

SYLLABUS: COMM 4556
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Instructor: Dr. Jingbo Meng

Email address: meng.28@osu.edu

Class time: WeFr 11:30 pm – 12:25 pm EST

Office hour: Fr12:30 pm to 1:20 pm or by Appointment

Instruction Mode: Hybrid

Location: McPherson Lab 2017 and Zoom

Course Information

Course description

Communication plays a vital role in the success and failure of almost any organization. This course introduces students to the foundational principles, theories, and research traditions in strategic organizational communication and examines how information and communication technologies (ICTs) reshape how organizations are structured, how communication unfolds, and how teams and individuals collaborate. Students will first develop a solid understanding of core organizational communication concepts and frameworks. Building on this foundation, the course explores how ICTs can reinforce, transform, or disrupt communication processes and organizational practices. The course will examine the influence of 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 introduces emerging challenges and opportunities for organizational members operating in increasingly digital and global environments.

Course outcomes

Students who have successfully completed this course will:

- Explain and apply foundational theories and research in organizational communication
- Analyze how information and communication technologies influence organizational communication
- Evaluate technology as an active component of organizational communication networks
- Apply organizational communication concepts to real-world cases.

Mode of delivery

This course is offered in a hybrid format with two scheduled class components each week: a Wednesday session and a Friday session. The Wednesday session will typically be held in person, while the Friday session will be conducted online, either asynchronously or synchronously via Zoom. Online Friday sessions are clearly indicated in the course schedule using red font, along with the specific delivery mode. Please refer to the course schedule at the end of the syllabus for detailed information.

How this course works

A Carmen module will open for each week with everything you need to complete the week's materials and assignments. Each week follows a theme. The asynchronous component will ask students to look at this topic from their individual perspective, with guided instructions.

Course materials

Reading list

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.

Keppler, S. M., & Leonardi, P. M. (2023). Building relational confidence in remote and hybrid work arrangements: novel ways to use digital technologies to foster knowledge sharing. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 28(4), zmad020.

Podolny, J. M., & Hansen, M. T. (2020). How Apple is organized for innovation. *Harvard Business Review*, 98(6), 86-95.

Riva, G., & Waterworth, J. A. (2014). Being present in a virtual world. *The oxford handbook of virtuality*, 205-221.

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.

Treem, J. W., Dailey, S. L., Pierce, C. S., & Leonardi, P. M. (2015). Bringing technological frames to work: How previous experience with social media shapes the technology's meaning in an organization. *Journal of Communication*, 65(2), 396-422.

Vitak, J., & Zimmer, M. (2023). Surveillance and the future of work: exploring employees' attitudes toward monitoring in a post-COVID workplace. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 28(4), zmad007.

Wu, Y. J., Antone, B., DeChurch, L., and Contractor, N. (2023). Information sharing in a hybrid workplace: understanding the role of ease-of-use perceptions of communication technologies in advice-seeking relationship maintenance. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 28, zmad025.

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.

Course Requirement and Faculty Response

In-class Assignments (5 points per assignment, 30 points in total): In-class assignments provide students with opportunities to apply and extend weekly course content. Assignments may involve (1) applying theoretical concepts introduced during the week to case studies or real-world scenarios, or (2) extending course material through engagement with videos, interviews with experts, or related applied resources. In-class assignments are completed individually and must be submitted by the end of the scheduled class day for the online session. Late submissions are not accepted unless prior approval is granted by the instructor and supported by documented extenuating circumstances.

Team Exercise (10 points): There will be one team exercise where students are asked to work together on a class topic. The exercise 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. It is also an exercise to deepen students' understanding of group decision making and virtual teams.

Mini Presentation (10 points): Each week there will be 1-2 readings recommended to the class. While everyone is expected to read, there will be a reading presentation for your favorite piece. The presentation may be individual or in 2-person groups. The presentation should summarize the reading and then go beyond, connecting the reading to course concepts and demonstrating relevance to the overall themes of the course. Students are also encouraged to point out the aspects in the reading that are intellectually challenging. Each presentation may be roughly 6-7 minutes and include slides to be shared with the audience.

Exams (90 points in total, 50 points for exam 1 and 40 points for exam 2): Exams for this course will involve multiple choice, true/false, and short answer. Exams are not cumulative. Exam details will be offered when it's close to exam dates.

Final projects: Students may work in 2-3 person groups on a final project that gives you the opportunity for a more in-depth topic reflection and to apply your new knowledge based on the lectures of the class. The project will be broken into two parts:

- ***Project prospectus meeting (20 points)-*** During the prospectus meeting, student groups are expected to present an outline of their final project. The outline should clearly identify the project topic, articulate a central research or analytical question, and include at least five scholarly references to be discussed during the meeting. Students should come prepared to verbally explain their project rationale, demonstrating how the selected references are relevant and how they collectively address the central question guiding the project. During the meeting, the students are expected to verbally articulate their thought processes of the project, analyzing and demonstrating how the references are relevant and collectively answer the key question asked in the final project. Based on the instructor's feedback, students are expected to revise their outlines and develop

the revised outline into a coherent final paper. Additional details and submission guidelines will be provided closer to the scheduled meeting dates.

- ***Revised prospectus and extend to a short paper (20 points)*** - the paper will be a 6-page long, double-spaced, involving narratives and arguments extended from the prospectus.

Quiz (15 points)

There will be five quizzes, administered as graded surveys on Carmen and made available during class meetings without advance announcements. Quizzes will typically open during class and must be submitted by the end of the class that day. The quizzes are designed to familiarize students with the format, level of difficulty, and types of questions that will appear on the exams, while also assessing understanding of key course concepts and serving as an unannounced attendance check. Because the emphasis is on learning rather than performance, students will receive full credit as long as they are present in class and submit the quiz on time. After each quiz, the instructor will review the correct answers and discuss the reasoning behind them to reinforce understanding and exam preparation. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Makeup request

Makeups should be requested prior to the due date, even if documentation has not yet been obtained. As some assignments are due late in the evening, the instructor may not be able to respond immediately to last minute requests for makeup. I will respond as soon as I am able.

Faculty feedback and response time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can call **614-688-HELP** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

Grading and feedback

For large weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **7-10 days**.

E-mail

I will reply to e-mails within **24 hours on school days**.

Discussion and communication guidelines

The following are my expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

- **Tone and civility:** Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't always come across online and is not always appreciated in-person. Please keep this in mind and remain civilized and respectful in your class communications.
- **Citing your sources:** When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say. (For the textbook or other course materials, please use APA style. 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, visit 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.
- 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. A separate guide to accessing Carmen Zoom and our office hours is posted on the course Carmen page under Files.
- 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

- **Turnitin:**

- Students at The Ohio State University are accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Therefore, you should be familiar with the guidelines provided by the [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) in order to meet the academic expectations concerning appropriate documentation of sources. In addition, OSU has made Turnitin, a learning tool and plagiarism prevention system, available to instructors. For this class, you will submit your papers to Turnitin from Carmen. When grading your work, I will interpret the originality report, following [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) as appropriate. For more information about Turnitin, please see [the vendor's guide for students](#). Note that submitted final papers become part of the OSU database.

- **Self-Service and Chat support:** <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>
- **Phone:** 614-688-HELP (4357)
- **Email:** 8help@osu.edu
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

Baseline technical skills necessary for online courses

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen

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

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>

Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

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, Melissa Mayhan, at titleix@osu.edu

Mental Health

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 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)

Creating an environment free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct.

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a community to reflect diversity and to improve opportunities for all. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Office of Institutional Equity:

1. Online reporting form at equity.osu.edu,
2. Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,
3. Or Email equity@osu.edu

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Office of Institutional Equity to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.
- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member.

Other Related Resources

Academic integrity policy

Policies for this hybrid course

- **Written assignments:** Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow **APA** style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in--but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.
- **Reusing past work:** In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.
- **Falsifying research or results:** All research you will conduct in this course is intended to be a learning experience; you should never feel tempted to make your results or your library research look more successful than it was.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; 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). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities

Requesting accommodations

Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 614- 292-3307, slds@osu.edu; slds.osu.edu.

Course Schedule

	Week 1: Welcome and Understanding Organizations	Important dues
1/14 1/16	<p>Wednesday: Welcome and Syllabus (In person)</p> <p>Friday: Zoom, synchronous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding Organizations 	
	Week 2: Organizational System Design	
1/21 1/23	<p>Wednesday: Organizational System Design (In person)</p> <p>Friday: Online, asynchronous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read “<i>How Apple is Organized for Innovation</i>” and answer questions in the study guide for in-class assignment 1. <p>Recommended Reading for mini presentation: Kapoor & Lee (2013)</p>	In-Class Assignment 1 due midnight Friday
	Week 3: New Models of Organization	
1/28 1/30	<p>Wednesday: New Models of Organization (In person)</p> <p>Friday: Online, asynchronous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Watch “The future of work: is your job safe?” to learn about digital nomads and workplace surveillance, then answer questions in the study guide for in-class assignment 2. <p>Recommended Reading for mini presentation: Zammuto et al. (2007)</p>	In-Class Assignment 2 due midnight Friday
	Week 4: Groups as Relational Organizing Strategies	
2/4 2/6	<p>Wednesday: Groups as Relational Organizing Strategies (In person)</p> <p>Friday: Online, asynchronous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read and watch: “<i>How to make hybrid work a success</i>” and “<i>The working-from-home illusion fades</i>”, then answer questions in the study guide for in-class assignment 3. <p>Recommended Reading for mini presentation: Sarker et al. (2011); Szelwach & Matthews (2021)</p>	In-Class Assignment 3 due midnight Friday
	Week 5: Continued Group Strategies for Organizing	
2/11 2/13	<p>Wednesday: Groups as Relational Strategies of Organizing – Hidden Profile Theory and Exercise (In person)</p> <p>Friday: Online, asynchronous</p>	In-Class Assignment 4 due midnight Friday

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read “What roles could generative AI play on your team?” and answer questions in the study guide for in-class assignment 4. <p>Recommended Reading for mini presentation: Keppler & Leonardi (2023); Vitak & Zimmer (2023)</p>	
	Week 6: Virtual teams	
2/18 2/20	<p>Wednesday: Virtual teams (In person)</p> <p>Friday: Zoom, synchronous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual team exercise (attendance is important) <p>Recommended Reading for mini presentation: Treem et al. (2015); Wu, Antone, DeChurch, & Contractor (2023)</p>	
	Week 7: Media Selection and Choices in Organizations	
2/25 2/27	<p>Wednesday: Media Selection in Organizations</p> <p>Friday: Online, asynchronous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read “5 ways to future-proof your career in the age of AI?” and answer questions in the study guide for in-class assignment 5. 	In-Class Assignment 5 due midnight Friday
	Week 8: Review for Mid-term	
3/4 3/6	<p>Wednesday: Catch-up lecture; Review for mid-term exam; Mini-presentation instructions and work in groups (In person)</p> <p>Friday: Review on your own; Optional Q&A on Zoom</p>	
	Week 9: Mid-term Exam, Online Assignment	
3/11 3/13	<p>Wednesday: Exam 1</p> <p>Friday: Work on your mini-presentations</p>	
	Week 10: Spring Break	
3/18 3/20	No class. Enjoy your spring break.	
	Week 11: Mini-presentation week	
3/25 3/27	<p>Wednesday: Mini-presentation I (Zoom, synchronous)</p> <p>Friday: Mini-presentation II (Zoom, synchronous)</p>	
	Week 12: Social Influence Model of Technology Use	
4/1 4/3	<p>Wednesday: Social Influence Model of Technology use (In person)</p> <p>Friday: Zoom, synchronous</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project prospectus instructions and rubrics • Working with your team members on project prospectus 	
	Week 13: Social Networks in Organizations I	
4/8 4/10	Wednesday: Social Networks in Organizations I Friday: Online, asynchronous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch “What does a relational approach to people analytics mean for HR?” 	No Assignment; Work on your group project
	Week 14: Social Networks in Organizations II	
4/15 4/17	Wednesday: Social Networks in Organizations II Friday: Zoom, synchronous. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project prospectus meeting I 	
	Week 15: Wrap up and Review	
4/22 4/24	Wednesday: Catch up lecture and Review for Exam 2 Friday: Zoom, synchronous. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project prospectus meeting II 	
	Week 16 and after: Exam 2 and Final Paper Submission	
4/29	Complete Exam 2	
5/1		Final project paper due at noon