COMM 585
Theories of Organizational Communication
Fall 2016, ASC 328

Instructor: Patti Riley
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Recommended Texts: ( Chapters from these books will be on Blackboard)
Background link:
http://2012books.lardbucket.org/:

Other Interesting Texts:


Course Rationale:

This class exposes students to the basic theoretical perspectives in organizational communication, and related areas of research. The class focuses on the change in theoretical perspectives over time as well as on new approaches to the study of organizational communication from a variety of perspectives.

As the area of organizational communication continues to expand, it is important to examine the relationship of organizational communication studies to other related “disciplines” in light of historical events as well as alternative agendas in academic discourse. As part of the course, students will be exposed to both “classic” readings and current perspectives, as well as alternative/diverse methods of research. Because organizations and their problems have been much in the news (think FEMA, Volkswagon, the UN) we will also have a focus on organizational change and the material, practical issues of organizational members. The class uses traditional academic research studies, case studies, current event articles as well as web materials, film excerpts and documentaries. It is, however, a seminar and students are expected to be active participants. Laptops are for note-taking only 😊.

Assignments:

Wiki page(s) and weekly reaction papers 15%

Every week students will post reaction papers from the weekly readings on the discussion forum on Blackboard, and by the end of the term, wiki groups will post either a new wiki entry or a blog entry on the new Organizational Communication website organizationalcommunication.org.
Class participation 10%
Book Review 25%
and
Book Review Presentation 10%

Students will choose a new(jsh) book related to organizational communication (or organizational or institutional studies or one that features communication technology impacts on organizations, etc.) and do a review in the style of those published in journals. There will be an oral presentation. Please prepare a handout or slides for class. Many of them will end up being published.

Final Project 40%

Students will write a research proposal for a field study in organizational communication. The proposal will include an introduction, theoretical rationale, literature review and methods section. The project may be quantitative or qualitative. Students can work individually or in groups. The literature review in a proposal is very focused and should the advance research questions/hypotheses that you wish to study. You will design an actual study and explain the specific methods that you would use to gather data to answer your research questions. Essentially you’ll need to describe the type of study (ethnography, survey, focus groups, experiment, etc.), the participants, groups, networks or organization(s) of study, the way you will collect your data and the type of data you plan to collect (e.g., ethnographic narratives, social media, survey instruments), and how you would analyze the data. The topic for this assignment is open as long as it focuses on some aspect of organizational communication. This proposal should lead to a conference paper and publication and could help you set up your research agenda. This option is for those of you pursuing a career in academia or wanting to prepare for your thesis/dissertation. You may have a specific project in mind right now and would like to carry it out this semester, which is of course allowed. The proposal should be set up so that, preferably, data can be collected and analyzed in time for the NCA deadline in February.

Citation styles: In this graduate course, you are expected to know APA style for citing outside sources, although if you know that the journal you will be submitting your paper to uses MLA or Chicago Style Guide or has its own style sheet, using that style is acceptable.

Absences

If there is an extenuating emergency or illness that interferes with your attendance or ability to keep up with work, please let me know. If you must miss a class (for any reason), you can make up the participation points by writing an expanded reaction paper
or an additional reaction on an unassigned reading from one of the recommended books. Your makeup report and discussion responses will be due following your return to class.

Academic Integrity Statement

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University’s Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violations or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code can result in the student’s expulsion from the Annenberg School.

Disability

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to Dr. Riley as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Class Schedule

August 22 Introductions, course review, explanation of Wiki projects, the short and not always glorious history of org comm

August 29 Background Reading

Baker, K. Organizational Communication. Chapter 13
https://blackboard.usc.edu/webapps/blackboard/execute/content/file?cmd=view&content_id=_4276023_1&course_id=_159221_1&launch_in_new=true


Create wiki teams

September 5  
No class—Labor Day

September 12  
Leadership
Barge, K. (1994). Putting Leadership back to work. *MCQ*, 8, 95-.
Fairhurst, Discursive Leadership (Chapters 1, 3, 4, 7 & pp. 191-201),
Leadership case (class handout)

September 19  
Corporations and Capitalism

Excerpts from the documentary “The Corporation”

September 26  


October 3  
Globalization and Networks  


October 10  


Weick, *Sensemaking in Organizations* Chapters 1-4.

Hurricane Katrina case

October 17  
Leonardi et al. chapters and articles on Organizational Culture Change  
October 24

**COO Theories**


October 31

**Theories of technologies and media.**


November 7

Guest lecturer Janet Fulk

**Organizational Discourse.**


November 14

**Book Review Presentations**

November 21

**Crisis**

Simpson, Engaging Communication


*Deetz Nukes*

**November 28**

Engagement, Identities and Impressions


Gibbs

**December 5**

Communication in Start-ups, Entrepreneurship and Emerging Organizations


**December 12**

Final Paper/Project presentations (will involve food)

Happy Holidays!