP - 9 2013

4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements
 5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course? Yes No
 If Yes, please complete:

- Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:
____ / ____ / ____
- Course ID: _____ Effective Date (currently active row): _____

6. Authorized Degree Program(s): BA
- Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department? Yes No
 - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments? Yes No
 - Can the course be repeated for credit? Yes No (if yes, include in course description)

7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)

8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title
COMM / 1302 / Introduction to Communication Theory

- Course ID: 16346 Effective Date (currently active row): 8212000

9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)
 Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: credit for or concurrent enrollment in ENGL 1303. Description (30 words max.): Perspectives in communication theory and process.

10. Dean's Signature: _____

Date: 9/6/13

Print/Type Name: Sarah Fishman

REQUEST FOR COURSES IN THE CORE CURRICULUM

Originating Department or College: Valenti School of Communication

Person Making Request: Julie B. Fix

Telephone: 713-743-3728

Email: jbfix@central.uh.edu

Dean's Signature: _

Date: 9/5/12

Course Number and Title: COMM 1302: Introduction to Communication Theory

Please attach in separate documents:

Completed CBM003 Add/Change Form with Catalog Description

Syllabus

List the student learning outcomes for the course (Statements of what students will know and be able to do as a result of taking this course. See appended hints for constructing these statements):

1) Students will be able to develop awareness, understanding, and appreciation of communication theory as a field of study. 2) Students will be able to appreciate the ways communication theory and research can be applied to solve personal, organizational, media and policy issues. 3) Students will be able to understand concepts, variables, and research findings relevant to communication in all contexts. 4) Students will be able to develop their ability to understand, compare, and critically assess theories related to the study of communication in all contexts. 5) Students will be able to develop their ability to use theories creatively as resources for thinking and talking about practical communication problems in alternative, potentially more productive ways. 6) Students will be able to help other students understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument in cooperative and/or interactive writing.

Component Area for which the course is being proposed (check one):

Communication

American History

Mathematics

Government/Political

Science

Language, Philosophy, & Culture

Social & Behavioral Science

Creative Arts

Component Area Option

Life & Physical Sciences

Competency areas addressed by the course (refer to appended chart for competencies that are required and optional in each component area):

Critical Thinking

Communication Skills

Empirical & Quantitative Skills

Teamwork

Social Responsibility

Personal Responsibility

Because we will be assessing student learning outcomes across multiple core courses, assessments assigned in your course must include assessments of the core competencies. For each competency checked above, indicated the specific course assignment(s) which, when completed by students, will provide evidence of the competency. Provide detailed information, such as copies of the paper or project assignment, copies of individual test items, etc. A single assignment may be used to provide data for multiple competencies.

Critical Thinking:

Students will write and submit to Blackboard two papers: an informative critique of a theory and an application essay, with a minimum 1500 words for each paper.

Each student is required to write an informative critique of any one theory of communication. This critique should showcase your understanding of the chosen theory. An excellent critique often sounds like a serious, mystery-solving kind conversation and includes a brief introduction of the theorist(s), theoretical assumptions, major variables and tenets, some research findings, and your admiration (e.g., it really works/explains/predicts correctly/help control communication behaviors) and/or disappointment with the theory (limitations/faults) - i.e., criteria of evaluating theory.

In the application essay, students are required to demonstrate an ability to analyze a practical communication problem and apply a theoretical solution. Specifically, an application paper does the following three things: (1) explains one of the theories covered in this course, defines the key concepts and presents the main points of that specific theory, using at least two published sources; (2) applies the theory to a real communication problem or your own "memorable" communication event in everyday contexts, including your personal/interpersonal relationships, family/home, work, public/mass media, and other settings, showing how the theory can be used to frame the problem, understand what's going on, and possibly decide what to do about it; and (3) critiques the theory in light of this application.

Communication Skills:

In the same papers and discussion assignments as above, students will demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively.

Empirical & Quantitative Skills:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Teamwork:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Social Responsibility:

In the second paper above, students will describe the relationship between social responsibility and communicating successfully with others.

Personal Responsibility:

In the second paper above, students will describe how their learning has enhanced their understanding of their personal responsibilities for communicating successfully with others.

Will the syllabus vary across multiple section of the course? Yes No

If yes, list the assignments that will be constant across sections:

The 1500-word assignments (Informative Critique and Application Essay) and participation in discussions will be constant across the sections.

Inclusion in the core is contingent upon the course being offered and taught at least once every other academic year. Courses will be reviewed for renewal every 5 years.

The department understands that instructors will be expected to provide student work and to participate in university-wide assessments of student work. This could include, but may not be limited to, designing instruments such as rubrics, and scoring work by students in this or other courses. In addition, instructors of core courses may be asked to include brief assessment activities in their course.

Dept. Signature: _____

**Introduction to Communication Theory
(COMM1302 - Section Number, Fall/Spring)**

Instructor: To be Named
Office: To be determined
Phone: To be determined
Email: To be determined
Office Hours: To be determined

Teaching Assistants: To be named
Office: To be named
Office Hours: To be determined
Office Phone: To be determined

Overview

Kurt Lewin, one of the founders of modern communication studies, once wrote, "There is nothing so practical as a good theory." In this course we will examine key perspectives in communication theory and process, assessing their potentials to address significant problems in society, work, and daily life. We will explore foundational issues including the ideas of metadiscourse and problem framing, alternatives to the traditional model of communication, "scientific" and "practical" perspectives on theory, and different ways of framing communication problems.

Objectives

1. Students will be able to develop awareness, understanding, and appreciation of communication theory as a field of study.
2. Students will be able to appreciate the ways communication theory and research can be applied to solve personal, organizational, media and policy issues.
3. Students will be able to understand concepts, variables, and research findings relevant to communication in all contexts.
4. Students will be able to develop their ability to understand, compare, and critically assess theories related to the study of communication in all contexts.
5. Students will be able to develop their ability to use theories creatively as resources for thinking and talking about practical communication problems in alternative, potentially more productive ways.
6. Students will be able to help other students understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument in cooperative and/or interactive writing.

Readings, lectures, discussions in discussion boards, three examinations, and two paper assignments have been designed to assist students in achieving these goals and to assess their progress in the course.

Required Textbooks:

Littlejohn, S. W., & Foss, K. A. (2011). *Theories of human communication* (10th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
ISBN: 13-978-1-57766-706-3.

And/or

Heath, R. L., & Bryant, J. (2000). *Human communication theory and research: Concepts, contexts, and challenges* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
ISBN: 0-8058-3007-3

Students are expected to read each chapter in advance of lectures and any supplementary materials. These readings are ***challenging*** (that is, difficult, in many cases). You should plan on devoting a significant amount of time to reading and studying for this class.

Course Requirements

Listed below are the tentative assignments and requirements for this semester. While careful thought and consideration have been put into the design of these assignments to help you achieve the course objectives, assignments may be altered, if and when necessary. You will be given ample notification if anything changes.

A. Discussion participation and Team Work (6%)

Participation in discussions on class Blackboard discussion boards is mandatory. You are expected to participate fully and positively in class discussions and activities in the class discussion board. At minimum, initiate or join ongoing discussions for each of the 5 major assignments - Exams 1, 2, and 3, and Informative Critique, and Application Essay. The same discussion team or group can extend to all other assignments and aspects of the course.

B. Three Tests (54%)

Each test will contain identification/matching, true/false type, and multiple choice questions. Test dates may change depending on the availability of a classroom or a computer testing lab that can accommodate a large number of students. Each test will last 50-60 minutes. If you need to make a different test arrangement for some reason (e.g., students with disabilities, religious holidays, and absence due to UH sponsored activities), please do so prior to the test date.

To make up a test, you must have a "reasonable" excuse (e.g., a documented emergency). All make-up tests are essay type questions (largely short descriptions) and should be taken within 7 days from the original exam date (unless the circumstance warrants a different date).

Weeks 1-5

Test 1: (18%)

- Chap 1 Communication Theory and Scholarship
- Chap 2 The idea of Theory
- Chap 3 Traditions of Communication Theory

Weeks 6-10

Test 2: (18%)

- Chap 4 The Communicator
- Chap 5 The Message
- Chap 6 The Conversation
- Chap 7 The Relationship

Weeks 11-14

Test 3: (18%)

- Chap 8 The Group
- Chap 9 The Organization
- Chap 10 The Media
- Chap 11 Cultures and Society

C. One 1500-word Informative Critic of One Theory (20%)

Each student is required to write an informative critique of any one theory of communication talked about in lectures or presented in PowerPoint files. This critique should showcase your understanding of the chosen theory. An excellent critique often sounds like a serious, mystery-solving kind conversation and includes a brief introduction of the theorist(s), theoretical assumptions, major variables and tenets, some research findings, and your admiration (e.g., it really works/explains/predicts correctly/help control communication behaviors) and/or disappointment with the theory (limitations/faults) - i.e., criteria of evaluating theory.

When evaluating your critique, we will focus on:

	(Comments, if any)
1. Writing skills and proofreading -Accurate spelling, punctuation, grammar -Easy to follow, flowing, coherent -etc.	Poor - Ok - Good
2. Introduction -Attention getter, preview -Purpose, theme -etc.	
3. Body -Presentation of theory -Theoretical assumptions -Major variables -Major tenets -Research findings -Critique/evaluation criteria	
4. Conclusion -Summary -Remarks/reflections (admiration, limitations) -etc.	
5. Overall impression	
Grade	A+, A-A+, A, ... to F

D. 1500-word Application Essay (20%)

You are required to use a communication theory to analyze a practical problem situation. Specifically, an application paper does the following three things: *(1) explains one of the theories covered in this course*, defining the key concepts and presenting the main points of that specific theory, using at least two published sources; *(2) applies the theory* to a real communication problem or your own "memorable" communication behaviors or activities in everyday contexts, including your personal/interpersonal relationships, family/home, work, public/mass media, and other settings, showing how the theory can be used to frame the problem, understand what's going on, and possibly decide what to do about it; and *(3) critiques the theory* in light of this application (optionally, this may include original suggestions for revising or extending the theory or a new theory). The paper must cover all three of these aspects (explanation, application, critique) with *roughly equal emphasis*.

Additional tips

1. This essay should be like a good short story or case analysis--with a beginning and an ending. Start with a **great title** that summarizes/characterizes your experience, people involved, background of involved people, what has happened over time.
2. It should cover "a chunk of reality," focusing on real events in your real-life context.
3. It should depict a series of events with a past as well as a present.
4. It should have a clear time structure; usually the past tense is most appropriate.
5. It should have some elements of argumentation, including multiple sources of evidence for support (for your theoretical points).
6. It should be engaging, with suspense and drama.
7. It should include background information, explicit boundaries, and multiple viewpoints, if appropriate.

When evaluating your application paper, we will focus on:

	(Comments, if any)
1. Writing skills and proofreading -Accurate spelling, punctuation, grammar -Easy to follow, flowing, coherent -etc.	Poor - Ok - Good
2. Introduction -Attention getter, preview -Purpose, theme -etc.	
3. Body -Presentation of theory -Systematic and comprehensive theoretical explanation -Use of supporting materials -etc.	
4. Conclusion -Summary -Critique -Remarks/reflections	
5. Overall impression	
Grade	A+, A-A+, A, ... to F

Scoring scheme for both critique and essay papers (**Slightly Different from the course grade scheme; Please also note the range grade.**)

100	A+			76	C+	
	A-A+	97			C - C+	74
95	A			73	C	
	A- A	93			C- - C	72
91	A-			70	C-	
	B+ - A-	89			D+ - C-	68
87	B+			67	D+	
	B- - B+	85			D - D+	65
83	B			63	D	
	B- - B	82			D- - D	62
80	B-			60	D-	
	C+ - B-	78		0	F	

*Please note that the **evaluation criteria** may change somewhat, depending on additional thoughts and inputs from students. Also, you need to cite **references**. You can use lecture materials or text (Heath & Bryant, 2000, p. xxx; Littlejohn & Foss, 2008, p. xxx). For the critique paper, when citing sources or references, please follow APA (American Psychological Association) style - 6th edition. One useful website to learn about APA style is: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

An application paper as well as an informative critique paper with less than 1500 words will not be evaluated, resulting in a failing grade of **F**. **Please do "word count" and write the information (the number of words) on the cover or 1st page (along with your name).** Please also make sure that you write the name of theory on the cover page.

One of these two writing assignments will be returned to you prior to the end of the semester with the instructor's written evaluation of grammar, style and content.

D. Extra Credit Project (up to 1%)

Students could earn up to 1% extra credit toward the entire course grade for participating in a research or similar project (i.e., survey, experiment, interview, focus group meeting, consultation, volunteering, etc.). Please note this sort of project is not guaranteed.

E. GRADE for the COURSE (Average %)

A	93 and up	A-	92 - 89		
B+	88 - 85	B	84 - 83	B-	82 - 79
C+	78 - 75	C	74 - 73	C-	72 - 69
D+	68 - 65	D	64 - 63	D-	62 - 59
F	58 and down				

PLAGIARISM (Adopted from the School of Communication)

Plagiarism is a serious form of cheating. To plagiarize is to claim another's ideas or writing as one's own. It is a form of stealing.

Plagiarism can take several forms. Students often associate the term with writers who copy entire passages from a book, magazine, encyclopedia, or other printed source and turn them in to an instructor as their work. This is, perhaps, the most blatant form of plagiarism as well as the easiest for instructors to detect. After all, instructors can usually recognize a passage lifted from *Time* magazine or other sources with distinctive styles. In fact, instructors can almost always recognize professional writing, even if they cannot immediately identify its source.

But plagiarism takes several other forms. For instance, students plagiarize when they borrow ideas from other writers without giving them credit. In this case, students might not even use the other writer's language; nevertheless, they are stealing the writer's content. Students also plagiarize when they present another student's work (*or the work of a professional paper writing service, or work copied from a Web Site*) as their own. Thus, documentation involves more than just citing the source of direct quotations.

Because plagiarism is such a complex concept to come to grips with in its entirety, take note of the following summary definition:

Plagiarism includes the **literal repetition without acknowledgement of the writings of another author**. All significant *words, phrases, clauses or passages* in a student's paper which have been taken directly from the source material must be enclosed in quotation marks and acknowledged either in the text itself or in footnotes or endnotes.

Plagiarism includes borrowing without acknowledgement another writer's **general plan, outline, or structure of argument** in the creation of one's own organization.

Plagiarism includes borrowing another's **ideas** and representing them as one's own. To **paraphrase** the thoughts of another writer without acknowledging is to plagiarize.

Plagiarism includes allowing **any other person or organization (including those found on the internet)** to prepare the paper and submitting it as one's own work.

Plagiarism in the course will not be tolerated. Penalties for plagiarism include, but are not limited to, failure in the course, suspension, and permanent expulsion from the university. For more information, consult the University of Houston Student Handbook section on "Academic Honesty."

Expectations on Conduct

Common courtesy and etiquette are expected in all manners of communication in this course.