communicationtheory

COM 382

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Office Hours: Available via Zoom. Please email me to make an appointment.

This course is designed to introduce students to communication theories that help us to understand human interactions and research in the communication discipline.

We have an asynchronous online course, meaning that students can log in at different times to complete assignments without a synchronous (e.g., live Zoom) meeting time. We go for three weeks, with the work for each week being due at a set time (Sunday night for the first two weeks and Friday night for the final week).

We will cover a variety of perspectives and theories but focus on social scientific theories.

The first week of the course introduces theory and demonstrates how theory guides our understanding of communication. We will learn where theories stem from, how to evaluate them, and how to apply them to communication problems.

The second week will focus on theories that explain mediated and interpersonal communication. We'll start analyzing how characters are depicted in the media according to cultivation theory. The class writing assignments will give you the chance to apply communication theory to examples from pop culture.

The third week has us wrapping up with interpersonal theories and completing our look at depictions of characters in the media.

- Required text: Griffin, Ledbetter, & Sparks (2014). *A First Look at Communication Theory* (9th edition). McGraw-Hill. 978-0073523927
    - The tenth edition would also be fine.
    - No need for Connect access for this course!
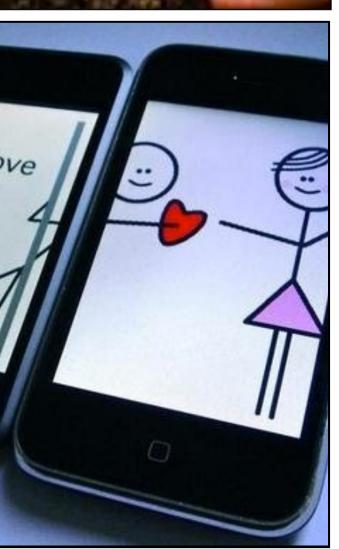
MODULE 1: INTRO TO COMM THEORY

The first module introduces us to communication theory, what it does for us, and why it is important. We will learn about the difference between the objective and interpretive perspectives of communication theory through analyzing a clip from New Girl.

MODULE 2: CULTIVATION THEORY

Our introduction to theory presents us with scientific and interpretive theories. This module gives us cultivation theory, which combines a bit of both sides to help us explain how media shapes our perception of the world.

MODULE 3: INTERPERSONAL THEORIES

We blend interpersonal and mediated communication with social information processing. You have the chance to explore how we develop relationships online through You've Got Mail. Uncertainty reduction theory is explored with Hitch.

CLASS OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will have had the opportunity to:

- Identify theories, models, and perspectives in communication research.
- Synthesize and articulate the significance of communication research.
- Analyze and critique communication theories and their applications.
- Apply theories to real world experiences.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Complete 7 Quizzes. The lowest grade will be dropped.	20%	20 pts
Complete 2 Written Assignments	20%	20 pts
New Girl Assignment	10%	10 pts
Discussion Forum Posts	15%	15 pts
Discussion Forum Replies	10%	10 pts
Class Content Analysis - Collecting Data	10%	10 pts
Class Content Analysis - Infographic Summary of Data	15%	15 pts
Total	100%	100 pts

MODULE	Topics Discussed	Learning Objectives	Deliverables
1 **Monday, January 2 - Sunday, January 8**	Introduction to comm. theory & perspectives in comm.	1. Identify theories, models, and perspectives in communication research 2. Synthesize and articulate the significance of communication research	● Introductory Discussion ● New Girl group assignment on perspectives in comm. ● Quiz for Ch. 1 & 2 & 3 ● Gerbner cultivation content analysis (ongoing)
2 **Monday, January 9 - Sunday, January 15**	Gerbner's cultivation theory & uncertainty reduction theory	1. Identify theories, models, and perspectives in communication research 4. Apply theories to real - world experiences	● Quiz for Ch. 29 & 9 ● Gerbner cultivation content analysis (ongoing) ●Discussion post on uncertainty reduction and dating ● Hitch writing activity
3 **Monday, January 16 - Friday, January 20**	Interpersonal communication theories (expectancy violation theory & social information processing theory)	1. Identify theories, models, and perspectives in communication research 2. Synthesize and articulate the significance of communication research 3. Analyze and critique theories and their applications 4. Apply theories to real - world experiences	● You've Got Mail writing activity ● Quiz for Ch. 7 & 10 ● Reply to Discussion on uncertainty reduction and dating ● Infographic summary of content analysis data

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

The best way to contact me is Jalette@uri.edu. I respond well to professional and polite messages (with a greeting, closing, and signature). I usually check email once a day (not as regularly on weekends), and will be unlikely to respond to messages sent late at night. Please review materials online before asking questions that can be answered with existing documents. I usually respond to student emails within 2 days. Students can manage perceptions by using a different tone than what is commonplace in texts and social media.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

To successfully complete this course, you will need access to a computer with reliable, high-speed Internet access and appropriate system and software to support the Brightspace learning platform. Typical technical requirements for users are:

Windows 7 (XP or Vista)	Mac OS X or higher
64 MB Ram	32 MB Ram
28.8 kbps modem (56k or higher recommended)	28.8 kbps modem (56k or higher recommended)
SoundCard & Speakers	SoundCard & Speakers
External headphones with built-in microphone	External headphones with built-in microphone
Mozilla Firefox 9.0 or higher	Mozilla Firefox 9.0 or higher; Safari 5.0 or higher
Webcam and microphone or device to record a short video and a short audio presentation (5-7 minutes)	Webcam and microphone or device to record a short video (5-7 minutes)

Also requires Word 2007 (PC) 2011 (MAC) or newer, PowerPoint, Excel, Adobe Flash, and Adobe Acrobat Reader.

BRIGHTSPACE HELP

Here is the link to access Brightspace https://brightspace.uri.edu as well as the Brightspace resource page https://web.uri.edu/brightspace/.

URI ACADEMIC WRITING STANDARDS

Specific writing standards differ from discipline to discipline, and learning to write persuasively in any genre is a complex process, both individual and social, that takes place over time with continued practice and guidance. Nonetheless, URI has identified some common assumptions and practices that apply to most academic writing done at the university level. These generally understood elements are articulated here to help students see how they can best express their ideas effectively, regardless of their discipline or any particular writing assignment.

Venues for writing include the widespread use of e-mail, electronic chat spaces and interactive blackboards. URI is committed to guaranteeing that students can expect all electronic communication to meet Federal and State regulations concerning harassment or other "hate" speech. Individual integrity and social decency require common courtesies and a mutual understanding that writing–in all its educational configurations–is an attempt to share information, knowledge, opinions and insights in fruitful ways.

Academic writing (as commonly understood in the university) always aims at correct Standard English grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

The following details are meant to give students accurate, useful, and practical assistance for writing across the curriculum of URI.

Students can assume that successful collegiate writing will generally:

- Delineate the relationships among writer, purpose and audience by means of a clear focus (thesis statements, hypotheses or instructor-posed questions are examples of such focusing methods, but are by no means the only ones) and a topic that's managed and developed appropriately for the specific task.
- Display a familiarity with and understanding of the particular discourse styles of the discipline and/or particular assignment.
- Demonstrate the analytical skills of the writer rather than just repeating what others have said by summarizing or paraphrasing
- Substantiate abstractions, judgments, and assertions with evidence specifically applicable for the occasion whether illustrations, quotations, or relevant data.
- Draw upon contextualized research whenever necessary, properly acknowledging the explicit work or intellectual property of others.
- Require more than one carefully proofread and documented draft, typed or computer printed unless otherwise specified.

THE UNDERGRADUATE WRITING CENTER

Located in Roosevelt 009 and also online, students work side-by-side or screen-to-screen with peer tutors to find ways to best communicate their ideas in writing. Tutors can help students get "un-stuck" on any writing assignment, at any stage of the writing process: from understanding a prompt and brainstorming ideas, to outlining and drafting, to developing strategies for revision. Appointments are free! Students can view the current schedule and book online at uri.mywcoline.com or call The Writing Center reception desk: 401-874-5839.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offenses, which are deal with firmly by the College and University. Scholastic integrity presumes that students are honest in all academic work. <u>Cheating</u> is the failure to give credit for work not done independently (i.e., submitting a paper written by someone other than yourself), unauthorized communication during an examination, or the claiming of credit for work not done (i.e., falsifying information). <u>Plagiarism</u> is the failure to give credit for another person's written or oral statement, thereby falsely presuming that such work is originally and solely your own.

If you have any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, visit the following website: <u>https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/ whatisplagiarism</u>, the URI Student Handbook, and University Manual sections on plagiarism and cheating at <u>http://web.uri.edu/studentconduct/student-handbook/</u>.

Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. A student's name on any written work, quiz or exam shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student's own independent thought and study. Work should be stated in the student's own words, properly attributed to its source. Students have an obligation to know how to quote, paraphrase, summarize, cite and reference the work of others with integrity. The following are examples of academic dishonesty.

- Using material, directly or paraphrasing, from published sources (print or electronic) without appropriate citation;
- Claiming disproportionate credit for work not done independently;
- Unauthorized possession or access to exams;
- Unauthorized communication during exams;
- Unauthorized use of another's work or preparing work for another student;
- Taking an exam for another student;
- Altering or attempting to alter grades;
- The use of notes or electronic devices to gain an unauthorized advantage during exams;
- Fabricating or falsifying facts, data or references;
- Facilitating or aiding another's academic dishonesty;
- Submitting the same paper for more than one course without prior approval from the Instructor.

Please note the following section from the University Manual:

8.27.17. Instructors shall have the explicit duty to take action in known cases of cheating or plagiarism. The instructor shall have the right to fail a student on the assignment on which the instructor has determined that a student has cheated or plagiarized. The circumstances of this failure shall be reported to the student's academic dean, the instructor's dean, and the Office of Student Life. The student may appeal the matter to the instructor's dean, and the decision by the dean shall be expeditious and final.

Such action will be initiated by the instructor if it is determined that any written assignment is copied or falsified or inappropriately referenced.

<u>Please note:</u> Students are responsible for being familiar with and adhering to the published "Community Standards of Behavior: University Policies and Regulations" which can be accessed in the University Student Handbook.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Office of Disability Services
Americans With Disabilities Act Statement
Any personal learning accommodations that may be needed by a student covered by the "Americans with Disabilities Act" must be made known to the university as soon as possible. This is the student's responsibility. Information about services, academic modifications and documentation requirements can be obtained from the The Office of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity (AAEOD). https://web.uri.edu/affirmativeaction/

Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact me early in the semester so that we may work out reasonable accommodations to support your success in this course. Students should also contact Disability Services for Students, Office of Student Life, 330 Memorial Union, 401-874-2098.

From the University Manual: 6.40.10 and 6.40.11 Accommodations for Qualified Students With Disabilities.
Students are expected to notify faculty at the onset of the semester if any special considerations are required in the classroom. If any special considerations are required for examinations, it is expected the student will notify the faculty a week before the examination with the appropriate paperwork.

Uri Online Library Resources
https://web.uri.edu/library/

➢Counseling Center: 401-874-2288 http://www.uri.edu/counseling/

➢Career Services: 401-874-2311 http://web.uri.edu/career/

➢Alcohol and Drug Services: 401-874-5073 http://www.uri.edu/substance_abuse/

➢Dean of Students Office: 401-874-2957 http://web.uri.edu/cels/deansoffice/