

**COMM 585**  
**Theories of Organizational Communication**  
**Fall 2016, ASC 328**

Instructor: Patti Riley

Office: ASC 2OIB

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**Recommended Texts:** (Chapters from these books will be on Blackboard)

Cheney, C. (2002). *Values at Work*. Cornell University Press. ISBN: 0801488168

Deetz, S. (1992). *Democracy in an Age of Corporate Colonization*. SUNY Press. ISBN: 0791408647

Fairhurst, G. (2007). *Discursive Leadership*. Sage Publications [paperback] ISBN 13: 978-1412904254

Giddens, A. (1979). *Central Problems in Social Theory*. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN: 0520057287

Jablin, F. & Putnam, L., (Ed.s) (2000). *New Handbook of Organizational Communication*. Sage. ISBN: 1412915252

Leonardi, P., Nardi, B.A. & Kalinkos (2013). Materiality and Organizing: Social Interaction in a Technological World. Oxford University Press.

Putnam, L. & Nicotera, A. (2008). *Building Theories of Organization: The Constitutive Role of Communication*. Routledge [paperback] ISBN-13: 978-0805847109

Putnam, L. & Mumby, D. (2013). *Sage handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research and methods, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.* Sage.

J.L. Simpson (Ed.) (2006). *Engaging Communication: Transforming Organizations*. Hampton Press ISBN 1572736194

Tompkins, P. & Tompkins, E. (2004). *Apollo, Challenger and Columbia. The Decline of the Space Program (A Study in Organizational Communication)*. Roxbury Publishing Co. ISBN: 1931719322

Taylor, J.R. & Van Every, E. (2011). *The Situated Organization*. Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-88168-5

Weick, K. (1995). *Sensemaking in Organizations*. Sage ISBN: 080397177X

**Background link:**

<http://2012books.lardbucket.org/>:

**Other Interesting Texts:**

Buzzanell, P. (2000) *Rethinking Organizational and Managerial Communication from Feminist Perspectives*. Sage ISBN: 0761912797

Clegg, S., C. Hardy and W. Nord (Eds.) (1999). *Managing Organizations: Current Issues (Handbook of Organization Studies, Volume 2)*. Sage 0761960465

Putnam, L. & Krone, K. (Eds.) (2007) *Organizational Communication*. SAGE Library in Business and Management.

Salem, P. (Ed.) (1999). *Organizational Communication and Change*. Hampton Press.

**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](http://organizationalcommunication.org).

Class participation 10%

Book Review 25%

and

Book Review Presentation 10%

Students will choose a new(ish) 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 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 <a href="https://blackboard.usc.edu/webapps/blackboard/execute/content/file?cmd=view&amp;content_id=_4276023_1&amp;course_id=_159221_1&amp;launch_in_new=true">https://blackboard.usc.edu/webapps/blackboard/execute/content/file?cmd=view&amp;content_id=_4276023_1&amp;course_id=_159221_1&amp;launch_in_new=true</a>  Buzzanell, P. M; Stohl, C. (1999). The Redding tradition of organizational communication scholarship: W. Charles Redding and his legacy. <i>Communication Studies</i> , 50, 324- 336.  Deetz, S. (2001). Conceptual Foundations. In the New handbook of Organizational Communication. Eds. L. Putnam and F. Jablin (2000), p. 3-46. Sage. ISBN: 1412915252  Jones, E., Watson, B., Gardner, J., Gallois, C. (2004). Organizational communication: Challenges for the new century. <i>Journal of Communication</i> , 54, 722-750.  Monge, P. & Poole, M.S. (2008). The evolution of organizational communication. <i>Journal of Communication</i> , 58, 679-692.

- Create wiki teams
- September 5 No class—Labor Day
- September 12 Leadership
- Barge, K. (1994). Putting Leadership back to work. *MCQ*, 8, 95-.
- Fairhurst, G. (2005). Reframing the art of framing. *Leadership*, 1, 165-185.
- Zigurs, I. (2003). Leadership in Virtual Teams. *Organizational Dynamics*, 31, 339-351.
- Fairhurst, Discursive Leadership (Chapters 1, 3, 4, 7 & pp. 191-201),
- Baldoni, J. (2004). Powerful leadership communication. *Leader to Leader*, 32, 20-24.
- Eisenberg, E.M. (forthcoming) Leadership in the Popular Imagination.
- Leadership case (class handout)
- September 19 Corporations and Capitalism
- Deetz, S. (1992). *Democracy in an Age of Corporate Colonization*, SUNY Press. ISBN: 0791408647. Chapters
- Tracy, S. J. (2004). Dialectic, contradiction, or double bind? Analyzing and theorizing employee reactions to organizational tensions. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 32, 119–146.
- Excerpts from the documentary “The Corporation”
- September 26 Structuration, Adaptive Structuration, Giddens, A. (1979 ). *Central Problems in Social Theory*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapters 1-3.
- Banks, S. & Riley, P. (1993). Structuration theory as an ontology for communication research, in S. Deetz (Ed.) *Communication Yearbook 16*, 167-196. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Olufowote, J. O. (2010) .'Informed consent to treatment's sociohistorical discourse of traditionalism: A structurational analysis of radiology residents' accounts.' *Health Communication*, 25, 1, 22 – 31.DOI: 10.1080/10410230903473508
- Barley, S. R. and Tolbert, P. S., (1997). Institutionalization and Structuration: Studying the Links between Action and Institution. Digital Commons @ILR. Articles & Chapters. Paper 130.

<http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/articles/130>

Witmer, D. F. (1997). Communication and recovery: Structuration as an ontological approach to organizational culture. *Communication monographs*, 64, 324-349.

October 3

Globalization and Networks

Stohl, C. (2005). Globalization theory. In S. May & D.K. Mumby (Eds), *Engaging organizational communication theory and research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, pp. 223–61.

Gibbs, J. (2009). Dialectics in a global software team: Negotiating tensions across time, space, and culture. *Human Relations*, 62, 905–935.

October 10

Weick, K. E. & Roberts, K. H. (1993). Collective mind in organizations: Heedful interrelating on flight decks. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38, 357-381.

Weick, K.E. (1993). The collapse of sensemaking in organizations: The Mann Gulch disaster. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38, 628-652. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2393339>

Mohrman, S.A., Gibson, C.B. & Morhman, A. M. (2001). Doing research that is useful to practice: A model and empirical exploration. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 44, 357-375. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3069461>

Boudes, T. & Laroche, H. (2009). Taking off the Heat: Narrative Sensemaking in Post-crisis Inquiry Reports. *Organization Studies*, 30. 377-396.

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

Hurricane Katrina case

October 17

Leonardi et al. chapters and articles on Organizational Culture Change

Conelly, C.E., Webster, J. & Trougakos, J.P. (2012). Knowledge hiding in organizations.

*Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33, 64–88. DOI:  
10.1002/job.737

October 24

COO Theories

Putnam, L. and Nicotera, A. (2008). *Building Theories of Organization: The Constitutive Role of Communication*. Routledge [paperback] ISBN-13: 978-0805847109 (chapters 1, 2 & 7)

Bisel, R. S. (2010). A communicative ontology of organization? A description, history, and critique of CCO theories for organization science. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 24, 124–131.

McPhee, R. D., & Zaug, P. (2000). The communicative constitution of organizations: A framework for explanation. *The Electronic Journal of Communication*, 10, 1–16.

October 31

Theories of technologies and media.

Contractor, N. (2001). New media and organization: Introduction. In, L. Lievrouw & S. Livingstone (Eds.), *Handbook of new media (pp. 201-205)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Waldeck, J. H., Seibold, D. R., & Flanagin, A. J. (2004). Organizational assimilation and communication technology use. *Communication Monographs*, 71, 161-183.

Orlikowski, W. J. (2007). Sociomaterial practices: Exploring technology at work. *Organization Studies*, 28, 1435–1448.

Guest lecturer Janet Fulk

November 7

Organizational Discourse.

Fairhurst, G.T. & Putnam, L. (2004). Organizations as discursive constructions. *Communication Theory*, 14, 5-26.

Ashcraft, K. L., Kuhn, T., & Cooren, F. (2009). Constitutional amendments: "Materializing" organizational communication. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 3, 1–64.

November 14

Book Review Presentations

November 21

Crisis

Simpson, Engaging Communication

Bridges, J. A. (2004). Corporate issues campaigns: Six theoretical approaches. *Communication Theory*, 14, 51-77.

Venette, S. J., Sellnow, T. L., & Lang, P. A. (2003). Metanarration's role in restructuring perceptions of crisis: NHTSA's failure in the Ford-Firestone crisis. *Journal of Business Communication*, 40, 219-236.

Tompkins, P. & Tompkins, E. (2004). *Apollo, Challenger and Columbia. The Decline of the Space Program (A Study in Organizational Communication)*. Roxbury Publishing Co. ISBN: 1931719322, Chapters 1, 3, 4 & 8

Keyton, J. (2014). Organizational culture: Creating meaning and influence. In L. L. Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *SAGE handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (3rd ed., pp. 549–568). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

#### *Deetz Nukes*

November 28

Engagement, Identities and Impressions

Ashcraft, K.L. & Allen, B.J. (2003). The racial foundation of organizational communication. *Communication Theory*, 13, 5-38.

Mumby, D. & Putnam, L.L. (1992). The politics of emotion: A feminist reading of bounded rationality. *Academy of Management Review*, 17, 465-486.

#### Gibbs

December 5

Communication in Start-ups, Entrepreneurship and Emerging Organizations

Saini, S. & Plowman, K. (2007) Effective Communications in Growing Pre-IPO Start-Ups, *Journal of Promotion Management*, 13, 203-232, DOI: 10.1080/10496490802308547

Riley, P. (2016). ISIS as a start-up.

December 12

Final Paper/Project presentations (will involve food)

Happy Holidays!