

Communication History Seminar

Communication 5392–Section 001 | Fall 2014

Tues., 6-8:50 p.m.

Room TBA

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Hours: TBA

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Note: Because of other department and university duties, office hours occasionally will be cancelled. Cancellations will be posted on the office door and, when possible, announced in class and/or via email.

Course Description: This course will provide students with an introduction to historical methods. While learning and practicing these methods, each student will develop a deeper understanding of his/her particular field of interest in an historical context.

Learning Goals and Objectives: The following learning goals and objectives have been set for students in this class:

- Students will become familiar with historical philosophies.
- Students will be able to critique existing historical research.
- Students will be able to assess the value of research sources and synthesize this material to interpret what is “truth.”
- Students will understand and demonstrate the elements of historical writing.
- Students will discover how their professions’ values and standards have developed historically and how they affect today’s communication environment.

Required Readings:

- A “starter” list of readings (provided on Blackboard and online) will be distributed.
- As the course goes on, students will begin to seek out their own readings.

NOTE: All required readings will be provided. However, if you consider yourself a budding communication historian, it would benefit you to own the following three books, from which many of the required readings will come:

Barzun, Jacques, and Henry F. Graff. *The Modern Researcher*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2004.

Sloan, Wm. David. *Perspectives on Mass Communication History*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1991.

Sloan, Wm. David, and Michael Stamm. *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*. Northport, AL: Vision, 2010.

Course Policies

Course Requirements: Students’ grades for this course will be based on participation in class discussion, critiques of existing historical work, a research paper, and a research presentation.

Grade Calculation

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>% of grade</u>	<u>Grading scale</u>
Class participation	25	A – 90-100 percent
Historical critiques	25	B – 80-89 percent
Research paper	40	C – 70-79 percent
Presentation	10	D – 60-69 percent
		F – below 60 percent

Class participation. This course will be conducted as a seminar/workshop, requiring active participation from all students. A portion of students' learning will occur through their own processing of reading material and discussion of these materials with their peers. Participation in these discussions will be evaluated based on asking insightful questions and contributing informed, thoughtful comments. Students are expected to keep up with assigned readings BEFORE class in order to participate.

Historical critiques. This portion of the student's grade comes from three components.

- 1) Students will submit one book report in week 3, analyzing general histories of their chosen fields. More details on this assignment will be provided on the first day of class. (5 percent)
- 2) In weeks 4-7, students will submit annotated bibliographies of at least five journal articles per week (at least 20 total) relevant to their selected paper topics.

During that process, students will select one article per week to critique carefully, using criteria to be distributed in class. Students must be prepared to discuss their findings in class each week to receive full credit for each critique. (15 percent)

- 3) Later in the course, students will apply the same criteria to each others' papers. (5 percent)

Research paper. Each student will write a 25-30-page conference-quality original research paper on a topic in communication history beginning prior to 1990. The paper must be fully referenced in Chicago Style. More details will be provided throughout the course.

Presentation. Students will give 15-minute conference-style presentations on their papers at the end of the term. More details will be provided on presentation requirements later in the semester.

Behavior expectations: Students are learning to be communication professionals and are expected to model the following professional behaviors in class:

- Arrive to class on time and ready to participate.
- Turn cell phones to silent/vibrate.
- Respect others; don't speak when someone else is speaking.
- Listen closely and disagree calmly with others opinions.
- Do not text message, check personal e-mail, instant message, surf the Web or study for other classes during lab time.

Attendance Expectations: Students are to treat the class like a job; they are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. Work completed in class weighs heavily on the student's grade; therefore, failure to come to class will affect students' grades adversely. Students will receive zeros for work completed during the student's absence.

There are no make ups, and no late work is accepted. Consideration will be given for **extreme circumstances** (serious illness, debilitating injury, or death of a loved one) if the student provides documented proof of the circumstances.

Department, College, and University Policies

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://web.uta.edu/ses/fao>).

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may contact the Maverick Resource Hotline by calling 817-272-6107, sending a message to resources@uta.edu, or visiting www.uta.edu/resources.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory will be asked to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS) about the course and how it was taught. Instructions on how to access the SFS system will be sent directly to students through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback data is required by state law; student participation in the SFS program is voluntary.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10 percent or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Academic Integrity: At UT Arlington, academic dishonesty is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any form, including (but not limited to) "cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts" (UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2). Suspected violations of academic integrity standards will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.