COMM 5302: Seminar in Communication Theory
CRN 41467...Section 001...ECDC 219B...Wednesdays 7:00pm – 9:30pm

Professor: Dr. Michael Sollitto, Ph. D.  Email: michael.sollitto@tamucc.edu
Office: 327 Bay Hall  Credit Hours: 3
Office Phone: (361) 825-2443
Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday 2:00pm-4:00pm

TAMUCC Department of Communication and Media Mission Statement
“Our mission is to develop students who are effective and ethical communicators with the creative, critical, and collaborative skills necessary to succeed in a diverse global environment.”

Course Title and Description
Seminar in Communication Theory is a three credit course that provides an overview of the development and application of sets of systematic ideas about the process of communication. Special focus will be placed on application of theory in a variety of contexts including cognition/intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, family communication, intercultural communication, instructional communication, organizational communication, and media/mass communication.

Course Objectives
The course is designed to expose students to the intricacies of small groups and the decisions that they make through the communication of members. This course is in partial fulfillment of the following Communication and Media Department outcomes. Specifically, students should be able to perform the following by the conclusion of the Fall 2017 semester:

- Define communication theory.
- Describe the link between theory, research, and practice.
- Develop positions and clear arguments about theories that best explain communication in particular contexts.
- Articulate the usefulness of theory in both academic and professional lives.
- Develop and refine scholarly writing and research skills.

Required Texts


Required Additional Readings
- Reading material for selected topics from a variety of sources will be placed in the “Required Additional Readings” folder on Blackboard.

Attendance
Student attendance in class is essential to learning. Assignments and tests are expected to be delivered on the day assigned. Exceptions will be made only in extreme circumstances at the discretion of the instructor. When absences are due to a University activity, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor of these absences at least one (1) week in advance of the occurrence to allow adequate time for rescheduling. Definitions of excused and unexcused absences will reflect university guidelines. Only formally documented, “university excused” absences will be allowed.

*More than 1 unexcused absences will result in automatic failure of the course*
Grading Procedure
Grades will be based on the following point values:

- 315-350 points = A
- 280-314 points = B
- 245-279 points = C
- 210-244 points = D
- 0-243 points = E

Grading
Grades are comprised of classroom engagement activities, position papers, popular press mall group book application paper and discussion, and a small group consultation manual and session. There will be no opportunity to makeup in-class activities. The total amount of points possible for the course is 350. Assignments turned in late will receive a 10-percent deduction for every day it is late.

Discussion Questions
Students are expected to submit discussion questions posed about the reading material assigned for a given class period. The answers to these questions should be thorough and showcase genuine understanding of the content and an ability to draw connections between the reading and other topics covered in class. Answers will be evaluated based upon depth of understanding, spelling/grammar, and the ability to synthesize the readings. There will be ten Discussion Questions due throughout the summer session, each worth 10 points, for a total of 100 points. They must be typed with Times New Roman size 12 font and physically submitted during the class session. Further directions and rubric for the discussion questions will distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time.

Classroom Engagement Activities
During various class periods, students will complete classroom engagement activities that will be used for direct application and discussion of course topics, discussion material, and reading content. There will be ten classroom engagement activities in this course, each worth 5 points, for a total of 50 points.

Position Papers
There will be three position papers in this course, each worth 25 points, for a total of 75 points. The purpose of Position papers is to encourage reflection, critical thinking, and argumentative skills. Position papers allow students to learn about an issue in the small group communication discipline, take a stand on the issue, and then effectively argue their viewpoint with relevant supporting evidence. Grading will be based upon the quality of information presented to defend one’s viewpoint. Further directions and rubric for the Position Papers will be distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time.

Ignored Theory Report and Discussion
The Ignored Theory Report allows students to research a communication theory that will receive no formal coverage during the semester. Papers should address the philosophical underpinnings of the theory, the communication context(s) that the theory is often used to explain, the creator of the theory and list of authors most associated with research about the theory, key research findings about the theory, practical application of the theory, and future research directions about the theory. Discussions of the book in class should capture the attention of fellow students and provide them an opportunity to see the scholarly and practical relevance of the theory. Decisions about and approval for the Ignored Theory should be provided by September 20. Further directions and rubric for the Ignored Theory Report and Discussion will be distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time. It is worth 100 points.

Communication Theory Exam and Defense
Each study will complete a written comprehensive exam of all the content covered in the course. Upon completion of the comprehensive exam students will orally defend their written answers to demonstrate complete competency of communication theory.
Students pursuing the Master of Arts in Communication will be paired with a graduate faculty member advisor in their first semester. Students should contact their advisors within the first two weeks of a semester to arrange a meeting during which degree plans, tracks, and opportunities for professional development should be discussed. If there is any question regarding whom a student’s academic advisor is, the student should contact Dr. Stephanie Rodriguez, Interim Graduate Coordinator, for assistance (stephanie.rodriguez@tamucc.edu; 361-825-5753). To finalize your degree plan and register for graduation, you must also meet with the Graduate Student Academic Advisor in the Academic Advising Center for the College of Liberal Arts. This office is located in Driftwood 203E and can be reached at (361) 825-3466.

Disability Services
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Grade Appeal Process
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

Expectations of Graduate Students
1. Ability to contribute engaging and thoughtful discussion points during class.
2. Demonstrated completion of all assigned reading material prior to class.
3. Proficiency in academic writing and use of APA Style.
4. Focus on learning instead of focus on grades.

Student Conduct
1. **Know the syllabus:** Be informed on what is to be read, discussed, and submitted for each class meeting.
2. **Respect:** Be courteous of the professor and fellow students and refrain from talking amongst yourselves during lecture and discussion. This also means that proper professional communication is also required.
3. **Preparation:** Attend class ready to contribute and interact with material presented in class.
4. **Punctuality:** Please make best effort to arrive to the classroom before class begins.
5. **Electronic Devices:** All devices that distract from the learning process are prohibited.
6. **Listening/Feedback:** Devote attention during class sessions and heed advice and constructive instruction on assignments provided throughout the semester.
7. **Effort:** This class will be fun and enlightening, yet challenging. Please put forth your best effort each day in the course.
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed Aug 30</td>
<td>Welcome; Basics of Communication Theory</td>
<td>Littlejohn et al. (2017), Ch. 1; Berger, Roloff, &amp; Roskos-Ewoldsen (2010)</td>
<td>Discussion Questions 1</td>
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<td>Wed Sep 06</td>
<td>The History of Communication Theory</td>
<td>McCroskey &amp; Richmond (1996); Eadie (2009)</td>
<td>Discussion Questions 2</td>
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<td>Wed Sep 20</td>
<td>Scholarly Writing &amp; Research: Connecting Research and Theory</td>
<td>Levine (2009); Scheibel (2009)</td>
<td>Discussion Questions 4</td>
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<td>Wed Oct 04</td>
<td>Theory in Context: Interpersonal Communication</td>
<td>Littlejohn et al. (2017), Ch. 7;</td>
<td>Discussion Questions 6</td>
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<td>Wed Oct 11</td>
<td>Ignored Theory Discussion</td>
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<td>Wed Oct 18</td>
<td>Ignored Theory Discussion</td>
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<td>Wed Nov 01</td>
<td>Theory in Context: Intercultural Communication</td>
<td>Littlejohn et al. (2017), Ch. 11</td>
<td>Discussion Questions 8</td>
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<td>Wed Nov 08</td>
<td>Theory in Context: Organizational Communication</td>
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<td>Discussion Questions 9</td>
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<td>Wed Nov 15</td>
<td>No Class: NCA Convention</td>
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<td>Wed Nov 22</td>
<td>Theory in Context: Instructional Communication</td>
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<td>Discussion Questions 10</td>
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<td>Wed Nov 29</td>
<td>Theory in Context: Media/Mass Communication</td>
<td>Littlejohn et al. (2017), Ch. 5</td>
<td>Discussion Questions 11</td>
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<td>Wed Dec 06</td>
<td>The Future of Communication Theory</td>
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<td>Discussion Questions 12</td>
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<td>Wed Dec 13</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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Reference Information for all Required Reading Material (Continued on Next Page)