

Advanced Theories in Communication

Communication 5300 | Fall 2016

Monday, 6-8:50 p.m.

Fine Arts 414

Instructor: Dr. Erika Pribanic-Smith

Office: 2114 Fine Arts Building

Hours: 12:30-1:30 p.m. T/Th or by appointment

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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: The purpose of this course is to introduce students to a variety of contemporary theories of communication. This includes some of the philosophical issues underlying the study of communication.

Learning Goals and Objectives:

In addition to providing students with an overview of some communication topics and issues, this course is designed to accomplish the following:

- Develop students' capacity for theoretical thinking;
- Encourage students to develop and refine their research interests;
- Refine students' library research skills; and
- Develop students' ability to express their ideas through scientific writing, formal presentations, and informal class discussion.

Course Materials:

- Required readings for the course will be provided through Blackboard.
- Students should consider purchasing a copy of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.).

Blackboard:

Students will submit all course assignments and complete all exams on Blackboard (<http://elearn.uta.edu>). Assignments not submitted to the proper slot on time will not be graded.

The instructor also will post all necessary course materials to Blackboard, including the syllabus, course readings, and assignment information.

All grades for individual course assignments, including in-class work, will be posted to Blackboard, and course averages will be posted there periodically. Please log in regularly to check grades and announcements. No grade information will be emailed.

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester on Blackboard and seek guidance if their grade drops below satisfactory levels.

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>
Literature review/presentation	35	A – 90-100 percent
Exams (15 each, midterm & final)	30	B – 80-89 percent
Seminar discussion (leadership = 5)	20	C – 70-79 percent
Response papers	15	D – 60-69 percent
		F – below 60 percent

Follow American Psychological Association (APA) style for all writing assignments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Students will complete a 10-page (typed, double-spaced, excluding references) essay in which you will apply a theoretical approach to examine a topic of your own choosing.

In your essay you should do the following:

- 1) Choose a topic that interests you and that you would like to examine conceptually and empirically. Problematize the topic – define it, why should we pursue it? Why do we care about this topic?
- 2) Justify the choice of theory/ies that you would use in examining the chosen topic. You would need to systematically demonstrate how the theory/ies would conceptualize the phenomenon you want to study. This includes a thorough review of literature studies done previously on the topic.
- 3) Reveal weaknesses, missing links, and oversights in previous research. Presumably, your suggestions for future research will be designed to address these inadequacies.
- 4) End with research questions and/or hypotheses and conceptual and operational definitions of your concepts of interest.

Further explanation of the paper

The goal of the paper is to demonstrate that you are able to use a theoretical approach to examine a topic of interest. In doing so you would justify why you chose a certain theory. This includes the assumptions about communication the theory makes. Another goal of the essay is to develop the ability to conduct research and synthesize existing literature on a topic and use that body of literature to generate new ideas. You are expected to review the original works of the theorist yourself rather than relying on what other scholars write about the original work.

A literature review introduces and defines important concepts or processes that are related to 1) the topic and 2) the selected theory. It describes the research that has been conducted in this area and seeks to integrate the work and arrive at meaningful conclusions.

The topic you select for your literature review should be well-defined. Try to narrow your topic as much as you can but don't make it so narrow that there isn't any research to review. You cannot do a literature review on "interpersonal research," for example, because this area is too broad. Likewise, you cannot do a literature review on "The effects of dating via Match.com on graduate students at the Department of Communication at UTA" because this topic is too specific. A more appropriate topic might be the "effects of online dating on young adults."

Literature reviews are selective. You should focus on the pieces that are relevant to your specific focus rather than describe all of the relevant studies in a given area. You should aim at synthesizing the articles you believe are important so that you can arrive at a conclusion regarding the state of the literature.

Literature reviews tell the reader both what previous work has said and has NOT said about a given topic. In other words, they reveal weaknesses, missing links, and oversights in previous research. Presumably, your suggestions for future research will be designed to address these inadequacies.

Three milestones have been identified for you (see schedule of classes):

- 1) Turn in a 1-2 page (500 words) statement proposing a topic for your lit review. Provide a detailed description of the topic and explain its significance. Why should this topic be researched?
- 2) Turn in an annotated bibliography with at least 10 sources for your lit review. At least three of these should be specifically about your chosen theory. Cite your sources in proper AP Style, and explain in a brief paragraph under the citation what its main points are. (TIP: Keep up with your annotating as you go along finding and reading sources, and this will be a simple assignment to complete. To adequately keep up, you should be reviewing two sources per week.)
- 3) Turn in drafts for timely feedback.

Presentation of your papers

You will be presenting to your peers an outline of your final paper. You may prepare visual aids or handouts to aid understanding. You will have 15 minutes each. We will decide on the order of presentations in an earlier class.

DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP

Each student will facilitate one class discussion (20 minutes). As the facilitator you are expected to pick one article from the reading list on the first day of class and prepare a one-page handout for the class that may be used as a guide.

Create an outline that logically covers the main points of the article, including the goal, theoretical framework used, research questions, methods, findings, and limitations.

Your handout should be fairly detailed and serve as study notes for exams. At the end of the analysis you are required to raise two questions regarding the readings that we will attempt to address during class discussions.

The handout can be single-spaced and printed on both sides.

NOTE: The discussion leader will not have to write a response paper during the week (s)he is assigned to facilitate discussion.

RESPONSE PAPERS

Response papers are intended to structure your thoughts about the readings each week. To facilitate thinking about the material, and to give the instructor time to look at the papers prior to

class, the response papers will be due each week by 8 p.m. on Sunday. Questions and comments from these papers will form discussion starters for class.

To get the most out of the readings, students should structure the paper in the following way:

- The first paragraph is to be a brief **summary** of the articles. Focus in particular on the main arguments, what was done in each study (the methods), and what the main findings were.
- The second paragraph is to be an **integration** of all articles that are due for that day. In your integration paragraph, talk about what generalizations or conclusions can be made across the readings. How would you succinctly summarize this group of articles? Are there important areas of discrepancy among the articles? If so, can you succinctly identify these? How is communication being measured?
- The third paragraph is to be **reaction**. What is the most important contribution from these readings, either to theory and basic knowledge, or to applications of knowledge? What limitations do you see in these readings?
- For the final part of the paper, write at least two questions for discussion. These can focus in general on what questions remain to be answered in this area or on any questions you have about the readings. What remains unclear to you?

Responses should be approximately 500 words and never should exceed two double-spaced pages. Your goal is to present a thoughtful and thorough but concise treatment of the topic.

EXAMS

Students will take Blackboard exams at the midpoint and end of the term. Exams will cover concepts in the readings and class discussions. They will consist of short answers and essays.

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, my philosophy is that students are to treat the class like a job. Students are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. Each absence reduces opportunities to contribute to discussion, participate in small group activities, ask questions, and clarify issues related to coursework. Missing class reduces students' participation grade.

LATE WORK

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.

WORK EXPECTATIONS

Students will be conducting individual research as well as reading for class and writing weekly response papers. Effective time management is crucial. Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities. If students are struggling with the material or the workload, they should see the instructor during office hours or arrange another meeting time outside of class to discuss it.

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, as noted in the syllabus schedule. 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://www.uta.edu/ses/fao>).

Disability Accommodations: UT 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)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. 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 disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)**. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting OSD (www.uta.edu/disability; 817-272-3364) or **Counseling and Psychological Services** (CAPS; www.uta.edu/caps/; 817-272-3671).

Only those students who have officially documented a need for accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling 817-272-3364.

Non-Discrimination Policy: *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos.*

Title IX Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.*

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>.

Campus Carry: Effective Aug. 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (SB 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the established as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

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% 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.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located at the end of the hallway in either direction from the classroom. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

Academic Integrity: All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) 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.

The English Writing Center (411LIBR): The Writing Center Offers free tutoring in 20-, 40-, or 60-minute face-to-face and online sessions to all UTA students on any phase of their UTA coursework. Our hours are 9 am to 8 pm Mon.-Thurs., 9 am-3 pm Fri. and Noon-6 pm Sat. and Sun. Register and make appointments online at <http://uta.mywconline.com>. Classroom Visits, workshops, and specialized services for graduate students are also available. Please see www.uta.edu/owl for detailed information on all our programs and services.

Library & Research Assistance: University-level research requires university-level sources. Appropriate sources include scholarly and peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and credible news magazines and newspapers. The UTA Library offers a plethora of resources and subject specialists to help you select and locate appropriate sources. Find library staff at the Service Zone on the first floor of the UTA Central Library, by phone at (817) 272-3395, by text at (817) 727-8395, email at AskUs@uta.edu, or the chat widget on the library's homepage, <http://library.uta.edu/>. For a list of useful guides to help you start your research, visit: <http://libguides.uta.edu/>.

Your librarian is **Diane Shepelwich**, dianec@uta.edu. Diane is available through email, individual or group meetings, or phone appointments. If you need help getting started with your research or course assignment or have questions along the way, please contact Diane for personalized research assistance.

Library Resources for Students

Academic Plaza Consultation Services library.uta.edu/academic-plaza

Ask Us ask.uta.edu/

A to Z List of Library Databases libguides.uta.edu/az.php

Library Tutorials library.uta.edu/how-to

Special Collections library.uta.edu/special-collections

Subject and Course Research Guides libguides.uta.edu

Course Schedule & Due Dates

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course. – Erika J. Pribanic-Smith

Date	Topics	Assignments
Aug. 29	Course introduction What is theory?	
Sept. 5	No Class (Labor Day)	
Sept. 12	Library research	Lit review topic proposal due by 5 p.m.
Sept. 19	Cognition and Intrapersonal Comm	Readings/response paper
Sept 26	Individual and Social Approaches	Readings/response paper
Oct. 3	Interpersonal Communication	Readings/response paper
Oct. 10	Intercultural Communication	Readings/response paper
Oct. 17	Exam 1	
Oct. 24	Persuasion & Health Communication	Readings/response paper Annotated bibliography due by 11:59 p.m.
Oct. 31	Organizational Communication	Readings/response paper
Nov. 7	Mediated Communication	Readings/response paper
Nov. 14	Media Effects	Readings/response paper
Nov. 21	Work day (no class)	Draft of lit review due by 11:59 p.m.
Nov. 28	Exam 2	
Dec. 5	Student presentations	Final lit review due by 5 p.m.

Emergency Phone Numbers:

In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at **817-272-3003** (non-campus phone), **2-3003** (campus phone). You may also dial 911. Non-emergency number: 817-272-3381.