

# COMM 3325: Introduction to Organizational Communication

## Autumn 2012

### Lecture

MWF 3:00 – 3:55  
Stillman Hall 0100

### Professor

Dr. Ray Pingree  
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3026 Derby Hall  
Office hours prior to each exam announced in class, or by appointment

### Teaching Assistant (ask your TA any questions on grades, absences, or extra credit)

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Office hour Thurs 4-5pm

## Course Objectives

Communication is central to organizational success. This course will explore some of the many communication dysfunctions common to organizations and provide a broad perspective on their possible solutions, with an emphasis on more democratic, bottom-up solutions neglected by traditional management-centered approaches. It is divided into four parts, each with its own non-cumulative exam:

1. Foundational and historical perspectives
2. Culture and power problems
3. Bottom-up alternatives
4. Processes and applications

## Required Text and Readings

Eisenberg, E. M., Goodall, H. L. Jr., & Tretheway, A. (2009). *Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Other required readings will be posted on Carmen.

## Grading scheme

In-Class Activities:	15 points
Exam 1:	15 points
Exam 2:	20 points
Exam 3:	20 points
Exam 4:	25 points
Concept Example Assignment:	5 points
Extra credit:	5 points max

## Course Policies

1. Attendance. In-class activities are the only way we check attendance. You can miss up to 5 of them

because your lowest 5 activity grades are dropped. Because of this, there is no need to tell me when you have a good reason to miss class. If you have documented reasons to miss more than 5 classes, we can make arrangements for you to make up the work.

2. All cell phones and music players must be turned off in the classroom.
3. I will use Carmen to communicate information about the course, such as changes to the syllabus and additional required readings. Thus, make sure to check the Carmen course website at least twice a week for updates.
4. Academic misconduct, including but not limited to plagiarism and knowingly providing or receiving help during examinations, will be penalized through the procedures set up by the university. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource\\_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp)).
5. Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to me and seeking assistance in a timely manner. If you feel you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please also contact the Office for Disability Services at (614) 292-3307 in Room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

## Course Content and Assignments

### Lectures

Lectures overlap with but are not redundant with readings. I will add other materials, particularly in the second half of the course, and any of these materials may be included on the exams. I will try to post my lecture slides on Carmen at least one hour prior to each class session, but these slides will not be complete and should not be used as a substitute for attending lecture and taking active notes.

***A big hint:** If you come to lecture, you'll have a much better idea what will be emphasized on the exams than if you just do the readings. This is because lectures and exams are both designed to emphasize what I think is most important about each topic.*

### In-Class Activities

There will be one activity per class session. You will complete it at some point during the lecture. As you leave the lecture hall, you will hand in your own activity and only your own activity. These activities are graded for effort, not correctness. You will receive a grade of 100% if you put in a reasonable effort, 50% if you do not, and 0% if you do not turn in an activity for that day.

Your lowest five activity grades will be dropped from your overall activity grade and then count as up to ½ point of extra credit each. This means you can miss up to five classes without losing activity points, and that if you do not miss any classes and get full credit for all activities, you will get an additional 2.5% extra credit. All activities must be completed during class time, and you may not make them up.

### Concept Example Assignment

This assignment is intended to help us find entertaining video examples of class concepts to be shown in lecture in future years teaching this class. The assignment is to pick one lecture and find a short (about 5 minute) video clip from a movie or TV show that is a good example of some concepts covered in that lecture. You can complete the assignment at any time during the term, turning it in via the drop box on Carmen. Do not use any video clips used in class, or any clips from the first five seasons of NBC's *The Office* or from the movie *Office Space*. What you will turn in is a one-page summary of how the video clip relates to the concepts. At the top of the page, say which lecture it's about and identify the video clip by giving the name of the movie and release year, or the TV show name, season, and episode number, and the exact start and end

times of the clip.

## Exams

All four exams are in-class, closed-notes, and closed-book. The first midterm is worth 15% of your final grade, the other two midterms are each worth 20%, and the final exam is worth 25%. These exams are on the hard side, so make sure to think carefully about each question. On each midterm, expect about 30 multiple-choice questions worth 1 point each, and a choice to answer one of two short essay questions worth 5 points. The final exam will be slightly longer but overall will use the same basic format. Although the exams are not cumulative, some concepts introduced in one unit are then applied again in a later unit, and in these cases these concepts are fair game on the exam for the later unit.

## Research Participation

To give you some exposure to communication research and to help our graduate students, you can earn extra credit for participation in short surveys or experiments throughout the quarter, depending on availability. They will be announced in class and/or on Carmen. Each survey or experiment will be worth 1 point of extra credit. Again, the total maximum extra credit is 5 points, which includes extra credit from research as well as extra in-class activities.

## **Class Schedule**

*Readings should be completed prior to the corresponding class session.  
Any changes to this tentative schedule will be announced on Carmen.*

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
	Aug 22: Introduction and course overview.	Aug 24: Communication and the changing organizational world. Reading: Ch1
Aug 27 & 29: Communication Models. Reading: Ch2 through p46.		Aug 31: Classical Management. Reading: Ch3 through p.70
Sep 3: Labor day, no classes	Sep 5: Human relations and human resources. Reading: Ch3 pages 70-79	Sep 7: Movie
Sep 10: Systems Reading: rest of Ch3	Sep 12: Exam review	<b>Sep 14: Exam 1</b>
Sep 17 & 19: Organizational Culture. Reading: Ch4		Sept 21: Power and resistance. Readings: Ch5, excerpt from Scott book (PDF on Carmen)
Sep 24: Power and resistance continued	Sep 26: Identity and difference Reading: Ch6	Sep 28: Movie
Oct 1: Movie continued	Oct 3 & 5: Micromanagement Case Study. No readings.	

Monday	Wednesday		Friday
Oct 8: Exam review	<b>Oct 10: Exam 2</b>		Oct 12: Leadership Reading: Ch 8 pages 273-293
Oct 15: Leadership continued Reading: <a href="#">Leading from Below</a> (Kelly & Nadler, 2007)	Oct 17 & 19: Teams & Networks. Reading: Ch7		
Oct 22 & 24: Participatory processes. Reading: GE Workouts (PDF on Carmen)		Oct 26: Democratic work organizations Reading: Mondragon (PDF on Carmen)	
Oct 29: Democratic work organizations continued.	Oct 31: Exam review.	<b>Nov 2: Exam 3</b>	
Nov 5: Intro to group performance No readings	Nov 7 & 9: Group processes No readings.		
Nov 12: Veterans Day, no classes	Nov 14 & 16: Mix of mechanisms and brainstorming. No readings.		
Nov 19: Group information pooling and problem solving. No readings.	Thanksgiving Break, no classes		
Nov 26: Accountability. Reading: Lerner & Tetlock, 1999 (PDF on Carmen)	Nov 28: Innovations in planning. No readings.	Nov 30: An innovation in group size: working in pairs. No readings.	
Dec 3: Final exam review		<b>Dec 6 (Thursday!) Final exam 4:00pm – 5:45pm Concept example assignment due</b>	