

**EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM**

CMN 2010: INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION THEORIES

There is nothing more practical than a good theory – Kurt Lewin

Term: Fall 2019	Section: 001	CRN: 90595, 3 credit hours	
Day/Time: T/R 12:30 – 1:45	Location: Coleman 1255 (Auditorium)		
Instructor: Dr. Richard G. Jones, Jr.	Office: Buzzard 2411	Phone: 581-3324	rgjones@eiu.edu
Office Hours: M 9:30-10:30 & 12-1, Tues. 11:15-12:15, Thurs. 2-3 and by appt.			

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE:

Course Description: How does communication work? Why does communication work that way? Scholars in communication studies begin to answer these questions through the application of communication theory. This course serves as an introduction to a broad range of communication theories related to interpersonal, group and public, intercultural, media, gender, and organizational communication. This core course is required for communication majors because it serves as a building block for upper level communication courses that depend upon a working knowledge of communication theories and processes. This course serves as part of your overall training as a communication scholar/professional in regards to critical thinking, analytic thinking, critical reading, and listening skills. In this course we will focus our attention on the analysis and evaluation of scientific, rhetorical, interpretive, and critical theories of communication. Particular emphasis will be placed on how theory helps us understand, predict, and transform communication processes.

Course Objectives:

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of a broad range of theories in the field of communication. Students should leave the course with:

- a. Knowledge of the nature of theory and how it guides scholarly inquiry
- b. An ability to critically evaluate theories from both scientific and humanistic perspectives
- c. Critical analytical skills/ problem solving/ creative thinking in the selection of which theories best explain what phenomena

Additionally, upon completion of the course, students should be able to do the following:

- d. Describe a broad range of communication theories that reflect the foundation of the discipline.
- e. Apply theoretical communication models to explain their own and others' communication behavior.
- f. Demonstrate professionalism, accountability, and self-motivation as a student by meeting or exceeding standard collegiate level expectations for class attendance, participation, class preparation, and communication in and out of class

The syllabus, calendar, and materials on d2l contain all the information you need to be successful in this course. You are responsible for knowing and being accountable for the information included in these documents. If you have a question about the class, these should be your first stop. Keep these documents handy/review them often.

Student Standards Statement: All faculty in the Department of Communication Studies uphold the standards of good scholarship and expect our students to do the same. We expect that students earning a degree in Communication Studies will develop superior reasoning/critical thinking, argumentation, writing, and presentational skills while also building a comprehensive knowledge of their content area. Students in Communication Studies classes will be expected to read all assigned materials, write extensively, complete their own work, and engage in respectful interactions in the classroom. We, as a faculty, agree to hold our students to these standards.

Student Responsibilities: Students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions, read the assigned reading material before class, and pass exams. Federal guidelines dictate that institutions should expect students to work for at least two hours outside of class for each hour of in-class instruction. That means that you should expect to work, on this class, at least six hours a week in order to earn credit for this course. The bulk of your out of class work time should be spent on reading the assignment chapters, reviewing notes, and preparing for exams.

Professor's Note on Expectations:

1. I am completely committed to facilitating your needs as they arise. Please ask me for help if you find that you have questions I have not answered in class, or if you would like to discuss any (potential) problems.
2. Understand that my commitment to facilitating your needs in and goals for the class are extended primarily to those students who are proactive and address concerns before they become significant obstacles, and generally do not extend to students who only demonstrate concern for their performance in the class during the last weeks of the semester.
3. As you have probably heard, this is a “hard class,” which okay because college is not supposed to be easy – if it were, more than 30% of people would have a college degree. We learn and grow through challenge. Since this is a core course for your major, be prepared to expend effort in reading and reviewing course content to understand it.
4. You will be graded based on standard collegiate level expectations. To earn an A or a B, you will need to consistently exceed those expectations.
5. As a student, you *earn* your grades rather than me “giving” you grades; however, I believe you always have the right to understand why you *earned* the grade you did. If you have a question, please ask.
6. Whether you already have a job outside of school or not, you should think of college as a profession as well—a profession that most people do not have the privilege of experiencing (only 36% of people have a bachelor’s degree), and a profession in which you are paid in knowledge and skills. Just like your regular jobs, you can’t get paid if you don’t show up and put in the effort.
7. As a professional, I will strive to enable you to succeed, but I will not “enable” you to rely on excuses, exceptions, and/or extensions to get by. What’s most important is that you meet me somewhere in the middle, so we both find the course rewarding.

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GRADING AND EVALUATION:

Grading Scale:

Grade	Percentage
A	100 – 90
B	89 – 80
C	79 – 70
D	69 – 60
F	59 and below

You must earn a C or better to complete a Communication Studies major or minor.

Assignment	Weight (%)
Exam 1	15
Exam 2	15
Exam 3	15
Exam 4	15
Exam 5	15
Final Exam	25

*You can use D2L to monitor your grade in the class at any time.

COURSE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:

Required Course Text: Griffin, E. (2018). *A first look at communication theory* (10th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity: The Student Code of Conduct states that students should meet the following standard: “Eastern students observe the highest principles of academic integrity and support a campus environment conducive to scholarship.” The Code defines *plagiarism* as: “the use, without adequate attribution, of another person’s words or thoughts as if they were one’s own.” At minimum a student who engages in academic dishonesty/plagiarism will receive a 0 (F) on the assignment and be reported to the Office of Student Standards. If the act of academic dishonesty is deemed particularly egregious by the professor then the student may receive an F for the course. If there are multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Office of Student Standards may sanction the student further, i.e., suspension for a semester or academic year or expulsion from the university.

Statement Regarding Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2022, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

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Student Success Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302

Class attendance and participation:

1. Class attendance is expected. The Student Catalog states: “Students are expected to attend class meetings as scheduled. When an absence occurs, the student is responsible for the material covered during the absence. Instructors will grant make-up privileges (when make-up is possible) to students for properly verified absences due to illness, emergency, participation in an official University activity, or participation in volunteer emergency work.”
2. I understand that there are times when you must miss class due to a previously planned event, illness, or family emergency. If you know you will need to miss a class, email me about it so we can make arrangements as needed.
3. Show respect for others by listening, taking turns, not having side-conversations, not arriving late, or packing up or leaving early. Disruption of teaching and/or learning is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. For the purposes of this class, “Disruption” is defined as, but not limited to: repeatedly leaving and entering the classroom without authorization, making loud or distracting noises, persisting in speaking without being recognized, and/or resorting to personal insults and challenges, taunts, crude behavior, physical threats or contact. If you disrupt the class, you may be asked to leave.
4. You may use a laptop or other electronic device to facilitate note-taking. If you are found to be using your device for non-class related tasks or your use of your device is distracting to others, you may no longer be allowed to use the device in class.
5. It is disrespectful and distracting to text message or use your phone in class. Phones should be turned off or silenced completely (not just put on vibrate).
6. If you use electronic devices in ways that distract or disrupt the class in others ways, you may be asked to leave.
7. Bring all of your course materials (book, notes, handouts, etc.) to each class period.

Safe Learning Environment: This class is a safe space for communication, learning, and the sharing of ideas. Each of us will need to be conscious of our role in providing a place where every class member, given all our differences, will feel safe and function as part of our learning community. Inclusive language is important to maintaining a safe class environment—no language will be tolerated that demeans, belittles, or marginalizes someone because of her or his gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, sexual orientation, ability, etc. Such language will not be accepted in your classroom communication, written work, or your oral presentations. If you disrupt the safety of our learning community you may be asked to leave.

Lateness: Arriving to class late does not reflect well on your professionalism as a student. Expect that I will begin class at the scheduled start time with important reminders, announcements, and other pertinent information. Therefore, it will be in your best interest to get to class a few minutes early so you will be ready to engage course materials at the scheduled start time.

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Make up work: Make-up privileges, where make-up is possible, will be granted to students who have properly verified absences, University approved absences, or made arrangements with the instructor. Otherwise, I will use my discretion to decide whether or not a student can make up work and how much of a penalty to impose. It is the student's responsibility to initiate plans for make-up work and complete the work promptly.

Electronic communication: Students are expected to visit the course webpage (d2l) daily for announcements and updates. **Use Panthermail – not d2l to send emails.** You should also check your Panthermail daily. Please communicate via email in a professional manner. While electronic communication is convenient at times, please take advantage of office hours to ask questions, as email responses may be delayed up to 48 hours.

ASSIGNMENTS

Reading: We will cover nearly all of the chapters in the textbook. You should read through the chapter before the class period indicated on the course calendar. The chapters are relatively short (10-15 pages) but there will be new vocabulary words and content that you might have to research or re-read to grasp. Remember that you are expected to work on this class at least six hours a week – much of this should be spent reading and preparing for class discussion.

Participation: Although this is a lecture class, there are interactive components. In each class period, I will provide guidance on what to focus on in terms of chapter content, discussion questions, and application questions. We will complete participation assignments in almost every class session. These assignments will be evaluated and the amount of points you get for that assignment will be added to your exam grade for that unit. The participation assignments will be evaluated for accuracy and understanding, not just completion.

Exams: We will have six exams in the class that will cover only information from the textbook that we have explicitly discussed in class. The exams include multiple-choice, true/false, matching, short answer, and essay questions. Reading the chapters and attending class will prepare you for these exams. During some class periods you will complete open-book, group quizzes that will also help prepare you for the exams. These exams are not meant to frighten or trick you. They will, however, provide a way for me to assess your comprehension of the material. Further, since the exams focus on what we discuss in class, *and* you will get opportunities to prepare for the exams through open-book group quizzes and participation assignments, they should provide an incentive for regular attendance.

Since the exams are the only graded assignments in the class, it is important that you prepare for them and do not miss them (see make up work and attendance policies above). Unless you have made arrangements with me to take the exam early, have a University excused absence, or a properly verified absence, it is unlikely that you will be able to make up the exam.

The final exam will be cumulative and be taken during the final exam period assigned by the University.

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CMN 2010: COURSE CALENDAR

Subject to revision as needed.

Date:	Content:
T 08/20	Course Introduction
R 08/22	Chapter 1 Launching Your Study of Communication Theory
T 08/27	Chapter 2 Talk About Theory
R 08/29	Chapter 3 Weighing the Words
T 09/03	Chapter 4 Mapping the Territory
R 09/05	Review for Exam 1
T 09/10	Exam # 1 (1, 2, 3, 4)
R 09/12	Chapter 5 Symbolic Interactionism
T 09/17	Chapter 22 The Rhetoric
R 09/19	Chapter 7 Expectancy Violations Theory
T 09/24	Chapter 8 Social Penetration Theory
R 09/26	TBD
T 10/01	Exam # 2 (5, 22, 7, 8)
R 10/03	Chapter 9 Uncertainty Reduction Theory
T 10/08	Chapter 11 Relational Dialectics
R 10/10	Chapter 31 Genderlect Styles
T 10/15	Chapters 32 Standpoint Theory
R 10/17	Exam # 3 (9, 11, 31, 32)
T 10/22	Chapter 16 Cognitive Dissonance Theory
R 10/24	Chapter 34 Communication Accommodation Theory, 35 Face-Negotiation Theory
T 10/29	Chapter 18 Symbolic Convergence Theory
R 10/31	Exam # 4 (16, 34, 35, 18)
T 11/05	Chapters 19 Cultural Approach to Organizations
R 11/07	Chapter 25 Media Ecology
T 11/12	Chapter 26 Semiotics
R 11/14	TBD
T 11/19	Chapter 29 Cultivation Theory
R 11/21	Exam # 5 (19, 25, 26, 29)
T 11/26	THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS
R 11/28	THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS
T 12/03	Chapter 37 Common Threads in Comm Theories
R 12/05	Exam Review
Finals Week 12/9 – 12/13	Final Exam Monday December 9, 12:30 – 2:30

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