

IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

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COMM465: Communication Theory with Dr. Knopf

Contact - Morey248: Mondays & Wednesdays 9:15-10:30am, Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:00-9:15am
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Course Description: This course examines several broad genres of communication theory & discusses a selection of key theories from interpersonal, intercultural, public, media, and gender communication areas. By the end of the course you should be better able to understand & critically examine what you think you know about communication.

Course Objectives: In taking this class, you will be able to:

- Understand the history of the discipline
- Show knowledge of & evaluate comm theory
- Understand contemporary scholarship
- Engage in lower-level theory analysis
- Recognize the place of theory in comm research, & explain the role of comm in society & your own life

Texts & Course Materials:

- *A First Look at Communication Theory*, 8th or 9th ed, by Em Griffin
- Syllabus & Assignment Packet (on Moodle)
- 4x6 index cards – strongly recommended, not required

Grading: Quizzes: 15% Midterm Exam: 20% Final Exam: 20% Participation: 30% Project: 15%
 ☆ Full assignment descriptions & instructions are in the "Assignments Packet" Use it. ☆

Final Grades are broken down **in this class** as follows:

- 4.0 = 95-100 • 3.7 = 90-94 • 3.3 = 86-89 • 3.0 = 82-85 • 2.7 = 78-81
- 2.3 = 72-77 • 2.0 = 67-71 • 1.7 = 61-66 • 1.3 = 56-60 • 1.0 = 51-55 • (0.0 = below 51)

☆ A 2.0 is a "satisfactory" grade that indicates the *minimum* has been achieved, or that the work is of an average acceptable quality. A 4.0 is attainable but will require much more than minimal effort. ☆

How to earn a minimum 2.3 in the course, guaranteed:

- Attend 27 class sessions (including the midterm & final)
- Arrive late or leave early no more than 4 times
- Complete all quizzes on time
- Submit the project on time
- Take both the midterm & final exam on time

Note: You can still earn up to a 4.0 if you do these things, and if you don't or are unable to do these you can still earn a 2.3 or higher in the course. If, however, you are worried about passing, this is the basic route to success.

Challenging a Grade: If you identify an error in grading, I am always willing to admit to a mistake and correct it. If you want me to *reconsider* a grade, follow these steps:

- Wait at least 24 hours before deciding to seek reconsideration, but no longer than one week.
- Write a 1-2 page explanation of why the grade should be reconsidered identifying what type of change you seek and providing a reasoned argument and evidence in support of that change. The burden of proof in any disagreement over evaluation of your performance rests with you.
- Resubmit the original work (complete with grade & comments) along with the rationale.
- Allow two weeks for reconsideration. Accept the final decision. *I will reconsider each assignment only once.*

Extra Credit: A way to succeed throughout life, while managing stress, is to be mindful – to focus your attention and your energies and to be aware of the consequences of your actions. To help you to be present mentally and not just physically in class, you will receive ½ point of extra credit for every day that you turn off your cell phone, or MP3 player, or tablet, or laptop, and leave it on the front desk for the class session (that can add up to 15 points of extra credit for the semester!). You will not be penalized if you choose to keep and use your electronic device during class.

Extra credit will not be available as an end-of-semester option to make-up-for or replace work that you did not do throughout the semester. It will never be given on an individual basis.

Due Dates/Late Work: **LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.** *If you know in advance you will not be in class when an assignment is due, turn it in early. If you wake up sick when something is due, please email it by class time.* All due dates are on the course calendar.

Attendance: This is a live, non-virtual, non-mediated, communication course. Being present on time (and AWAKE) is necessary. **If you cannot consistently be present, on time, for class, you should withdraw.** ☆ You are solely responsible for catching up on work that you miss (always refer to the course calendar and to the potential kindness of classmates). Absences are not an excuse for late work or for being unaware of course expectations. Make-ups for assignments will only be granted in rare instances and usually only with documentation of an unavoidable emergency.

In the case of **college-sanctioned activities or religious observances**, arrangements should be made prior to the absence.

Absences of two or more straight weeks: If you miss, or will miss, two straight weeks of class (4 consecutive class meetings), you must contact me before or within those two weeks or risk failing the course.

Attendance for the Final Exam/Meeting: Finals week is part of the required number of class meeting hours set by the SUNY system. Final exam times are scheduled by the school to ensure that classes do not overlap. Final exams or activities scheduled during the final exam timeslot, will not be rescheduled unless you have 3 or more exams on a single day. (If that happens, please see the policy online at <http://www.potsdam.edu/offices/registrar/exams.cfm>). **You must make travel/work/childcare arrangements around the final exam.**

Incompletes: Incompletes, or other arrangements for course completion, can be planned only in advance to the semester's end when there is an emergency that makes completing the course otherwise impossible.

Academic Integrity & Dishonesty: A pledge of academic honesty is made by all students at SUNY Potsdam, indicating that you understand & comply with the requirements set forth by instructors the Academic Honor Code. To plagiarize is to pass off ideas or words of someone else as your own without crediting the source, no matter what the source is or if you make some changes to the wording or add in some of your own words/ideas. ***In the event of plagiarism on an assignment in this course you will have 24 hours to correct or authenticate your work or receive a zero on the assignment. Other forms of academic dishonesty, such as cheating on an exam, or attempting to cheat, will result in a 33% lower grade on the work.***

Etiquette: The success of this course is directly related to the sense of community that we develop in the classroom. Any communication or behavior that potentially interferes with the learning environment of other students will not be tolerated. Disruptive behavior - even minor disruptions - may result in your being told to leave class. Repeated offenses may result in course failure.

	TUESDAYS	THURSDAYS
Wk1	1/20: Introduce class focus & expectations	1/22: Chapters 1 & 2 due
Wk2	1/27: Chapters 3 & 4 due <i>Bring an ad with you</i>	1/29: <u>Quiz</u> , ch. 1-4 Discussion of research methods
Wk3	2/3: Expectancy Violation (7) ch. due	2/5: Uncertainty Reduction (9) ch. Due
Wk4	2/10: Relational Dialectics (11) ch. due	2/12: Interactional View (13) ch. Due
Wk5	2/17: Social Judgment (14) ch. due <u>Quiz</u> ch. 7, 9, 11, 13	2/19: Elaboration Likelihood (15) ch. Due
Wk6	2/24: Cognitive Dissonance (16) ch. due	2/26: <u>Quiz</u> ch. 14, 15, 16, 17 Midterm review, study guidance
Wk7	3/3: No Class – Spring Recess	3/5: No Class – Spring Recess
Wk8	3/10: <u>Midterm exam</u>	3/12: Functional Perspective (17) ch. Due
Wk9	3/17: Symbolic Convergence (18) ch. due	3/19: Cultural Approach (19) ch. due <i>Bring an upload-ready camera-equipped device, if you have one.</i>
Wk10	3/24: Dramatism (23) ch. due <u>Quiz</u> ch. 17, 18, 19	3/26: Narrative Paradigm (24) ch. due
Wk11	3/31: Semiotics (26) ch. due	4/2: Uses & Gratifications (28) ch. due <u>Quiz</u> ch. 23, 24, 26 <i>Bring calculator</i>
Wk12	4/7: No Class – April Recess	4/9: Cultivation (29) ch. Due
Wk13	4/14: Agenda-Setting (30) ch. due	4/16: Comm Accommodation (31) ch. due <u>Quiz</u> ch. 28, 29, 30
Wk14	4/21: Speech Codes (33) ch. due <i>Bring internet-ready device, if possible</i>	4/23: Genderlect (34) ch. due <i>Bring calculator</i>
Wk15	4/28: Standpoint (35) ch. due	4/30: <u>Quiz</u> ch. 31, 33, 34, 35 Project discussion, help
Wk16	5/5: Final exam review	5/7: Final project due One-on-one or small group study help
Wk17	5/15 @ 8:00-10:00am: 465.001 final exam	5/15 @ 12:30-2:30pm: 465.002 final exam

COMM465: Communication Theory, Spring 2015 Assignment Packet

Readings

Nearly every class day, one or more chapters will be due. To maximize our class time and your learning, you should read the chapters *before* coming to class. This way, our discussions in class will make more sense to you and you will be better prepared to ask questions or contribute to dialogues. As an added bonus for keeping up with the reading, you have to following *option*:

On the day a chapter is due you may turn-in one 4x6 index card with handwritten notes (front & back) from the chapter, which you will be able to use as a cheat sheet on the quizzes/exams:

- You may have only **1 card per chapter** (both sides).
- Cards must be **no larger than 4x6 inches**.
- Notes must be **handwritten**, not typed.
- Your **name** must be on the card.
- Cards will be accepted **only on the day the chapter is due**, no exceptions.

This is approximately a 4x6" box.

If you don't have index cards, you may cut paper to this size to use.

If you do not have index cards or a ruler, trace this box.

It may not be any larger than 4x6"

Larger notecards WILL NOT be accepted.

One chapter = one card (front & back) – absolutely no more than 1 card.

If you don't put your name on it, it will be thrown out.

Note card "cheat sheets" are always optional.

To be used, the card must be submitted on or before the chapter is due.

Late cards are not accepted under any circumstances.

Quizzes: For each unit, there will be a quiz of roughly 10 multiple-choice questions. The quizzes will cover the readings, lectures, and discussions since the previous quiz (see course calendar for exact chapters included on each quiz).

In cases of college-sanctioned activities or religious observances, quizzes must be rescheduled *in advance*. Otherwise, missed quizzes cannot generally be made up because the lowest quiz grade will be dropped anyhow.

There are several ways to prepare for the quizzes:

- Read the chapters. (Each day a chapter is due you may choose to turn-in one 4x6 notecard for each chapter with handwritten notes from the chapter; these notecards will be returned to you for use on quizzes and exams as cheat sheets; see the section in this Assignment Packet about *Readings*.)
- Listen carefully and take notes in class.
- Use the practice quizzes on the textbook website at www.afirstlook.com

Questions for the midterm and final exams will be adapted from these quizzes. You should keep each quiz when it is returned and carefully study what you got wrong and what you got right. When a quiz is over, you can't just forget the information and move on to the next thing. The quizzes, therefore, are practice for the bigger exams.

Midterm & Final Exams: To help reinforce the theories and their similarities, differences, and connections two major exams will be used to encourage you to maintain good study and work habits throughout the semester.

The midterm exam will be a combination of short-answer and multiple-choice questions, taken from the quizzes at the midpoint of the semester. The midterm will be approximately 25 questions. The final exam will be a combination of short-answer and multiple-choice questions, taken from the quizzes since the midterm. The final exam will be approximately 25 questions. In cases of college-sanctioned activities or religious observances, exams must be rescheduled *in advance*.

In addition to the preparation you do for the quizzes, you can be ready for exams by: Listen carefully and take notes in class.

- Carefully review your quizzes throughout the semester.
- Attend class regularly: ★ Good attendance will pay off in having credit that you can use to "buy out" of exam questions. *For every full week of attendance (arriving on time, not leaving early), credit will be earned toward being able to skip questions on the exams.* **NOTE:** Sleeping in class, reading or doing work for other classes, and other disruptive behaviors can reduce the attendance credit you may earn for exams.

Why tests? Psychological research on the science of successful learning has demonstrated that the act of preparing for a test and actually taking the test and retrieving information is a great boost to memory. This is your major – it's important to know the language of the discipline. Plus, exams are not just a measurement instrument, they are also an important learning instrument. Exams are a clinically proven way to help students keep up with classwork – they encourage attendance, preparation and review in ways that less formal or structured means don't, and the use of regular quizzes or tests is likely to promote regular, moderate, work, whereas a few larger assignments tend to produce short bursts of cramming, often at the last minute.

Participation - This course is structured to include regularly scheduled small-group activities that mimic research efforts in the communication discipline. These activities will help to illustrate the theories you are learning and will introduce you to some research methods.

To help me account for your participation in, and attention to, these activities, you may be asked to write, in-class, following the activity, a short (1-5 sentence) account of what concept(s) the activity taught/illustrated and what you learned.

Full credit for an activity will be awarded if you participated in it demonstrated that you know what the activity was about & carefully followed the directions you were given.

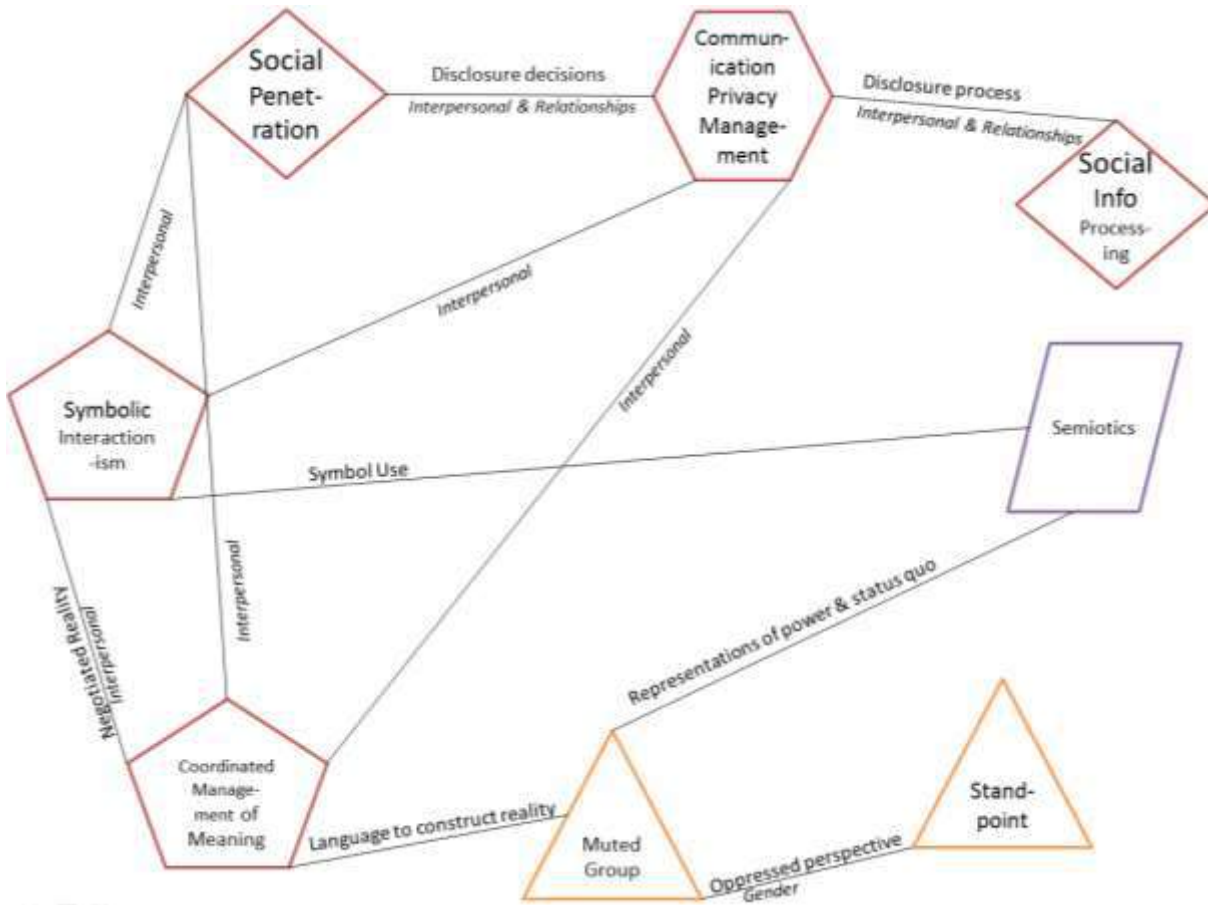
If you miss an activity for a religious observance or college-sanctioned event, alternative arrangements in the form of a comparable homework assignment can be made *in advance*.

Final Project – Cumulative exams cause massive amounts of stress, but a cumulative aspect to the end of the course is the only proven way to help students review and integrate a semester's worth of content (as opposed to memorizing it temporarily for a quiz and then forgetting it), so we are using a cumulative project. You still need to go back over the entire semester and draw from everything you've learned, but you don't have to spit it out on a bubble-sheet or in a blue book.

Use chapter 37 in the textbook as a starting place, as a guide, and consider all the various links/connections/similarities you can identify between and among the different theories we discuss this semester. Then, develop a visual way of representing those links – a web made of string, a Prezi presentation, a connect-the-dots game, a puzzle... whatever. Make sure the relationships between theories you identify are made clear (Is it a similar concept? A parallel idea? The same kind of communication? A research method?)

Partial samples/examples:

Power	Disclosure	Constructions of Reality	Images of & Expressions of Self	Managing Discomfort
Semiotics	Communication Privacy Management	Semiotics	Symbolic Interactionism	Cognitive Dissonance
Muted Group	Social Penetration	Coordinated Management of Meaning	Muted Group	Uncertainty Reduction
Standpoint	Social Information Processing	Symbolic Interactionism	Standpoint	



Grading:

Were the theories accurately represented (including correct names & spelling)?	4 pts
Were the connections you made between them clear (identified) to another reader?	4 pts
Did you develop connections other than those outlined in the textbook?	4 pts
Did you use incorporate at least 18 of the 21 covered theories? [Possible bonus points for using all]	4 pts
WRITE YOUR OWN – with your project, provide one additional criterion/consideration you would choose to be evaluated on (such as design, artistry, creativity of thought)	4 pts