Perspectives on Human Communication
COMM 1210
Spring 2012

M/W 9:00-9:50pm (CHEM 140); plus once weekly recitation (TH or F)

Course Instructors (e-mail/offices—office hours)

Professor Peter Simonson (peter.simonson@colorado.edu)
  Hellems 95 – M 12-1 pm, W 2-3pm
Alyce Thibodeaux, Lead Teaching Assistant (alyce.thibodeaux@colorado.edu)
  Hellems 14 – M 10:30-11:30am, TU 11:30-12:30am
Jorge Lizarzaburu (jorge.lizarzaburu@colorado.edu)
  Hellems 14 – M 10-11am, TH 1-2pm
Maggie George (margaret.george@colorado.edu)
  Hellems 14 – M 10:30-11:30am, TU 1-2pm
Bingjuan Xiong (bingjuan.xiong@colorado.edu)
  Hellems 14– W 2-3pm, TH 10-11am

Communicating with the Instructors: You may communicate with us face-to-face or via e-mail. Besides our office hours, we will generally be available before and after class in or outside CHEM 140. If you have an e-mail question, contact your recitation instructor first, through their CU address above (i.e. not through the D2L website). Don’t expect an immediate response, but they will try to get back to you within 24 hours during the week (on weekends and holidays it is likely to be longer).

The Course

Communication and its media have created new worlds for us, and we only partly understand what we’re doing in them. These worlds condition the way we feel, think, and relate to others—as communicative environments have done for as long as life has existed. We need to try to understand those environments better, our places in them, and our ways of producing and reproducing communication at this time in history. Our lives depend on it.

This course provides an introduction to communication as a way of thinking about and living in the world. It also introduces communication as a discipline and interlocking fields of study. We will read from both classic and contemporary writings to make sense of communication as a discrete event, ongoing interactive process, habit, structure, and cultivated art that can be directed toward all kinds of human purposes. In the process of learning key concepts and theories, emphasis is placed on developing reflective self-awareness about the communication that we participate in and wider-ranging curiosity and care for the communicative lives of others. In the process, we will consider a range of embodied and technologically mediated forms of communication cutting across interpersonal, organizational, and public settings and relationships.
The first half of the course will chart different ideas and perspectives on communication in general, looking back to influential ancient views, classic twentieth-century authors, and important contemporary understandings. Across the first seven weeks, we will focus particularly on the way that communication can create individual and social realities. Following the midterm, we will turn to questions of self, others, and community in the contemporary world, and sample representative ways of considering those issues from communicative perspectives. Instead of trying to give an overview of communication studies writ large, we will focus on specific, empirical studies of interpersonal, intercultural, organizational, group, rhetorical, and mass-mediated communication. The aim is both to apply general conceptual frameworks developed in the first half of class and to see particular ways that students of communication think about and investigate the world.

**Goals for Students**

The course is designed to promote the following outcomes for students:

1. To see communication as a historical idea and a way of understanding the human world; to develop more reflective and articulate ways of interpreting, evaluating, and responding to communication in the present day.
2. To improve the ability to read scholarly literature, explain key ideas and terms, apply them to real-world examples, and differentiate approaches and perspectives to the study of communication.
3. To develop habits of reflective awareness about communication that can enrich your everyday experience, help you negotiate it, and improve your ability to intelligently consider the communicative lives of nearby and distant others.

**Assignments and Exams**

Weekly Reading Assignments (Wednesdays):

- Reading Questions: 20%
- Reading Quizzes: 10%
  
  *See handout: Reading Questions and Quizzes*

Group Work (in lecture and recitation): 10%

  *See handout: Group Work and Group Presentations*

Practice Exam: 5%

Midterm Exam (2 days; multiple choice and short essay): 25%

Final Exam (multiple choice and short essay): 30%

  *Review Sheets will be distributed before each exam.*
Readings and Course Materials

Readings: As a way of both encouraging independent thought and reading practices—as well as saving students $70 or more—we won’t be using a textbook for this class. Instead, we have selected individual readings, all of which are available through D2L or the University’s Chinook Library System. If you are using the latter from off campus, you will need to make sure that your VPN Client is turned on. (If you need VPN software, visit http://www.colorado.edu/its/vpn/clients.html).

Print off hard copies of all assigned readings and keep them in a three-ring binder or folder with your graded Reading Questions and class notes. Bring it to every lecture and recitation. We will be working from the texts, which we want you to read carefully, mark up, and make notes on. If you don’t have the readings with you, you can’t fully participate in recitation and lecture. We reserve the right to conduct spot checks to make sure you have them. (For more information, see Readings and Reading Questions handout)

You also need an iClicker for the course. (Once you have one, you must register it through CUConnect.) iClicker participation does not directly correspond with a grade in this course.

Two Notes on Grading

1. Philosophy. Your instructors are ‘old school.’ ‘C’ stands for ‘competent,’ as in ‘displayed competent knowledge of the materials and skills, and completed the assignments satisfactorily.’ ‘B’ means that you have gone significantly beyond basic competence; while ‘A’ indicates a superior answer, displaying both excellent understanding of the material and evidence of independent thought. We uphold high standards as a way to help bring out your best thinking and writing, and reward true excellence.

2. Mechanics. We will be entering your grades on D2L. It is your responsibility to monitor the grades that are recorded there and make sure they accord with the grade you received on the assignment or exam. We are very careful when we grade and enter scores, but occasionally a mistake occurs. If you find a discrepancy between your posted grade and the one written on your homework or exam, you need to let your TA know within 10 days after the assignment is returned. Grades will not be changed except in cases where there was an error in recording, computation, or application of course grading rubrics.

If You Want to Do Well in this Class…

Be Prepared: Give yourself enough time to do a thorough job on the readings and Reading Questions (RQ). They count for 20% of your final grade, and they prepare you for exams. Do all of them, do them carefully, and bring the original readings to class with you for discussion. Stay on top of the material; there is a lot of it, and cramming does not work for the exams. Be sure to bring a printed copy of your RQ to recitation each week as we will review your responses and use the material for class discussion.
Be Present: If you’re not present, you lose the benefit of learning through examples, problem solving, live thinking, and other ‘active learning.’ Unless you are remarkably talented, your exam grade will suffer. Even if you are remarkably talented, you will still lose a chance to learn more, and find ways to make course material applicable to your own life. You will be asked to sit with your group during lecture, and will be given a participation sheet to fill out during structured discussion moments. Being present in both lecture and recitation counts toward 5% of your final grade (see Groups and Group Presentation handout).

Be Engaged: Learning is an active process. It is marked by physical and cognitive engagement. Listen carefully in class. Stay involved by taking notes, both of what is said, and of things that cross your mind during lecture and discussion. Be active in recitation and lecture discussions. To help you stay engaged, avoid distracting people around you, and explore the world of the spoken word, students will not be permitted to use laptops, cell phones, or other portable electronic devices in class. (Exceptions to the laptop rule will be made if students have registered a learning difference with CU’s Disability Services Office. Please talk with Simonson in the first week of school).

Consider this advice from former COMM 1210 students taught by Simonson:

- “You get out of the class what you put in - do the work. Enjoy it. That’s all you have to do!”
- “Work really hard and keep up with everything! Doing the RQs and reading really help with the learning process of this class.”
- “Understand grading process - it differs from most other courses and that it is difficult to get an "A".
- “The tests are challenging, so take time to fully complete the RQs. Be present - go to every lecture.”
- Study early and often! Really be sure to put a lot of time and effort into RQs and quizzes.”
- “Stay on top of all readings, take good notes and listen/attend lecture. Try to see the bigger picture, this is not one of those classes where you have to ask when you will use this knowledge in real life.”
- “Do the work, show up and listen!”

Alternate-Date and Makeup Exams

Alternate-date and makeup exams will be given only:

a) If the student is required to attend an officially sanctioned University athletic event as a participant and notifies the instructor in advance.

b) In cases of a religious observance where the instructor is notified in advance.

c) In cases of documented serious illness.

d) In cases of a documented family emergency.

e) In cases of a documented legal obligation that cannot be adjusted (e.g. court appearances)
Students with Special Needs

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please give Prof. Simonson a letter from Disability Services as soon as possible so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices. **If accommodation includes the need to take notes on a laptop computer during class, please let us know immediately.**

Maintaining a Civil Classroom Environment

We will be talking about issues and ideas that can make a difference in all of our lives. To do that well, we need to be respectful of one another. We all have that responsibility. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion, and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. We will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. The UC-Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment (http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html) and the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships applies to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/odh

Plagiarism and Other Cheating

**We take cheating seriously—on exams, quizzes, and with Reading Questions.** All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic, dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (303-725-2273; honor@colorado.edu). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). **For information on following the Honor Code with Reading Questions, see that handout.**

Other information can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html & http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/.
Class Schedule

- Unless otherwise noted, readings are available through D2L and you should complete them in the order listed.
- Typed and printed Reading Questions (RQs) need to be handed in to your TA at the beginning of lecture on Wednesday (note weeks RQs are due).
- Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class on Wednesday (note quiz weeks in schedule).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments due (Wednesday)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: Introduction to the Course</td>
<td>Jan. 16 – No class Jan. 18</td>
<td>Class doc.: Logos and Dissoi Logoi: Isocrates Class doc.: “Comm. as Event, Process, Habit, Structure, &amp; Art”</td>
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<td>Week 4: The Discovery of “Communication” as a Central Idea for Modern Life – and Questions about it</td>
<td>Feb. 6 &amp; 8</td>
<td><em>Cooley, Social Organization</em> (1911), Part II, Chs. 6-8 <em>Lippmann, Public Opinion</em> (1922), Ch. 1</td>
<td>Feb. 8 – RQ # 2:</td>
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<td>Week 8: Midterm Exam</td>
<td>Mar. 5 &amp; 7</td>
<td><em>Mon. – Short Essay Wed. – Multi. Choice</em></td>
<td>EXAM (Mon &amp; Wed)</td>
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<td>Week 10: Multiple Selves &amp; Personal Identity</td>
<td>Mar. 19 &amp; 21</td>
<td>Comello, William James on ‘Possible Selves’</td>
<td>Mar. 21 – RQ # 4</td>
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<td>Week 11: Spring Break</td>
<td>Mar. 26 &amp; 28</td>
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<td>Week 12: Discourses &amp; Media Representations of Work &amp; Masculinity</td>
<td>Apr. 2 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Ashcraft &amp; Flores, “Slaves with White Collars”</td>
<td>Apr. 4 – Quiz # 4</td>
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<td>Week 13: Talking about Sex &amp; Acquaintance Rape</td>
<td>Apr. 9 &amp; 11</td>
<td>Harris, “Peanut Butter Sandwiches: Making Sense of Acquaintance Rape Bussel, “Beyond Yes or No: Consent as Sexual Process”</td>
<td>Apr. 11 – RQ # 5</td>
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<td>Week 16: Bringing it All Together</td>
<td>Apr. 30 &amp; May 2</td>
<td>Review and Application Week</td>
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<td>Week 17: FINAL EXAM</td>
<td>Sat. May 5</td>
<td>4:30 – 7:00pm</td>
<td>CHM 140</td>
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