Syllabus: COM 504
Theories and Models in Communication
Fall 2007

Instructor: Steve Corman
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Phone: 965-3830
E-mail: steve.corman@asu.edu (preferred comm method)
Office hours: TBA

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the basics of communication theory construction, metatheoretical concerns, models, construct definition, and comparative analysis of current theories in communication.

Texts and Readings:

• Other weekly readings as assigned, available from ASU online journals.

Assignments

• Exams (200 pts): We will have a take home midterm, and an in-class final exam. They will focus on integration and application of the material we cover in class. For the in-class exam I will endeavor to make the questions as much like comps questions as possible. The final will take place at the time scheduled for the course final in the ASU Bulletin.
• Discussion Board Posts (100 pts): This course will include Blackboard discussion board posts as a major portion of the assigned writing. Over the course of the semester you are responsible for posting:
  • 1 review of a research area in communication, to be assigned. (29 pts)
  • At least 2 posts, one before and one after the midterm, on some other topic of your choice relevant to the course, including citations. (29 pts each)
  • At least one comment per week (except first week) on someone else’s post (13 of these total for 13 pts).
• Exercises. (50 pts). These points cover 5 exercise assignments that are made periodically through the course of class.
• Participation. (50 pts). These points cover attending class, being prepared for discussion, and participating.

Evaluation

Evaluation of all assignments is as follows: The presumptive grade is “B” (85% of the points) which indicates that you perfectly met the expectations of the assignment and performed consistent with the expectations for someone who has mastered the material. Work that exceeds expectations in some significant way earns a grade of “A,” and work that falls short of expectations earns a “C.”
Your final grade will be based on a percentage of the possible points, using the following scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>% of possible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100 - 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>98.9 - 92</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91.9 - 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89.9 - 88</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>87.9 - 82</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81.9 - 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79.9 - 78</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>69.9 - 60</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>59.9 - 50</td>
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Policies

Attendance: Attendance at all classes is mandatory. While arrangements can be made for true emergencies, it is considered *unusual* for graduate students to miss *any* classes.

Academic Integrity: By taking this class you agree to abide by the academic integrity policies of the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, particularly those dealing with plagiarism.

Incompletes: I do not give incomplete grades except in case of bona fide catastrophes. Incompletes must be arranged before substantial work is missed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8/27</td>
<td>Overview of communication theory</td>
<td>Assignment 2: Counterargument to Egan and Papson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4    | 9/17 | Explanation, Communication, Theory, and Research | Abbott 1  
Communication Education, 44, 191-222.  
Turner, J. (1986). The nature of sociological theorizing,” Ch. 2 in The Structure of Sociological Theory, 4th Ed., | Assignment 2: Counterargument to Egan and Papson |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | 9/24 | Basic Debates, Methodological Practices, and Cycles of Critique  
Abbott 2  
| 6 | 10/1 | Basic Heuristics  
Abbott 3  
| 7 | 10/8 | Search and Argument Heuristics  
Abbott 4  
Assignment 3  
Post theory examples |


8 10/15 Description, Narration, & Fractal Heuristics

Abbott 5,6


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
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<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
</table>
The Great Communibiology Debate!  
  o Commentaries from 2005, *Communication Theory, 15*(1), by Beatty, Babrow, McCrosky, & Nelson |
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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