

Communication 487
Communication and Global Organization
Fall 2011

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Class:	W 2:00 – 4:50 in KER 101
Office:	KER206
Office Hours:	W 5:00-6:30 and by appointment

Description/Goals:

This seminar explores trends in communication in small groups and global business, government. The course is organized in three parts: (1) Interpersonal communications, (2) Point-to-multipoint communication, and (3) Communication, creativity, and innovation. These three sections track the communication issues that emerged in parallel with the rise of ubiquitous, mobile, cheap digital networks.

Organization:

The course meets once each week for three hours. The first 30-45 minutes will generally be devoted to exercises. Lecture and discussion will follow.

Requirements:

- 1) 25% of the grade is based brief quizzes on the readings
- 2) 25% of the grade is based on class participation
- 3) 25% of the grade is based on your buzz assignment
- 4) 25% of the grade is based on a Final Paper

Required Books and Pamphlets: (Available at Amazon for less money)

1. Brian Arthur, *The Nature of Technology: What it Is and How it Evolves*.
2. Warren Bennis, *Organizing Genius: The Secrets of Creative Collaboration*
3. Clayton Christensen, *The Innovators Dilemma*
4. Eric von Hippel, *Democratizing Innovation (available online)*
5. Edward Tufte, *The Cognitive Style of Power Point*

Academic Integrity:

The Annenberg School is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the *Scampus Guide*. It is the policy of the SIR to report all violations of the academic code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the International Relations major or minors. The University may also decide on further consequences.

Disability Accommodation:

Students requesting academic accommodations based on disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open M-F, 8:30-5:00pm. The office is in STU 301 and their phone is 740-0776.

PART I: Interpersonal Communication

1. **Aug 24: Introduction, Overview of the Goals and Content of the Class**
We will discuss the evolution Interpersonal Communications including rhetoric and persuasion. Also, what makes a great class? Teacher? Student?

Required Readings: None

Exercise 1: Introduce Yourself: In one to two minutes introduce yourself. Think about what makes you unique or distinctive or surprising and tell rest of us. Please go beyond, my name is Laura or Sam, I am a senior in Annenberg and want to go to law school. Tell us something about yourself that would surprise even your close friends. And, as a second round, if you had 30 seconds with the President of the US or the President of USC to make a favorable, memorable impression, what would you say or do?

2. **Aug 31: Small Group Communications:** Why do teams (study groups or football teams) succeed or fail? Are there secrets to making a meeting successful? When are power point presentations a plus and when are they a negative? Why? More generally when does technology in the classroom improve learning? Charles Eames meets IBM. We will also discuss the single best use of PowerPoint to present data that I have ever seen. Available at:
http://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_shows_the_best_stats_you_ve_ever_seen.htm
!

Required Readings: Edward Tufte, "The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint"
(AND)

Elizabeth Bumiller, "We Have Met the Enemy and He is PowerPoint," *NYT*, April 27, 2010, pp. A1, A8. (Available at:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/world/27powerpoint.html>)

(AND)

Farhad Manjoo, "No More Bullet Points, No More Clip Art: PowerPoint isn't evil if you learn how to use it," Available at: <http://www.slate.com/id/2253050/>

Exercise 2: Three-minute presentation (Do not go long!) Using **one** prop (handout, power point slide, or something else) tell me something that I don't know. Also, form into groups of 2 or 3 to plan for Exercise 3 next week.

PART II: Point to Multi-Point Communication: Local to National to Global

3. **Sep 7: Voice:** Speech to Telephones to Radio and from Vinyl to CDs to iTunes to Pandora and Spotify: From oratory to telephone (really point-to point) was a huge leap. The move to radio changed the world, but was overshadowed by television and movies. Skype and streaming Netflix introduces new possibilities. If we charge for video, phone service must be free. The death or distance. The music business in transition.

Required Listening and a short article to read:

Listen to Talk Radio for at least an hour (NPR, Limbaugh, KCRW, KPCC, KPFK or anybody else you choose). (Music and sports excluded) Think about how it is presented.

Listen to: "Radio Icon Norman Corwin's Splendid Century," May 3, 2010,
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=126414628>,

Norman Corwin's "On a Note of Triumph:"
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4668028>

Joshua Green, "Management Secrets of the Grateful Dead," *The Atlantic*, March 2010, pp.64-67. (Available at:
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/03/management-secrets-of-the-grateful-dead/7918/>)

Exercise 3: Group Decision and Follow Through: In your group you will need to decide on (negotiate) an activity to undertake together and then do it. (Visit the natural history museum, have a meal together on campus or off, see a movie, go for a swim, take a walk, etc.) As a group, in no more than 3 minutes tell the class what your group did together and, more important, how the decision was made. Each member of the group should indicate whether they felt their views were taken into account or not.)

4. **Sep 14: Print:** Books, Pamphlets, Letters, Magazines, and Newspapers: Printing Presses. The printing press started a revolution in literacy but also in terms of power politics. People are reading more but they are doing so online. What does this mean for publishers, authors, newspapers, culture and society?

Required Readings:

Jonathan Shaw, "Gutenberg 2.0: Harvard Libraries Deal With Disruptive Change," *Harvard Magazine*, May-June 2010. (Article is available at: <http://harvardmagazine.com/2010/05/gutenberg-2-0>).

Ken Auletta, "Publish or Perish: can the iPad topple the Kindle, and save the book business?" *The New Yorker*, April 26, 2010. (Article is available at: http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/04/26/100426fa_fact_auletta)

Shane Richmond, "The printed book is doomed: here's why our children will grow up with ebooks and they'll always view printed books as a less convenient relic." <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/shane-richmond/>>
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/news/8680271/The-printed-book-is-doomed-heres-why.html>

Peter Osnos, "How Book Publishing Has Changed Since 1984," *The Atlantic*, April 2011. <http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2011/04/how-book-publishing-has-changed-since-1984/237184/>

Also Look at: <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/jacketcopy/2010/05/reading-around-the-world-in-photos.html>

Someday if you are inspired read Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge, 1979).

Exercise 4: Map: Create a 1-page or 1 power point map of USC's international links (both incoming e.g. international students, and outgoing, e.g. overseas programs and offices). You may work alone or with your team.

Quiz #1: Covering Readings for Weeks 3 and 4

5. **Sep 21: Images and Video:** Movies and Television to YouTube and Hulu. How do you watch television and movies? How has this changed and will change in the future? Cable v. Networks. Asynchronous viewing. Reaching audiences. Transmedia storytelling. All great and lasting criticism is positive – discuss.

Required Readings: “Changing the Channel: A special report on television, “*The Economist*, May 1, 2010, (Article available at: http://www.economist.com/specialreports/displaystory.cfm?story_id=15980859)

Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, Chapter 3, pp. 59-92. Also see his “The Revenge of the Origami Unicorn: Seven Principles of Transmedia Storytelling,” (Available at: http://www.convergenceculture.org/weblog/2009/12/the_revenge_of_the_origami_uni.php)

David Byrne, “David Byrne's Survival Strategies for Emerging Artists — and Megastars,” *Wired*, 16:01, December 2007. Available at: http://www.wired.com/entertainment/music/magazine/16-01/ff_byrne?currentPage=all

Dealbook, “Blockbuster’s Fall and Netflix’s Rise, in Pictures,” *New York Times*, February 24, 2011. Available at: <http://dealbook.nytimes.com/2011/02/24/blockbusters-fall-and-netflixs-rise-in-pictures/>

Exercise 5: Publish or Perish Introduction: What makes a good review? *Carefully Read the last Sunday’s New York Times* Book Review or the last *TLS* in a paper version and then online. Consider the differences and be ready to discuss.

6. **Sep 28: Data:** Computers and Internet: Email to Broadband to 4G to social networking via Facebook! The amount of data available and consumed is exploding. What is the significance of the data eruption and of social networking. Who dominates today? From AT&T to IBM to Microsoft to Google to Facebook? What about Apple and Steve Jobs? **Consider:** ‘Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?’ (T. S. Elliot, 1934); ‘Where is the information we have lost in data?’ (C. Jonscher, 1999).

Required Readings

Roger Bohn and James Short, “How Much Information? 2009: Report on American Consumers,” Global Information Industry Center, UCSD, December 9, 2009. (Available at: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/31120885/How-Much-Information-2009-Report-on-American-Consumers-Roger-E-Bohn-amp-James-E-Short>)

Martin Hilbert, “How much information can the world store, communicate, and compute?” Video at: <http://www.vimeo.com/19779116>

Explore the Technorati web site.

“Data, data everywhere” A special report on Managing Information, *The Economist*, February 27, 2010. (Available at: http://www.economist.com/specialreports/displaystory.cfm?story_id=15557443)

Exercise 6 Creating Buzz: 15 Minutes of Fame: Explanation of the Assignment and Selection of Topics. (a) Self promotion; ok, but boring; (b) Make somebody else famous. (3) It’s not creative if it doesn’t sell! License plates. How should success be measured?

Quiz #2: Covering Readings for Weeks 5 and 6

7. Oct 5: Social Networking and YouTube

The rise of Facebook, the displacement of MySpace and the social networking of the world. . Is Facebook a true competitor to Google? How does Twitter differ? What international implications are there? What about specialized networks such as LinkedIn? Implications? Similarly what accounts for the popularity of YouTube? How can these instruments be leveraged to create fame and fortune. A brief tangent to discuss American Idol and the introduction of texting.

“Over the past year, social media has caused a major shift in how Americans spend their time online. According to research done by Nielsen Co., the time spent using e-mail fell to third place in a list of all Internet activities, behind social media, which surged 43 percent in the past year, and gaming. "There's significant overlap there, obviously," said Nielsen analyst Dave Martin of social media and gaming, acknowledging that a growing portion of online gaming takes place via social media applications (read: Farmville).” *Advertising Age*

Required Reading:

“710 Million Facebook subscribers,” 2011 Q2, Data available at:
<http://www.internetworldstats.com/facebook.htm>

Ujala Sehgal , “Why Google Won't Survive the Facebook Threat,” June 05, 2011.
Available at: <<http://www.theatlanticwire.com/authors/ujala-sehgal/>>

“The virtual curmudgeon: Jaron Lanier, a pioneer of virtual-reality technology, has more recently become an outspoken critic of online social media,” *The Economist*, September 2, 2010.

Spend some time exploring YouTube and think about why some videos take off and others fizzle.

Also, if you are one of the few who have not seen *The Social Network*, rent it and watch it and consider the politics of competition..

Exercise 7: Initial strategy report and brainstorming on Buzz assignment

8. Oct 12: The Web, Videogames and Virtual Worlds

Massive Multi-Player Games (MMPGs), the Semantic Web, the Cloud and RFIDs. Next steps in innovation and how will it change the way we communicate. Will the new fad in 3-D movies let by Avatar change things or is it a flash in the pan?

Required Reading:

Tim Berners-Lee, “Long Live the Web: A Call for Continued Open Standards and Neutrality,” *Scientific American*, December 2010. Available at: <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=long-live-the-web>

N. Evan Van Zelfden, “What's Killing the Video-Game Business? Hint: It's not the economy.” Available at: <http://www.slate.com/id/2210732/>

Samantha Murphy, “Virtual worlds need real laws,” Available at: <http://tiny.cc/smyga>

Additional readings will be assigned.

Also, if you are one of the few who have not seen Avatar, rent it and watch it and consider how it changes the cinema experience.

Exercise 8: Thinking about creative promotion. What crosses the line?

Quiz #3 Covering Readings for Weeks 7 and 8

9. Oct 19: Case Study: Converging Business Models adapt to a Digital World: The Rise of Google and eBay and their Business Models. Consider the advertising model adopted by Google and the auction model embraced by eBay (including Paypal). But why did eBay buy Skype?

Peter Cowhey and Jonathan Aronson, *Transforming Global Information and Communication Markets: The Political Economy of Innovation* (MIT Pres, 2009), Chapters 3-5. Available at: www.globalinfoandtelecom.org

Exercise 9: Final Paper Topics due today. Discuss and critique the proposals.

PART III: Communication, Creativity, and Innovation

10. **Oct 26: Defining and Promoting Creativity and Innovation.** The last portion of the class considers how and when organizations are creative and innovative. What does it mean to be innovative and how can we foster it in ourselves and in organizations.

Required Readings: Before class please read Vannevar Bush's seminal article "As We May Think," that was first published in *The Atlantic* in July 1945. It is available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1945/07/as-we-may-think/3881/>

Also read Brian Arthur, *The Nature of Technology: What it is and how it Evolves* (Free Press, 2009), Chapters 1,2, and 11.

Quiz #4: Covering Readings for Weeks 9 and 10

11. **Nov 2: Fostering Creative Groups:** Bennis provides case studies of highly creative groups for Lockheed's Skunk Works, to Disney

Required Readings:

Warren Bennis, *Organizing Genius: The Secrets of Creative Collaboration*

Some day go back and read Tracy Kidder's classic, *The Soul of a New Machine*. Also please attend his lecture at Bovard – October 18 or 19.

[Note: I likely will need to reschedule this class to attend a meeting in Washington, DC. We will find a convenient time for everybody.]

12. **Nov 9: Disruptive technologies and Killer apps.** Where do they come from? Why are small companies often more innovative than large ones? Is Christensen right? If so how does this story apply to higher education and especially to the challenges facing USC?

Required Readings:

Start with Wikipedia article on disruptive technology. Available at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disruptive_technology

Explore from there.

The classic work in this realm is Clayton Christensen, *The Innovators Dilemma: When New Technologies Cause Great Firms to Fail* (HBS Press, 1997). Try and scan some of it, but the reality is that this late in the semester you won't get through all of it.

Quiz #5: Covering Readings for Weeks 11 and 12

13. **Nov 16: Bottom-Up Innovation.** The Web has changed the news business, politics, innovation, and economics. How does the Web flatten and liberate the creative and innovative process?

Required Readings: Eric von Hippel, *Democratizing Innovation* (Available at: <http://web.mit.edu/evhippel/www/democ.htm>)

Quiz #6: Extra Credit: Covering Readings for Week 13

14. Nov 23: **NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

15. Nov 30: **Using Innovations for Innovation:**

Creativity in Statecraft: Given the political morass that the US and other countries find themselves stuck in. Given corruption and poverty. Can countries and international groups actually craft creative solutions to hard problems?

Required Readings: Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. "Creativity in Statecraft."
(Hard to find so I will provide this to students)

Buzz Assignment Reports Presented and Turned in Today

Final Paper Due: December 6, 2011