Communication 6806:  
Contemporary Communication Theory  
Autumn 2015

Professor:  David R. Ewoldsen  
Email: ewoldsen.osu@gmail.com  
Office: 3168 derby Hall  
Office hours: Wednesday 10 to 12 and by appointment

Location:  3116 Derby Hall  
Time:  9:35 to 10:55 am

Readings
Required Text

Highly Recommended Text
http://www.amazon.com/Concise-Encyclopedia-Communication-Wolfgang-Donsbach/dp/1118789326/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1438115114&sr=8-1&keywords=the+concise+encyclopedia+of+communication&pebp=1438115117996&perid=15STZ7H16SRRNKD7XYPW

There will be a large number of readings for the course. These can be found on Carmen. The readings will be categorized in one of three ways: required, recommended, and additional. You must do the required readings before class if this class is going to benefit you intellectually. I will do pop quizzes on the readings to ensure you are reading prior to class. Recommended readings will likely be discussed in class, but it is not necessary that you read this prior to class. However, if this is one of your areas of study, I would strongly encourage you to read these prior to class. Additional readings are provided for you as readings that I think you should familiar with if this is your area of study but you will not be responsible for these readings.

Course Description
The class is an introduction to the theoretical orientations that are found within the social scientific approach to the study of communication. Graduate careers often involved increased specialization, but the goal of this course is to introduce you to the breadth of study found within the social scientific study of communication. However, the course is also designed to reflect Ohio State’s orientation to the discipline as opposed to covering the entirety of the discipline. While there is a great deal to be learned from other approaches to the study of communication (e.g., critical, cultural, and rhetorical), there is not the time in this course to do justice to diversity of orientations found within this discipline.

Course Learning Objectives
1. You should be able to identify and explain many of the theories across the various domains of study within the social scientific study of communication.
2. You should be able to explain major trends that are going on within different parts of the discipline and to advance arguments about where the discipline is heading.
3. You should be able to describe Ohio State’s place within the discipline and major programs of research that ongoing within the School of Communication.
4. You will be able to explain the theories that are important to your interests as a scholar.
5. You will be able to critique any of the theories that are discussed in class or found in the readings.
6. You will be able to identify linkages between the theories found in distinct areas of the discipline and utilize these theories to improve your own research.

**Academic integrity policy**

The Ohio State University’s *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: “Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process.” Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University’s *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an “excuse” for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the *Code of Student Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

**If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.** If COAM determines that you have violated the University’s *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- The Committee on Academic Misconduct web pages (COAM Home)
- *Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity* (*Ten Suggestions*)
- *Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity* ([www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.htm](http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.htm))

**Accommodations for accessibility**

If you would like to request academic accommodations based on the impact of a disability qualified under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, contact your instructor privately as soon as possible to discuss your specific needs. Discussions are confidential.

In addition to contacting the instructor, please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 or ods@osu.edu to register for
services and/or to coordinate any accommodations you might need in your courses at The Ohio State University.

Go to http://ods.osu.edu for more information.

Additional information on tOSU’s accessibility policies and services can be found at http://ada.osu.edu/resources/Links.htm

Accessibility of course technology
This online course requires use of Carmen (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.

- Carmen (Desire2Learn) accessibility
- Streaming audio and video
- Synchronous course tools

Academic Support Services provided
Academic support services provided by tOSU can provide needed services and help so that you succeed in your courses. To get more information on obtaining these services, go to http://artsandsciences.osu.edu/current-students/university-resources

Additional information on student services can be found at http://ssc.osu.edu

GRADING
Your grades in the class will be based on 3 components.

1. Midterm. The midterm will consist of short answers and essay questions. It will be a take-home test, but you will only have 48 hours to complete the test so you should have studied prior to getting the test. The midterm will be turned in online via the class’s dropbox. There will be a strict page limit. The midterm will be distributed on October 21 and will be due by 5 pm on October 23. The midterm will be worth 35% of your final grade.

2. Final. The final will consist of short answers and essay questions. The final will also be a take-home test. The test will be distributed on Tuesday, December 8 and due on Friday, December 11 at noon. The final will be worth 40% of your final grade.

3. Theory paper. There will be three parts to the paper. First, you will summarize what you hope to study while you are in graduate school. Second, you will identify one or more theories that provide the foundation for your research. Third, you will identify three theories from distinct areas of study outside of your area that will inform your research.
The text of the paper will be no longer than 10 double spaced pages. More details on the paper will be provided on Carmen. The paper will be due December 1 at 5 p.m. The paper will be worth 25% of your final grade.

The tests and the paper will be turned in by the noted time using dropbox on Carmen. Assignments that are turned in late will be penalized at a rate of -10% per day it is late.

APA Style Sheet
All papers should following the APA Publication Manual guidelines.

Grade assignment
Currently, I anticipate that grades will be assigned using the following percentage system.

- \( \geq 93\% = A \)
- \( \geq 90\% = A- \)
- \( \geq 87\% = B+ \)
- \( \geq 83\% = B \)
- \( \geq 80\% = B- \)
- \( \geq 77\% = C+ \)
- \( \geq 73\% = C \)
- \( \geq 70\% = C- \)
- \( \geq 67\% = D+ \)
- \( \geq 63\% = D \)
- \( >63\% = E \)

Policies and Rules
1. I expect you to act as responsible students. I understand that you have other demands on your time and that this course will not always be your top priority. However, the amount of time you spend on this course will probably have a direct impact on your grade for this course.
2. If there are unusual circumstances that are affecting your performance in this class, you should inform me of them as soon as possible. Do not call me after the fact. I can adjust time schedules, but I will not adjust my grading policies. "C" work is "C" work no matter what the circumstances.
3. You have a two week period after the graded assignment is returned to challenge grades.
4. Grade challenges will be made in writing.
5. The classroom is a space where people come to explore a variety of ideas in an open and welcoming environment. In order for this to occur, we must be respectful of one another. Sexual harassment, racism, or homophobic behavior will not be tolerated.
6. All cell phones and beepers will be turned off during class lecture. Be courteous to your fellow students.

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus at any point during the semester. Modifications will be posted on Carmen.
Topics for Grad Theory

August 25: Course intro & syllabus

a. Required

b. Recommended

August 27: Intro to assistant profs & how to read

September 1: Introduction to the discipline and its history

a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional


September 3: Theory Overview and criteria for judging theory

a. **Required**


b. **Recommended**

DeAndre & Holbert reading


September 8: Language

a. **Required**


b. **Recommended**

c. Additional

September 10: Message Production
a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

September 15: Message processing
a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional


September 17: Interpersonal communication
a. Required


b. Recommended


c. Additional

September 22: Interpersonal communication continued
a. Required


b. Recommended


September 24: Relationships

a. **Required**


b. **Recommended**


c. **Additional**


September 29: Intercultural

a. **Required**


b. **Recommended**

c. Additional

October 1: Intergroup
a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

October 6: Attitude-Behavior Relationship
a. Required
b. Recommended

c. Additional

October 8: Persuasion
a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

October 13: Computer Mediated Communication
a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

October 15 – Fall Break

October 20: Human Computer Interaction
a. Required

b. Recommended
Li, S., & Feng, B. (in press). What to say to an online support-seeker? The influence of others’ responses and support-seekers’ replies. Human Communication Research.
October 22: Midterm

October 27: Media Selection

a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

October 29: Media Effects, classic approaches

a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

November 3: Media effects, newer work

a. Required

b. Recommended


c. Additional

November 5: Entertainment

a. Required


b. Recommended


c. Additional

November 10: Risk communication

a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

November 12: Interpersonal Health Communication

a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

November 17: Health Communication – fear appeals
a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

November 19: Health Communication – campaigns
a. Required
Slater, M. (2002). Involvement as goal-directed strategic processing: Extending the Elaboration Likelihood model. In J. P. Dillard & M. Pfau (Eds.), The handbook of

b. Recommended

c. Additional

December 1: Political communication – psychological theories

a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional


December 3: Political communication – sociological approaches

a. Required

b. Recommended

c. Additional

December 8: Dynamics

a. Required
Lang, A. (2014). Dynamic Human-centered communication systems theory. The Information Society, 30, 60-70.

b. Recommended

c. Additional