

COM 229: Foundations of Organizational Communication
School of Communication
Illinois State University
Fall 2019
MW 4:00p – 5:15p; 101 Stevenson

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*Office hours are the most reliable means of communication for complicated issues

If emailing, ensure subject line begins with “COM229: ”

Required Course Materials:

1. Miller, K. (2009). *Organizational communication: Approaches and processes* (5th Edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
2. Online readings. See course schedule below and reference list at end of syllabus. Readings *should* be available on ReggieNet; however, failure to find an article on RN should impel a student to obtain it through alternative means (e.g., ILSTU Library, Google Scholar).

Recommended Course Materials:

1. American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (6th ed.). New York, NY: APA.

Course Outline

Often we take human communication for granted without making an effort to understand various communication perspectives and applications that combine to make communication flow more smoothly (or not) within organizational settings. This course deals with fundamental concepts and theories in organizational communication as well as the role of communication in organizations. The course is designed to enhance students' basic communication knowledge, understanding, and skills in an organization including introductory concepts of organizational communication. The course goal is to provide students with an informed understanding of the importance of effective communication relevant to their organizational experiences. This course examines theoretical and practical approaches to the study of organizational communication. The text presents theoretical approaches to the study of organizational communication and organizational communication processes. A mix of scholarly theory, research-based material, and practical application will be presented, accompanied by case studies and examples. Your classroom experience will also include in-class lectures, readings, research, discussions, exams, and quizzes.

Course Objectives

1. To develop a working knowledge of the various designs and processes in organizational communication.
2. To identify relevant organizational communication concepts and fundamental theories.
3. To understand significant historical benchmarks, contributors, and notable research in the development of the discipline of organizational communication.
4. To demonstrate an understanding of the influence communication has on organizational productivity, relationships, culture, and employee satisfaction.
5. To develop a working understanding as a competent organizational communicator by applying concepts and practical skills of communication that may be useful in improving overall effectiveness and organizational behavior.
6. To transfer organizational communication knowledge to everyday organizational experience.

Course Requirements

- *Rigorously* complete all required readings.
- Attend all scheduled sessions.
- Engage and participate fully.
- Complete required assignments in timely and scholarly manners.
- Utilize excellent APA-6 style when completing assignments.

Workload and Grading

<i>Grade Point (portion) Breakdown</i>	<i>Final Grade Assignment</i>	<i>Research Participation Record</i>		
Exams: 600		Study Name	R.C.s	Points
Biweekly ReggieNet Quizzes: 240		Required	1.0	60
Classroom Participation: 100	A 900 - 1045		(x60)	
Research Participation: 60	B 800 - 899		(x60)	
Extra credit opportunities: ≤ 45	C 700 - 799	Required Subtotal		
Total: 1000 (+45)	D 600 - 699	Extra Credit	4.5	≤ 45
	F < 600		(x10)	
Each of these assignments will be explained in more detail below.	* Scores are not curved or rounded. As many As, Bs, etc. as given as are earned.		(x10)	
			(x10)	
			(x10)	
			(x10)	
			(x10)	
			(x10)	
			(x10)	

Exams (60%):

There will be three exams during the semester, each worth 200 points. The *first exam* will cover all material covered up to that class session. This will include material from Chapters 1-5 (inclusive), classroom discussion, outside reading, and presentations. The *second exam* will likewise cover

Chapters 6-10 (inclusive). The *third exam* will have two components: The first (and largest, ~80%) component will cover material covered since the previous exam—Chapters 11-14 (inclusive), class discussion, outside reading, and presentations; while a second (and smaller, 20%) component of Exam 3 will be a chance to connect and synthesize broad concepts and theories from across course content. The format for each exam may include multiple-choice, true/false, and/or matching format.

You *may* be able to schedule a make-up exam if you have a verifiable egregious excuse (e.g., written excuse from a doctor denoting emergency surgery). Family vacations, reunions, or avoidances; work schedules; entertaining out-of-town visitors; cocurricular and extracurricular activities; travel; etc. are not valid excuses. Alternate exams must be approved and scheduled *before* the exam is administered as-scheduled, and are offered at the instructor's discretion.

Biweekly ReggieNet Quizzes (24%):

There are six online quizzes briefly reviewing previous weeks' content. They are designed to keep you up to pace with the course materials and facilitate discussion. You will be responsible for taking the quizzes over the assigned chapters prior to the in-class discussion approximately every other week (see schedule). Quizzes are available on ReggieNet, are available seven days preceding the due date until the start of class on the due date listed, and each quiz is worth 40 points. Quizzes have a 30-minute time limit.

Classroom Participation (10%):

You begin with full credit for this assignment, and your points are yours to lose. Throughout the semester, class discussions and activities will seek to uncover greater meaning and application of the materials being discussed. To that end, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material—even if that is to simply ask questions to help you clarify and solidify your understanding on topics. Class members will randomly be called on to provide an answer to a question or report on a group activity; students not able to provide a scholarly (though not necessarily correct) response will lose 25 points. The course TAs will keep track of student responses (and lack thereof). Please contact Ms. Witt with questions or clarification regarding your classroom participation, which will be updated periodically on ReggieNet. Students may be called upon in multiple sections or never at all—you should attend and be prepared to engage in a scholarly discussion every class. You may not reacquire lost participation points, so those engaging in game theory would be well-served to prepare for and attend all scheduled courses.

Research Participation (6%)

We are here not only to obtain knowledge; we also help generate knowledge. Thus, part of your grade this year is taking part in research being conducted in the School of Communication. Throughout each semester, several research studies are posted on the SoC's Research Study Announcement Board (<https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/>). The calls for participants list both the requirements for participants and the Research Credit associated with each project. For the first full credit of research in which you participate during the semester, you should earn 60 points (i.e., 30 points for each .5 Research credits, or 60 points for a 1.0 Research Credit study). Research participation above and beyond the first required credit is counted toward extra

credit (see below). There are several studies throughout the semester, and you may take part in any for which you qualify to participate; though the timing of studies is not guaranteed, so you are encouraged to take part in studies as they present themselves. Those waiting until the end of the semester and missing research participation opportunities may not have a chance to participate in the final few weeks of the class—take part in studies where and when you can.

Extra Credit Opportunities:

Participation in research beyond the required will earn extra credit toward the course. The extra credit points will be added to your final grade, and may not necessarily appear in the gradebook immediately upon your completion of the opportunity—each study will appear in the gradebook when the study is closed and a list of participants has been received from the researcher. If you do not see the study listed in gradebook, a participant list has not yet been received. There are no guarantees for extra credit, and it is each student’s responsibility to be aware of and take advantage of such opportunities. You may receive extra credit for participating in any of the studies posted to the School of Communication Research study Announcement Board, after your first 1.0 Research Credit (which is earned toward the “Research Participation” requirement, above). The Research Announcement Board is updated as research studies are opened/closed, and it is your responsibility to access the Board and be aware of available opportunities. The Research Board can be accessed via:

<https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/>

In general, each 30 minutes of participation in an extra credit study will earn you .5 Research Credits, but please see the call for participants for the Research Credits associated with each study. Each Research Credit is worth an additional 10 points toward your total possible final grade in this course. For example, if you participate in a research study worth .5 Research Credit, your participation would provide 5 points to your final grade. Each project listed on the Research Announcement Board will indicate the specific number of Research Credits associated with the project. The course instructor will get evidence of participation and the time of participation from the researcher(s) who administer the research studies at the conclusion of the semester; however, it is *your* responsibility to make sure that the researchers have the necessary evidence of your participation at the time of the study. Before participating in a study, **please be sure to have your name, ULID** (i.e., the part of your email before @ilstu.edu), **instructor name, and course and section number** ready—which appear at the top of the syllabus—as you will need to provide these to receive credit. Research Credit can only be applied to one course for each study, unless specified otherwise in the Research Announcement Board. A maximum of 4.5% of your final course grade (i.e., 45 points) can be earned from extra credit opportunities via the Research Announcement Board. After the final exam there will be no further opportunities for extra credit or to otherwise improve your grade.

Course Policies

Course Website:

All students enrolled in this course have access to the course website on ReggieNet (RN; <https://reggienet.illinoisstate.edu>). Important announcements, grades, and copies of assignments

will be available through ReggieNet. On occasion, you may be asked to print a document from ReggieNet for use in course activities or readings.

Course Communication:

Before you decide to send an email inquiry, check the syllabus. You are most likely to find answers there. **Please begin the subject line of your e-mail with “COM229: ” to ensure receipt and timely responses.** Appropriate e-mail will be replied to within 24 hours. The instructor does not regularly check office voice mail, so if a verbal conversation is preferred, it is best to call during scheduled office hours.

Course announcements will be made in class and via email messages to ILSTU email accounts. **It is your responsibility to check your ILSTU email and course announcements regularly, at least twice weekly.**

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, no paper submissions will be accepted. Per APA style, norms since primary school, and common standards, your name *must* be on your assignment and it must be in English for it to be evaluated; submissions not meeting basic standards will not be accepted and cannot be resubmitted for credit. Your first and only non-Research Announcement Board extra credit is to bring a Post-It note (or off brand) to the course instructor before the start of class on 19 August, on which you have legibly written your name and favorite movie quotation (including what movie it's from); and is worth 5 points of extra credit above and beyond that stipulated above. All assignments should be submitted electronically to the corresponding assignment dropbox in ReggieNet, and it is your responsibility to confirm the attachment has been uploaded successfully before the due date and time. Only electronic documents in *.doc, *.docx, *.pdf, *.rtf, or *.txt will be accepted. If you are using a Macintosh version of Microsoft Word, please be sure to save in either the *.doc or the *.docx format, as I am unable to open the default Apple-specific file format. No (re)submissions will be allowed after the due date for submission errors.

Past Due Assignments:

In preparation for the rigor and responsibilities of the workforce, all assignments and work must be completed and turned in on-time. **NO LATE WORK IS ACCEPTED.** If you have a medical or family emergency which will prevent you from getting your work done, it is YOUR obligation to either arrange for alternate means of assignment submission (e.g., send it to class with a roommate or friend) or to communicate with the Dean of Students' Office and Dr. Carr **BEFORE** the due date of the assignment to see if exceptions can be made. If your work is not turned in on time and you have not received an exception with Dr. Carr prior to the due date, do **NOT** contact the instructor with justifications. You will simply not receive credit for the assignment.

In the event of a death in the immediate family, ILSTU has in place a bereavement policy to enable students to complete exams or presentations due to funeral attendance. All such absences should be addressed, **prior to missing class**, with the Dean of Students office who will facilitate the process. Per ILSTU Policy 2.1.27, “If a student will be absent because of a death, the student

is responsible for notifying the Dean of Students (DoS) office prior to their absence. The DoS will communicate with the individual's course instructors of record about the absence and the reason for the absence. Upon receiving proper documentation regarding the death and relationship, the DoS will provide this documentation to each of the course instructors, if requested. The DoS may ask for additional documentation if necessary.”

Academic Honesty:

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to: disruption of classes, threatening an instructor or fellow student, giving or receiving unauthorized aid on examinations or the assignment preparation, knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work, plagiarizing another’s work, or acting dishonestly in research. All University Policies concerning academic misconduct will be upheld in this course (see ILSTU’s Code of Conduct and Community Rights and Responsibilities [<http://www.deanofstudents.ilstu.edu/crr/>]). Of particular concern in a course with written assignments is the issue of plagiarism. *Plagiarism* is defined "the appropriations or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (Webster’s, 1989, p. 1100 *If you turn in an assignment that contains plagiarized material (other people’s words or ideas which are not cited appropriately and/or which you implicitly or explicitly represent as your own), you will receive a zero point.* This is non-negotiable. If you are unclear about what constitutes either of these, please read the relevant sections of the ILSTU’s [Code of Student Conduct](#), Chapter V, Section B. You may also find it helpful to read http://integrity.ou.edu/files/nine_things_you_should_know.pdf . Cite your sources accurately and consistently in both your oral and written assignments. Academic misconduct will not be tolerated and may result in a failing grade on the assignment or in the class, depending on the incident’s severity.

You will do some great research and work in this course, so please credit your work accordingly. APA style is the format used by the Communication discipline, and is the required format for all assignments in this class. It is your responsibility to become familiar with APA style if you are not already. Using proper citations and references will ensure your work is not plagiarized. Your assignments and final paper may be checked in turnitin.com or other academic honesty software.

Courtesy to Fellow Students and Instructors:

The classroom is a community, and, as such, the instructor requires all course members (including the instructor) must follow several basic guidelines:

Technology: Out of respect for your fellow student, your instructor, and yourself, *all* telecommunication devices (e.g., cell phones, tablets, laptops) should be *powered off* and stored during class time. Increasingly, research (e.g., [Bellur, Nowak, & Hull, 2015](#); [Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014](#); [Sana, Weston, & Capeda, 2013](#)) indicates multiple negative effects of students’ technology use in-class—even when used for on-task purposes—and particularly the growing myth (and misnomer) of multitasking. Thus, no electronic media devices (computers, mobile phones, tablets, etc.) should be powered on during class. **Turn your cell phone off—not set on silent, not on vibrate, off.** Please bring pen-and-paper for note taking during class—slides are not made available; but there are few during each class. You are responsible for taking notes on what *you* find to be important or needing to be noted; not necessarily what’s on the

screen. Those using digital devices during class (including audio devices, mobile telephony, and computing tools) without permission may be immediately asked to leave and will not be eligible for participation in the remaining class time. Those with documented [academic] needs for digital technologies during class should speak with the instructor prior to the class session, and will be asked to sit in the last utilized row of seating for the course so as to not disrupt others with their screens, and expected to utilize those devices for scholarly engagement during class time.

Students may not photograph or use audio or video devices to record classroom lectures or discussions or visual materials that accompany them (e.g., lecture slides, whiteboard notes/equations). Students with disabilities who need to record classroom lectures or discussions must contact Student Access and Accommodation Services to register, request, and be approved for an accommodation. Students who violate this policy may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under the University's Code of Student Conduct.

Late Arrival: There are sometimes unpredictable events prevent students from arriving to class on time for every class session. If this is the case, please be respectful of others, and enter the class as quietly as possible and take a seat as close to the entrance as possible to minimize your disruption to the class. However, repeated late arrivals are not acceptable, and you may be asked to look into taking the course a different semester that is more aligned with your scheduling requirements should repeated late arrivals occur.

Departing Early: It is extremely rude and disruptive to both fellow classmates and the instructor when students leave early. Class is scheduled at the same time every week—work, study sessions, sports practices, and doctor appointments should be scheduled accordingly. If you know in advance you are going to be forced to leave the class early, be absolutely sure that you take a seat as close to the exit as possible, so that when you do leave your departure will cause a minimum of disruption.

In-Class Talking. The instructor encourages an open environment in which everyone has a right to express their own ideas and contribute to our scholarly discussion. However, everyone should be able to do so without having to talk over their peers in order to be heard. Refrain from unnecessary, disruptive, and off-topic discussions during class.

Unique Academic Needs:

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu.

Religious Observances:

It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays.

You may arrange to take an exam on an alternative date if the exam falls on a religious holy day. Let the instructor know in the first two weeks of the semester if any exam date falls on a religious holy day.

Course Adjustments:

Any aspect of this syllabus, including content and reading schedule, may be adjusted throughout the semester. Changes will be announced via class or ReggieNet. Students are responsible for checking ReggieNet for course announcements at least twice weekly.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings (To be completed prior the class listed)	Assignments (due before the start of scheduled class)
M 19.8	Situating Org. Comm.	Syllabus Wikipedia: Org. Comm. (Sections 1, 2, & 5)	
21.8	Framing Org. Comm.	Miller, Ch. 1	
M 26.8	Classical Approaches	Miller, Ch. 2 (pp. 16 – 28)	
28.8		(pp. 28 –34)	
M 2 Sept	NO CLASS	LABOR DAY	
4.9		(pp. 28 –34)	
M 9.9	Human Relations Approaches	Miller, Ch. 3 (pp. 35 – 46)	<i>Quiz 1 (Ch. 1-2) Due</i>
11.9		(pp. 46 – 56)	
M 16.9	Systems Approaches	Miller, Ch. 4 (pp. 57 – 70)	
18.9		(pp. 70 – 76)	
M 23.9	Catch up/Review Day		<i>Quiz 2 (Ch. 3-5) Due</i>
25.9		<i>Exam 1 (Ch. 1-5)</i>	
M 30.9	Power & Control	Miller, Ch. 6	
2 Oct	Assimilation	Miller, Ch. 7	
M 7.10		Grier & Tollison (1994)	
9 Oct	Decision-Making Processes	Miller, Ch. 8	<i>Quiz 3 (Ch. 6-7) Due</i>
M 14.10	Conflict Management	Miller, Ch. 9	
16.10	Change	Miller, Ch. 10	
M 21.10	Leadership	Supplemental readings (Trenholm) on leadership styles & member roles – on RN	
23.10	Catch up/Review Day		<i>Quiz 4 (Ch. 8-10) Due</i>
M 28.10		<i>Exam 2 (Ch. 6-11)</i>	
30.10	Emotion	Miller, Ch. 11 (pp. 197-216)	
M 4 Nov	Diversity	Miller, Ch.12 (pp. 217 – 236)	
6.11	Technology	Miller, Ch. 13	<i>Quiz 5 (Ch. 11-12) Due</i>
M 11.11		Carr & Stefaniak (2012)	
13.11	NO CLASS	DR. CARR @ NCA	
M 18.11		Baltes, Dickson, & Sherman, Bauer, & LaGanke (2002)	
20.11	Future Trends	Miller, Ch.14 (pp. 257 – 273)	
M 25.11	NO	THANKSGIVING	

27.11	CLASS	BREAK	
M 2 Dec	Catch up/Review Day		<i>Quiz 6 (Ch. 13-14) Due</i>
4.12		<i>Exam 3 (Ch. 11-14; Synthesis)</i>	
M 9.12	<i>NO CLASS</i>	<i>EXAM PERIOD NOT SCHEDULED BY REGISTRAR</i>	

References

Baltes, B. B., Dickson, M. W., Sherman, M. P., Bauer, C. C., & LaGanke, J. S. (2002).

Computer-mediated communication and group decision making: A meta-analysis.

Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process, 87, 156-179. doi:

10.1006/obhd.2001.2961

Carr, C. T., & Stefaniak, C. (2012). Sent from my iPhone: The medium and message as cues of

sender professionalism in mobile telephony. *Journal of Applied Communication*

Research, 40, 403-424. doi: 10.1080/00909882.2012.712707

Grier, K. B., & Tollison, R. D. (1994). The rookie draft and competitive balance: The case of

professional football. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 25, 293-298. doi:

10.1016/0167-2681(94)90016-7