

SPCM: 4320 Communication Theory
The University of Texas at Tyler
MWF (9:05-10:00)

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Text

Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., & Sparks, G. (2015). A first look at communication theory (9th ed.). McGraw Hill. ISBN:978-0-07-352392-7

Course Description

Interdisciplinary overview of communication theories from the perspective of the anthropologist, sociologist, educator, psychiatrist, philosopher, and scientist, including theoretical models, symbolic transformation, and attitude formation change.

Student Learning Outcomes

- A. Understand multiple theoretical perspectives and diverse intellectual underpinnings in communication as reflected in its philosophy and/or history.
- B. Utilize critical thinking to apply applicable communication theory in the writing context.
- C. Synthesize and make connections between and among communication theories.

Major Requirements & Grade % Approximations (Total Points: 900)

A. Quizzes (4 @ 50 pts each)	(200 pts)	22%
B. Division Theory Papers (4 @ 100 pts each)	(400 pts)	44%
C. Final Theory Paper	(300 pts)	33%

Grades: Standard Grading Scale

90% - 100%	=	A
80% - 89%	=	B
70% - 79%	=	C
60% - 69%	=	D
59% - ↓	=	F

Attendance Policy

Perfect attendance in this course is recommended. A student's grade will not be automatically reduced due to absences. However, a student is more likely to do better in this course with higher attendance. In-class activities may be missed due to absences and are only available for make-up if the absence is excused. If a student must miss class, he or she is advised to contact another student to learn what was missed and if any work is due on a following class period because that work is still due next class period whether or not the absence was excused. If you are to be absent from a class, whether or not you miss any assignments, you must notify the teacher before-hand if possible, but no later than the next class period, of your desire to make up any missed work in order to be able to do so. If medical reasons are cited for absences, a doctor's note must accompany any request to provide make-up work.

Participation

Students are expected to not only attend class, but to play active roles in the classroom. Assigned text readings are to be completed before each class session and students are encouraged to ask questions or offer insight during class periods. When group or individual assignments or activities are assigned, everyone is expected to participate as assigned.

Assignments and Exams

All assignments are due when stated by the instructor. As the college experience is, in part, designed to prepare students for the work place, ABSOLUTELY NO LATE WORK will be accepted. If you have completed at least part of an assignment by the due date, it is better to turn in part of the assignment on time than to turn in the completed assignment late for no credit. All homework turned in, unless otherwise stated, is to be typed. Any exam must be taken on the designated day and time set forth by the instructor. Any exceptions to due dates must be verified with the instructor prior to the scheduled deadline. Lack of performance as a part of a group assignment can constitute in a lowered grade than other group members.

Original Work

All student work must be original to the student and original for the course where assigned. Any failure to abide by high standards or ethics in regard to student work will be handled by the instructor and the university and may constitute in the student failing the course and receiving further reprimand from the university. Plagiarism is a big deal and the consequences can go much further than the university's reach, so please be careful.

Students Rights and Responsibilities

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www2.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- ☑ Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- ☑ Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- ☑ Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)
- ☑ Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- ☑ Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

Academic Dishonesty and Original Work

Faculty members have a special obligation to expect high standards of academic honesty in all student work. Students also have a special obligation to adhere to such standards. It is your responsibility to become familiar with the material in [A Student Guide to Conduct and](#)

[Discipline.pdf](#) at UT Tyler concerning university regulations regarding academic dishonesty, and the definitions of cheating and plagiarism that it contains. In general, plagiarism is the unauthorized use of published or unpublished material as well as not giving proper credit to the source.

The term plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- a) use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without fully or properly crediting the author with footnotes, citations or bibliographical reference
- b) unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials
- c) unacknowledged use of work/materials that have been produced through collaboration with others without release in writing from collaborators.

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu

Student Absence due to Religious Observance

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement:

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation:

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

Course Calendar

Week 1

Introduction to Course

Division One – Overview (Chapters 1-4)

Weeks 2-5

Division Two – Interpersonal Communication

Quiz on Division Two (Beginning of Week 2)

Interpersonal Communication Theory Paper (Due: End of Week 5)

Weeks 6-9 (Week 7 Spring Break)

Division Three – Group and Public Communication

Quiz on Division Three (Beginning of Week 6)

Group and Public Communication Theory Paper (Due: End of Week 9)

Weeks 10-11

Division Four – Mass Communication

Quiz on Division Four (Beginning of Week 10)

Mass Communication Theory Paper (Due: End of Week 11)

Weeks 12-14

Division Five – Cultural Context

Quiz on Division Five (Beginning of Week 12)

Cultural Context Theory Paper (Due: End of Week 14)

Week 15

Work Time on Final Paper (Paper serves as final exam)

Due: Friday – Final Theory Paper

SPCM 4320 Communication Theory Division Quizzes (4)

SLO

- A. *Understand multiple theoretical perspectives and diverse intellectual underpinnings in communication as reflected in its philosophy and/or history.*

To ensure student textbook reading that can add to the learning atmosphere of the classroom, there will be a quiz over each of the divisions at the onset of each. Quizzes may be in any format and cover any content within the division under consideration. Quizzes may be administered in class or online through the course's blackboard page, but will be timed respective to the level of work required.

Each quiz is worth 50 points. Please take the time to read prior to each division.

**SPCM 4320 Communication Theory
Division Papers (4)**

SLO

- B. *Utilize critical thinking to apply applicable communication theory in the writing context.*
- C. *Synthesize and make connections between and among communication theories.*

Based on your readings of chapters, lectures, and class discussions or activities, write a two-page paper [APA Style, Times New Roman, Double Spaced, 12-Font, plus a minimum of 3 academic references] regarding the theories from each division. The paper should cover the following:

1. Name and discuss at least three theories you selected from the division.
2. Synthesize and display your solid understanding of the theories by drawing a connection between your selected theories.

Each paper is worth 100 points. Please follow APA style in format and citation.

**SPCM 4320 Communication Theory
Final Theory Paper**

SLO

- A. *Understand multiple theoretical perspectives and diverse intellectual underpinnings in communication as reflected in its philosophy and/or history.*
- B. *Utilize critical thinking to apply applicable communication theory in the writing context.*
- C. *Synthesize and make connections between and among communication theories.*

Serving as final exam for this course, you are asked to write a paper displaying your understanding of communication theory and ability to synthesize and apply pertinent theory as an upper-division communication student. This theory based paper is to be 10 pages [APA Style, Times New Roman, Double Spaced, 12-Font, plus a minimum of 10 academic references] and draw a clear, reasoned connection between three theories from the textbook. These three theories must come from three separate divisions.

Assigned Paper Grading Rubric

Dept. of Communication

Dr. Justin Velten

Assignment: _____

Description of Work	Grade
The paper is free of grammatical errors, closely adheres to the required style format, and is the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is clearly covered and is done so in a manner that displays a high level of understanding and application of theory or course concepts to the paper topic(s). The paper displays a high level of effort and originality in thought and writing and makes a clear point.	A
The paper is nearly free of grammatical errors, adheres to the required style format, and is the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is covered and is done so in a manner that displays an adequate level of understanding and application of theory or course concepts to the paper topic(s). The paper displays a good level of effort and originality in thought and writing.	B
The paper has a few grammatical errors, somewhat adheres to the required style format, and is near the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is mostly covered and is done so in a manner that displays a marginal level of understanding and application of theory or course concepts to the paper topic(s). The paper displays an evidently average level of effort and originality in thought and writing.	C
The paper has a significantly noticeable amount of grammatical errors, does not adhere to the required style format, and is not quite near the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is only partially and is done so in a manner that displays a lack of understanding and application of theory or course concepts to the paper topic(s). The paper displays an inadequate level of effort and originality in thought and writing.	D
The paper has numerous grammatical errors, does not adhere to the required style format, and is not near the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is not covered and a strong lack of topic-understanding is evident. The paper displays an evidently low level of effort and originality in thought and writing.	F

Please see university policy on plagiarism and work hard to not plagiarize. If you are unsure as to whether you are plagiarizing the work of another person it is best to be cautious and take the appropriate steps to insure you are not plagiarizing. In the event that you are caught plagiarizing on this paper you will receive either a reduction of 50% on the assignment (if the plagiarism is minor or not seemingly blatant) or a 0% on the assignment (if the plagiarism is major and seemingly blatant). There are clear guidelines available for what constitutes plagiarism so please do not plan to plead ignorance in the event your grade is reduced for plagiarism. I hope this is not an issue with your paper and do not expect it to be so.

Total: _____