

**Syllabus COMM 4556**  
**Information Technology and Organizational Communication**  
***Online Class with Live Zoom Sessions***

The Ohio State University  
School of Communication

**Instructor:**

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Online Office Hours via Carmen Zoom:

*Thursdays 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.*

*(Please also see on Carmen/Canvas Homepage)*

**Course Objectives, Description, and Work Expectation**

Communication plays a vital role in the success and failure of almost any organization. To support their communication processes and to increase their performances, organizations use various information technologies and technological networks.

Thus, the course will demonstrate the influence of these technologies on communication and knowledge networks, and how technology changes the daily work of organizations, teams, and individuals.

Students will learn about technologies that impact organizational communication patterns, new organizational forms, and new challenges for organizational members as users of information technologies in a global business environment.

***Why exactly should I be interested in that topic?***

Well, we all know that we need to cooperate with other people. We also know that more and more communication technologies are used to support cooperation. We also may know that work environments get more dynamic and complex. With a lot of practical examples, important research findings, and class activities and discussions, the class will help you to understand the changing motivations and needs of the people around you and how communication technology influences your own communication behavior in modern work

environments. See it as chance to prepare for the communication challenges in the organizations/companies that you will eventually join.

### ***What do I need to do for class?***

Short Version: Work through the online material/lectures regularly as soon as they are released, reflect on the topics, complete assignments on time, participate in class activities and cooperate with others when possible or mandatory, always cite sources of used material/information, follow academic conduct rules, ask questions and also have a little fun with the class.

Longer Version: Follow online instructions very carefully, participate in online class activities and assignments, take your notes while working through class content, ask questions if you are not sure about a topic, and reflect on things based on your own experiences and ideas. The more you are willing to reflect on class topics and activities, the better the chance to make it a really good learning experience for you and others with whom you may work together.

This class is an online class with a combination of live and asynchronous tasks/activities. While the goal of online teaching is to increase learning flexibility and efficiency, students are more challenged to set up their own learning schedule and pace. It is important to keep an oversight of all the online assignments and deadlines to complete the class successfully. All necessary information to do so is posted on Carmen under Modules, is part of this syllabus, and is provided through email.

This is a 3-credit hour course. According to Ohio State policy, students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent with instruction material and Carmen activities and 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average. However, the time necessary to succeed in class also depends on every student's learning pace.

### **How this Course Works – Live Sessions, Online Material, Posting**

The class is online but has some live sessions via video conferencing on some of the Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:40 to 1:35 p.m. (see schedule in this syllabus). I strongly recommend to block the times of those live sessions to participate. Attending the live Zoom sessions is not mandatory to receive a 100% score in this class but provides additional learning opportunities. Live Zoom meetings are

scheduled for the team presentation assignment (the presentation days) and for three other sessions, used to provide general class information at the beginning of the semester and to introduce two of the major assignments.

Also, new content will be provided on Tuesdays and Thursdays (at 12:01 a.m.) with assignment due dates on those same days (at 11:59 p.m.). Thus, by blocking the originally scheduled class times for work in this class will help to stay on track and keep deadlines.

The posted online material will consist of narrated PowerPoint presentations with my voice recorded (as MP4 file) and presentation handouts with accompanying texts (both as PDF files). You can use the MP4 video or the PDF files or both, depending what works best for you. Just try it out, but I recommend to use both. Additionally, you will find instructions for the bigger assignments as PDF files.

All material will be available under Modules on Carmen/Canvas.

You will receive regular information about the posting of new lecture content, upcoming assignments, and news at the beginning of each week on Mondays per email. Thus, make sure to check your email regularly. However, information about tasks and deadlines is always posted under each topic header under Modules, which follows the class schedule in the syllabus.

### **Copyright Disclaimer**

Per the Study Code of Conduct, you may not share recorded lectures or other class materials with anybody not officially enrolled in this class. Sharing material like this is a copyright violation.

### **Used Text**

Readings will be posted under Modules on Carmen (also listed in the schedule and at the end of the syllabus). However, there are some additional books about technology use and communication in organizations that may be helpful to understand the class topics, e.g.:

DeSanctis, G. & Fulk, J. (Eds.) (1999). Shaping organizational form: Communication, connection, and community. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Eisenberg, E. M., Goodall Jr., H. L., Trethewey, A. (2014). *Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint* (7th ed.). Bedford/St. Martin's

### **Class Website via Carmen/Canvas:**

*Please be sure to check Carmen regularly also for news or changes,...*

### **Assignments and Exams**

All assignments need to be uploaded to the corresponding folder, accessible on Carmen under Modules (and Assignments/Discussions) on the assigned days. Papers or text entries in wrong folders will not count and will lead to a zero for the assignment.

Always follow instructions and upload your work in the correct format. For example, if an assignment uses Carmen discussions and you are asked to upload a Word or PDF document, do not use the text/comment field to post your work. Text/Comment fields are to be used for comments or text only if the instructions explicitly say so.

Also, be prepared to sign up for a team at the beginning of the semester, necessary for important assignments (see sign-up time window in class schedule below).

### **Exams (online)**

The information taught before an exam will be tested on this exam. It will not be tested on the following exam again (exams in this class are not cumulative).

Exams are designed as Carmen Quizzes (multiple-choice), based on the material from the readings and lectures. The overall exam time is 45 minutes for 28 questions (about 1 ½ minutes per question). Make-up exams will only be offered for medical or other similar, legitimate reasons.

Failure to take an exam will result in a zero for the exam.

The online exams have to be completed within the scheduled time window.

Starting toward the end of the time window may reduce the time students have to answer the questions. For example: time window is 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the scheduled day and students have 45 minutes to complete. A late start at 8:30 p.m. will leave 30 minutes to complete the exam and not 45 minutes because the online exam closes when the time window elapses.

### **Topic Reflection Assignments (TRA)**

Online Lectures (materials) are posted on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On those online lecture days, there will be Topic Reflection Assignments (14 over the course of the semester) where you should take a few minutes to work on an assigned topic. TRAs must be completed on those days (within a time window of about 24 hours – 12:01 a.m. – 11:59 p.m.). They should help you to reflect specific topics of the current lecture. Review the lecture material under Modules regularly on those days not to miss any assignment deadlines.

One of the TRAs provides the opportunity for bonus points. Only 13 of the 14 TRAs are necessary to obtain the chance to score 100% in this class.

*(Example: You have completed all 14 TRAs successfully = 26 regular points + 2 bonus point; you have completed 13 TRAs successfully = 26 regular points and 0 bonus points.)*

### **Topic Reflection Exercises (TRE)**

There will be two topic reflection exercises where students are asked to work together on a class topic. Those exercises will allow you to learn about views and attitudes of fellow students and how to take those different thoughts into consideration to discuss the topics and/or to come to a mutual decision. Your group has about 48 hours from the assigned day to complete the exercise.

### **End of Semester Assignment (Assignment)**

There will be a bigger assignment which starts in the second half of the semester with a due date at the end of the semester (see class schedule). You will be asked to work on an assigned topic, alone or together with another student. The assignment gives you the opportunity for a more in-depth topic reflection and to apply your new knowledge based on the lectures of the class.

If you are working together with other students, all team members will get the same amount of points so that it is a question of fairness and honesty that everyone contributes actively to create an excellent paper. All papers must be uploaded within the given deadline. Late submissions will be penalized. Further details about the assignment will be posted on Carmen.

### **Team-Presentations**

At the beginning of the semester, students need to sign up for a team of three and the teams are assigned to one of eight different topics. They are asked to prepare a 10-minute presentation about the topic based on reviewed literature. The presentations will take place throughout the semester (see class schedule). Students who do not sign up for a team until the end of the second week of the semester cannot get credit for this assignment. Teams can choose between different presentation modes: They can a) present during the scheduled live zoom session, b) they can create a presentation that consists of slides and accompanying text, or c) they can create a narrated PowerPoint presentation with their voices recorded. All presentations must be uploaded on Carmen on the assigned day. Those teams who present during the scheduled live zoom meeting receive a bonus point for their extra efforts.

All students are strongly encouraged to use the chance of live presentations and also participate in those sessions as audience. Students are asked to comment on one presentation of their classmates per presentation day (except the presenters of that day), which is easier if live presentations are held and attended. However, comments must be posted on Carmen and are good for 1 point. You need to post a comment on six of the seven presentation days where you are not the presenter to keep the chance to score 100% in this class.

You will find all details in the instructions of the team presentation assignment on Carmen under Modules (team sign-up will start on Friday at the end of the first week – see class schedule).

**Grade Distribution**

Topic Reflection Assignments	23% (26 points – 13*2)
Topic Reflection Exercises	5% (6 points – 2*3)
Team Presentation	8% (8 points)
Presentation Comments	5% (6 points – 6*1)
End of Semester Assignment	9% (10 points)
2 Exams (weighted equally)	50% (56 points – 2*28)
<i>Total</i>	<i>100% (112 points)</i>

The grading in this class is based on OSU's grading scheme (posted on Carmen under Syllabus and Modules).

**Grade Change Requests**

Students are strongly encouraged to check posted points for all assignments and exams regularly on Carmen. Any missing points have to be reported 14 days after posting of the score in question. Later requests will not be considered. The last day for requesting any score changes is the first day of finals week, Monday, 4/26/2021.

### **Late Assignments**

Assignment papers, text entries, or comments need to be uploaded/posted by the deadline to the corresponding assignment folder or discussion to receive credit. Submissions to wrong folders cannot be considered for grading. Late submissions won't be accepted if not explicitly stated in the assignment instructions.

### **Makeup of missed Assignments**

Completing missed assignments late will only be allowed for serious, legitimate reasons (documentation needed like doctor's note). Students are required to inform the instructor before the originally scheduled assignment/exam time. Otherwise, a makeup opportunity cannot be granted. If a student is missing more than 3 assignments throughout the semester, make-up opportunities cannot be granted even if documentation is presented.

### **Instructor Illness or Absence**

If the *instructor* is too ill to teach the course for a period of time, the designated backup for this course will step in. You will be notified via email from the School of Communication.

### **Instructor Feedback and Response Times**

I am always happy to help and suggest that you make use of my office hours, especially with more personal or more complex questions and any grade/assignment issues. Just email me to set up a Carmen Zoom meeting. If you have technical problems, you should call 614-688-HELP for the OSU helpline.

You can also email me with questions, and I will reply within 24 hours on school days. There will also be a Q&A Discussion on Carmen (on our homepage and under Discussions) where you can ask topic related questions. I will reply to those questions within 24 hours on school days.

You can expect to see your points for smaller assignments within 2-3 days and for larger ones within 7-14 days.

## **Discussion and Communication Guidelines**

The best learning experience is when everyone is participating in class activities and discussions, sharing topic related views, standpoints, and experiences. We are all different and can learn a lot from each other. To take full advantage of this, we need a positive learning environment of respectful and thoughtful communication.

I expect that everybody is supportive to others so that we all feel safe, even if we should disagree on certain topics/issues. Thus, please remain civilized and respectful in your email and discussions. You will see that I work very hard to provide a positive learning experience.

Also keep in mind to cite your sources. For most assignments you are asked to use APA style for all used sources (for online sources, be sure to include a link).

## **Course Technology**

For help with your password, university e-mail, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

- **Carmen:**

- Carmen, Ohio State's Learning Management System, will be used to host materials and activities throughout this course. To access Carmen ([Carmen accessibility](#)), visit [Carmen.osu.edu](https://carmen.osu.edu). Log in to Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit [my.osu.edu](https://my.osu.edu).
- Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen>

- **Carmen Zoom:**

- Office hours will be held through Ohio State's conferencing platform, Carmen Zoom in addition to some live class sessions.
- Students may use the audio and video functions if a webcam and microphone are available. If not, there is still a chat function within Carmen Zoom for the student to live chat with the professor or TA in the virtual office hours room.
- [Carmen Zoom](#) help guide

## **Baseline technical skills necessary for online courses**

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen and Carmen Zoom

### **Necessary equipment**

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection
- Web cam and microphone

### **Necessary software**

- Word processor with the ability to save files under .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf. Most popular word processing software programs including Microsoft Word and Mac Pages have these abilities.
- OSU students have access to Microsoft Office products free of charge. To install, please visit [https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb\\_view.do?sysparm\\_article=kb04733](https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=kb04733)

### **Other Course Policies**

#### **Student Academic Services**

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services' website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

#### **Student Services**

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

## **Accessibility Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu) ; 614-292-3307; [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu) ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

## **Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct**

It is imperative that all work you submit be your own. When you use someone else's ideas, you must give proper credit to the original author(s). Please adhere to the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the APA manual of style when citing others' work.

According to the Committee on Academic Misconduct "Academic misconduct is defined as any activity which tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution, or subvert the educational process." Further, the term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed and is illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). It is the responsibility of the Committee of Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>).

## **Diversity**

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of

diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

### **Title IX**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu)

### **PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF (Mental Health Statement)**

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting [ccs.osu.edu](http://ccs.osu.edu) or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24 hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445 / National: 800-273-8255); or text (4hope to 741741); or at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

**Class Schedule and Reading List**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<b>January</b>			
T	12 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> Course Overview and Introduction	
R	14 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> Team Presentation Assignment Team sign-up between 1/15 and 1/22/2020	
T	19	Communication Technology and Organizational Form TRA1 Due 11:59 p.m.	Zammuto et al (2007)
R	21	Communication Technology and Organizational Form (cont.) TRA2 Due 11:59 p.m.	
T	26	In Search of a New Organizational Model TRA3 Due 11:59 p.m.	Kapoor & Lee (2013)
R	28	Communication Technology for Global Network Organizations TRA4 Due 11:59 p.m.	Sarker et al (2011)
<b>February</b>			
T	2	Network and Internet Technology TRA5 Due 11:59 p.m.	

R	4	Use of Internet Technology at Companies – Topic Reflection Exercise 1 Due 2/5 11:59 p.m.	
T	9	Information Technology and the Transformation of Work TRA6 Due 11:59 p.m.	
R	11 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> Companies on the Internet Team Presentation 1 Due 12:40 p.m. Comment Due 11:59 p.m.	
T	16	Shaping Electronic Communication TRA7 Due 11:59 p.m.	Bansler & Havn (2003)
R	18 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> Technology Use at the Workplace Team Presentation 2 Due 12:40 p.m. Comment Due 11:59 p.m.	
T	23	Instructional Break	
<b>R</b>	<b>25</b> <i>Between</i> 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.	<b>Online Exam I</b>	
<b>March</b>			
T	2	Team Based Organizations and Communication Flows TRA8 Due 11:59 p.m.	Tannenbaum et al (2012)

R	4 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> Teamwork in modern Companies Team Presentation 3 Due 12:40 p.m. Comment Due 11:59 p.m.	
T	9	Organizational Culture, Communication Effectiveness, and Technology Use TRA9 Due 11:59 p.m.	Leidner & Kayworth (2006)
R	11 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> Organizations and their Cultures Team Presentation 4 Due 12:40 p.m. Comment Due 11:59 p.m.	
T	16	Improving Organizational Culture - Topic Reflection Exercise 2 Due 3/17 11:59 p.m.	
R	18 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> Analyzing Technology in Organizations Introduction End of Semester Assignment	
T	23	Communication in Networked Organizations TRA10 Due 11:59 p.m.	Garner (2006)
R	25 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> Today's working conditions and environments Team Presentation 5 Due 12:40 p.m. Comment Due 11:59 p.m.	

T	30	The Dark Side of new Organizational Forms TRA11 Due 11:59 p.m.	Seo & La Paz (2008)
<b>April</b>			
R	1	Instructional Break	
T	6	Computer-Mediated Communication TRA12 Due 11:59 p.m.	Ou et al (2013) & Zur & Zur (2011)
R	8 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> The Influence of Computer-mediated communication on Employees Team Presentation 6 Due 12:40 p.m. Comment Due 11:59 p.m.	
T	13	Knowledge Management TRA13 Due 11:59 p.m.	McIver et al (2013)
R	15 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> The Process of Technology Implementation Team Presentation 7 Due 12:40 p.m. Comment Due 11:59 p.m.	
T	20	Virtual Reality and Work TRA14 Due 11:59 p.m.	Hyrkkänen et al (2012)
R	22 12:40-1:35 p.m.	<b>Live Zoom Session</b> Companies efforts of Confidentiality and Internet Security Team Presentation 8 Due 12:40 p.m. Comment Due 11:59 p.m.	

F	23	<i>Deadline End of Semester Assignment Due 11:59 p.m.</i>	
<b>T</b>	<b>27</b> <i>Between 9:00 a.m. -9:00 p.m.</i>	<b>Online Final Exam</b>	

All days not labeled as “Live Zoom Session” relate to asynchronous learning/activities where students can work at their own pace within the given deadlines for assignments.

### **Caveat**

I reserve the right to update or change portions of this syllabus to make the class a better experience for everyone. Any changes will be posted on Carmen.

### **Readings**

#### **Topic: Communication Technology and Organizational Form**

Zammuto, R. F., Griffith, T. L., Majchrzak, A., Dougherty, D. J., & Faraj, S. (2007). Information technology and the changing fabric of organization. *Organization Science*, 18(5), 749-762.

#### **Topic: In Search of a New Organizational Model**

Kapoor, R., & Lee, J. M. (2013). Coordinating and competing in ecosystems: How organizational forms shape new technology investments. *Strategic Management Journal*, 34(3), 274-296.

#### **Topic: Communication Technology for Global Network Organizations**

Sarker, S., Ahuja, M., Sarker, S., & Kirkeby, S. (2011). The role of communication and trust in global virtual teams: a social network perspective. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 28(1), 273-310.

#### **Topic: Shaping Electronic Communication**

Bansler, J. P., & Havn, E. (2003, November). Technology-use mediation: Making sense of electronic communication in an organizational context. In *Proceedings of the 2003 International ACM SIGGROUP Conference on Supporting Group Work* (pp. 135-143). ACM.

#### **Topic: Team Based Organizations and Communication Flows**

Tannenbaum, S. I., Mathieu, J. E., Salas, E., & Cohen, D. (2012). Teams are changing: Are research and practice evolving fast enough?. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 5*(1), 2-24.

**Topic: Organizational Culture, Communication Effectiveness, and Technology Use**

Leidner, D. E., & Kayworth, T. (2006). Review: a review of culture in information systems research: toward a theory of information technology culture conflict. *MIS quarterly, 30*(2), 357-399.

**Topic: Communication in Networked Organizations**

Garner, J. D. (2006). Masters of the universe? Resource dependency and interorganizational power relationships at NASA. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 34*(4), 368-385.

**Topic: The Dark Side of new Organizational Forms**

Seo, D., & La Paz, A. I. (2008). Exploring the dark side of IS in achieving organizational agility. *Communications of the ACM, 51*(11), 136-139.

**Topic: Computer-Mediated Communication**

Ou, C. X., Sia, C. L., & Hui, C. K. (2013). Computer-mediated communication and social networking tools at work. *Information Technology & People, 26*(2), 172-190.

Zur, O., & Zur, A. (2011). On digital immigrants and digital natives: How the digital divide affects families, educational institutions, and the workplace. *Zur Institute*.

**Topic: Knowledge Management**

McIver, D., Lengnick-Hall, C. A., Lengnick-Hall, M. L., & Ramachandran, I. (2013). Understanding work and knowledge management from a knowledge-in-practice perspective. *Academy Of Management Review, 38*(4), 597-620.

**Topic: Virtual Reality and Work**

Hyrkkänen, U., Nenonen, S., & Kojo, I. (2012). The Virtual Reality of Work—How to Create a Workplace that Enhances Well-Being for a Mobile Employee. *Virtual Reality and Environments, Cecilia Sik Lanyi (Ed.), ISBN, 978-953*.