

# Organizational Communication

COM 329  
FEL 125 at 12:35 pm  
FEL 180 at 2:00 pm

Dr. Hallsten Lyczak

Spring '24

## Course Description

Theoretical and experimental literature dealing with communication processes in an organizational setting

## Course Explanation

This course will enhance both your understanding of and practice of communication with others in organizations. It will help you recognize the communication organizations engage in that affects our relationships, our communication, our understandings, and experiences, at work.

## Through Course Experiences You Will:

- Develop your knowledge base about current research in organizational communication.
- Enhance your toolkit for recognizing common communication challenges in organizations.
- Better understand how to manage challenging organizational experiences through effective communication practices.
- Recognize assumptions inherent in organizations that cause employee dissatisfaction and burnout and discover how communication plays a role in both enabling these outcomes as well as improves organizational experiences.
- Develop communication skills to help serve you in a myriad of organizational situations.

## Course Perspective

COM 329 continues exploring ideas you've learned in other communication courses. Together we endeavor to deepen our understanding of communication processes and practices of communication in organizations. This senior-level course will offer opportunities for you to apply the material to your professional life and provide you with experiences you can use in the "real world" as you look ahead to graduation.

## Our Learning Objectives

- Apply various theoretical perspectives to organizational settings and situations
- Identify communication problems in a variety of organizational contexts
- Explain advanced communication practices necessary for successful management of various contemporary challenges of communicating in a diverse world.
- Evaluate communication practices in accomplishing organizational effectiveness
- Identify and manage toxic organizational communication and behaviors by individuals.
- Identify the challenges that arise from generational differences among members of organizations and apply best practices in communication and management to overcome them
- Recognize organizational culture creation and management
- Apply effective socialization communication and practices to organizational settings



ENGAGE IN:  
Active Learning

Focus On:  
Outcomes

SIMPLY:  
Always Do Your Best

### How to be

## SUCCESSFUL



Much like you can't get fit without actively working out, you can't learn this content without actively engaging in the content. This means thoughtfully consuming course readings and actively participating in classroom experiences.

When you only focus on the end goal (grades), you've forgotten why you're here in the first place: to learn. Research reveals that student fixation on grades actually creates a barrier to learning. Focus on your innate intellectual qualities like curiosity, honesty and participation in a community of inquiry instead of whether or not you'll get a certain grade. This will inevitably bring you the success you desire.

Always do your best work; never just phone it in. This is a recipe for professional success, but it works in this class, too. You get more out of this class when you give more to it. Honest!



Office Hours: T/TR 2:30-4:30 pm **by appointment only** - follow the link on the LMS.

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# Demonstrating Your Learning:

## Learning Artifacts

Learning artifacts allow you to demonstrate your ability to meet course objectives or synthesize course content and apply it to real-life situations. There are several learning artifacts assigned throughout the semester; many of them are completed in class.

## Class Participation

Our time in class is an opportunity to actively engage with the material we are exploring. Your participation will involve bringing **printed** readings notes to class every day to prepare for discussions and activities. In all cases, they cannot be made-up. Don't put name tents/notes away until class is dismissed or risk missing these points.

## Portfolio

You will submit a reflective course portfolio of resources as evidence from your learning in the course that includes a reflection piece.

## Short Papers

These assignments provide an opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to apply course concepts to a given real-life artifact and to reflect on your course learning in a meaningful way at the end of the semester. Details are on the LMS.

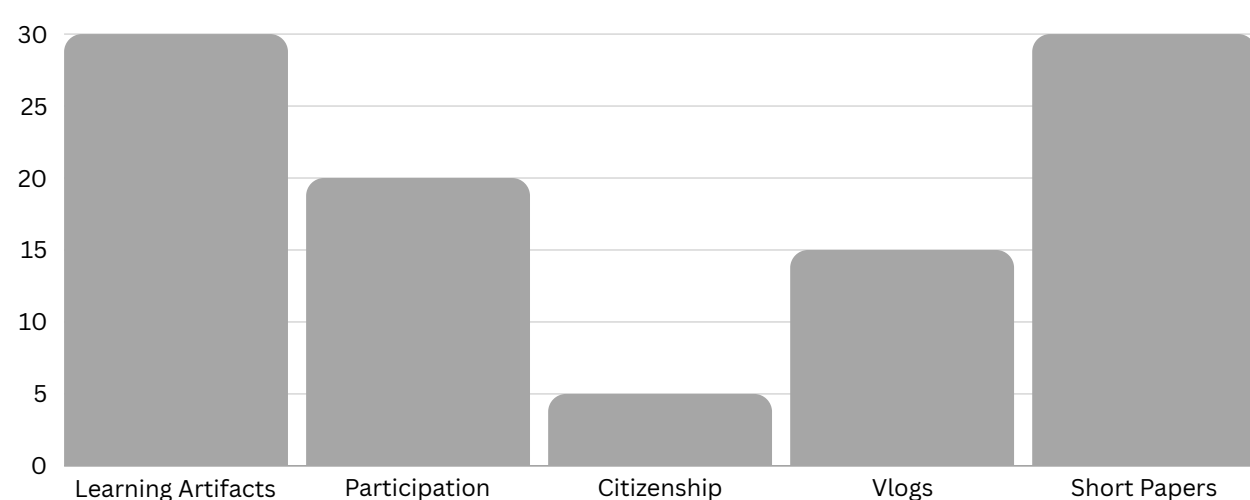
## Vlogs

After each reading, you will record and post a 3-minute "future me" video where you identify how you can use the information in the reading and use it as a knowledge or skill to offer an employer post-graduation.

## Citizenship

Good course citizens take responsibility for their success. They are resourceful. They are considerate. A full explanation of how to earn these points can be found on the LMS.

## Grade Breakdown



## Technology Rules

Our classroom is a no-tech zone. Technology is not allowed (laptops, tablets, phones, etc.)

**This syllabus is subject to change; all changes will be announced in class. Students are responsible for all changes.**

# It's Good To Be "In The Know:"

## Late Work Policy

I am often willing to work with you ahead of time if you're having any situations preventing you from meeting deadlines. Without advanced notice, however, nothing can be made up or submitted late.



## Grade Solicitation Policy

"Grade Solicitation" / "Grade Grubbing" - The inappropriate acts of asking for: rounding up of grades, extra opportunities to increase grades or any special consideration in regards to grades are strictly prohibited.



## 329 Recording Policy

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 who violate this policy may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under the University Code of Student Conduct. In short: you do not have my consent to record me or anything in this course. Ever.

## ISU COVID Policy

I will follow the university policy on excused absences for communicable diseases (e.g. COVID) found here: <https://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-30.shtml> This policy requires that students must provide documentation of the self-isolation/quarantine requirement to the Dean of Students Office.

In my class, students will be expected to make up all work missed during a COVID-mandated quarantine within 2 weeks of the first date of return as indicated by the documentation. Failure to meet this deadline will result in zeros on all missed work

Recent changes in CDC recommendations indicate that exposure to someone with COVID-19 no longer requires quarantine. Get tested, and plan to continue to fully participate in your education.

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p0811-covid-guidance.html>

## A Note About Grading Writing

I assess all written work in my courses based on formal Standard American English. I strongly recommend you proofread/have your content proofread before you submit it for grading. Success in your future will often be determined by your attention to detail and ability to communicate your thoughts, and my goal is to inch you forward in being the best student you can be through my expectations.



# Let's All Agree On These Things:

## Intellectual Property

Anything on Power point/Nearpod/Reggienet etc. that I provide to you as learning materials in this class belongs to ME. It is MINE. It is NOT yours. You may use it to study for tests, but you DO NOT HAVE PERMISSION TO SHARE IT ANYWHERE. If you choose to post any material from this course anywhere online you run the risk of my finding it, having the ISU IT department trace it to your IP address, and reporting you to the Dean's Office for violation of the Student Code of Conduct, Section VI – A7. Simply put: use what I provide you, but don't share it with anyone; it's not yours to share. I'm crazy serious about this. (If I loaned you my car for a week, you'd respect that. You'd take care of it; you would return it as you found it. You would never leave the keys hanging by an elevator in Watterson with a sign that said "help yourself." My intellectual property is as personal to me, and as valuable to me, as my car. Please treat it as you would my car, okay?)

## Academic Dishonesty

Students are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus.

- All work is to be appropriately cited when it is quoted or paraphrased from another source (including the course text or readings or any other source).
- Unauthorized and unacknowledged work with other students on assignments or tests, misrepresentation of sources, and/or the presentation of someone else's work as your own is considered plagiarism.
- Completing individual assignments for another student, re-using assignments from another course for credit in this one, misrepresenting attendance or contributions on any class document, or making your course work available to other students for submission are also considered to be cheating.

Be aware that academic dishonesty is not limited to the use or attempted use of any unauthorized assistance in any academic exercise, or even of knowingly or intentionally assisting another in committing a violation of this or the larger university student code of conduct. Regardless of intentionality, cheaters will immediately fail this course and will be reported to the office of Community Rights and Responsibilities for action taken there, too.

In short, if you think you might be in a place where cheating is happening; leave. If you wonder if you're cheating, you probably are: stop.

(Here's the scoop - if you're simply in a place where people are sharing course information and if the prof found out it wouldn't be cool, then you're participating in legit academic dishonesty. Even if you didn't ask for that information, your presence there (even just your membership) means you benefitted from that information and you are therefore participating in that dishonesty and can suffer the same consequences as those who are both seeking and giving the information. This happens w/GroupMe-type message boards all the time. Don't join them, or if you choose to take the risk and you see it going south, delete your account immediately.)

## ISU Bereavement Policy

If a student experiences a death of an immediate family member or relative as defined below, he/she/they will be excused from class for the funeral, bereavement, and/or travel. The student will provide appropriate documentation and arrange to complete missed classroom work as soon as possible according to the process outlined by the university below. Ultimately, the student is responsible for all material covered in class and must work the professor as soon as they return to complete any required work.

Details of this policy can be found at the following website:  
<http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-27.shtml>

## Be Well

### We Get By With A Little Help From Our Friends

If you or someone you know needs a bit of encouragement, request a through Redbirds Reach Out. Redbirds Reach Out is a new program on campus with the goal of connecting students who may be struggling via a letter of encouragement from a student peer. To request a letter, fill out the Redbirds Reach Out Letter Request. Learn more at: <https://studentaffairs.illinoisstate.edu/keepthriving/>

### Your Well-Being

It's hard to learn if you're hungry or couch surfing. If you are having difficulty affording groceries, accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or securing a safe and stable place to live, help may be available. I urge you to contact the Dean of Students Office to learn more. Also check out the School St. Food Pantry if you just need to pick up some groceries. For more tips and campus resources for taking care of yourself please visit:  
<https://studentaffairs.illinoisstate.edu/keepthriving/>

### Student Counseling Services

Life at college can get very complicated. In fact, according to recent research, nearly 44% of college students suffer from generalized anxiety disorder and are less likely to seek help for it compared to other mental health issues. Students also sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience depression, and struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. However, many of these issues can be effectively addressed with a little help. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. Student Counseling Services is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are FREE and completely confidential. Find out more at <https://counseling.illinoisstate.edu/> or by calling (309) 438-3655.

### ISU Commitment To Diversity

ISU remains committed to creating and maintaining a working, learning and living environment that is welcoming, supportive, respectful, inclusive, diverse and free from discrimination and harassment. I know it's hard to call out or correct a teammate, TA or instructor, but I promise we are here to help and will be open to feedback and will commit to improvement. Thank you in advance for making the class a welcoming, inclusive class culture. If you have experienced or witnessed a bias-related incident, you can report to the Inclusive Community Response Team at the Dean of Students office. More info and a link to report are available at: <https://studentaffairs.illinoisstate.edu/who/diversity/icrt/>

### Harassment & Bullying

ISU provides support and resources to students, faculty, staff, and visitors to campus to address concerns relating to: gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence or stalking. Misbehavior will not be tolerated in this class or in group work. To report instances or problems (in or out of class) please visit: [https://ilstu-advocate.symplicity.com/public\\_report/index.php/pid987165](https://ilstu-advocate.symplicity.com/public_report/index.php/pid987165)

# Organizational Communication

## Reading List By Unit

### Unit 1: Organizational Culture (because IMHO, everything comes down to culture).

1. Barsade, S. G., & O'Neill, O. A. (2014). What's love got to do with it? A longitudinal study of the culture of companionate love and employee and client outcomes in a long-term care setting. Administrative Science Quarterly, 59(4), 551-598.
2. Barsade, S., & O'Neill, O. A. (2016). Manage your emotional culture. Harvard Business Review, 94(1), 58-66.
3. Men, L. R., & Yue, C. A. (2019). Creating a positive emotional culture: Effect of internal communication and impact on employee supportive behaviors. Public Relations Review, 45(3),
4. Schein, E. H. (2004). The concept of organizational culture. Why bother? In Organizational Culture and Leadership (3rd ed., pp. 3-24), Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.
5. Schein, E. H. (2004). The levels of culture. In Organizational Culture and Leadership (3rd ed., pp. 25-38), Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.
6. Schein, E. H. (2004). Cultures in organizations: Two case examples. In Organizational Culture and Leadership (3rd ed., pp. 39-62), Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.
7. Schein, E. H. (2004). How leaders embed and transmit culture. In Organizational Culture and Leadership (3rd ed., pp. 25-38), Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.
8. Sull, D., & Sull, C. (2022). How to Fix a Toxic Culture. MIT Sloan Management Review, 1-16.



**Unit 2: Socialization – Getting to work (That is – we’re socialized into working before our first job, we’re sometimes recruited to work, and there’s a lot going on in our first organizational encounters where communication is central to the whole experience. We explore all of it.**

1. Chillakuri, B. (2020). Understanding generation Z expectations for effective onboarding. Journal of Organizational Change Management, 33(7), 1277-1296.
2. Kramer, M. W., & Bisel, R. S. (2017). Communication and organizational encounter. In Organizational Communication: A lifespan approach (1st ed., pp. 57–83). Oxford University Press: New York
3. Modaff, D. P., DeWine, S., & Butler, J. A. (2008). Realistic recruitment. In Organizational Communication: Foundations, Challenges, and Misunderstandings (2nd ed., pp. 134–148). Pearson/Allyn & Bacon: Boston.
4. Wanberg, C., Saks, A. M., & Gruman, J. A. (2012). Getting newcomers on board: A review of socialization practices and introduction to socialization resources theory. In The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Socialization (pp. 27–45). Oxford University Press: London.

**Unit 3: Communicating with others at work: Challenges and opportunities**

**Part 1: Toxic People: Dark Triad Personalities**

1. Furnham, A. (2010). Narcissism at work. In The Elephant in the Boardroom (pp. 111–139). Palgrave Macmillan: London
2. LeBreton, J. M., Shiverdecker, L. K., & Grimaldi, E. M. (2018). The dark triad and workplace behavior. Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 5, 387-414.

**Part 2: Toxic People: Organizational Bullying**

1. Harvey, M. G., Heames, J. T., Richey, R. G., & Leonard, N. (2006). Bullying: From the playground to the boardroom. Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 12(4), 1-11.
2. Lutgen-Sandvik, P., Namie, G., Namie, R. (2009). Workplace bullying: causes consequences and corrections. In P. Lutgen-Sandvik & B. Davenport Sypher (Eds.) Destructive Organizational Communication (pp. 27–52). Routledge: New York
3. Sumner, E. M., Scarduzio, J. A., & Daggett, J. R. (2020). Drama at Dunder Mifflin: Workplace bullying discourses on "The Office." Journal of interpersonal Violence, 35(1-2), 127-149.
4. Taylor, S. G., & Locklear, L. R. (2022). A Little Rudeness Goes a Long Way. MIT Sloan Management Review, 63(2), 1-6.

**Unit 4: Burnout. Post COVID, we're all there, but even before COVID we needed an understanding of this phenomenon in organizations because communication played a role in it occurring, and in helping folks out of it.**

1. Petitta, L., & Jiang, L. (2019). Burning out? Watch your own incivility and the emotions you spread. Work, 64(4), 671-683.
2. Pickard, E. (2021). Towards a collective theory of burnout: Implications for future research and intervention. Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (2724701442). Retrieved from <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/illinoisstate.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/towards-collective-theory-burnout-implications/docview/2724701442/se-2>

**Unit 5: Generational Communication: For the first time in history, four generations are in the workplace together: Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z. Among a myriad of organizational things, communication isn't the same for each groups. Let's prepare you for what's ahead.**

1. Schroth, H. (2019). Are you ready for Gen Z in the workplace?. California Management Review, 61(3), 5-18.
2. Wilkie, D. (2019, August 16). Generation Z says they work the hardest, but only when they want to. SHRM. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/gen-z-worries-about-work-skills.aspx>