

**CMUN 150- Communication Processes\***  
**Spring Semester 2008**

**Professor Brian Falb, M.A.**  
**E-mail: [BFalb@LUC.edu](mailto:BFalb@LUC.edu)**

**Office Hours:**  
**--Tuesdays, 3-4pm**  
**Loyola Hall, LSC, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**

**Mailbox location:**  
**Loyola Hall, LSC, 1<sup>st</sup> floor**

**--Tuesdays 10:15-11:15am**  
**Lewis Tower, WTC, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**Required Text:**

Griffin, Em. A First Look at Communication Theory (6<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006. ISBN-13 9780073010182

Additional readings can be downloaded and printed from Blackboard (Blackboard.luc.edu). An updated syllabus will always be available on Blackboard.

**Course Description:** This is one of two introductory foundation courses for Communication majors and minors. It will introduce you to the study of Communication as a discipline and its most important theories and concepts. We will discuss the ways that language, perception, meaning and interaction have been understood and studied. You should complete the course with a broad understanding of the discipline, its methods, and perhaps a predisposition for continuing your studies in one direction or another. Put simply, this course will help you think through ways that communication works. Much of the course is dedicated to teaching you the language of communication theory, key concepts and foundational assumptions that guide the study of communication so that when you take other courses in the discipline, you will have facility with those ideas. Exams are designed to test your knowledge of concepts covered and to challenge your writing and retention abilities – to be able to put on paper what you have come to know in the course. The course format will consist of lectures, discussions and some small group work. Your knowledge will be tested through a midterm examination and a cumulative final as well as a theory paper and an in-class presentation.

**Course Objectives:**

To introduce students to communication as a practical discipline while examining the philosophical issues that guide how it is studied and practiced.

To understand the predominant theoretical approaches in the communication field and to apply the theories to contemporary events and problems.

To critically analyze how communication situations are shaped by power, culture, and language and to identify ethical issues in interpreting communication situations and events.

*\* Course content and schedules are subject to change as the professor deems appropriate and necessary. The course content, schedule, or exam methodology may be modified at any time at the professor's discretion.*

**Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the College of Arts and Sciences, the Communication Department or Loyola University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g. failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours). If you have questions about proper source referencing, see someone at the Tutoring Center in the Sullivan Center, Suite 260, (773) 508-7714. Please also note the Communication Department uses new online technology to uncover plagiarism. Also consider investing in an APA (American Psychological Association) style guide. Online resources are also available through the Loyola libraries Web site. Be especially careful choosing online sources as well as citing them. This is an academic community; being uninformed or naive is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing your sources. If you are in doubt about something, please come speak with me!

**Students with Disabilities:** Students requiring classroom accommodation for disabilities must provide written documentation from the appropriate university official regarding the specific disability during the first week of class. The professor will work with the student to arrange necessary accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student to make the professor aware of any disabilities as soon as possible so all accommodations can be made.

**Attendance and Participation:** You are expected to read all assignments, to come to class ready to discuss those readings, and to be a contributing member of the course. Participation grades will be assigned on the basis of your critical evaluation of material read and your engagement with lecture materials and group work. Your physical attendance will not guarantee a good grade in participation. I will keep track of the frequency and quality of your class contributions, attentiveness to lectures and fellow classmates' comments. Students will not be able to make up any quizzes or in-class assignments except in extraordinary circumstances (as defined by the professor) and in cases of documented medical/emergency situations. Students are required to adhere to any changes in the class schedule, even if the change was made during an absence from class. There will always be an updated syllabus on Blackboard.

Students are expected to arrive on time. If you are going to be more than 5 minutes late to the course meeting, do not enter the classroom. Arriving late is disruptive and demonstrates disrespect for fellow students and the professor. If you leave class early, are chronically tardy or disrupt the class in any way, your participation grade will be adjusted to your detriment. Students are expected to adhere to codes of academic and classroom decorum and to behave in a respectful manner appropriate for a community of scholars. I insist that everyone is treated with the utmost respect. Students should not engage in distracting, unprofessional and/or rude behavior - for example, eating or excessive chatter - during class time. Cell phones and other electronic devices beepers should be turned off at the door! Final grades will reflect each student's attitude and classroom.

**Exam policies:** Students will not be able to make up exams or in-class assignments except in extraordinary circumstances as defined by the professor and in cases of documented medical/emergency situations. Make note of the due dates for all assignments in the semester and drop the course if you are unable to meet any of the deadlines. Notice of an absence from exam must be given *in writing* no less than 24 hours prior to the exam; without prior notice and approval from the professor, the student will receive no credit with no possibility of a makeup exam. Makeup exams will be administered with *approved* absences and must be completed no later than one week later than the original test date (except in particularly exigent circumstances). The professor reserves the right to provide a makeup exam in any format, including but not limited to multiple choice, short answer, or essay.

**Theory Paper:** In the theory paper, you will choose the theory/theories that resonate most with you. This paper offers the opportunity to critically analyze the specific viewpoints discussed in class. Additional research may be done to gain a better understanding of the theory or theories chosen. The assignment is designed to give you significant flexibility to engage with the course material and to offer your opinions on a contemporary situation through the lens of a theory or viewpoint discussed in class. You will be expected to use APA style for all citations and references. More information will be provided in a separate handout later in the semester. You will be expected to turn in your paper to turnitin.com, a website purchased by the department to check for plagiarism. More details will be provided as the due date approaches.

Students must turn in an introductory paragraph and thesis statement on Tuesday, March 25. **Without exception, the paper will be due in class on Tuesday, April 8 and each student must e-mail the paper to turnitin.com by 4:15pm on Tuesday, April 8 for the assignment to be considered on time.**

**Group presentation:** Each student will present a communication theory to the class in a small group. You will be expected to deliver a professional, polished, rehearsed presentation lasting approximately 30 minutes. Each team should provide a handout for each student in class summarizing the theory selected as well as a one-page paper to turn into me demonstrating your understanding of the theory or topic chosen. Every team will also provide me a one-page summary of the theory chosen. I will make copies to give to the class to serve as a study guide. It should use 12-point font, New Roman font, and should be a Microsoft Word file. This summary should be e-mailed to me not later than 5p.m. the night before the presentation is to be given. If turned in late, the entire group's grade will be reduced half a grade.

Each team member will be asked to evaluate the contributions of his/her team colleagues to the presentation. Of course, every team member is expected to contribute his/her fair share to the project and to the presentation. Unless there is evidence that such was not the case, each team member will receive the presentation grade. Team members whose failure to fully participate is documented by other team members will receive lower grades. Lack of attendance on the day of the presentation or clear and obvious lack of understanding of the topic will result in an automatic zero for the assignment.

**Assignments and Grading Policies:** Final grades will be calculated as follows:

- 15%: Class participation, quizzes, and overall in-class performance
- 20%: Midterm Exam (Feb 26)
- 15%: Group presentation
- 20%: Theory paper (April 8)  
    [Introductory paragraph and thesis statement due on March 25]
- 30%: Final Exam (April 29)

**Grading Scale:**

A	94-100	A-	90-93	B+	87-89
B	84-86	B-	80-83	C+	77-79
C	74-76	C-	70-73	D+	67-69
D	64-66	D-	60-63	F	Below 60

Late assignments will be given a reduction equal to one-third of a grade level per day unless you have prior approval from me. For example, an A paper will receive an automatic A- if it is received one day late, a B+ if two days late, etc. Technology problems (my printer didn't work, my e-mail was down) are not valid reasons for a late paper! Egregiously late assignments may be denied entirely at the discretion of the professor.

**Copyrighted Class Materials:** Class notes, lectures, presentations, assignments, etc. are the copyrighted materials of the professor. The copying and sale of any such materials will subject the involved parties to the provisions of the Federal Copyright Act.

**If you have any questions or concerns throughout the semester, please let me know!**

## SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Jan 15 Welcome, introductions, syllabus review; what is communication?

### **Part I: Interpersonal communication**

Jan 22 Communication traditions, what is theory?  
READ: Chapters 1, 2, 3,  
*Choose groups and dates for presentations*

Jan 29 Creating communication realities  
READ: Chapters 4, 5, & 7  
Group presentation: Chapter 8, social penetration theory

Feb 5 Interpersonal relationship development,  
interpersonal review  
READ: Chapters 6, 9, & 14  
Group presentation: Chapter 10, social information processing theory

### **Part II: Group/public communication**

Feb 12 Persuasive communication, small group communication  
READ: Chapter 16  
1. Stasser, G., & Titus, W. (2003). Hidden profiles: A brief history. *Psychological Inquiry, 14*, 304-313.  
2. Foschi, M. (2000). Double standards for competence: Theory and research. *Annual Review of Sociology, 26*, 21-42.  
Group presentation: Chapter 15, elaboration likelihood model

Feb 19 Small group communication and processes, midterm review  
READ:  
1. Bettenhausen, K. L. (1991). Five years of groups research: What have we learned and what needs to be addressed. *Journal of Management, 17*, 345-381.  
2. Littlepage, G. E., & Mueller, A. L. (1997). Recognition and utilization of expertise in problem-solving groups: Expert characteristics and behavior. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 1*, 324-328.  
Group presentation: Ch.19, Information Systems Approach to Organizations

Feb 26 **MIDTERM EXAM**

Mar 4 Spring Break (no class)

### **Part III: Cultural contexts**

Mar 11 Public communication  
READ: Chapters 22, 23, & 25  
Group presentation: Chapter 24, narrative paradigm

Mar 18      **Critical theory & feminist theory**  
READ: Chapters 21, 31, and 35  
Group presentation: Chapter 34, standpoint theory

Mar 25      **Cultural studies**  
Introductory paragraph, thesis statement due at beginning of class  
READ: Chapters 20, 26 & 30  
Group presentation: Heilman, M. E., Block, C. J., & Lucas, J. A. (1992). Presumed incompetent?: Stigmatization and affirmative action efforts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77, 536-544.

#### **Part IV: Mass media communication**

Apr 1      **Cultivation theory and media dependency theory**  
READ: Chapter 27  
Hindman, D. B. (2004). Media System Dependency and Public Support for the Press and President. *Mass Communication & Society*, 7(1), 29-42.  
Group presentation: Chapter 29, Spiral of silence

Apr 8      **Agenda setting and framing theories**  
**THEORY PAPER DUE**  
READ: Chapter 28  
1. Scheufele, D. A., & Tewksbury, D (2007). Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models. *Journal of Communication*. 57(1) , 9-20.  
2. Tian, Y. & Stewart, C. (2005). Framing the SARS Crisis: A Computer-Assisted Text Analysis of CNN and BBC Online News Reports of SARS. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 15 (3), 289-301.

Apr 15      **Commercial messaging, critical perspectives**  
READ: 1. Matsaganis, M.D. and Payne, J.G. (2005). Agenda Setting in a Culture of Fear: The Lasting Effects of September 11 on American Politics and Journalism, *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 49(3), 379-392.  
2. Fitzpatrick, K. & Gauthier, C. (2001). Toward a Professional Responsibility Theory of Public Relations Ethics. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 16 (2/3), 193-212.  
Group presentation: TBD

Apr 22      **Communication Law, Public Diplomacy, Final Review**  
READ:  
1. Callahan, R. (2006). A View From the Embassy. *American Journalism Review*, 28 (2) 32-37.  
2. Ozernoy, I. (2006). Ears Wide Shut. *Atlantic Monthly*, 298 (4), 30-33.  
3. Jones, L. & Turki, F. (2005). Karen Hughes' "Listening Tour" and Its Aftermath. *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, 24 (9), 24-26  
4. TBD

Apr 29      **FINAL EXAM (4:15p.m.)**