COMM 5307: Communication & Organizations

CRN 71857 ...Section 002 Bay Hall...Mondays 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
Communication and Organizations is a three credit course that focuses on the complex and continuous process through which organizational members create, maintain, and change their organizations. This course will include instruction on the role that communication plays in constituting and altering organizations with special attention placed upon interaction of organizational members with their organizational environment. This course is intended as an overview of contemporary theory and research in organizational communication.

Course Objectives
The course is designed to expose students to the construction of organizations 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 2018 semester:

- Define organizational communication.
- Explain the development of organizational communication as a scholarly area of study.
- Become familiar with empirical research studies and scholars associated with the study of organizational communication.
- Enrich class discussion with informed and knowledgeable discourse.
- Develop positions and clear arguments about organizational communication theory, research, and practice.
- Propose new areas of organizational communication research.

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 scale:
100-90% - A  89-80% - B  79-70% - C  69-60% - D  Below 60% - E

Grading
Grades are comprised of talking points, classroom engagement activities, position papers, an individual research project, and a course project. There will be no opportunity to makeup in-class activities. The total amount of points possible for the course is 275. There will be no opportunity to makeup in-class activities. Assignments turned in late will receive a 10-percent deduction for every day it is late.

Talking Points
Beginning with the reading material for August 27, students will be expected to submit talking points about each of the readings assigned. The talking points should highlight fascinating and provocative aspects of the reading sources, showcase genuine understanding of the content, and an ability to draw connections between the reading and other topics covered in class. Talking points will be evaluated based upon depth of understanding, the ability to synthesize the reading material, and relevance to the discussion topic. Further directions and rubric for the talking points will be distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time. Talking Points are each worth 5 points, for a total of 75 points.

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, lecture 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 organizational 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.

Individual Project
In collaboration with Dr. Sollitto, students will write a research proposal about an organizational communication topic that is based on one of the topic areas in the course. This project will include an introduction and purpose section, literature review, and a proposed method section. It will be the students’ choice if they want to continue the project and submit it for conference and publication at some point after the conclusion of the semester. The Individual Project is worth 75 points. Further directions and rubric for the Individual Project will be distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time.

Course Project
As a class, Dr. Sollitto and the students will conduct an empirical research study, which will involve designing/refining the study, writing sections of the literature review, method, and discussion sections; and collecting and analyzing data. The plan is for this project to be submitted for presentation at the 2019 National Communication Association convention. After that, it will be submitted for publication to a journal commensurate with the quality of project. Further directions and rubric for the Course Project will be distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time.
**Academic Advising**

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](mailto: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.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation will not automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

**Grade Appeal Process**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*, 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.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*. These documents are accessible online at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).

**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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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon Sep 03</td>
<td>No Class: Labor Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon Sep 10</td>
<td><em>Foundations of Organizational Communication: Developing the</em> Organizational Communication Discipline</td>
<td>Tompkins (1989); Miller (2008); Krone, Kramer, &amp; Sias (2010);</td>
<td>Talking Points 2; Position Paper 1: Essential Knowledge and Skills</td>
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<td>Mon Sep 17</td>
<td><em>Foundations of Organizational Communication: Theoretical Perspectives of Organizational Communication</em></td>
<td>Putnam (1983); Miller (2000); Mumby (2014)</td>
<td>Talking Points 3; Course Project CITI Training</td>
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<td>Mon Sep 24</td>
<td><em>Foundations of Organizational Communication: Research Methods of Organizational Communication</em></td>
<td>Miller (2001); Tracy &amp; Grist-Martin (2014)</td>
<td>Talking Points 4</td>
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<td>Mon Oct 08</td>
<td><em>Processes of Organizing: Organizational Culture</em></td>
<td>Keyton (2014); Hoelscher, Zanin, &amp; Kramer (2016)</td>
<td>Talking Points 6</td>
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<td>Mon Oct 15</td>
<td><em>Processes of Organizing: Organizational Assimilation</em></td>
<td>Jablin (1982); Kramer &amp; Miller (2014); Dailey (2016)</td>
<td>Talking Points 7; Course Project Rationale</td>
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<td>Mon Oct 22</td>
<td><em>Processes of Organizing: Supervisor-Subordinate Communication</em></td>
<td>Jablin (1979); Sias (2008); Fairhurst (2014)</td>
<td>Talking Points 8</td>
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<td>Mon Oct 29</td>
<td><em>Processes of Organizing: Peer Coworker Communication</em></td>
<td>Kram &amp; Isabella (1985); Sias (2014); Sollitto &amp; Myers (2015)</td>
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<td>Mon Nov 12</td>
<td><em>Employee Behavior: Aggression, Incivility, and Conflict</em></td>
<td>Tepper (2000); Avtgis &amp; Chory (2010); Kassing &amp; Waldron (2014);</td>
<td>Talking Points 11</td>
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<td>Mon Nov 26</td>
<td><em>Employee Behavior: The Balance of Work and Life</em></td>
<td>Butler &amp; Modaff (2008); Kirby &amp; Buzzanell (2014)</td>
<td>Talking Points 13; Course Project Implications</td>
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<td>Mon Dec 03</td>
<td><em>Theory into Practice: Application and Consulting</em></td>
<td>Redding (1979); Bartunek &amp; Rynes (2014); Dempsy &amp; Barge (2014)</td>
<td>Talking Points 14; Final Research Proposal</td>
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Cheney, G., & Zorn, T. E. (2012). What do we know and what we can learn about meaningful work (from the standpoint of communication)? In A. K. Goodboy & K. Shultz (Eds.), Introduction to communication: translating scholarship into meaningful practice (pp. 315-322). Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.


