

Comm 3263: Organizational Communication Spring 2016
M-W-F 11:30 AM-12:20 PM: BH 206

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8-5 M-F

Course Goals:

This class is designed to acquaint students with many of the major theories, concepts, and research findings related to the study of organizational communication. While it is more of a theoretical course than a "hands on" or "practical skills" course, the information should be of practical value since individuals spend much of their lives in organizations. The course involves a significant amount of writing.

The course is divided into three units:

- Unit 1: Communication and the assimilation process and management theory (Exam 1)
- Unit 2: Communication structures, organizational culture, relationships, and leadership (Exam 2)
- Unit 3: Change, decision making, conflict, and power (Exam 3)
- Unit 4: Work-Life, Transitions, Exit (Final Exam)

Text: Kramer, M.W., & Bisel, R.S. (Under contract). *Organizational Communication: A Life-Span Perspective*. New York: Oxford Press.

Please note: A prepublication/draft of this text will be provided to you as PDF files through D2L for free during the semester. In return for this free version, you will be asked to provide feedback on the draft to assist in improving it for publication. The feedback you provide will count approximately 5% of the grade on each test. Your feedback will automatically be "correct."

So that you provide honest and useful feedback (positive and negative), you will send your feedback via email to shelleyturner@ou.edu prior to the start of each exam. She will provide me a list of names of who provided feedback that will be separate from the actual feedback. This way I will be unable to know who wrote what.

Course Assignments:

1. A schedule of all assignments is attached. Students should have read the assigned readings or have completed the other assignments on the day that they are listed unless the professor announces a change in the schedule. Quizzes must be taken **before class** on the assigned dates.
2. Two case studies (2-3 pages each) are listed on the schedule. Copies of the actual case studies are posted in D2L. The assignments are explained in more detail on the attached pages. These will be submitted through D2L and checked by Turnitin.com
3. One major paper assignment is the assimilation paper, an analysis of organizational entry, described on the attached pages. It is due no later than Friday, March 11, 2016 (6-8 pages).
4. A project analyzing change in an organization is due Monday, May 2, 2016. This is described on the attached pages (5-7 pages).

Class Management and Rules:

1. Attendance is expected. Exams cover information from the text, as well as supplemental information presented in class. You may have five absences without any penalty. However, on your sixth absence you can expect that your course grade will be reduced one full grade. On the tenth absence your grade can be reduced two full grades. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences except for extended and documented absences. University excused activities do not count as absences.
2. After absences, you are responsible for catching up on what was missed by obtaining handouts, notes, etc. from other students. After you "catch up," please see me if you have questions.
3. Assignments and tests will be accepted on the assigned day only. Except for documented reasons (medical bill, etc.) late work will not be accepted. This includes quizzes taken on-line.
4. Plagiarism occurs when you take credit for someone else's idea without giving them credit. Information that is common knowledge or is from your personal experience does not need to be referenced. However, if the idea or information comes from a source (written, internet, or in person), you must give credit to the source whether you are using exact wording or paraphrasing ideas. When plagiarism occurs, the grade for the assignment will be reduced significantly. A failing grade on the assignment or in the course can be the result if it is excessive.
5. Cheating is an extreme form of plagiarism. Copying significant portions or the entire text of someone else's work and presenting it as your own or allowing someone else to copy your work is cheating. If discovered, this will result in the individual receiving a zero on the assignment, test, or quiz, and being turned in for academic misconduct to the Academic Integrity Office and could result in failure of the course and suspension from the university.
6. Use of electronic devices should not be distracting to the instructor or other students. This means cell phones should be off or on silent and not be used. Computers should only be used for taking notes. The only exception will be on days when the instructor requests that you bring the textbook and you may need to use the electronic device to access the book.

Grading (tentative weighting):

1. The sum of the grades on the case studies, rough drafts, quizzes (taken and graded on line), and participation will count for 10% of your grade.
2. Each of the first three examinations will count 12% of your final grade.
3. The final exam (partially comprehensive) counts 20% of your final grade.
4. The assimilation paper and final paper will each count 15% of your final grade.
5. Scale: 100-94% A; 93-91 A-; 90-88 B+; 87-85 B; 84-82 B-; 81-79 C+; 78-76 C; 75-73% C-; 72-70 D+; 69-67 D; 66-64% D-.

American Disabilities Act:

All necessary accommodation will be made for students under the ADA. Students with disabilities who require accommodations are requested to speak with the professor as early in the semester as possible. Students with disabilities must register with the Office of Disability Services prior to receiving accommodations in this course. The Office of Disability Services is located in Goddard Health Center, Suite 166, phone 405-325-3852 or TDD only 405-325-4173.

Religious Holidays:

It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Please inform your professor prior to any such holidays so that reasonable accommodations can be made.

Case Study Assignments

Case Study #1

DUE: Friday, January 29, 2016

Read Chapter 1 and Case Study "Chain of Command." Choose one of the three main perspectives for studying organizational communication described in chapter one that you feel can be used to analyze this case study. Describe the essential characteristics of the perspective and then, as a researcher, analyze or interpret the case study from that perspective. Be sure to refer to specific information in the case or chapter to support your ideas (using proper APA citation format). Be sure to discuss communication in your analysis. Your essay should have an introduction, thesis statement, supporting examples, conclusion, etc.

Case Study #2

DUE: Friday, February 12, 2016

Read Chapter 4 and the case study, "Prophecy Fulfilled." Then in an essay address these two issues:

1. What particular management "theory" (classical, human relations, human resource, teamwork) does Mary Ann seem to use in her interaction with subordinates? Provide evidence from her communication and actions that show she exemplifies that "theory."
2. If she operated from one of the other theories, how would Mary Ann approach the situation differently? How would her communication and behaviors be different?

While you may choose a particular classical management theory for your paper (Fayol, Taylor, or Weber), when you do your comparison, do not compare two classical management theories for your paper. Compare it to one of the others—human relations, etc.

Your essay should have an introduction, thesis statement (or perhaps two), and a conclusion.

ASSIMILATION PAPER DUE between Monday, February 29 and Friday, March 11, 2016

Choose an organization you previously joined. You may or may not still be a member of the organization. The assignment works best for an organization you work or volunteer in, but it can be any form of organization. It must be an official organization.

Based on the first six chapters of the book, write a description and analysis of assimilation in that organization. This includes personal experience, but should also include your observations of others as well. You should use first person when describing your personal experiences, but not at other times.

The following is a possible organization for the paper, but other organizational patterns are acceptable if they cover the appropriate topics:

1. Provide a brief organizational description or history (@2 brief paragraphs).
2. Provide a description of how people typically enter or join the organization. This includes topics from Chapter 2 on anticipatory organizational socialization. (i.e., how they hear about it, how they are recruited, how are they "interviewed", etc.). You do not need to include anticipatory role socialization unless you think it is important to include.
3. Focus the paper on the organization encounter phase. Be sure to include the following topics from Ch 3: 1) How does the organization typically use each of the six sets of socialization strategies? 2) How do people cross various organizational boundaries? Remember crossing means changing positions (promotions, lateral moves), not simply communicating across boundaries. 3) What information seeking strategies do newcomers use to manage their uncertainty?
4. Discuss the nature of the culture of the organization. Include the following from Ch 6. 1) What are the important values, beliefs, or practices of the organization? 2) What are the important norms of the organization that are learned through the encounter phase?
5. Based on Ch 7, briefly discuss general characteristics of leader/member or superior/subordinate communication and peer communication. If this is a volunteer or student group, there still are people who are in higher status/supervisory roles even if they are not called supervisors.
6. Draw a conclusion(s) as to the general nature of the assimilation in the organization based on your experiences and those of others you have observed. In particular, does the organization seem to focus on "individualization or socialization" as they are typically defined (See Chapter 1)? Do members primarily assume custodial roles, innovative ones, or rebel (Chapter 3)?

In your paper, use an APA style of reference to refer to parts of the book to define terms and concepts relate the assimilation process for the organization. Be sure at the end of an idea that refers to the book include (Kramer & Bisel, 2016). Include page numbers only if it is a direct quote (Kramer & Bisel, 2016, p. 22). Be sure to use references to the book to define or clarify points you did not know before reading it to avoid plagiarism.

General Guidelines:

- a. length should be 6-8 pages of text; it may be longer, but make sure it is not just wordy
- b. have an introduction paragraph, a thesis, and a conclusion
- c. accuracy of writing, style, etc., is expected
- d. all papers are due no later than Friday, March 11, 2016
- e. submit to D2L where it will be checked by turnitin.com

COMMUNICATION CHANGE ANALYSIS: All are due in D2L Monday, May 2, 2016

For this assignment, select an experience you had in an organization in which a significant change or innovation occurred. It does not matter if the change was successful in achieving the intended goals, or if the organization stuck with the change or reverted back to the previous way of doing things. This can be a change at the University of Oklahoma or a subsidiary organization, but it could be a workplace, a volunteer or religious organization, or a previous school. It should be a change that was quite memorable to you in positive or negative ways. It could be a change in leadership, technology, procedures, personnel, or whatever.

For the analysis, you are to specifically consider as many of the topics from Chapter 13 as are applicable. This will vary depending on the particular type of change you choose to write about. I expect your paper will cover some of the following topics. You may also include ideas from other chapters in the text, such as culture, leadership, conflict, power, or decision making as applicable.

The topics of the paper should include most of the following although the organization of the paper may vary:

- 1) Some background on the organization
- 2) Some background about how things were in the organization prior to the change
- 3) Definition of the nature of the type of change (pp. 4-5)
- 4) Discussion of why the change occurred—perhaps something external or perhaps someone internal promoted the change
- 5) The large part of the paper should be the reaction to change including how quickly and/or slowly it was adopted and by whom (diffusion of innovation), emotional reactions to the change if any, and resistance to the change if any. You might address why these didn't happen if they did not.
- 6) **The other large part of the paper should be a discussion of whether communication surrounding the change was effective or not** (pp. 12-13). This could relate to whether you thought the change was successful or not or whether the organization reverted back to the old way of doing things.
- 7) Finally, draw some overall conclusions about the change process as successful or unsuccessful.

General Guidelines:

- a. Length should be 5-7 pages of text (a bit shorter than the first paper).
- b. Have an introduction, thesis statement, and conclusion
- c. Accuracy of writing, style, etc., is expected
- d. Should include citations to appropriate ideas from the text
- d. All papers are due Monday, May 2, 2016.
- e. Submit paper to D2L where it will be checked by turnitin.com
- f. Briefly (2 minutes) present a summary of your paper in class last two days

Tentative Course and Assignment Schedule Spring 2014

1. Wed, Jan 20	Introduction to Class
2. Fri, Jan 22	Ch 1: (pp. 1-18): Organizations and communication Quiz 1 Due
3. Mon, Jan 25	Ch 1: (pp. 18-36): Perspectives on organizational communication
4. Wed, Jan 27	Nonverbal Communication/Preview
5. Fri, Jan 29	Ch 2: (pp. 1-21): Anticipatory role socialization Case Study 1 Due
6. Mon, Feb 1	Ch 2: (pp. 21-35): Anticipatory organizational socialization
7. Wed, Feb 3	Ch 3: (pp. 1-12): Socialization strategies Quiz 3 Due
8. Fri, Feb 5	Ch 3: (pp. 13-29): Uncertainty management and information exchange
9. Mon, Feb 8	Ch 3: Boundary passages, expectations, and outcome
10. Wed, Feb 10	Ch 4: (entire chapter) Management theories
11. Fri, Feb 12	In class debate and review for first exam Case Study #2 Due
12. Mon, Feb 15	Examination 1: Chapter 1-4
13. Wed, Feb 17	Ch 5: (pp 1-21): Communication structures Quiz 5 Due
14. Fri, Feb 19	Ch 5: (pp. 21-37): Communication networks
15. Mon, Feb 22	Ch 6: (pp. 1-15): Organizational culture & norms Quiz 6 Due
16. Wed, Feb 24	Ch 6: (pp. 15-20): Structuration and three perspectives
17. Fri, Feb 26	Ch 6: (pp. 20-37): Analyzing organizational culture (bring OU story)
18. Mon, Feb 29	Ch 7: (pp. 1-23): Organizational relationships
19. Wed, March 2	Ch 7: (pp. 23-32): Emotion management
20. Fri, March 4	Ch 8: (pp. 1-17): Managerial leadership
21. Mon, March 7	Ch 8: (pp. 17-34): Organizational leadership
22. Wed, March 9	Examination 2: Chapters 5- 8
23. Friday, March 11	Ch 13: Change and Technology Assimilation Paper Due
Saturday March 12	Sunday March 20 Spring Break: No classes
24. Mon, March 21	Ch 13: (pp. 1-22): General organizational change Quiz 13 Due
25. Wed, March 23	Ch 13: (pp. 22-35): Diversity and globalization
26. Fri, March 25	Ch 9 (pp. 1-12): Traditional decision making Quiz 9 Due
27. Mon, March 28	Ch 9: (pp. 13-27): Alternative decision making
28. Wed, March 30	Ch 9: Faulty decision making
29. Fri, April 1	Ch 10: (pp. 1-17): Conflict Quiz 10 Due
30. Mon, April 4	Ch 10: (pp. 17-30): Conflict and abusive relationships
31. Wed, April 6	Ch 11: (pp. 1-14): Surface level power
32. Fri, April 8	Ch 11: (pp. 15-30): Deep structure power Quiz 11 Due
33. Mon, April 11	Examination 3: Chapters 9-11 &13
34. Wed, April 13	Ch 12: (pp. 1-22) Work-Life
35. Fri, April 15	Ch 12: (pp. 23-30) Third Place/Volunteering
36. Mon, April 18	Ch 14: (pp. 1-20): Individual transitions Quiz 14 Due
37. Wed, April 20	Ch 14: (pp. 20-31): Organizational transitions
38. Fri, April 22	Ch 15: (pp. 1-17): Voluntary Exit
39. Mon, April 25	Ch 15: (pp. 17-32): Involuntary Exit
40. Wed, April 27	Communication Audit: No readings
41. Fri, April 29	Communication Audit (continue)
42. Mon, May 2	All Change Papers Due: Communication Audit
43. Wed, May 4	Brief presentations of change papers
44. Fri, May 6	Brief presentations of change papers/review

Tuesday, May 10, 1:30-3:30 PM **Final Exam** (@3/4 comprehensive & 1/4 last unit)