

**COMM 4351: COMMUNICATION THEORY
SPRING 2022**

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Course Description:

Communication (language, representation, discourse) plays a pivotal role in our everyday lives. Through communication, we make sense of things and we create/share meanings. In that sense, communication is the central means through which we come to know who we are and how we lead our daily interactions. The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with the “ways of seeing/understanding” communicative phenomena, used in the field of communication studies. In this course, we will (A) explore various communication theories (including interpersonal, organizational, mediated, intercultural, rhetorical, critical, and post-modern theories), (B) examine the processes involved in theory development, and (C) discuss philosophical, ethical, and political implications of each theory. My hope is that, by centralizing communication, each of you critically appreciates (1) how we understand who we/they are, (2) how we relate with others, (3) how power plays in everyday relationships, and (4) how we manage ethical/relational concerns.

To achieve this goal, I plan to engage in extensive dialogues with each one of you. This should be seen as a collaborative effort, where we learn from each other, question each other and ourselves. The obligation this places on each one of us is to arrive at each class having carefully (rather than casually) read the materials assigned, raised our own questions about those materials (in terms of “what is going on here?” and “why would s/he claim that?” and “how is this applicable to my life?”).

Required Readings:

Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., & Sparks G. (2019). *A first look at communication theory* (10th Ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Education.

Course Evaluation:

3 Application Papers	150 points (50 points each X 3 papers)
Midterm Exam	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
Participation	50 points
Total	400 points

Grading Scales:

A=400 – 360 B=359 – 320 C=319 – 280 D=279 – 240 F=239 – 0

COURSE POLICY

Use of Masks/Facial Coverings in Class:

While face coverings/masks are optional, for those who have not been vaccinated, face coverings are highly recommended to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Current research on the COVID-19 virus suggests there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. In other words, facial coverings have been an effective part of the COVID-19 management strategy, which can support our efforts to continue operations without disruptions and provide as traditional of an educational experience as possible. Therefore, wearing masks in class is strongly encouraged and highly recommended.

Attendance, Participation, & Missing Classes:

Regular attendance is expected in this course. Attendance will be taken and counted beginning the first day of class. The student is allowed to miss 3 days (in MWF classes), 2 days (in TR or MW classes), and 1 day (if class meets once a week) without penalty to the final grade. However, a student's absence will result in a zero for all work/assignment completed on that day. Once a student misses more than the allotted absences mentioned above, two (2) points will be deducted from the student's FINAL average for each additional absence. This number includes both EXCUSED and UNEXCUSED absences. You will be counted absent if you are not present for the entire class.

To be considered excused for a class absence, the student must be excused through the school (e.g., as they will be attending a school sponsored event), and provide the instructor proper documentation for the absence. If the student misses a class period, it is the responsibility of her to complete any assignments she will be missing prior to her departure, to get notes from a class member and be prepared for the next class meeting. This includes being accountable for any changes in the schedule that were announced in the student's absence.

Note: To ensure full participation credit, attendance is a necessary precondition, as is having read the assigned book chapters or readings. I believe good participation involves with good listening and asking good questions that reflect a genuine attempt to grapple with the assigned readings and with what other people are saying in class. Thus, to earn full participation credits, be a good listener and ask good questions.

Class Etiquette & Electronic Communication:



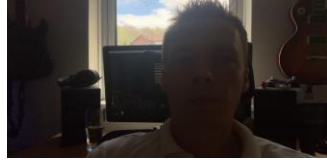



This classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth, and where the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class. Disruptive behaviors include (but are not limited to): using a cell phone in any way (including text-messaging, social media posting, etc.), using a computer during class for any purpose not approved by the instructor and not directly related to the course, reading outside materials or doing homework for other classes, having side conversations while someone else is speaking, and repeated arriving late for class.

Tip: before you enter classroom, turn off all your electronic devices and put them in your bag – if your cell phone is visible by me, 10 points will be taken off from the final grade, you will be counted absent for the day and receive a zero for any work completed on that day. Be respectful, and show you care about learning!

Virtual & Hybrid Etiquette:

In case of joining the class virtually (for medical emergencies, etc.), online/virtual etiquette shares the same principle as in-class etiquette explained above. Although being fully present (psychologically, intellectually, and physically) may sound common sensical for a precondition for good participation, new educational environment via online technologies often add unforeseen challenges – we are barely starting to understand the implications of virtual/e-learning environment. Despite the differences in the modes of communication (in-class or online), however, online/virtual classes are equally held with the highest professional standards and utmost respect for the purpose of everyone's learning and growth. Therefore, consider your personal online station (wherever you access class virtually – be it your home, dorm room, library, etc.) as an extension of actual classroom and real/live class – organize your surroundings, prepare for full participation, and be mindful of nonverbal signs (of yourself and your settings).

When/if you join the class virtually, here is one tip to think about nonverbal signs of 'camera framing' – to give an impression that you are fully ready and available to contribute! Here are some examples of bad camera frames – either offering partial view (e.g., forehead), if at all, or mismatching eye-levels, or bad lightings – giving out the nonverbal impression that the speakers are not fully available/present to engage.

		
		
Partial View Incorrect!	Ceiling View Incorrect!	Too Dark or Too Bright Incorrect!

Here are some examples for good camera frames – showing the speakers are fully present & available, ready to make eye-contact and participate. Again, be mindful of nonverbals!



Technology Support at Angelo State IT Service Center: Make sure you have necessary and functioning technology for you to join/participate in the class. For any tech issues or concerns, please contact the ASU IT Service Center:

Address: ASU Station #11020

Website: <https://www.angelo.edu/services/technology/support/>

Walk-up: Mathematics-Computer Science Building #111

Phone: (325) 942-2911

Toll Free: 1-866-942-2911

To Open a Support Ticket: ITSupport@angelo.edu

For General Questions: ServiceCenter@angelo.edu

Also, please visit <https://help.blackboard.com/> for online tutorial for Blackboard, for more information about Blackboard.

Missing Tests & Late Assignments:

If you miss a test due to an excused absence (e.g., official university business, hospitalization, funeral of close family members, etc.), you must make the test up within a reasonable length (no more than one week, desirably less). All arrangements for making up for work should be made prior to the absence, if possible, and is the student's responsibility. A typed, signed, and dated explanation must be given to the instructor upon returning to class.

Similarly, all assignments must be submitted by the due date/time. Any paper that is not in my possession/access by when it is due is considered "late submission." This includes any papers put in wrong folders or papers sent to wrong email address. The late submission will have 10 points deducted in every 24-hour period.

Note: Schedule your assignment submission ahead of time. I cannot overemphasize the importance of developing drafts. I believe in the improvement of writing over developing drafts, so I tend to offer more and fuller feedbacks on drafts than your final submission. For your final version, however, I focus on grading (than offering suggestions for change).

Grading:

At the end of the semester, grades are assigned STRICTLY BY POINT TOTAL. For example, if you have accumulated 359 at the end of the course, you will receive a B rather than an A (even though an A is a point away). Over the course of the semester, however, I will give you a number of opportunities (e.g., writing reaction papers; see below Extra Credit Assignments) to earn extra credit points. So, if you need an A be sure to accumulate enough points (360) to earn an A.

Note: Please do not tell me what grade you NEED in my course. Grades are not based on need; they are based on a student's performance on the tests and course assignments. I will NOT change grades at any point based on need. If you need a certain grade, be certain to earn enough points to merit that grade.

Extra Credit Assignments:

During the semester, I will provide several opportunities for extra credit points (worth a total of 20 points) – for example, you may write reaction papers for attending university events. Points earned from these reaction opportunities will simply be added

into your total accumulation of points for the class. Therefore, missing or not doing reaction papers will not hurt your grade but help your grade.

Grading Concerns:

After I return any graded assignments, I will not discuss any grading questions for a 24-hour period. After 24 hours have elapsed, I will be happy to address any grading concerns you might have. All grading concerns MUST be addressed WITHIN TWO WEEKS after the assignment is returned.

Academic Misconduct & Honor Code Policy:

Plagiarism in your work will result in a zero for the assignment and will result in an 'F' in the course regardless of your numerical average, and the instructor may pursue additional measures. All assignments are to be the original composition of each student. Outside sources are required for each assignment with proper verbal citation in the paper and in a bibliography as required.

Violations of academic integrity are very serious matters and are clearly documented in the ASU Student Handbook. The work a student submits in a class is expected to be the student's own work and must be work completed for that particular class and assignment. Plagiarism means intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own. This may include your own previous work. Plagiarism includes quoting or paraphrasing from other sources without acknowledging/citing the source of your information or presenting quoted material as your own words. You must be very clear about attribution of sources and you must know how to cite sources in a presentation, outline, and bibliography. Please see full Honor Code Policy at http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent/documents/pdf/Student_Handbook.pdf

Religious Holy Day Observance:

- "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code 11.20.
- A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.
- A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence, however; the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

Title IX at Angelo State University:

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal

violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance. This is done in order to connect students with resources and options in addressing the allegations reported. As a student, are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU's Office of Title IX Compliance and the Title IX Coordinator. You may do so by contacting:

Michelle Miller, J.D.

Title IX Coordinator

Mayer Administration Building, Room 210

325-942-2022

michelle.miller@angelo.edu

You may also file a report online 24/7 at www.angelo.edu/incident-form.

If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the *University Health Clinic at 325-942-2171, Counseling Services at 325-942-2371* or the *ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345*.

The Office of Title IX Compliance also provides accommodations related to pregnancy (such as communicating with your professors regarding medically necessary absences, modifications required because of pregnancy, etc.). If you are pregnant and need assistance or accommodations, please contact the Office of Title IX Compliance utilizing the information above.

For more information about Title IX in general you may visit www.angelo.edu/title-ix.

Disability Statement:

The Student Life Office is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodation based on a disability. It is the student's responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting:

Dr. Dallas Swafford, Director of Student Development,

University Center Suite 112B,

Phone: 325-942-2047, or Fax: 325-942-2211

E-Mail: dallas.swafford@angelo.edu

Tentative Course Schedule:

DATE	TOPIC	MATERIAL	ASSIGNMENT
1/19	Orientation		
1/24	Launching Your Study	Ch. 1	
1/26	Talk About Theory	Ch. 2	
1/31	Talk About Theory	Ch. 2	
2/2	Weighing the Words	Ch. 3	
2/7	Mapping the Territory	Ch. 4	
2/9	Interpersonal Messages	Ch. 5, 6, & 7	
2/14		Ch. 5, 6, & 7	
2/16	Relationship Development	Ch. 8, 9, & 10	Miscommunication Paper
2/21		Ch. 8, 9, & 10	
2/23	Relationship Maintenance	Ch. 11, 12, & 13	
2/28		Ch. 11, 12, & 13	
3/2	Influence	Ch. 14, 15, & 16	Movie Paper
3/7		Ch. 14, 15, & 16	
3/9			Mid-Term Exam
3/14			Spring Break
3/16			Spring Break
3/21	Group Communication	Ch. 17 & 18	
3/23	Organizational Communication	Ch. 19, 20, & 21	
3/28		Ch. 19, 20, & 21	
3/30	Public Rhetoric	Ch. 22, 23, & 24	
4/4		Ch. 22, 23, & 24	
4/6	Media & Culture	Ch. 25, 26, & 27	Speech Criticism Paper
4/11		Ch. 25, 26, & 27	
4/13	Media Effects	Ch. 28, 29, & 30	
4/18		Ch. 28, 29, & 30	
4/20	Gender & Communication	Ch. 31, 32, & 33	Media Criticism Paper
4/25		Ch. 31, 32, & 33	
4/27	Intercultural Communication	Ch. 34, 35, & 36	
5/2		Ch. 34, 35, & 36	
5/4	Course Review		Music, Dance, & Food Assignment
5/11			Final Exam (3:30 – 5:30 PM)

Course Assignments

Throughout this course, there are two (main) kinds of assignments and projects – Exams (Midterm & Final), and Theory Application Papers/Projects (Pick Three). These assignments/projects are designed to help you develop conceptual knowledge as well as practical skills in various communication contexts.

- **Theory Application Papers/Projects (Pick THREE – 50 points each)**

Individual essays analyze examples of persuasion by applying theories/concepts that we learn in class. Although your final version of paper must have a clear organization (structure) of Introduction (with a clear thesis statement and a preview), Body, and a Conclusion, the main part (substance) of your essay has primarily four components – **Description, Explanation, Application, and Evaluation (DEAE)**. (1) **Description** (of your example): Your paper should begin with a clear and detailed description of the example/artifact of persuasion. (2) **Explanation** (of your theory/concept): Pick at least **TWO** theories/concepts from the textbook, explain what they are, and justify how/why these theories/concepts are appropriate for your topic of consideration. (3) **Application** (analysis of your example, by applying your theory): Apply your theories/concepts to your example, to analyze how communication works in/with your example. In applying these theories/concepts, you should not assume that I am a highly knowledgeable reader. That is, you should be very detailed and thorough in your application of the theory. Do not simply assume that I will make the connections for you. It is always safer for you to assume that I know too little rather than to assume that I know too much. (4) **Evaluation** (of your findings): Discuss the implications of your main points (learned from your analysis) – how/why what you learned ‘matters’ (socially, politically, culturally, theoretically, etc.) – how/why others should care about your points (arguments, insights, findings, etc.).

Your paper will be 4-5 pages in length, type-written (12-point font), double-spaced, and stapled. Be prepared to give a short presentation in extemporaneous, professional, and engaging style on the day it is due.

I. Miscommunication Paper (due – 2/16)

Choose an instance from your own life when you miscommunicated with someone (someone sent a message that was not received as it was intended) or when your communication produced a negative outcome (an outcome that you were not happy with). You should use **AT LEAST** two theories from class or from the book, to analyze why the miscommunication occurred or why the communication produced a negative outcome. These two theories must be theories we have examined in the course (not from other courses or theories from other chapters in the textbook not assigned in the course). In other words, you must work with at least two theories from the chapters 5, 6, & 7. The structure of your paper should follow the DEAE Model explained above.

II. Movie Paper (due – 3/2)

Assume that you have the opportunity to step into a scene in a film in which you identify a relationship problem between/among characters. Write a letter (4-5 pages,

following DEAE Model) to one of the characters, using communication theories, to suggest ways to understand and solve the problem within the film. Use AT LEAST two theories from class or from the book to analyze why the relationship problem occurred, how communication played a central role, how s/he can manage the problem better. These two theories must come from the chapters 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13.

III. Speech Criticism Paper (due – 4/6)

Watch/listen to a public speech, and analyze its rhetorical implications, with AT LEAST two theories/concepts from the chapters 22, 23, & 24. If you have a difficulty in finding a more contemporary example, you may look for your example of speech from the American Rhetoric Top 100 Speeches (<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/top100speechesall.html>), or our library provides numerous resources/examples of public speeches (Vital Speeches of the Day: <https://phl.angelo.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=890903>), or (Great Speeches Series: https://fod-infobase-com.easydb.angelo.edu/p_Collection.aspx?seriesID=30420). Follow the structure of DEAE model (explained above) for the organization of your analysis paper.

IV. Media Criticism Paper (due – 4/20)

Choose a media artifact (advertising, music video, movie, TV drama, YouTube clip, etc.) and analyze its communicative implications, with AT LEAST two theories from the chapters 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, & 30. In analyzing your media example, you must ‘show’ (than ‘tell’) how/why your media example manifests the issues, concerns, or implications addressed by your theories. Your paper must follow the DEAE Model explained above.

V. Music, Dance, Food Assignment (due – 5/4)

In about 5-7 minute, give a presentation/performance (instead of writing a paper), to discuss/analyze a music, dance, or food from your culture that tells a ‘story’ about you and your culture. Your discussion/analysis must incorporate/apply AT LEAST two theories from the chapters 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, & 36. You may sing, dance, or perform; also prepare for a one-page handout for the wordings, recipes, or visual images of your example (if needed, provide translation).

General Criteria for Grading Papers

“F” – Answer reveals you really have no clue what is going on, or are so carelessly inattentive to matters of style as to write an incomprehensible response.

“D” – Answer reveals less than adequate understanding of theory, concept, or other relevant information. Answer may also misapply concept, use an inappropriate or weak example in attempting to clarify an explanation, or may ramble on in the hope that something will eventually hit the intended target. Answer also may be more or less on target, but carelessly or sloppily written/proofed.

“C” – Answer provides an on-target recitation of the correct material from the text or other sources being consulted. Answer meets the basic expectations with respect to number of outside sources, or other conditions of a specific assignment. The writing, while clear and comprehensible, is otherwise non-exceptional, or gives evidence of inattention to basic matters of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

“B” – Answer is not only on-target, but is written in a clear, well-organized style, with few errors (and indicates attention given to correcting spelling or punctuation mistakes). In addition, examples illustrate thought beyond recall or recitation of a text’s commentary and add to the overall understanding of the theory, concepts, or other materials being evaluated. There is evidence of having gone beyond the text to consult other sources of information that might be relevant.

“A” – Answer goes beyond that required for a “B” response to indicate critical analysis, offering evidence of a cogent, well-reasoned defense of a position or argument that is advanced relative to the object under consideration. In other words, the answer reveals a clear authorial voice in command of the material. In addition, the style is elegant, indicating careful attention to presenting a well-constructed, well-thought-out response that advances understanding, stimulates thought or is otherwise evidence of exceptional thinking.

Note: These standards apply as general guidelines for the evaluation of assigned papers. As should be clear, inattention to matters of style/format will result in a corresponding decrease in a grade, even when content is otherwise clear and on-target. As a further explanation of these criteria, consider the following comments:

- A “C” answer is a good answer – It simply does not do any more than is being asked.
- A “B” answer is a better answer, but does not reveal depth of analysis that would be required to be considered exceptional.
- An “A” is an exceptional piece of work. Simply understanding the material is not the equivalent of an “A.”

Note: Use this as a checklist for paper assignments. This checklist contains the same information as the general criteria for grading papers explained above. Make sure you work on drafts and receive my feedbacks. I can offer more and fuller feedbacks on drafts than the final version of the paper (submitted for grading).

Paper Assignment

Name: _____

Grade: _____

	Need Improvement	OK	Well Done
1. Clarity of Central Argument/ Thesis/Position:	_____	_____	_____
2. Well-Reasoned Defense of Thesis/Position:	_____	_____	_____
3. On-Target Articulation of Theories:	_____	_____	_____
4. Critical Analysis:	_____	_____	_____
5. Adding/ Stimulating New Thoughts:	_____	_____	_____
6. Clear Authorial Voice in Command of the Materials:	_____	_____	_____
7. Organization of Paper:	_____	_____	_____
8. Appropriate Style/Format:	_____	_____	_____
9. Comment:			