

COMM 3323, NUMBER 1, COMMUNICATION THEORY

Fall 2012

Department of Communication and Rhetoric

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a comprehensive view of the theoretical traditions that influence our understanding of communication. This course is a core course in the Speech Communication major (double major system) and the Communication and Rhetoric major/minor (major/minor system). For non-majors, this class is an upper-level elective. To enroll in this class, students must have taken COMM 1313 or COMM 1323.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Dr. Marie Mater

E-mail: mmater@hbu.edu

Office Phone: 281-649-3603

Office Location: Brown Administrative Complex-Office 227

Office Hours: M 5:15-6:00, T 3:15-5:00, W 5:15-6:30, TH 3:15-5:00, and other days and times by appointment only

LEARNING RESOURCES

Course Text: Littlejohn, S. W. & Foss, K. A. (2011). *Theories of human communication* (10th ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc. ISBN: 1-57766-706-9

Supplementary Text: American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th Ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. ISBN: 1-4338-0561-8

Other Required Materials: Will be supplied when necessary.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course provides students the opportunity to understand and apply communication theories.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand the process of scholarly inquiry and its relationship to communication theory.
- Identify, define, discuss, critique and apply theories about communicators.
- Identify, define, discuss, critique and apply theories about messages.
- Identify, define, discuss, critique and apply theories about conversations.
- Identify, define, discuss, critique and apply theories about relationships.
- Identify, define, discuss, critique and apply theories about groups.
- Identify, define, discuss, critique and apply theories about organizations.
- Identify, define, discuss, critique and apply theories about the media.
- Identify, define, discuss, critique and apply theories about culture and society.
- Demonstrate the ability to accomplish all of the above with both oral and written communication.

RELATION TO DEPARTMENTAL GOALS AND PURPOSES

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an opportunity to develop a level of expertise in a particular field; improve critical-thinking skills and the ability to articulate difficult concepts, theories, and arguments; and provide a setting that fosters an appreciation for education and encourages students to learn more about the world in which they live. More importantly, as with all other courses in the College of Arts and Humanities, this course should

encourage students to use the knowledge and skills they gain to improve the human condition, strengthen the bonds of society, govern wisely, and live well.

RELATION TO COLLEGE GOALS AND PURPOSES

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an opportunity to develop a level of expertise in a particular field; improve critical-thinking skills and the ability to articulate difficult concepts, theories, and arguments; and provide a setting that fosters an appreciation for education and encourages students to learn more about the world in which they live. More importantly, as with all other courses at the University, this course should encourage students to use the knowledge and skills they gain to improve the human condition, strengthen the bonds of society, govern wisely, and live well.

RELATION TO THE PURPOSE STATEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

This course on communication theory reflects the values of the University Ten Pillar Vision by building on the classics, increasing our cultural impact, renewing our community, and allowing students to see the connection between theory and application. The course, like all courses in the Department of Communication and Rhetoric, is founded on the belief that Jesus Christ is Lord and our Christian faith shapes our worldview, personal values, and desire to serve others.

ATTENDANCE

Please see the official Attendance Policy in the HBU Classroom Policy on Blackboard. Students missing more than 25% of the class will be given a failing grade.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Students needing learning accommodations should inform the professor immediately and consult the Academic Accommodations section of the HBU Classroom Policy posted on Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADE SCALE

Theory Reflection Examinations-Upon entering class on scheduled days, students should be able to discuss the details of textbook chapters assigned for that day. To promote reading comprehension and the critical study of theories, students will be asked to summarize and analyze readings in theory reflection examinations. Students will be asked to respond to a specific question over the assigned reading for that class. Reflections will be assessed according to the student's ability to (a) incorporate theoretical concepts into the answer (e.g. citations of the textbook's theories), (b) relate readings to other important issues addressed in previous classes, and (c) demonstrate mastery of the material. There will be 10 theory reflection examinations (see schedule in this syllabus).

Student Presentations of Readings-Groups of students will have the opportunity to lead class discussions of the assigned readings on scheduled days. Students will have approximately one hour in which to summarize the main ideas of the assigned reading, present their own opinions of it and lead the group discussion of it by providing examples, asking questions and preparing activities. Presenters may assume that the other students have read the assigned material. Each group will be required to submit a printed outline of their discussion to the instructor and the other students at the beginning of class. Use of PowerPoint technology is required. Creative approaches to the readings are encouraged and rewarded.

Communication Analysis Draft Essays and Final Examination Essay-Each student will have the opportunity to write a communication analysis essay in which they apply a communication theory to a mediated/real-life communicative situation or text. The student will design and conduct a theoretical analysis of a communicative situation of their choosing. The

culminations of this analysis will be a four-page first-draft essay and six-page second-draft essay and a ten-page final-draft examination essay (excluding title page and references). The essay must include 5 different sources (of which only two may be websites that are not edited or peer-reviewed) in the references list. The APA (6th edition) referencing style should be used.

Grading standards:

The grading scale for this class is as follows: 90.0-100.0% is an A; 80.0-89.9% is a B; 70.0-79.9% is a C; 60.0-69.9% is a D; 59.9% and below is an F.

Grades will be determined by the following points and percentages:

Theory Reflection Examinations	(10 x 10 = 100 points)	25%
Student Presentations of Readings	(2 x 100 = 200 points)	50%
Communication Analysis Essay Drafts and Final Examination Essay	(4 + 6 = 10 points) and (90 points) = 100 points	25%

LATE WORK

Late work will be penalized. You should not miss any examinations. If you are sick, you need to notify the professor in advance. The professor reserves the right to administer a different examination, deduct points for taking the examination late, and/or schedule the makeup for a later date. Missing an examination without giving prior notice will result in a zero for that test, with no makeup.

Student Signature – I have read and understand the syllabus for this class. I understand that the content of this syllabus and the topical outline are subject to change at the discretion of the professor. I have read and understand the HBU Classroom Policy posted on Black Board. **I promise to uphold the Code of Academic Integrity at Houston Baptist University and will not tolerate its violation by others.**

TOPICAL OUTLINE

Class Date or Meeting	Topic: Class Assignment
Tuesday, August 21	Course and Colleague Introductions
Thursday, August 23	Chapter 1 “Communication Theory and Scholarship”: Guided Discussion
Tuesday, August 28	Chapter 2 “The Idea of Theory”: Guided Discussion
Thursday, August 30	Chapter 2 “The Idea of Theory”: Theory Reflection Examination #1
Tuesday, September 4	Chapter 3 “Traditions of Communication Theory”: Guided Discussion
Thursday, September 6	Chapter 3 “Traditions of Communication Theory”: Theory Reflection Examination #2
Tuesday, September 11	Student Presentations Orientation and Workshop
Thursday, September 13	Student Presentations Workshop
Tuesday, September 18	Chapter 4 “The Communicator”: Student Presentation
Thursday, September 20	Chapter 4 “The Communicator”: Theory Reflection Examination #3
Tuesday, September 25	Chapter 5 “The Message”: Student Presentation
Thursday, September 27	Chapter 5 “The Message”: Theory Reflection Examination #4
Tuesday, October 2	Chapter 6 “The Conversation”: Student Presentation

Thursday, October 4	Chapter 6 “The Conversation”: Theory Reflection Examination #5
Tuesday, October 9	Chapter 12 “Continuing the Conversation: Theorizing Your World” and Communication Analysis Essay Briefing
Thursday, October 11	Library Resources Orientation
Tuesday, October 16	Chapter 7 “The Relationship”: Student Presentation
Thursday, October 18	Chapter 7 “The Relationship”: Theory Reflection Examination #6
Tuesday, October 23	Chapter 8 “The Group”: Student Presentation
Thursday, October 25	Chapter 8 “The Group”: Theory Reflection Examination #7
Friday, October 26	Last day to drop a class with a “W”
Tuesday, October 30	Chapter 9 “The Organization”: Student Presentation
Thursday, November 1	Chapter 9 “The Organization”: Theory Reflection Examination #8
Tuesday, November 6	Chapter 10 “The Media”: Student Presentation
Thursday, November 8	Chapter 10 “The Media”: Theory Reflection Examination #9
Tuesday, November 13	Chapter 11 “Culture and Society”: Student Presentation
Thursday, November 15	Chapter 11 “Culture and Society”: Theory Reflection Examination #10
Tuesday, November 20	Communication Analysis Essay Brainstorming Workshop
Thursday, November 22	Thanksgiving Holiday-No Class
Tuesday, November 27	First Draft Communication Analysis Essay Editing Workshop
Thursday, November 29	Second Draft Communication Analysis Essay Editing Workshop
Tuesday, December 4 (3:00-5:00 pm)	Final Examination: Final Communication Analysis Essay