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COMM 101: Communication in the 21st Century—A Peer Review of Teaching Project Benchmark Portfolio

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Strengthening Communication Competencies Through the Basic Course: An Analysis of Communications 101

A 2016 Peer Review of Teaching Project Benchmark Portfolio

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COMMUNICATION 101: COMMUNICATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY
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Abstract

This portfolio examines the large lecture basic survey course, Communication 101. This course uses a combination of large lecture sections led by one faculty member and small recitation sections led by three graduate assistants. The goal of this project is to enhance learning and create higher levels of student engagement. Student learning was measured through a pretest and posttest, as well as through self-evaluation of their knowledge and skills. Additionally, graduate teaching assistants completed an evaluation of the course by providing an assessment of the course's learning objectives and of course activities. Results showed that student learning was taking place. Students scored significantly higher on the posttest compared to the pretest. Additionally, student self-reporting showed significant gains in students' self-assessment of their communication skills and knowledge of communication theories and concepts. Analysis and reflection revealed that the course could be improved by a winnowing and refining of course learning objectives and by strengthening the relationship between the objectives, readings, and assignments.

Key words: communication, large lecture, recitation, survey, basic course

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	1
Objectives of the Peer Review Portfolio.....	3
Description of the Course.....	3
Enrollment and Demographics of Students.....	4
Teaching Methods and Course Materials.....	4
The Course and the Broader Curriculum.....	5
Analysis of Student Learning.....	7
Pretest and Posttest Results.....	7
Analysis of Graduate Teaching Evaluation.....	8
Planned Changes.....	10
Old Learning Outcomes.....	10
Revised Learning Outcomes.....	11
Summary and Overall Assessment of Portfolio Process.....	12
Appendix A: Syllabus.....	14
Appendix B: Activities.....	29
Appendix C: Pretest.....	37
Appendix D: Posttest.....	55
Appendix E: Graduate Assistant Course Evaluations.....	72
Appendix F: Extemporaneous Speech Rubric.....	85

Objectives of the Peer Review Portfolio

I have several goals that I wish to accomplish by creating this portfolio. Initially, I want to refine the course to better meet the learning outcomes I have established. I am interested in evaluating how the size of the course affects student engagement and seeking out ways to improve the assessment of students' learning in this format. Second, I want to understand and evaluate graduate assistants' views of the course. As the leaders of the recitation section, the graduate assistants play a vital role in the success of this course. Third, I want to use this process to evaluate how students in the course are performing in the three key areas of advocating, negotiating, and relating. These three areas are used to organize the course and relate directly to the three areas of emphasis in our undergraduate major. Fourth, I want to be able to document my teaching in order to demonstrate the value and importance of this course to the Department of Communication Studies, the College of Arts & Sciences, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Finally, I want to document my teaching for promotional purposes. As a Professor of Practice, a major allocation of my time is for teaching and I need to be able to demonstrate my value as a teacher. The creation of this portfolio will aid me in documenting and assessing my teaching skills so that I can provide the promotion committee proof of my teaching effectiveness.

I want to create a portfolio that will provide a broad overview of the course, as well as ensuring that the course is fulfilling its largest, and most important, functions. Although, this will no doubt involve reflection on individual assignments, my goal is to create a portfolio that accurately represents and evaluates the course as a whole. I want to make sure the larger processes for creating and assessing student learning are functioning properly and are effectively tied to the course's goals.

Description of the Course

The course that I am examining for this project is Communication 101: Communication in the 21st Century. This course is a survey course designed to give students an introduction into the discipline of communication studies. The course is both a requirement for all majors in communication studies and a general education course that fulfills the Achievement-Centered Education (ACE) Outcome 2, "demonstrate communication competence." The course is organized into three units: advocating, negotiating, and relating. These three areas mirror the three areas of focus in our department. Therefore it is important that this course lay the foundation for knowledge and skills that will be further developed in other courses within the major. Within in the College of Arts & Sciences, many students take this course in order to

fulfill their ACE 2 requirement, and it is likely many of these students' only exposure to the discipline of communication.

Enrollment and Demographics of Students

The students taking this course come from varied backgrounds, but the majority of students in the course are underclassmen and women. The course is a large lecture with a current population of 240 students per semester. During the semester of this review, 64% of students were in their first year of college and 27% were in their second year of study at the university. Some of the students in the course are communication majors who have already declared and have likely taken at least a few other communication courses. These students tend to be either first or second year students because this course is a prerequisite for many of the other offerings within our major. A second group of students in the course are those who have declared a major in something other than communication studies and who are taking the course in order to fulfill their ACE 2 requirement. The final group of students populating the course are first year students who are undeclared. During this semester 88% of students in the class were taking their first course in communication studies. New student enrollment advisors often direct students to this course because it fulfills a general education requirement and introduces them to a potential major. Most of the students in this course have either little or no understanding of the discipline of communication studies.

Teaching Methods and Course Materials

Communication 101 utilizes a variety of teaching methods and materials that make it an ideal candidate for the peer review process. First, the nature of this course creates several new challenges for me as an educator. This is a large lecture course with a current enrollment of 240 students per semester. Prior to undertaking this course, I had never taught a course with more than 60 students enrolled. The size of this course possesses special challenges for assessing student learning. Normally, I rely on a combination of essay exams, papers, and semester long student projects in order to evaluate how well students have learned course material. Unfortunately, with a course of this size it is not practical to have students write long papers, create large projects, or take essay based exams. I have concerns about whether the methods I am employing in the course to evaluate students are effective at determining if they are reaching the goals discussed above, and I hope that engaging in the peer review process will allow me to improve the assessment tools used in this course. Currently, the course evaluates students

through a combination of exams, an extemporaneous speech, a group paper auditing the communication of an organization, and an individual paper examining an interpersonal problem ([Appendix A](#)).

This course uses two types of reading materials. First, the course relies on a customized textbook created with McGraw-Hill. The members of the undergraduate curriculum committee, who helped to launch this course, felt that traditional introductory textbooks were a poor fit for this course. Many of those books had organizational structures that emphasized public speaking and deemphasized interpersonal communication and organizational communication. The book is composed of individual chapters selected from various textbooks in the McGraw-Hill catalogue. Designing our own book allowed us to customize it to reflect the unique structure of this course. Additionally, since we use many of McGraw-Hill's books in our upper division courses, using readings from those books in the introductory course allowed for greater continuity. Second, the book is supplemented with a variety of readings from popular magazines and books. These readings provide context and show how theories and concepts from the course can be applied to a variety of real world settings.

The teaching of this course is held three times a week and also relies on the use of graduate teaching assistants. The first two days of the week, students meet with me for lecture. On the third day, students break off into 10 recitation sections of 24 students each that meet with one of the graduate students assigned to the course. In these smaller sections, students participate in various application based activities ([Appendix B](#)). The goal of these activities is to give students hands-on learning experiences where they can apply the theories and concepts they learn on Mondays and Wednesdays, to real world problems and issues. However, I have am not directly involved in the teaching of these sections. It is my hope that this process will allow me to better assess the education taking place in the recitation sections.

The Course and the Broader Curriculum

This course is central to our department's curriculum. It was developed in order to replace Communication 200: Communication Theory. This is the foundational course for our major and our undergraduate curriculum. The three areas of the course are meant to introduce students to the three areas of emphasis in our undergraduate curriculum. One of the goals of this course is to create interest in studying these areas in more depth and provide students with the knowledge necessary to be successful in advanced classes.

Students taking the course need to develop an understanding of the discipline of communication studies. Because this is many students first exposure to the discipline it is important to provide them with knowledge and perspective about the importance of

communication studies. One the important stakeholders in the course is my department. My colleagues rely on this course to provide students with the knowledge and skills to be successful in the major. The department is also relying on the course to recruit new students to majors. Therefore, it is important that the course provide a realistic preview of the major and represent the diversity of opportunities for study present in our department.

Communication 101 also fulfills a general education requirement. This course fulfills ACE 2: Demonstrate communication competence in one or more of the following ways: a) by making oral presentations with supporting materials, b) by leading and participating in problem-solving teams, c) by employing a repertoire of communication skills for developing and maintaining professional and personal relationships, or d) by creating and interpreting visual information. I want to examine this course to make sure that the course is developing one or more these competencies. For students taking this course to fulfill their ACE requirement there is a distinct possibility that this will be the only communication course they take in their college careers. As potentially students only touchstone for understanding communication it is critical that they be provided the necessary knowledge and skills to communicate in the 21st century. Communication is every present in students' lives and it is imperative that they understand how it operates in order for them to be able to take advantage of the various possibilities and opportunities presented to them.

Upon completion of the course students should be able to define and apply the communicative capacities of advocate, negotiate, and relate. They should be able to advocate for a cause by making an oral presentation, negotiate solutions for a small group problem or conflict, and relate competently by applying theory to an interpersonal problem. These skills are essential for individuals living in a modern society. Communication is now listed in survey of employers as the most important skill they want new employees to possess and these three areas comprise the heart of the discipline.. Students need to be able to competently express their ideas and advocate for viewpoints they believe in, if they are going to be successful in their public and professional lives. Conflict is an inevitable part of organizational life and the ability negotiate conflict to create desirable outcomes will allow students to have greater satisfaction in their professional and personal lives. Finally, establishing, maintaining, and growing interpersonal relationships is necessary for students to lead happy and fruitful personal lives.

Students in the course ought to develop critical thinking skills that will allow them evaluate and criticize messages across public, professional, and private contexts. We live in an over communicated world that bombards us with messages. Students need to be able to effectively determine the strength and value of these messages so that they can make wise decisions. Finally, this course will be successful if students learn to apply various communication theories and concepts to pressing 21st century problems and opportunities. Many of the most pressing issues in politics, business, and our personal lives are based in communication. Students need to be able to use the knowledge they gain in this course to solve the various problems they will encounter in an increasingly diverse, networked, and technologically complex world.

Analysis of Student Learning

Student learning was examined in this course through two methods. The first method was a pretest and posttest taken by students at the beginning and end of the semester. The second method, involved asking graduate teaching assistants to rate and reflect on the course learning objectives, assignments, and activities. Together these two methods allowed me to gain insight into how students view their learning, their level of improvement over the course of the semester, and assess the graduate teaching assistants' views of student learning. The combination of these methods allowed me to view the course from three perspectives, that of the the students, graduate assistants, and my own self-reflections.

Pretest and Posttest Results

The administration of the pretest and posttest allowed me to assess students learning and development over the course of the semesters. The test had two components. The first component asked students to engage in the process of self-reflection and evaluation ([Appendix C](#) & [Appendix D](#)). Students were asked to rate the importance of communication in their own lives and rate their knowledge and skills in the areas of advocacy, negotiation, and relating. The second portion of the test examined their levels of knowledge about core course concepts.

Students' evaluations of their own development throughout the course were positive. Overwhelming, students rated themselves as more knowledgeable and more skillful communicators at the end of the course. In the three core areas of advocate, negotiate, and relate students' self-ratings increased significantly. For example, when asked, "I am comfortable speaking in front of groups of people," the number of students answering "strongly agree" increased by 60%. When asked, "I am comfortable communicating with others on an interpersonal level," the number of students answering "strongly agree" increased by 64%. Students were also asked to rate their knowledge of rhetoric, interpersonal communication, and organizational communication. When rating their understanding and knowledge of rhetoric the number of students answering "excellent" increased from the pretest to the posttest by 425%. When asked to rate their understanding and knowledge of interpersonal communication the number of students answering "excellent" increased from the pretest to the posttest by 900%. Finally, when asked to rate their understanding and knowledge of organizational communication the number of students answering excellent increased by 650%. Overall, students rated

themselves as substantially more knowledgeable about theories of communication and as more comfortable communicating after completing the course.

The results of the students' self-assessments were supported by the results of the pretest and posttest. Results of the test demonstrated substantial growth in students' understand and knowledge of communication concepts and theories. A total of 213 students completed the pretest and on average they answered 7.3 out of 14 questions correctly, for a score 52%. A total of 210 completed the posttest exam and on average they answered 11.1 out of 14 questions correctly, for a score of 85%. The end result was an increase on average of 3.8 questions correctly answered and an overall improvement in their scores of 33%.

This data can further be understood by examining students' performance in each of the three subcategories of advocating, negotiating, and relating. Students showed improvement in each area after taking the course, but development was most pronounced in the area of relating. Students scores on questions related to advocacy improved from a pretest average of 60% to a posttest average of 80%. Students scores on questions related to negotiating improved from a pretest average of 60% to a posttest average of 73%. Finally, students scores on questions related to relating improved from a pretest average of 23.5% to a posttest average of 80%.

These results revealed a number of important findings. First, these scores demonstrated that students had some familiarity with theories and concepts about advocacy and negotiation before entering the course, but very little familiarity with theories and concepts about relating. However, students showed significant improvement in their knowledge and understanding of relating by the end of the semester. At the end of their course, scores on questions about relating were equal to or greater than those related to advocating and negotiating. Second, these results revealed that the negotiating section of the course needed improvement. Student learning in this area improved the least, only 13%. Additionally, students posttest scores in this area were 7% lower, when compared to the areas of advocating and relating. This confirmed my own observations that students showcased lower levels of engagement with the course materials in this area of the course.

Analysis of Graduate Teaching Evaluation

The feedback from the course's three graduate assistants was generally positive and mirrored the undergraduate students pretest and posttest results ([Appendix E](#)). Graduate students were asked to rate how well they felt the course was meeting each objective on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the course fulfills this outcome completely and 5 being the course fails to address this learning outcome at all. They were also asked to rate each, activity and assignment on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being an exceptional activity that directly relates to course learning outcomes and

creates student engagement and 5 being an activity that has no clear learning outcomes and does not engage students. All of learning objectives and course activities averaged a score of 1 to 2.7.. This indicated that there was general agreement that the course was meeting its learning objectives and that the activities in the course were valuable additions. The extemporaneous speaking assignment and interpersonal problem paper rated highly, with average scores of a 1.3 and 1. The graduate assistants were also asked to explain their rankings and were given the opportunity to make suggestions to improve the course's design. Including the qualitative comments, with graduate students' rankings, was useful in getting an overall picture of the course from the graduate students' perspective. From this information I was able to draw several conclusions.

First, the graduate assistants believe the course is doing an excellent job of educating and engaging students about interpersonal communication and developing skills to help them relate. The activities and assignments in this area received the best scores. The internet dating activity and interpersonal problem paper activity both received average scores of 1.3. All of the evaluators rated the interpersonal problem as being valuable and each gave it a score of 1. Learning objective number three, "relate competently by applying theory to an interpersonal problem," received an average score of 2. One commenter noted that the interpersonal problem paper has produced numerous "ah-hah!" moments with their students. Another noted, "My students have found our interpersonal section to be supremely useful (and interesting)."

Second, learning objective six needed to be reevaluated. This learning objective states, "Articulate what communication is and why it is important, including the promise of communication and how a communication lens helps understand and address societal challenges and opportunities/possibilities." This is by far the longest and most complex objective and I believe this has led to it being the lowest rated objective. Refining this objective to make it clearer and more measurable will aid me in future assessments of the course.

Finally, the area in need of most improvement is our teaching of organizational communication and the accompanying skills of "negotiation." As previously noted, students showed little improvement in this area overall between the pretest and posttest. Graduate assistants gave the learning outcomes related to this area (outcomes 2 and 9) an average score of 2.3. They also rated the assignment for this area, the organizational audit a 2.6. Although these scores were overall satisfactory, the organizational audit did receive the lowest score of all of the graded activities. Additionally, several of the commenters suggested this was an area in need of improvement. One respondent noted that despite students' enjoyment of the organizational audit assignment, that this section of the course was, "slippery for me and the students." The commenter went on to explain that students were not getting the "richness of organizational communication from the assignment." Another commenter noted that although the assignment was well designed students often turned in "surface level analyses." Both of these commenters noted that a greater focus on power dynamics and critical approaches to organizational analysis would be helpful at improving this area of the course.

Planned Changes

Undertaking the peer review of teaching process has helped me to better evaluate this course, its learning outcomes, and corresponding assignments and activities. The use of backward design, coupled with analysis of student learning, and reflections from graduate student recitation leaders has lead me to undertake several changes aimed at improving this course. These changes include: refining learning outcomes, introducing new readings related to negotiation and organizational communication, and alteration of the organizational audit assignment.

Going through the peer review process revealed several issues related to the course's learning outcomes ([Appendix A](#)). First, the course had too many learning outcomes and some were unneeded. Learning outcome number one is not central to the mission of the course. Second, several of the outcomes were overlapped or repeated parts of other outcomes. For example, learning outcome number three merely sought to combine learning outcomes 2-6 and therefore was not needed. Third, some of the outcomes were too complex and multifaceted to properly measure. For example, learning outcome number two contained too many elements and ideas to be properly measured and evaluated. Fourth, learning outcome number nine no longer fit the course. As the course evolved many of the readings on design interactions have been removed and assignments had been altered, such that this objective was no longer being taught or met. As result I paired down and refined the learning outcomes to reflect the goals of the course and the needs of its various stakeholders. Below is a listing of the initial learning outcomes followed by the list of revised learning outcomes.

Old Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes – By the time you have completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the history and roots of communication
2. Articulate what communication is and why it is important, including the promise of communication and how a communication lens helps understand and address societal challenges and opportunities/possibilities
3. Define and apply the communicative capacities of advocate, negotiate, and relate
4. Advocate for a cause by making an oral presentation
5. Negotiate solutions for a small group problem or conflict
6. Relate competently by applying theory to an interpersonal problem

7. Evaluate and criticize messages across public, professional, and private contexts
8. Apply various communication theories and concepts pressing 21st century problems and opportunities
9. Design interactions that help solve problems

Revised Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes – By the time you have completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate the importance of the study of communication to their public, professional, and private lives
2. Advocate for a cause by making an oral presentation
3. Negotiate solutions for a small group problem or conflict
4. Relate competently by applying theory to an interpersonal problem
5. Evaluate and criticize messages across public, professional, and private contexts
6. Apply communication theories and concepts to pressing 21st century problems and opportunities

I believe that this more focused and measurable set of outcomes will result in a better course going forward and will make future assessment easier. Each of these outcomes can be directly measured through assignments in the class including essay and multiple choice questions exams, an extemporaneous speech ([Appendix F](#)), reflection papers, and group activities.

Second, analysis of students' learning and graduate students' feedback revealed that the section of the course dedicated to negotiation utilizing was not working properly. Students' performed the worse on this area in the posttest and graduate assistants evaluated it as the area of the course most in need of improvement. In order to increase student engagement and provide more structure to this area I have changed several of the readings. Initially, the course was using readings from Dr. Stan Deetz examining how to negotiate conflict and design positive interactions. However, after reflecting on these readings and my analysis of student learning I believe these readings to be a poor fit for this course. The readings are rather complex for an introductory course and assume students already have a familiarity with organizational communication. Additionally, we do not have enough time in this course to cover all of the

readings from Dr. Deetz's book and this created gaps in student learning. Therefore, I have replaced those readings with new readings. These readings come from a variety of different sources including textbooks, scholarly articles, and popular literature. In the other section of the course I have used this blend of readings and it has proved successful. The textbook readings provide students with the vocabulary and background information they need in order to understand the literature in this area. The scholarly articles allow them exposure to advanced concepts and the popular sources provide real world examples that promote engagement and memory.

In addition to changing the readings for the negotiation section of the course, I have also changed the assignment in this area. Previously students worked on group project auditing the communication of an organization ([Appendix A](#)). Reflections from the graduate assistants revealed that student work on this assignment was often superficial. The posttest results showed that students were learning and remembering materials at the level of the other areas. Furthermore, self-reflection and using the process of backward design revealed that the project was not clearly connected to any of the learning outcomes. The learning outcome for this section of the course is for students to be able to "negotiate solutions for a small group problem or conflict." The organizational audit assignment did not successfully operationalize this outcome because it was not focused on the process of conflict resolution. The revised assignment asks students to work in groups to identify an ongoing conflict either on campus or in the local community. They must then identify the key stakeholders and the underlying causes of the conflict. Using the new readings students will create potential solutions for the conflict and prescribe strategies for implementation. Students will submit their work in a paper and will also give an oral presentation of their findings and recommendations to the class.

Summary and Overall Assessment of Portfolio Process

Undertaking the peer review process proved to be a valuable method of evaluation for my course and allowed me to identify areas for improvement. The process of backwards design helped me to refine and improve the learning objectives for the course. It also helped me to see that the organizational audit assignment was not connected to any of the course objectives and needed to be discarded. The pretest and posttest I used for the project was helpful in assessing students' knowledge and their self-evaluations of their learning. If I were to undertake this process again, which I plan to do, I would include more questions on the pretest and posttest. Although fourteen questions was enough to establish a broad level of student understanding, a longer and more comprehensive test would provide more specific information. This information would be helpful in evaluating the success of individual readings, assignments, and activities. I also plan to continue the process of having graduate students evaluate the course. Although this

process yielded useful insight, it was based on the feedback of only three graduate assistants and their responses may not be representative or reliable. Continuing this process over multiple semester will provide me with a larger pool of feedback to draw upon.

Appendix A: Syllabus

COMM 101: Communication in the 21st Century Spring 2016

Instructors: Dr. Aaron Duncan

Katie Brockhage

William Cooney

Chase Aunspach

Nate Swords

Class/Room: 10:30am-11:20am MW Love library - 102

Friday Class time and location based on section

Office: Aaron's Office Oldfather Hall 410

Katie's Office Oldfather Hall 422

Will's Office Oldfather Hall 432

Chase's Office Oldfather Hall 418

Nate's Office Oldfather Hall 419

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Will Friday 3pm-5pm

Nate Friday 10:30am-12:30pm

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Departmental Mission Statement:

The mission of the faculty and students of the Department of Communication Studies is to examine human symbolic activity as it shapes and is shaped by relationships, institutions, technology, and culture. This work concerns the creation, analysis, and critique of messages ranging from face-to-face to digital media contexts. The department's research and teaching devote particular attention to scholarly initiatives aimed at understanding and explaining the role of communication in (a) facilitating civic engagement, mediating public controversies, and organizing for social change, (b) constituting individual and family health, promoting healthy behaviors, and helping persons navigate relational challenges, and (c) creating, maintaining, and challenging personal, social, and community identity in a complex and diverse world.

Required Texts

Custom COMM 101 Book (available at the bookstore)

Deetz Book (available via blackboard)

Reading packet (available via blackboard)

Class Description & Goals

This course is designed to provide you with an introductory understanding of the discipline of communication studies through a problem centered learning approach. This course provides students with an understanding of communication theory and how that theory can be applied to solve everyday problems we face in our public, professional, and private lives by teaching students how to advocate, negotiate, and relate. To this end we will have a variety of assignments to help you build these skills.

Class Description & ACE 2 Outcome

This course is designed to provide you with an introductory understanding of the discipline of Communication Studies through a problem centered learning approach. This course provides students with an understanding of communication theory and how that theory can be applied to solve everyday problems we face in our public, professional, and private lives by teaching students how to advocate, negotiate, and relate.

This course is designed to satisfy ACE Outcome #2. In particular, through lecture, discussion, readings, and in-class application activities, students will have the opportunities to acquire the skills necessary to “Demonstrate communication competence in one or more of the following ways: (a) by making oral presentations with supporting materials, (b) by leading and participating in problem-solving teams, and (c) by employing a repertoire of communication skills for developing and maintaining professional and personal relationships. Student achievement of the outcome will be assessed through problem-solving exercises, homework, exams, and assignments, including an extemporaneous speech, a small group problem-solving exercise, and an interpersonal problem application.

Instructional Objectives – By the time you have completed this course, students will be able to:

- a. Understand the history and roots of communication
- b. Articulate what communication is and why it is important, including the promise of communication and how a communication lens helps understand and address societal challenges and opportunities/possibilities
- c. Define and apply the communicative capacities of advocate, negotiate, and relate
- d. Advocate for a cause by making an oral presentation
- e. Negotiate solutions for a small group problem or conflict

- f. Relate competently by applying theory to an interpersonal problem
- g. Evaluate and criticize messages across public, professional, and private contexts
- h. Apply various communication theories and concepts pressing 21st century problems and opportunities
- i. Design interactions that help solve problems

Attendance and Participation Policy

Friday meetings of this class are designed around in class activities that require your participation. Attendance will not be taken on Mondays and Wednesdays (although pop quizzes may be given). Attendance for Friday classes is required. You are allowed to miss 2 Fridays throughout the semester. For every absence beyond these 2 “free” absences, students will receive a 5-point reduction in their course grade. If you come to class we expect both your physical and mental attendance. I expect you to not only be in class to be present and engaged in what we are doing. Texting, surfing the internet, reading outside materials, or being otherwise unengaged during class will result in you being counted as absent. Everyone’s presence is necessary in order to facilitate discussions. Additionally, **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED**. It is your responsibility to turn work in at the **BEGINNING** of the class period for which it is assigned.

Excused absences include illness as verified by a doctor’s note, death in the immediate family, jury duty, military service, religious holidays, and participation in school related activities. Excused absences do not include vacations, transportation problems, or employment issues. *In case of an excused absence, you must notify me before you miss class. Make-up work must be done before you leave unless other arrangements were made with your Friday instructor.* Failure to do so may result in a grade reduction, as I will not accept late work.

If you are absent for any reason, you are responsible for all material covered in class that day. You are also responsible for coming to class on time. Tardiness may be considered equivalent to an unexcused absence. Texting, talking, sleeping, and/or reading outside materials during class time will be considered an absence. I take both physical and mental attendance. You need to both be here physically and be mentally attending to the topics we are discussing.

Students are expected to actively participate in class; this is especially true during activity days. Fail to actively engage will be counted as an absence.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Academic dishonesty is a serious matter and will result in automatic failure of this class as well as referral to the proper university officials. Academic dishonesty includes: handing in another person's work or part of another person's work as your own, turning in one of your old papers for a current class, turning in the same or similar past or current paper for two different classes, and purchasing or otherwise obtaining research or papers by another and turning that work in as your own. Using unauthorized notes or study aids or otherwise obtaining another person's answers for an examination also represents a breach of academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism means intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another person as your own. This includes quoting or paraphrasing from published sources without acknowledging/citing the source of your information or presenting quoted material as your own words. Students who are unfamiliar with how to cite sources should purchase a style manual such as APA (American Psychological Association). Claiming lack of knowledge about standards for writing is not an acceptable excuse for committing plagiarism. Come to a faculty member for help or seek help at the UNL Writing Assistance Center: 472-8803 129 Andrews Hall.

Statement on Special Needs Accommodation

Students with disabilities and /or special needs are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same accountability and the same support applied to offenses against other protected categories; such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, UNL offers several resources for reporting and support. Located in Canfield Administration 128, Susan Foster is UNL's Title IX coordinator. Her contact number is

402-472-3417. In the Student Union, Jan Deeds runs the Women's Center and is supervisor of PREVENT (the on campus student organization aimed toward sexual assault awareness and bystander intervention). Her contact information is jdeeds1@unl.edu, and 402-472-2598. Also located in the Student Union, Voices of Hope provides support in answering questions and guidance in reporting options. Please find the many resources offered by Voices of Hope at <http://involved.unl.edu/gender/advocate>. Additional support is offered through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) located in the University Health Center on the second floor. The contact number for CAPS is 402-472-7450.

Note: Dr. Aaron Duncan is a mandatory reporter and responsible employee designated by the university. Any information he learns about sexual assault, harassment, or violence he is required to report to university officials.

Pop Quizzes

This class will require student participating. In order to have effective participation, students must do the reading. If I notice a lag in discussion or participation, pop quizzes will be implemented as part of your participation grade. Therefore, keep up with the readings to lessen your anxiety level.

Exams

There will be three exams during the semester. Tests will be drawn from the assigned readings for the course, related in-class notes, and supplemental material. It is, therefore, important that students take good notes. The test will include some multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Assignment Requirements

To pass the class, all major assignments must be completed. All written assignments are to be typed, double-spaced (except graphs and charts), stapled, and reflecting college-level grammar and punctuation. Work that does not meet these guidelines will not be accepted.

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Points</u>
Extemporaneous speech	25
Interpersonal problem paper	50
Organizational audit	50
Attendance/In Class Activities/Homework	50

Exams 1	100
Exam 2	100
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>125</u>
TOTAL	500

Grading Scale:

A+	97-100 %
A	93-96 %
A-	90-93 %
B+	88-90 %
B	83-88 %
B-	80-83 %
C+	78-80 %
C	73-78 %
C-	70-73 %
D+	67-70 %
D	63-67 %
D-	60-63 %
F	Below 60 %

Evaluation:

Communication Studies faculty assume that all students enter course with the ability to earn at least a “C” average in the course. Students who meet *minimum* requirements will earn a “C” for that work. Students who earn a “B” or “A” average *exceed* the minimum requirements.

A = EXCELLENT. Greatly exceeds the requirements. Shows outstanding creativity, skill, initiative, and effort.

B = GOOD. Exceeds requirements. Shows substantial creativity, skills, initiative, and/or effort.

C = AVERAGE. Meets the requirements in every respect, but does not exceed requirements.

D = BELOW AVERAGE. Meets some requirements, but deficient in others.

F = DEFICIENT in most or all requirements.

Description of Assignments

Extemporaneous Speech:

The purpose of the persuasive speech is to influence the audience's beliefs or actions. Specific requirements are:

- Length of 2-3 minutes
- Minimum of 1
- Reference page (APA format) required
- Use of Visual Aid is optional

Failure to show up either the day you are speaking OR the day others are speaking will result in an automatic loss of 10 points towards your speech grade. We need people to be prepared to speak on speech days and to be there as supportive audience members when not speaking.

Group Project: Group Organization Audit. Working in groups of 3-5 you will be tasked with conducting an organizational audit of a group of your choosing. You may do a group on campus or one off campus. If you choose an on campus group it needs to be an RSO (recognized student organization). So a group like the Microbiology Club would work but your intermural soccer team would not. Off campus organizations need to be either a for-profit company, a charitable organization, or a recognized non-profit organization. Your job is to act as organizational detectives to discover as much about the organization and its communication practices as possible. Strategies you should use ought to include online research, ethnographic observational research, and interviewing of organizational members. Remember the goal of the project is to understand as much about the communication practices of the organization as possible. You will be asked to turn in a group paper 3-5 pages in length explaining what you learned about the organization and to present your findings to the class. Your paper should include the following sections: (1) An introduction and overview of the organization you decided to examine and an explanation of why you choose this organization. (2) A detailed description of the methods you used to gather information. For example, please include an explanation of when and for how long you observed the organization, who in the organization you talked to, and where you went to gather information online and off. (3) A discussion of the organizations communicative strengths and weaknesses. (4) Critical implications for the communicative practices of the organizations. Critical scholars focus their observations and research on issues related to power and power disparities. Please include analysis of both surface power structures (i.e. power structures that are obvious and are easy to see) and hidden power structures (i.e. power structures that exercise influence often indirectly or informally within an organization). Think about who has power within an organization and who does not and/or may be excluded or absent from the organization.

Interpersonal Problem Paper:

Students will first begin by describing a family communication conflict. The conflict situation can be one taken either from the student's own life, from someone they know, or a fictional one from film or television. The paper should begin by describing the situation, the family members involved, and the nature of the conflict. Next, students will discuss all the messages present in the scene and identify the types of communication messages present in the scene (i.e. confirming, disconfirming, defensive, supportive, etc.). Finally, students will suggest a proper remedy for the communication conflict.

Grade Appeals: All grade appeals must be made in writing and must be made within two weeks of receiving the initial grade on an assignment. Grade appeals should first be given to the

graduate teaching assistant in charge of the Friday section you are in. If concerns over a grade persist than the appeal should be given to Dr. Duncan.

In Class Activities and Homework:

Throughout the semester students will be given actives and task to complete (these will typically occur on the Friday of each week) to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of course materials. As part of these activities you will be asked to turn in products and projects you will create for them. Each activity assignment will be work 5 points, unless otherwise noted.

Week 1: What is Communication and Why Should You Study it?

1/11 M: Course introduction and syllabus review

1/13 W: Introduction to Human Communication

(Book p. 1-26)

1/15 F: Introductions

Week 2: Communication Present and Future

1/18 M: No Class Martin Luther King Jr Day

1/20 W: Introduction: Studying communication

(Book p. 27-32)

Communication Study Today and Tomorrow

(Book p.33-52)

1/22 F: Impromptu Speeches

Week 3 Advocate: Plato, Politics, and Persuasion

1/25 M: The Beginning of Communication Study

(Book p. 55-69)

1/27 W: *Don't Think of an Elephant* and *Global Warming v. Climate Change*

(Readings posted on Blackboard)

1/29 F: Constructing Your Cave

Week 4 Advocate: Rhetoric and Debating Climate Change

2/01 M: The Rhetoric

(Book p. 70-87)

2/03 W: Political Polarization and Extremist Rhetoric

Amy Gutmann, “The Lure and Dangers of Extremist Rhetoric”

(Readings posted on Blackboard)

2/05 F: Fall Out Shelter Activity

Week 5 Advocate: The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly of Argument

2/08 M: An Introduction to the Study of Argument (Will)

(Book p. 88-101)

2/10 W: Rape Cultural and Rhetoric (Katie & Aaron)

(Reading on Blackboard)

2/12 F: Extemporaneous speeches

Week 6 Advocate: Media and Culture

2/15 M: Convergence and the Reshaping of Mass Communication

(Book)

2/17 W: Reimagining the Self-Made Man

(Reading posted on blackboard)

2/19 F: Extemporaneous Speeches

Week 7 Exam & Ethical Practices

2/22 M: Communication and Ethics

(Book, not on Exam 1)

2/24 W: Communication and the changing world of work (Nate)

(Reading posted on blackboard, not on Exam 1)

2/26 F: Exam 1

Week 8 Negotiate: Creating Successful Interactions

2/29 M: Defining Organizational Communication

(Reading posted on blackboard)

3/02 W: Casing the Promise Land

(On Blackboard)

3/04 F: Crafting an Ethical Code

Discuss Organization Audit

Week 9 Negotiate: Globalization, Pluralism, and Collaboration

3/07 M: Social Changes and New Demands on Communication Conceptions and Practices

(from Deetz Reading packet on Blackboard)

3/09 W: Interaction Design

(from Deetz Reading packet on Blackboard)

3/11 F: The building blowup

Week 10 Negotiate: Participation and Community

3/14 M: Reciprocity, Genuine Conversation and Dialogue in Participatory

Democracy

(from Deetz Reading packet on Blackboard)

3/16 W: Intercultural Communication

(Reading Posted on Blackboard)

3/18 F: Organizational Audit Presentations

Group Paper Due today

Students will present papers in class

Week 11 Negotiate: Where do we go from here?

3/21 M: No Class Spring Break

3/23 W: No Class Spring Break

3/25 F: No Class Spring Break

Week 12: Negotiate: Where do we go from here?

3/28 M: Gendered Lives (Chase)

Julia Wood (On Blackboard)

3/30 W: Finish up discussion of Org Comm and review for the exam

(Reading not on Exam 2)

4/01 F: Exam 2

Week 13: Relating and Health

4/04 M: Interpersonal Communication in Romantic Relationships

(Book p. 155-174)

4/06 W: Interpersonal Communication in Family Relationships (Katie)

Book Chapter 9 (p. 174-188)

4/08 F: Internet dating Activity

Discuss Interpersonal Communication Problem Paper

Week 14: Relating Across Boundaries

4/11 M: Interpersonal Communication in Everyday Life by Julia Wood

(On Blackboard)

4/13 W: Conflict and health. (Aaron & Nate)

Outliers: The Mystery of Roseto (on Blackboard)

Hocker & Wilmot (2014). Ch 1. The nature of conflict. McGraw Hill

4/15 F: Interpersonal Problem Paper Due

Interpersonal Communication Activity

Week 15 Relating Across Boundaries cont.

4/18 M: Communication and Culture

Book Chapter 12

4/20 W: Relating online

Baym, N. (2010). Ch. 6 in *Personal Connections in a Digital Age* (Blackboard)

4/22 F: Intercultural Activity

Week 16: Relating in a Culture of Family Diversity

4/25 M: Reading TBA

4/27 W: Review for Exam

4/29 F: No Class (GTAs will be available in their office to meet one on one to review for the exam)

Week 17 Relate: Final Exam Week

Final Exam 7:

Appendix B: Activities

Activities for Comm 101

Impromptu Speech Day

This day is designed to help students get used to speaking in public and work on the performance skills in front of small group. Break students into groups of four if possible. I like to start them off by giving each student a short excerpt from a famous speech (each excerpt should be about two minutes long and I have excerpts if you would like to use them). After they have read their excerpt over, group members can then take turns standing up and delivering their excerpt to each other. The other students in the group are responsible for watching and providing constructive feedback to the speaker. After all of the students have gone I move on to the impromptu assignment. Students are each given a different question or prompt. I have prompts if you would like to use them but feel free to come up with your own. Example prompt: What one class should all students be required to take in college? I don't give a student a prompt until it is their turn to speak. Once given the prompt each student has two minutes to prepare and is then expected to stand up and speak for two minutes. Students are encouraged to speak for the full two minutes but are required to speak for at least one minute. After each student in a group speaks their fellow group members should again offer them feedback. Hopefully by the end students are more comfortable standing up in front of people and talking.

Notes:

For this activity I have to read the room a little bit. Sometimes, having student read the excerpts from famous speeches, and then give impromptus takes up way too much time. I think that getting students up speaking is the most important part, so I start with that and if there is time at the end I have them read speech excerpts. I like to use prompts that have two unrelated subjects that students then have to tie together. For example one student might choose the prompt: 1. My favorite thing about college, and 2. Peaches. They then have to give a two minutes speech that uses both of their prompts. I have a list of these, so let me know if you want me to send them your way. It's up to you if you want them to do these speeches in group or in front of the whole class. I like to have them give the speech to the whole class if possible so that their graded speech isn't the first time they're speaking to a larger group. It takes more time though- so again, judgment call.

Have excerpts of speeches printed out before class in case you do have extra time, and they end up being able to practice expression. My classes usually don't, but sometimes I have a

group that gives 30 second speeches and finishes really quickly, so having a backup activity is great.

Constructing Your Cave

In the previous chapter we learned about Plato's hostility towards communication and how it is rooted in his allegory of "the Cave" and his belief about the nature of truth, reality, perception, and how communication works to distort our view of the world. Your assignment for today is to create your own allegory or metaphor that explains the role of communication in the world and how it shapes society. Work in groups of three or four for this activity. First, make a list of positive and negative ways that communication shapes our world. Second, brainstorm possible ways to illustrate communication's role. Examples, perhaps communication is a "bridge" that brings people together. Third, bring your allegory to life. Build a model that illustrates the way you see communication and its role in the world today.

Notes:

I split this activity up, breaking for discussion in the middle of it. After explaining all of what we'll be doing, I have the group come up with their lists of positive and negative ways that communication shapes our world. Once they've done that, I have them shout out things they've written and write them in two columns on the white board. We discuss each point, and I ask who else has that on their list, and what their groups talked about, etc. The point of this discussion is for me to demonstrate that many ways communication shapes our world can be viewed as both positive and negative. If something is in the "negative column" I try and have them come up with ways that it can also be positive. I then explain how multifaceted these things are, and why it takes conscious thought and skill to better understand.

After this initial discussion I have students do the second part of the activity. Once their groups have come up with a metaphor, I have them draw it on the board and present it to the class. Sometimes we vote on the best one (obviously they can't vote for their own group)

Fall out shelter

See attached handout

Have students get into groups of four

Give each group a copy of the fallout shelter problem handout and instruction sheet

Things to go over with groups:

Each decision must be unanimous

Give groups ~20 minutes to come to a consensus before meeting back to discuss

(If time allows, have the class come back together and try the activity again as a whole class. This demonstrates how much more difficult group decision making is when groups are large. Also gives groups a chance to debate and fight for their original decisions)

After the activity debrief.

Debrief 1: How did the decision making process go? Did you always agree? If you disagreed, how did you come to a conclusion?

Debrief 2 (I tend to focus most of the discussion time on this): How do the decisions you make reflect your culture? What does your shelter say about what YOU value, and what WE as a society value? Who did you put in your shelter first? Why was that and what does this imply about what you view as important? Who was last? Why? This is a chance to be reflexive about how our culture impacts our values.

Crafting an Ethical Code

The Board of Regents has decided that the university needs an ethical overhaul. As newly minted ethicists they have selected you to craft a new code of ethical conduct for students, staff, and members of the faculty. It is up to you to work in groups to create this code and set the future course of the university. While, this code may have a guiding moral compass (example: Kant's categorical imperative), it needs to be practical as well. Your code needs to be one that is capable of dealing with the everyday problems encountered a major college campus. Examples of potential issues include stealing, theft, drinking underage, and the use of racists and/or sexist language. How will you determine when the ethical line is crossed and what punishment is appropriate? After you have created your code of conduct you will be given different case scenarios. Using your new code of conduct you must adjudicate the scenarios as best you can. Finally, you will compare your code of conduct to the current one used by the university.

Notes:

I give them examples of issues, but ask them to think of their own as well, and be ready to defend their code even against things they hadn't considered. I then read them some ethical scenarios and they have to apply their code to them to see what would be done. In the past I've used the ethical situations above, though I've also come up with new ones, issues from current

events (for example this semester I'm sure I'll discuss campus sexual assault), and then edit their codes as necessary along the way. After these discussion we talk about these issues at UNL, how the university handles them, and how students may have encountered issues similar to things we've discussed

Ethical scenarios

Consider the following ethical scenarios. Evaluate each from the major ethical perspectives we discussed in class (categorical imperative, utilitarianism, veil of ignorance). First, determine how each perspective would advise you to act. Second, determine what action you would take. Be ready to explain and defend the ethics of your action.

1) Wikileaks – You are working for the American government in middle level position with the National Security Agency (NSA). During your work with the NSA you have discovered a secret program conducted by the government to listen into the phone calls of unsuspecting Americans whom they believe may be involved in terrorist activities. The eavesdropping is done without the approval of the courts and is in clear violation of the constitution. One of the founders of wikileaks has learned of the program but does not have any proof. He asks you to provide proof to expose the illegal government eavesdropping program. Doing so will be in violation of the contract you signed with the government to provide outsiders with classified information. What is the ethical thing to do?

2) Undercover reporter - You are the editor of a major American newspaper. One of your reporters has written an expose showing the flaws in the welfare system. As part of her reporting she lied by pretending to be homeless in order to write an expose on the welfare system. She falsified her work information, social security number, and intentionally misfiled government documents claiming to be poor, when she was not. Her undercover report contains important information about major flaws in the system and if printed will likely lead to changes to fix these flaws. Do you print her report?

3) A Doctor's choice - You are a doctor of a cancer patient. The patient has a very aggressive and deadly form of cancer. Studies have indicated that cancer patients will to fight and belief that they can get better boos their chances of recovery. If you are honest with your patient and tell her that she has only a 20% chance of survival, then she will have only a 20% of recovery.

IF however, you lie to her and tell her that she has a 60% of survival, her chances of recovery increase to 35%. What is the ethical thing to do?

4) A Terrorist's Tale – You are a member of an FBI special task force charged with preventing terrorists acts on American soil. You have learned that a sleeper cell has plans to detonate a bomb at a major American landmark sometime in the next month. However, you do not know the exact date, time, or location of when the bomb will go off. By sheer luck you have managed to apprehend one of the suspected terrorist. Traditional interrogation tactics have failed to garner any useful information. If you torture the suspect you will be given information that will help you to prevent the detonation of the bomb and the loss of thousands of lives. Do you torture him?

The Building Blowup

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln was indeed of new housing and running out of space on campus. Thus, the university decided to buy and renovate a office building on O street in the middle of the bar district. The new building is now open with dorms and problems are occurring. We, as communication professionals, have been contacted by a community the city to help solve the problem. Some students in the building are upset because the loud noise from the bars is keeping them up all night. The bars complain that many students are leaving their establishments to go party in dorm rooms because the close proximity. The university is upset because of the increased parting in the dorms and the noise complaints from students. UNL is petitioning the city to close the bars 10pm in order to stop the noise complaints and discourage students from drinking. The bars have banned together to ask the city to force UNL to move its new dorm. The students in the dorm are divided on what they want.

You have been asked to give recommendations to make this a helpful **process**. Working in groups of 3-5 discuss what you think the meetings/discussions should be like. Who should be involved and why? What would the discussion process ideally look like? How should they handle conflict? Should they make decisions? Who should make them? How should they make them if there are disagreements? Discuss how your conceptions of democracy, communication, and decision making processes influenced your advice. Be prepared share your recommendations with the class.

Note:

When doing this activity I stress that they should think outside of their student role, or personal opinions. Think about how much this must have cost, and what the cost of moving buildings would be? Who would pay that? Would tuition go up? Is there a compromise to be made, and if so, who makes it? I ask them to be realistic in their ideas, and consider plausible options, and ramifications. We debrief by talking about negotiation

. Internet Dating Activity

The goal of this activity is to get students to think about issues related to gender, privilege, sexual orientation, and self-presentation. Students should be broken into groups based on sex and asked to create to create an online dating profile for someone of their gender. This profile and can be for someone seeking either a hetero or homosexual relationships. The goal of their profile is to appear as attractive as possible while still maintain a sense of reality i.e. no profiles of billion movie star philanthropist lion tamers etc... Common questions asked on dating profiles relate to items such as occupation, hobbies, likes/dislikes, etc... It may even be helpful for the instructor to use an actual online dating profile such as those provided by sites like match.com or plentyoffish.com as a basis for the activity.

The second half of this assignment can be done several different ways depending on the instructor's preference. You can either have the groups create an internet profile for the opposite gender, or opposite sexual orientation, or you can have them come up with a list of qualities they would look for when examining a profile of someone they are attracted too. After they have completed those tasks groups will present their profiles and receive feedback from other groups. The goal is to generate understanding of different pressures and expectations created by societal gender norms and social constructions of "attractiveness." Students should be asked to think about how well they live up to their own idealized dating profile and how they would feel if the same criterion they created for the opposite gender was applied to them.

Note:

This is my very favorite activity! Here is how I do it: In same gender groups, students have to come up with the ideal online dating profile for someone of their same gender. I do not answer questions at this point about what ideal means—that's for them to decide. I tell them that their profile can include things about interests, likes, dislikes, occupation, goals, hobbies, etc. but also things about physical appearance, personal and political beliefs, etc.

After each group has their fake profile done we go in groups reading them to the class. After everyone has shared we have a discussion about the 'findings.'

Generally speaking, the 'ideal' men have a lot in common with one another, despite the groups not working together (same goes for the ideal women). For example, I don't tell them to make their character heterosexual, but they always do. Sometimes not explicitly, but it's assumed for them. The men are always 6'2 and making 6 figures. The women volunteer a lot, etc. We then talk about why that is. How do they all have similar ideas about what an ideal mate would be? Where do we get these ideas? I stress that I'm not saying they're bad people for making these assumptions, but that they are part of their culture, and cannot always separate from that. I also have them discuss how what the class has come up with is not the reality for what a lot of people look for in a partner. For example, most of the "men" have very rigorous, high paid careers, however women in the class will tell me that they don't want to marry a man who will spend that much time at work, or that they are actually more attracted to artistic types. We talk about how these are cultural scripts that we fall back on, even if they aren't always represented in our personal lives. Gender, and gender ideal are so ingrained that it's easy not to question them, even though we've just demonstrated that they sometimes don't reflect reality. Finally, I end with a discussion on how this is why it's important to think critically about our culture, communication, and the way we interact.

Interpersonal Communication Problem Paper Exercise

Begin the class by going over the interpersonal problem paper assignment. Then give students some time to brainstorm interactions they might want to examine. To help them better understand the assignment have them watch a scene involving a communication conflict from a popular television show or film. Examples: The Break Up, Modern Family, and Parenthood. Have the students break down the scenes in groups identifying the various types of messages present. Finally, the groups should work to rewrite the scene to produce a more productive and beneficial communication interaction. If time have the groups present their rewritten interactions.

11. Culture wars (This comes from the Deetz reading packet but could be adapted for the interpersonal section as well).

Some years back, James Davison Hunter described how the American society had in several ways become two warring groups, defined partly by religion, ethnicity, social class, and political affiliation, but more centrally by polarized world views. Some have described this as a struggle over the soul of America. In the class's terms, these "world views" are considered to be particular articulated relationships among our six politics.

The metaphorical “war” is experienced in contestations and struggles of identities, appropriate feelings, knowledge, concepts of the good life, and justice. Each “side” of the “war” engages in much cultural management to generate unwitting consent. Little versions of “wars” like these appear in ordinary interactions.

For example, concepts of being male and female are common to all society and are frequently contested and culturally managed as part of “culture wars.” This has been clear in issues around Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin and how they dress, talk and act. Women’s dress and rights issues are significant in many of the discussions in the middle east. In a different way this came up. In the reading, you have a link to a SNL skit where a British comedian tries to reclaim the masculinity of tight jeans in response to a popular Miller Lite commercial. While primarily intended to sell beer, the Miller Lite commercial clearly also attempts to use and manages culture in the roles and actions given to women and in conceptions of masculinity. And further, it in some way shows American as more masculine and a number of attributes that come with that than Europeans.

For this week’s assignment gather in your normal groups, identify a manifestation of “culture war” or a clear contestation in one or more of the six politics. What is each “side’s” conception, how does this conception fit into their larger “world view?” How do they engage in cultural management? What can we do to solve for this ongoing war? Who are the victims of the war?

Appendix C: Pretest

Pretest and Posttest Results

213 Total Respondents

Average Score was $7.3/14 = 52\%$

Post Text

210 Total Respondents

Average score was = $11.1/85\%$

Results

Average student got 2.9 more questions correct and scored 21% higher on the post test

Post-test results are noted in ()

1. What is your academic standing at UNL?

A. First year - 130 (133)

B. Sophomore - 55 (50)

C. Junior - 6 (16)

D. Senior - 12 (12)

2. NOT counting this course, how many communication courses have you previously completed at UNL?

A. 0 - 178 (171)

B. 1 - 16 (18)

C. 2 - 9 (10)

D. 3 - 2 (4)

E. More than 3 - 8 (8)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

3. Communication is an important part of my daily life.

A. Strongly Agree - $170/213=79\%$ ($162/210=77\%$)

B. Agree - $43/213=20\%$ ($50/210=23\%$)

C. Strongly Disagree - 0 ($2/210=1\%$)

D. Disagree - 0 (0)

4. I am comfortable communicating with others on an interpersonal level.

A. Strongly Agree - $61/213=29\%$ ($96/212=45\%$)

B. Agree - $131/213=61\%$ (105)

C. Strongly Disagree - 14 (9)

D. Disagree - 7 (2)

5. I am comfortable speaking in front of groups of people.

A. Strongly Agree - $28/213=13\%$ ($46/211=22\%$)

B. Agree - $91/213=43\%$ ($97/211=46\%$)

C. Strongly Disagree - $44/213=21\%$ ($36/211=17\%$)

D. Disagree - $5/213=2\%$ ($32/211=15\%$)

6. I think about the best way to communicate before doing so.

A. Strongly Agree - $38/213=18\%$ ($51/210=25\%$)

B. Agree - $131/213=62\%$ ($118/210=56\%$)

C. Strongly Disagree - $26/213=12\%$ ($29/210=14\%$)

D. Disagree - $18/213=8\%$ ($12/210=6\%$)

7. My current understanding and knowledge of various models of Communication is:

A. Excellent - $5/213=2\%$ ($22/211=10\%$)

B. Very Good - $28/213=13\%$ ($91/211=43\%$)

C. Good - $89/213=42\%$ ($81/211=38\%$)

D. O.K. - $69/213=32\%$ ($15/211=7\%$)

E. Poor - $21/213=10\%$ ($2/211=1\%$)

8. My current understanding and knowledge of interpersonal communication:

A. Excellent - $4/213=2\%$ ($37/210=18\%$)

B. Very Good - $33/213=15\%$ ($91/210=43\%$)

C. Good - $91/213=43\%$ ($73/210=35\%$)

D. O.K. - $73/213=34\%$ ($9/210=4\%$)

E. Poor - $12/213=6\%$ ($0/210=0\%$)

9. My current understanding and knowledge of organizational communication:

A. Excellent - $5/213=2\%$ ($27/206=13\%$)

B. Very Good - 18 (75)

C. Good - 82 (88)

D. O.K. - 86 (15)

E. Poor - 22 (1)

10. My current understanding and knowledge of rhetoric:

- A. Excellent - $9/213=4\%$ ($33/195=17\%$)
- B. Very Good - $28/213=13\%$ ($76/195=39\%$)
- C. Good - $65/213=31\%$ ($77/195=39\%$)
- D. O.K. - $78/213=37\%$ ($7/195=4\%$)
- E. Poor - $32/213=15\%$ ($0/195=0\%$)

11. In a communication model, a “channel” refers to an individual who decodes information.

- A. Strongly
- B. Agree
- C. Agree Disagree Strongly
- D. Disagree

12. An extemporaneous speech should be

- A. Memorized
- B. Given with limited notes
- C. Off the cuff
- D. Given with detailed notes

13. People’s perceptions of ancestry or heritage is their _____.

- A. Ethnicity
- B. Culture
- C. History
- D. Society

14. According to interpersonal research our _____ socializes us into either constructive or destructive ways of handling conflict and this can carry over to how romantic relationships are handled later in life.

- A. Family of origin
- B. Country of origin
- C. Community of origin
- D. Ethnic origin

15. This is a state in which each person's behaviors affect everyone else in the relationship

- A. Intimacy
- B. Love
- C. Interdependence
- D. Connectedness

16. The ability of a person to effectively communicate or exchange meanings with other people is their level of _____.

- A. Communication competence
- B. Communication aptitude
- C. Communication intelligence
- D. Communication adaptability

17. Aristotle defined _____ as "all the available means of persuasion."

- A. Public speaking
- B. Invention
- C. Syllogism

D. Rhetoric

18. “The interaction required to directed a group of people toward a share goal” is the definition of:

- A. Group process communication
- B. Goal Oriented Interaction Process
- C. Organizational communication
- D. Business communication

20. This type of interpersonal communication treats the other person as a real person and involves created a significant and intimate relationship with them.

- A. I-IT
- B. I-Noun
- C. I-You
- D. I-Thou

21. This is the most complete model of interpersonal communication because it emphasizes the dynamism of interpersonal communication and the multiple roles people assume during the process.

- A. Transactional Model
- B. Interactive Model
- C. Linear model
- D. Progressive Model

22. Which of the following is the most accurate description of the *tragedy of the commons*?

- A. People are trying to work together to conserve resources but it doesn't work.

- B. People share resources with only their own communities and other communities are disadvantaged.
- C. People act in their own momentary self-interest. This depletes shared common resources and harms everyone (including themselves) in the long run.
- D. People act in their own self-interest from which they benefit by getting a bigger and bigger piece of the pie hurting the common person.
- E. Commons always wear out; hence people have always had to find new pastures and markets.

23. Pluralism is the belief that _____.

- A. One correct truth and everyone should strive to find it
- B. There are many different truths and perspectives and they all have value
- C. We must search for the best idea in every situation
- D. Pluralism is the most important outcome of collaboration

24. Mark tells Jamie that he understands her concerns and frustrations and he would like to work to create a solution they can both live with. This is a positive interaction because it demonstrates:

- A. Concreteness
- B. Ownership
- C. Immediacy or presence
- D. Acknowledgement
- E. Confirmation

25. This type of talk is cooperative or co-determinative but often strategic talk; aims at tension reduction and rational assessment of parties' best rational interests in light of constraints and limited options; decision by agreement.

- A. Collaboration
- B. Deliberation

C. Negotiation

D. Dialogue

Pretest Exam Results

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

10/ 9 28 65 78 32 1 0 0 0 0 1 213

%s 4.2 13.1 30.5 36.6 15.0 0.5 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 3 16 37 35 10 1 0 0 0 0 + 0 0.0

mid + 1 7 11 17 6 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 0.0

lo + 5 5 17 26 16 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 0.0

=====

means + 6.4 8.0 7.6 7.2 6.7 8.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.00 Discrimination = 0.00 Correlation = 0.00

** No respondents received credit for this item **

11/c 1 52 46 114 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%s 0.5 24.4 21.6 53.5 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 0 13 28 61 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 27.5

mid + 0 11 7 24 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 16.7

lo + 1 28 11 29 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 15.7

```
=====
means + 6.0 6.5 8.0 7.4 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+
```

```
-----
Difficulty = 0.21 Discrimination = 0.12 Correlation = 0.20
```

```
# 12/b  31 121 41 20 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 213
```

```
%'s  14.6 56.8 19.2 9.4 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0
```

```
----- %'s
hi + 8 72 15 7 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 70.6
mid + 9 22 7 4 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 52.4
lo + 14 27 19 9 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 38.6
```

```
=====
means + 6.7 7.8 6.7 6.7 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+
```

```
-----
Difficulty = 0.57 Discrimination = 0.32 Correlation = 0.29
```

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

13/a 73 96 42 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%s 34.3 45.1 19.7 0.9 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 48 36 18 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 47.1

mid + 11 25 6 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 26.2

lo + 14 35 18 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 20.0

=====

means + 8.1 6.9 7.0 3.5 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.34 Discrimination = 0.27 Correlation = 0.30

This question has high correlation.

14/a 128 8 56 21 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%s 60.1 3.8 26.3 9.9 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 77 3 14 8 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 75.5

mid + 25 1 15 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 59.5

lo + 26 4 27 12 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 37.1

=====

means + 7.9 6.8 6.4 6.6 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.60 Discrimination = 0.38 Correlation = 0.38

This question has high correlation.

15/a 25 8 116 64 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%'s 11.7 3.8 54.5 30.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 10 2 70 20 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 9.8

mid + 6 0 19 17 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 14.3

lo + 9 6 27 27 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 12.9

=====

means + 7.4 6.3 7.6 6.9 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.12 Discrimination = -0.03 Correlation = 0.01

This item is difficult.

It is a poor discriminator.

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

16/a 123 38 33 19 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%s 57.7 17.8 15.5 8.9 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 77 7 11 7 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 75.5

mid + 21 11 8 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 50.0

lo + 25 20 14 10 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 35.7

=====

means + 7.9 6.2 6.9 6.4 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.57 Discrimination = 0.40 Correlation = 0.37

This question has high correlation.

17/d 54 4 12 142 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 212

%s 25.5 1.9 5.7 67.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 14 2 3 83 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 81.4

mid + 10 1 4 26 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 61.9

lo + 30 1 5 33 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 47.1

=====

means + 6.1 7.3 6.7 7.8 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.66 Discrimination = 0.34 Correlation = 0.39

This question has high correlation.

18/c 41 108 60 4 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%s 19.2 50.7 28.2 1.9 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 18 43 41 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 40.2

mid + 9 25 8 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 19.0

lo + 14 40 11 4 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 15.7

=====

means + 7.1 7.0 8.2 5.5 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.28 Discrimination = 0.24 Correlation = 0.28

ITEM ANALYSIS

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

19/* 3 8 39 4 0 0 0 0 0 0 160 54

%'s 5.6 14.8 72.2 7.4 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 0 4 18 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 78 100.0

mid + 2 1 6 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 33 100.0

lo + 1 3 15 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 49 100.0

=====

means + 6.7 7.4 7.1 7.5 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 1.00 Discrimination = 0.00 Correlation = 0.00

** All respondents received credit for this item **

20/d 16 24 159 14 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%'s 7.5 11.3 74.6 6.6 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 5 7 81 9 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 8.8

mid + 6 3 30 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 7.1

lo + 5 14 48 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 2.9

=====

means + 7.2 6.3 7.4 7.9 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.07 Discrimination = 0.06 Correlation = 0.08

This item is difficult.

21/a 35 120 15 43 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%'s 16.4 56.3 7.0 20.2 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 19 59 5 19 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 18.6

mid + 9 23 2 8 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 21.4

lo + 7 38 8 16 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 10.0

=====

means + 7.9 7.3 6.8 7.1 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.16 Discrimination = 0.09 Correlation = 0.13

This item is difficult.

COMM 101

Duncan, Aaron

Page 11

Spring 2016

pretest

ITEM ANALYSIS

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

22/c 12 26 124 37 14 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%'s 5.6 12.2 58.2 17.4 6.6 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 2 8 74 12 6 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 72.5

mid + 2 7 21 10 2 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 50.0

lo + 8 11 29 15 6 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 41.4

=====

means + 5.7 6.7 7.8 6.7 7.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.58 Discrimination = 0.31 Correlation = 0.33

This question has high correlation.

23/b 13 175 11 13 1 0 0 0 0 0 1 213

%'s 6.1 82.2 5.2 6.1 0.5 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 4 97 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 95.1

mid + 4 36 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 85.7

lo + 5 42 9 12 1 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 60.0

=====

means + 6.8 7.7 5.0 4.6 4.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.82 Discrimination = 0.35 Correlation = 0.48

This item is easy.

It has high correlation.

24/d 7 11 16 163 14 0 0 0 0 0 3 211

%'s 3.3 5.2 7.6 77.3 6.6 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 0 2 1 97 2 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 95.1

mid + 0 2 7 30 3 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 71.4

lo + 7 7 8 36 9 0 0 0 0 0 + 3 51.4

=====

means + 5.0 5.5 6.3 7.8 5.9 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.76 Discrimination = 0.44 Correlation = 0.48

This question is a good discriminator.

It has high correlation.

Appendix D: Posttest

Note questions 1-52 on the exam were not part of the pretest and posttest analysis

_____52. In a communication model, a “channel” refers to an individual who decodes information.

- A. Strongly
- B. Agree
- C. Agree Disagree Strongly
- D. Disagree[AD1]

_____53. An extemporaneous speech should be

- A. Memorized
- B. Given with limited notes
- C. Off the cuff
- D. Given with detailed notes

_____54, People’s perceptions of ancestry or heritage is their _____.

- A. Ethnicity
- B. Culture
- C. History
- D. Society

_____55. According to interpersonal research our _____ socializes us into either constructive or destructive ways of handling conflict and this can carry over to how romantic relationships are handled later in life.

- A. Family of origin

- B. Country of origin
- C. Community of origin
- D. Ethnic origin

_____56. This is a state in which each person's behaviors affect everyone else in the relationship

- A. Intimacy
- B. Love
- C. Interdependence
- D. Connectedness

_____57. The ability of a person to effectively communicate or exchange meanings with other people is their level of _____.

- A. Communication competence
- B. Communication aptitude
- C. Communication intelligence
- D. Communication adaptability

_____58. Aristotle defined _____ as "all the available mean of persuasion."

- A. Public speaking
- B. Invention
- C. Syllogism
- D. Rhetoric

_____59. "The interaction required to directed a group of people toward a share goal" is the definition of:

- A. Group process communication
- B. Goal Oriented Interaction Process
- C. Organizational communication
- D. Business communication

_____60. This type of interpersonal communication treats the other person as a real person and involves created a significant and intimate relationship with them.

- A. I-IT
- B. I-Noun
- C. I-You
- D. I-Thou

_____61. This is the most complete model of interpersonal communication because it emphasizes the dynamism of interpersonal communication and the multiple roles people assume during the process.

- A. Transactional Model
- B. Interactive Model
- C. Linear model
- D. Progressive Model

_____62. Which of the following is the most accurate description of the *tragedy of the commons*?

- A. People are trying to work together to conserve resources but it doesn't work.
- B. People share resources with only their own communities and other communities are disadvantaged.
- C. People act in their own momentary self-interest. This depletes shared common resources and harms everyone (including themselves) in the long run.

D. People act in their own self-interest from which they benefit by getting a bigger and bigger piece of the pie hurting the common person.

E. Commons always wear out; hence people have always had to find new pastures and markets.

_____ 63. Pluralism is the belief that _____.

A. One correct truth and everyone should strive to find it

B. There are many different truths and perspectives and they all have value

C. We must search for the best idea in every situation

D. Pluralism is the most important outcome of collaboration

_____ 64. Mark tells Jamie that he understands her concerns and frustrations and he would like to work to create a solution they can both live with. This is a positive interaction because it demonstrates:

A. Concreteness

B. Ownership

C. Immediacy or presence

D. Acknowledgement

E. Confirmation

_____ 65. This type of talk is cooperative or co-determinative but often strategic talk; aims at tension reduction and rational assessment of parties' best rational interests in light of constraints and limited options; decision by agreement.

A. Collaboration

B. Deliberation

C. Negotiation

D. Dialogue

This portion of the exam is ungraded and will be used to help assess the strengths and weaknesses of this course.

____1. What is your academic standing at UNL?

- A. First year
- B. Sophomore
- C. Junior
- D. Senior

____2. NOT counting this course, how many communication courses have you previously completed at UNL?

- A. 0
- B. 1
- C. 2
- D. 3
- E. More than 3

Having completed this course to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

____3. Communication is an important part of my daily life.

- A. Strongly
- B. Agree
- C. Agree Disagree Strongly
- D. Disagree

____4. I am comfortable communicating with others on an interpersonal level.

- A. Strongly
- B. Agree
- C. Agree Disagree Strongly
- D. Disagree

____5. I am comfortable speaking in front of groups of people.

- A. Strongly
- B. Agree
- C. Agree Disagree Strongly
- D. Disagree

____6. I think about the best way to communicate before doing so.

- A. Strongly
- B. Agree
- C. Agree Disagree Strongly
- D. Disagree

____7. My current understanding and knowledge of various models of Communication is:

- A. Excellent
- B. Very Good
- C. Good
- D. O.K.
- E. Poor

____8. My current understanding and knowledge of interpersonal communication:

- A. Excellent
- B. Very Good
- C. Good
- D. O.K.
- E. Poor

____9. My current understanding and knowledge of organizational communication:

- A. Excellent
- B. Very Good
- C. Good
- D. O.K.
- E. Poor

____10. My current understanding and knowledge of rhetoric:

- A. Excellent
- B. Very Good
- C. Good
- D. O.K.
- E. Poor

Posttest Scores and Results

COMM 101 Duncan Page 21
 Spring 2016 Final Exam

ITEM ANALYSIS

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

52/ 144 21 17 35 0 0 1 0 0 0 3 218

%'s 66.1 9.6 7.8 16.1 0.0 0.0 0.5 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 47 5 6 20 0 0 1 0 0 0 + 1 0.0

mid + 54 9 9 9 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 2 0.0

lo + 43 7 2 6 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 0.0

=====

means + 99.6 97.3 104.7 104.5 0.0 0.0 112.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 +

Difficulty = 0.00 Discrimination = 0.00 Correlation = 0.00

** No respondents received credit for this item **

53/b 7 180 31 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 221

%'s 3.2 81.4 14.0 1.4 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 0 72 8 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 90.0

mid + 2 67 13 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 80.7

lo + 5 41 10 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 70.7

=====

means + 81.7 102.2 96.7 90.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 +

Difficulty = 0.81 Discrimination = 0.19 Correlation = 0.55

This item is easy.

It has high correlation.

54/a 183 29 8 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 221

%'s 82.8 13.1 3.6 0.5 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 76 4 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 95.0

mid + 72 8 2 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 86.7

lo + 35 17 6 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 60.3

=====

means + 102.9 90.8 85.3 100.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 +

Difficulty = 0.83 Discrimination = 0.35 Correlation = 0.81

This item is easy.

It has high correlation.

COMM 101

Duncan

Page 22

Spring 2016

Final Exam

ITEM ANALYSIS

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

55/a 202 0 9 10 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 221

%s 91.4 0.0 4.1 4.5 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %s

hi + 78 0 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 97.5

mid + 75 0 5 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 90.4

lo + 49 0 4 5 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 84.5

=====

means + 101.5 0.0 91.1 91.4 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.91 Discrimination = 0.13 Correlation = 0.48

This item is easy.

It has high correlation.

56/c 2 0 201 18 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 221

%'s 0.9 0.0 91.0 8.1 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 0 0 80 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 0.0

mid + 0 0 76 7 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 0.0

lo + 2 0 45 11 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 3.4

=====

means + 80.0 0.0 101.7 91.4 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 +

Difficulty = 0.01 Discrimination = -0.03 Correlation = -0.33

This item is difficult.

It is a poor discriminator.

It has low correlation.

57/a 189 4 22 6 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 221

%'s 85.5 1.8 10.0 2.7 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 78 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 97.5

mid + 73 1 8 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 88.0

lo + 38 3 12 5 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 65.5

=====

means + 102.9 81.5 89.1 86.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.86 Discrimination = 0.32 Correlation = 0.89

This item is easy.

It has high correlation.

COMM 101

Duncan

Page 23

Spring 2016

Final Exam

ITEM ANALYSIS

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

58/d 25 0 1 194 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 220

%s 11.4 0.0 0.5 88.2 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 4 0 0 76 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 95.0

mid + 7 0 0 76 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 91.6

lo + 14 0 1 42 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 72.4

=====

means + 91.0 0.0 86.0 102.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.88 Discrimination = 0.23 Correlation = 0.60

This item is easy.

It has high correlation.

59/c 12 54 154 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 221

%'s 5.4 24.4 69.7 0.5 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 1 4 75 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 93.8

mid + 4 22 56 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 67.5

lo + 7 28 23 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 39.7

=====

means + 91.2 91.3 104.6 102.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 +

Difficulty = 0.70 Discrimination = 0.54 Correlation = 1.00

This question is a good discriminator.

It has high correlation.

60/d 1 1 56 163 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 221

%'s 0.5 0.5 25.3 73.8 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 0 0 3 77 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 96.3

mid + 0 0 19 64 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 77.1

lo + 1 1 34 22 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 37.9

=====

means + 78.0 64.0 90.3 104.6 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.74 Discrimination = 0.58 Correlation = 1.08

This question is a good discriminator.

It has high correlation.

COMM 101

Duncan

Page 24

Spring 2016

Final Exam

ITEM ANALYSIS

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

61/a 139 55 1 26 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 221

%s 62.9 24.9 0.5 11.8 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 72 5 0 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 90.0

mid + 53 20 0 10 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 63.9

lo + 14 30 1 13 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 24.1

=====

means + 105.7 92.4 70.0 92.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

hi + 0 79 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 98.8
 mid + 1 79 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 95.2
 lo + 4 51 2 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 87.9

=====

means + 87.6101.3 95.0 64.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+

Difficulty = 0.95 Discrimination = 0.11 Correlation = 0.45

This item is easy.

It has high correlation.

COMM 101 Duncan Page 25
 Spring 2016 Final Exam

ITEM ANALYSIS

Question/Answer a b c d e f g h i j Omits Subtotal

64/d 7 16 13 151 34 0 0 0 0 0 0 221

%s 3.2 7.2 5.9 68.3 15.4 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0

----- %'s

hi + 0 2 2 66 10 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 82.5
 mid + 1 7 8 49 18 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 59.0
 lo + 6 7 3 36 6 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 62.1

```
=====
means + 82.3 95.4 99.5101.9101.9 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+
```

```
-----
Difficulty = 0.68 Discrimination = 0.20 Correlation = 0.30
```

```
# 65/c 94 20 101 4 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 219
```

```
%'s 42.9 9.1 46.1 1.8 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0
```

```
----- %'s
hi + 39 3 35 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 43.8
```

```
mid + 34 11 35 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 1 42.2
```

```
lo + 21 6 31 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 + 0 53.4
```

```
=====
means + 101.7 98.1100.0102.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0+
```

```
-----
Difficulty = 0.46 Discrimination = -0.10 Correlation = -0.10
```

This question is a poor discriminator.

It has low correlation.

Appendix E: Graduate Assistant Course Evaluations

Eval #1

Note: Data collected from evaluation forms will be used for compilation in a peer review of teaching portfolio. The goal of the peer review project is to engage in critical reflection and processing in order improve teaching and course design. As graduate teaching assistants and leaders of the recitation sections your feedback is essential to evaluating and improving the design of the course. All data used in the peer review of teaching portfolio will be kept anonymous.

This course currently has nine learning outcomes. Please rate how well you feel that the course fulfills these outcomes on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 being the course fulfills this outcome completely and fully and 5 being the course fails to address this learning outcome at all.

___2___1. Advocate for a cause by making an oral presentation

___1___2. Negotiate solutions for a small group problem or conflict

___2___3. Relate competently by applying theory to an interpersonal problem

___2___4. Evaluate and criticize messages across public, professional, and private contexts

___1___5. Understand the history and roots of communication

___2___6. Articulate what communication is and why it is important, including the promise of communication and how a communication lens helps understand and address societal challenges and opportunities/possibilities

___2___7. Define and apply the communicative capacities of advocate, negotiate, and relate

___1__8. Apply various communication theories and concepts pressing 21st century problems and opportunities

___1__9. Design interactions that help solve problems

Please pick one or two of the outcomes you rated highest and explain why you rated them highly. How is the course successfully promoting fulfillment of this learning outcomes?

#5 – The course does a good job of discussing the origins of communication through Aristotle and Plato and the basic premise of objective/subjective realities. I think the students gain a good grasp of the art of communication and how the field emerged.

#9 – The materials on interaction design are thorough the Friday class activity is fairly productive in allowing students to apply those concepts to practical examples.

Please pick one or two of the learning outcomes you rated lower and explain why you rated them this way. How/Why is the course failing to promoting fulfillment of this learning outcomes?

I think overall, all of the outcomes are being met to a certain degree, however some more than others. I think the interpersonal materials could be updated and more current theories and principles could be incorporated into the course. I also think the organizational communication materials should have a bit of an overhaul.

Are there any learning outcomes you think should be removed or added to list above? If yes, please explain why.

I think the learning outcomes are solid.

Please rate each of the activities and assignments done in recitation sections on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 being an exceptional activity that directly relates to course learning outcomes and creates student engagement and 5 being an activity that has no clear learning outcomes and does not engage students. For any activity you did not complete please mark N/A.

__1__1. Impromptu speeches

__3__2. Constructing your cave

__3__3. Fall Out Shelter Activity

__2__4. Crafting an Ethical Code

__1__5. The building blowup

__1__6. Internet dating Activity

__1__7. Interpersonal problem paper activity

__4__8. Intercultural Activity

__1__9. Extemporaneous speech

__1__10. Organizational audit

__1__11. Interpersonal problem paper

Please pick one or two of the activities or assignments you rated highest and explain why you rated them highly. What about these activities engages students and promotes learning outcomes of the course.

I like the interpersonal problem paper because I force my students to bring in materials from class to analyze a real-life conflict. Overall, my students have done very well on this assignment and I think its productive. They always have “ah-hah!” moments in these papers.

Please pick one or two of the activities or assignments you rated lower and explain why you rated them this way. What about these activities fails engages students and promote learning outcomes of the course. Please include any suggestions you may have for improving the activity.

I’ve struggled with the Fall-Out Shelter activity multiple times. It’s not always easy to get students involved. I think the prompts should be changed and the activity should be a little more complex. Sometimes students crank out their decisions in 5 minutes without actually thinking about them critically and then I often have to point out a lot of the things they should have considered. Changing the “process” of the assignment or the prompts might buffer this.

Finally, is there anything else in the design of the course that you feel could be improved to promote student engagement and the achievement of learning outcomes?

I’m still 50/50 on an attendance policy for the lecture... maybe there should be one. Students miss a lot when they don’t go to those and I often get a lot of emails and questions that are covered in lecture.

Eval Form #2

Note: Data collected from evaluation forms will be used for compilation in a peer review of teaching portfolio. The goal of the peer review project is to engage in critical reflection and processing in order improve teaching and course design. As graduate teaching assistants and leaders of the recitation sections your feedback is essential to evaluating and improving the design of the course. All data used in the peer review of teaching portfolio will be kept anonymous.

This course currently has nine learning outcomes. Please rate how well you feel that the course fulfills these outcomes on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 being the course fulfills this outcome completely and fully and 5 being the course fails to address this learning outcome at all.

 2 1. Advocate for a cause by making an oral presentation

 3 2. Negotiate solutions for a small group problem or conflict

 2 3. Relate competently by applying theory to an interpersonal problem

 2 4. Evaluate and criticize messages across public, professional, and private contexts

 4 5. Understand the history and roots of communication

 3 6. Articulate what communication is and why it is important, including the promise of communication and how a communication lens helps understand and address societal challenges and opportunities/possibilities

 3 7. Define and apply the communicative capacities of advocate, negotiate, and relate

__3__8. Apply various communication theories and concepts pressing 21st century problems and opportunities

__3__9. Design interactions that help solve problems

Please pick one or two of the outcomes you rated highest and explain why you rated them highly. How is the course successfully promoting fulfillment of this learning outcomes?

I think that this course does a really good job of teaching students how to apply communication theories and concepts to an interpersonal conflict. In class students are able to share examples of these concepts in their own lives, or the lives of others, as well as identify relevant theories in video clips, tv shows, etc. The interpersonal problem paper assignment further demonstrates student's abilities to analyze their relationships using course material.

Please pick one or two of the learning outcomes you rated lower and explain why you rated them this way. How/Why is the course failing to promoting fulfillment of this learning outcomes?

I believe students have a difficult time understanding the roots of the communication discipline and the connection between the contemporary study of communication and the Ancient Greeks. My students have a hard time remembering, and truly grasping, philosopher's positions on communication. My students do not seem to be able to relate this unit to the real-world as easily or see how this information impacts them, and as a result I think they are less engaged and ask fewer clarifying questions.

Are there any learning outcomes you think should be removed or added to list above? If yes, please explain why.

I do not usually have time to do the crafting the ethical code activity, but that is due to time constraints rather than an opinion on the activity itself.

Please rate each of the activities and assignments done in recitation sections on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 being an exceptional activity that directly relates to course learning outcomes and creates

student engagement and 5 being an activity that has no clear learning outcomes and does not engage students. For any activity you did not complete please mark N/A.

__1__ 1. Impromptu speeches

__4__ 2. Constructing your cave

__1__ 3. Fall Out Shelter Activity

__N/A__ 4. Crafting an Ethical Code

__3__ 5. The building blowup

__1__ 6. Internet dating Activity

__2__ 7. Interpersonal problem paper activity

__1__ 8. Intercultural Activity

__1__ 9. Extemporaneous speech

__4__ 10. Organizational audit

__1__ 11. Interpersonal problem paper

Please pick one or two of the activities or assignments you rated highest and explain why you rated them highly. What about these activities engages students and promotes learning outcomes of the course.

I think the Internet Dating activity is really engaging. This can be a hard activity for some students because it asks them to think critically about their own worldviews and assumptions about culture, gender, and relationships, but if done well I believe students leave the classroom with a better understanding of all those topics. I also think that because the activity seems, at first, fun and silly, students enjoy the process and are more open to listening and debriefing with one another—perhaps because they are already engaged. This activity promotes students ability to connects things discussed in the course to their own experiences and conceptions of the world in a way that isn't

Please pick one or two of the activities or assignments you rated lower and explain why you rated them this way. What about these activities fails engages students and promote learning outcomes of the course. Please include any suggestions you may have for improving the activity.

I do think that the constructing your cave assignment is helpful in having students think metaphorically about communication, so it does promote learning and demonstrate course material. However it is not the most engaging, nor does it promote a lot of critical thought. I don't think this is a bad activity though.

The organizational audit is a well designed assignment, however my students often turn in surface level analyses. I believe this is because we do not have time to sufficiently discuss critical power dynamics in the course, and students struggle to identify these intricacies during their short observations and interviews.

Finally, is there anything else in the design of the course that you feel could be improved to promote student engagement and the achievement of learning outcomes?

I think this is, overall, a very good course. Like many large introductory courses, we are covering a lot of different information over the semester and must necessarily sacrifice depth for breadth.

Unfortunately this also means that students may not have a the best understanding of some aspects of our field, as we have to move quickly and cannot cover everything.

Graduate Student Assistant Comm 101 Course Evaluation Form

Note: Data collected from evaluation forms will be used for compilation in a peer review of teaching portfolio. The goal of the peer review project is to engage in critical reflection and processing in order improve teaching and course design. As graduate teaching assistants and leaders of the recitation sections your feedback is essential to evaluating and improving the design of the course. All data used in the peer review of teaching portfolio will be kept anonymous.

This course currently has nine learning outcomes. Please rate how well you feel that the course fulfills these outcomes on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 being the course fulfills this outcome completely and fully and 5 being the course fails to address this learning outcome at all.

- 2 1. Advocate for a cause by making an oral presentation
- 3 2. Negotiate solutions for a small group problem or conflict
- 2 3. Relate competently by applying theory to an interpersonal problem
- 2 4. Evaluate and criticize messages across public, professional, and private contexts
- 2 5. Understand the history and roots of communication
- 3 6. Articulate what communication is and why it is important, including the promise of communication and how a communication lens helps understand and address societal challenges and opportunities/possibilities
- 2 7. Define and apply the communicative capacities of advocate, negotiate, and relate
- 2 8. Apply various communication theories and concepts pressing 21st century problems and opportunities
- 3 9. Design interactions that help solve problems

Please pick one or two of the outcomes you rated highest and explain why you rated them highly. How is the course successfully promoting fulfillment of this learning outcomes?

My students have found our interpersonal section to be supremely useful (and interesting). I have had discussions in class after they turn in the interpersonal problem paper, and I was impressed with their thoughtfulness about their role in the these interactions, how they could tangibly change them, etc. My students would like even MORE interpersonal in the course, but with this learning objective, we are doing a strong job.

Please pick one or two of the learning outcomes you rated lower and explain why you rated them this way. How/Why is the course failing to promoting fulfillment of this learning outcomes?

Our course runs a difficult balance. On the one hand, this is not a course about public speaking. But on the other, I just don't know if we spend enough time really thinking through public speaking. We don't spend enough time on the actual doing of the speech; we give them impromptu speeches before we even really discuss 3 point structure or other speaking rules/tips/guidelines. It's difficult to make public speaking sexy and fun, so I have a difficult time making that sing for students. But I think we could use a bit more or more emphasis on that if this is the only chance they'll have to learn about presentations.

The organizational communication section is slippery for me and the students. When informally discussing what worked/didn't work for my students, the organizational audit was the second highest "best/useful/liked." But I don't know if the course meets the objectives related to org communication. Reading students' essays, they seem to understand a very small view of all interactions needing neutral parties and moderators, but organizational behavior could be a lot more/conflicts can arise from more places.

Are there any learning outcomes you think should be removed or added to list above? If yes, please explain why.

#7 feels vague. I'm not quite sure what defining and applying those three actually looks like.

Please rate each of the activities and assignments done in recitation sections on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 being an exceptional activity that directly relates to course learning outcomes and creates student engagement and 5 being an activity that has no clear learning outcomes and does not engage students. For any activity you did not complete please mark N/A.

- 3 1. Impromptu speeches
- 2 2. Constructing your cave
- 2 3. Fall Out Shelter Activity
- N/A 4. Crafting an Ethical Code
- 3 5. The building blowup
- 2 6. Internet dating Activity
- 1 7. Interpersonal problem paper activity
- N/A 8. Intercultural Activity
- 2 9. Extemporaneous speech
- 3 10. Organizational audit

___1___ 11. Interpersonal problem paper

Please pick one or two of the activities or assignments you rated highest and explain why you rated them highly. What about these activities engages students and promotes learning outcomes of the course.

I think the “Building Your Cave” activity engages our students in a few registers. It rearticulates the history objectives above by having students recall Plato/Aristotle, but it also asks them to think about communication in metaphor. They seem to walk away with a more personalized and poetic view of communication beyond “getting people to do what I want” or “messages people send.”

I’ve already discussed the joys and praises for the interpersonal problem paper above!

Please pick one or two of the activities or assignments you rated lower and explain why you rated them this way. What about these activities fails engages students and promote learning outcomes of the course. Please include any suggestions you may have for improving the activity.

I don’t feel the organizational audit does everything we wish it would. We only given students 2 weeks to do the assignment, which puts them in a super rushed and sometimes shoddy mindset. But at the same time, I’m unsure how much time they would *actually* need to complete the assignment—if procrastination would take over. Sometimes, student show really impressive analysis or higher level thinking, but for the most part, I’m finding students aren’t getting the richness of organizational communication from this assignment. They’re tracing power structures and hierarchies which just aren’t very communicative. They’re treating organizations as containers instead of following the communication that organizes them, if that makes sense. With COMM 286 also doing this assignment, I question if students have a difficult time with the assignment because they can’t find organizations since we’re putting a lot of strain on orgs’ time.

By no means is the assignment completely flawed. However, there is so mixture of how it’s enacted in the class, as well as the types of things we are (or aren’t) covering about organizations that is missing. It seems we’re supposed to be covering organizational conflicts, but the organizational audits I’m getting are all very structural.

Finally, is there anything else in the design of the course that you feel could be improved to promote student engagement and the achievement of learning outcomes?

I’m finding student engagement difficult in the course because I am simply unconvinced they’re reading or working with the materials. During Friday sections, we can’t work through or highlight the week’s concepts in the activities because they don’t even know them. Students are

waiting until the exams to cram everything in their brains. While that's one approach, I wonder if having reading quizzes on Fridays would help with this. Maybe not posting the powerpoints either, though I know students really like them? It's very draconian, but I am pressed to find ways to make our students really grasp the materials.

Students need clearer expectations for assignments. While the blurbs on our syllabus are good starting points, they don't provide enough material for them. Thus, our students are getting confused because each TA gives fairly different instructions + we have different things said during lecture sometimes. Having more clear expectations could help minimize confusions. This is not to say I don't see or appreciate the flexibility we have as TAs. I am just not convinced a "perfect" basic course exists.

Having more engaging organizational communication readings might drive up student interest. Topics like organizational culture, rituals, stories, and identity are important, essential communication behaviors and are fun. There isn't the same life with the material and readings. I envision this class being like the fun tidbits and greatest hits of communication to get students thinking with and through communication, but where the org section sits, it doesn't pop as much as it could.

Appendix F: Extemporaneous Speech Rubric

Name _____ Topic _____

Introduction

Yes

No

Speech contained a clear attention getter (1pt)

Thesis statement was clearly stated (2pt)

A statement of significance was articulated (2pt)

Speaker previewed their points (2pts)

Body

Speaker had clear transitions between points (2pt)

Speaker presented a logical argument (2pt)

At least one source was cited (2pt)

Source was properly cited (2pt)

Delivery

Speaker maintained good eye contact (2pt)

Speaker avoided distracting body movement (2pt)

Speech was free of distracting filler statement (2pt)

Conclusion

Speaker reviewed their points (1pt)

Thesis was restated (1pt)

Speaker has a strong closing to the speech (2pt)

Time: _____

Grade /25