

COM 333 – Organizational Communication
Dr. Tamara Gillis
206G Steinman Center
Office: 361-1386

9:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays
S101
Fall 2009

Prerequisites: Com 120.

Textbook (required):

Modaff, D. P. and DeWine, S. (2008). *Organizational Communication: Foundations, Challenges, and Misunderstandings*. Pearson/Allyn & Bacon. 2nd edition.

Course Description and Purpose:

Through theory, application, and practice, this course explores aspects of organizational communication in order to prepare students for the challenges of organized activity at work, in the community, and in the family.

Course Objectives:

The goal of this course is to prepare students to interact effectively in a variety of organizations by being able to assess a communication situation (including the wishes of the client) and then to display the appropriate communication behaviors.

The objectives are that the student be able to:

- display an understanding of the basic theories of organizational communication through writing, testing, and presentations;
- display communication attributes in group settings that organize and motivate constructive activity; and
- display high quality products (presentations and materials) as a result of organized activity.

This class is an opportunity for professional development and intellectual growth. Both theory and practice will be of equal importance. Students are also expected to apply any knowledge or skills acquired in all previous courses. The more realistic or real the projects, the more value this class has.

Course Policies:

Attendance: It is expected that all students attend every class and be on time. Absences severely handicap the learning process and reflect on the student's ability to meet deadlines. Being late for class interrupts the momentum of the class and distracts other students.

A student may miss two class sessions without penalty; however, on each successive absence, a grade reduction will be made from the course final grade.

Student athletes must discuss their schedules individually with the instructor. There may be occasions when the absence of a student athlete will not be permitted.

Submission of Assignments: Unless otherwise stated, assignments and class exercises are to be handed in during the class. In an attempt to provide a professional experience, deadlines will be made for some in-class assignments. In such cases, if the story is not ready at the deadline, it will not be accepted. Work assigned for overnight will be due at the beginning of the next class meeting, unless otherwise agreed.

Makeup Work: Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. No late work will be accepted and a grade of 0 will be given.

Assignments, quizzes or tests missed as a result of absence will only be made up by prior arrangement with the instructor. If permission is not secured, a grade of 0 will be given.

Written Work: All work must be typed including drafts (although limited use of *standard* editing marks is OK). All work must adhere to the style standards for the assignment (APA).

Specifications: All written submissions (in class and out of class assignments) must be type-written or printer generated, double spaced, 12 point type, Times or Times Roman, one inch margins on all edges, and proper slugs. If assignments do not meet these specifications, a grade of 0 will be assigned.

Academic Integrity: The Pledge of Integrity as established by the College will be followed. The sources of any materials or ideas used, whether directly quoted or paraphrased, must be acknowledged by a citation (APA style). This holds true for both written work and spoken presentations. Direct quotations should be clearly identified as such with a source citation and page number in written work or by a clear citation statement in spoken presentations. Failure to identify sources of material used will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Severe or repeated cases may result in a failing course grade.

College Statement on Disability: If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodations to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements, you must:

- 1) contact the Coordinator of Learning Services and Disability Services, Tamera Longsderff, in the Center of Student Success, BSC 226, (717) 361-1549, longsdtl@etown.edu, AND
- 2) meet with me, the instructor, within two weeks of receiving a copy of the accommodation letter from Disability Services to discuss your accommodation needs and their implementation.

Projects, Tests and Assignments

Exams: There will be four unit exams. These tests may include a variety of assessment questions, multiple guess, essay or short answer concerning the discussion of the text and class readings. Each exam will focus on materials assigned during that portion of the course, although some concepts may bridge more than one exam. The fourth exam will be scheduled during the final exam period.

Research Project: This research project is an analysis of a company and its industry in light of organizational communication. Local companies have been recruited to work with the class for the semester. The project requires formal research (e.g., academic resources, popular press/web sources, interviews with experts) as well as informal primary research with company representatives. To provide some structure and to make what might seem like a daunting project into a manageable process, the research project will meet a series of deadlines with a series of deliverables: 1) an initial proposal; 2) a research update; 3) the final research project paper; and 4) a formal presentation. You will receive feedback on all elements during the process. This will ensure that no one gets lost along the way.

- 1) **The initial proposal** is a one- to two-page proposal (or annotated outline) describing briefly the issue you expect to investigate in regards to organizational communication. Additionally, it will include a list of key terms that you will use for your formal investigation (library research), list of companies you will interview, and a timeline for data collection and project completion.
- 2) **The research update** shows your progress on the research proposal and allows for any navigational shifts. At a minimum this will include a narrative of your progress as outlined in your initial proposal. At a maximum, it would include a draft of your project as it stands at that moment in time along with a summary of what you have left to accomplish to complete the project. Appendices to the project should include interview questions and other supporting primary resource documentation.

- 3) **The final research project paper** is a formal research paper of 12 to 20 pages (not including the cover page or appendices) that discusses what you have learned through your secondary and primary research. It will be documented using APA style and written as an academic paper (third person formal). Papers will be evaluated on the application, analysis, quality of research, discussion, writing style, and mechanics. All papers are graded for both content and form, which includes, but is not limited to, spelling, grammar, organization, clarity and sentence structure.
- 4) **A formal presentation** of 10 minutes will be presented in class. This formal presentation will be evaluated as an extemporaneous professional presentation. Powerpoint may be used for ancillary information, not as a running manuscript or speaker cues for the presentation.

Assessment Activities: There are a series of assessment activities that everyone will participate in during the semester. These include the following:

Employee Handbook Content Analysis: In this small group activity, students will review and evaluate a collection of employee handbooks. The course has a library of employee handbooks that have been collected from a number of companies that have been rated by the Great Place to Work Institute as some of the best places to work in the United States. These handbooks were collected in June 2005. Students are encouraged to request employee handbooks to add to the course collection.

Organizational Challenge Scenario: In this small group activity that will span the length of the course, students will engage in a scenario with the professor to apply the communication concepts explored during the course. A detailed description of the challenge scenario will be distributed during the first or second week of class.

Grading:

Research Project	50%
Assessment Activities	
- Employee Handbooks	15%
- Challenge Scenario	15%
Four Unit Exams	20%

Schedule: Subject to change. Fall 2008 Schedule

Day	Date	Discussion	Some Deadlines
Tues	Sep 1	Class introduction and orientation	
Thur	Sep 3	Chapter 1: Introduction	
Tues	Sep 8	Chapter 2: Classical Theories of Organizations	
Thur	Sep 10	Chapter 3: Humanistic Theories of Organizations	
Tues	Sep 15	Chapter 3 continued	
Thur	Sep 17	Challenge Scenario Activity	
Tues	Sep 22	The OC Game – Round One	
Thur	Sep 24	Exam #1	Research Project Proposal due
Tues	Sep 29	Chapter 4: Systems Theory	
Thur	Oct 1	Chapter 5: Organizational Culture Theory and Critical Theory	<i>Research Project Proposals returned</i>
Tues	Oct 6	Chapter 6: The Communicative Organization	
Thur	Oct 8	Fall Break	
Tues	Oct 13	The OC Game – Round Two	Research Project Update due
Thur	Oct 15	Exam #2	
Tues	Oct 20	Chapter 7: Realistic Recruitment Chapter 8: Socialization of New Members	
Thur	Oct 22	Employee Handbook Content Analysis	<i>Research Project Update returned</i>
Tues	Oct 27	Chapter 9: Conflict in the Organization	
Thur	Oct 29	Group Work Day	

Tues	Nov 3	Exam #3	
Thur	Nov 5	Work Day	
Tues	Nov 10	Chapter 10: Superior-Subordinate Communication	
Thur	Nov 12	Chapter 11: Peer and Co-worker Communication	
Tues	Nov 17	Chapter 12: Organizational Teams	
Thur	Nov 19	Chapter 13: Communication Technology in the Organization	
Tues	Nov 24	Movie: Monsters Inc.	
Thur	Nov 26	Happy Thanksgiving!	
Tues	Dec 1	The OC Game – Final Round	
Thur	Dec 3	Research Project Presentations	
Tues	Dec 8	Research Project Presentations	Research Projects due by 4 p.m.
Thur	Dec 10	Present/Discuss Challenge Scenario	
Thur	Dec 17	7:30 -10:30 AM Final Exam	FINALS WEEK