

COM 324: Organizational Communication

Course Syllabus

Fall 2003

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Office Hours: MWF - 9:30-11:30; Other times by appointment or chance.
Course Website: <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~lucask/com324>

Course Perspective & Objectives:

Whether or not you have given it much thought, you are surrounded by organizations in your daily life (e.g., schools, businesses, governments, healthcare systems, non-profits, churches). What's more, these very organizations are created, maintained, transformed, and, in some cases, destroyed by communication. The purpose of this course is to increase your awareness of organizational communication and the way that it shapes your life, give you new lenses and vocabularies for viewing and analyzing organizational communication, expose you to classical and cutting-edge scholarship in the discipline of organizational communication, and allow you to develop an area of "expertise" in the field that is particularly relevant to your interests.

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- explain and differentiate between the major approaches to studying organizational communication;
- critically evaluate organizational communication scholarship and practice; and
- apply theory to make informed judgments that affect the quality of communication in the organizations to which you belong.

Required Reading:

Cheney, G., Christensen, L. T., Zorn, T. E., Jr., & Ganesh, S. (2004). *Organizational communication in an age of globalization: Issues, reflections, practices*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Additional readings will be posted on the class website.

Class Climate & Expectations:

Academic Honesty. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Any student who is found to have engaged in an act of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will *automatically fail the course* and may be reported to the Dean of Students for further action.

Attendance. Although there is no formal attendance policy, you are responsible for all class material and are expected to be in class every day. If you have circumstances that prevent you from meeting a deadline (e.g., representing the university in official functions, such as athletic/academic competition, professional development conferences, ROTC, etc.), please make arrangements to submit your assignment(s) *before* the due date.

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Participation. You are expected to participate actively in the course. In order to do so, you should prepare yourself by reading assignments before class and thinking critically about the material. Participation is not limited only to “having the answers.” Some of the liveliest and most interesting conversations are sparked by *questions* instead of *answers*. Therefore, you can participate in a variety of meaningful ways, including asking clarification questions, critiquing a research approach or theory, and sharing personal experiences that confirm or contradict what you read, to name only a few. Although you are encouraged to challenge ideas, I will demand that you show respect for the people who share differing viewpoints in support of a climate that encourages participation from everyone.

Deadlines. Late assignments will NOT be accepted.

Written Work. The work you turn in should reflect your professionalism. All written assignments must be typed and proofread for errors. Typos, spelling mistakes, and grammatical errors will result in significant grade reductions. If you need help with your writing, I can offer assistance *before* the due date or you can contact the Purdue Online Writing Lab. Neither handwritten work nor email attachments will be accepted.

Cell Phones, Visiting, Sleeping, Etc. Please respect your classmates and their learning experience. Turn off the ringer on your cell phone, stay focused on and engaged in the class discussion rather than a private conversation with your neighbor, and do not disrespect the contributions of your classmates by sleeping. Failure to provide these courtesies may result in your being asked to leave the class for the day.

Workload and Grading:

Workload. The reading and assignments for this course are consistent with the workload recommended for a 300-level course. You can expect to work one to two hours outside of class for every hour that you are in class.

Grading. Your final grade will be determined based on the weighted average of your performance on the following:

<i>Assessment Item</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Grade</i>
Topic Paper 1	x1	_____
Midterm Exam	x2	_____
Topic Paper 2	x1	_____
Synthesis Project	x3	_____
Final Exam	x2	_____

IMPORTANT: Missing and/or failed assignments will override your weighted average as follows:

- 1 missing/failed assignment = highest possible grade C
- 2 missing/failed assignments = highest possible grade D
- 3 missing/failed assignments = automatic F

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Social Capital Token:

As a general rule, no exceptions will be made to the policies stated in the syllabus. However, as a member of this class, you are given one Social Capital Token that you may use as you choose. Basically, it can be used to excuse a late assignment (must be turned in no later than the start of the next class period) or redo a topic paper (if the original one was handed in *on time* but didn't meet your expectations in terms of a grade). However, your Social Capital Token cannot be used to excuse you from missing a test or converted to "extra credit" at the end of the semester.

Course Schedule & Assignments (Subject to Change):

Week 1 (08.25)	Introduction to course; organizational communication; labor Read: Chapter 1
Week 2 (09.01)	Labor continued; metaphors Read: Web article(s) NO CLASS - 09.01 (Labor Day)
Week 3 (09.08)	Approaches to organizational communication Read: Chapter 2, Web article(s)
Week 4 (09.15)	Rationality in organizations; emotion labor Read: Chapter 3, Web article(s)
Week 5 (09.22)	Culture; social construction of reality; socialization Read: Chapter 4, Web article(s) Due: Topic Paper 1, Friday, 09.26
Week 6 (09.29)	Identity; social relations Read: Chapter 5, 6, Web article(s)
Week 7 (10.06)	Leadership Read: Chapter 7, Web article(s) Exam: Midterm Friday, 10.10
Week 8 (10.13)	Teams; democracy; organizational justice Read: Chapter 8, Web article(s) NO CLASS - 10.13 (October Break)
Week 9 (10.20)	Critical theory; hegemony, ideology Read: Chapter 9, Web article(s)

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Week 10 (10.27)	Feminist theory; critical race theory Read: Web article(s) Guest Speaker: Wednesday, 10.29 Due: Topic Paper 2, Friday, 10.31
Week 11 (11.03)	Critical theory applied Read: Web article(s)
Week 12 (11.10)	Conflict; change management Read: Chapter 10, 11, Web article(s)
Week 13 (11.17)	Technology, global organizations Read: Chapter 12, 13, Web article(s) NO CLASS - 11.21 (NCA Annual Conference)
Week 14 (11.24)	Ethics; corporate social responsibility Read: Chapter 14, Web article(s) Guest Speaker: Monday, 11.24 NO CLASS - 11.26 & 11.28 (Thanksgiving)
Week 15 (12.01)	Analyzing organizational communication; presentations Read: Chapter 15, Web article(s) Due: Synthesis projects, Wednesday, 12.03
Week 16 (12.08)	Presentations continued; course wrap-up; final exam review
Finals Week	Exam: _____