Course Descriptions

Courses Offered for Graduate Credit in

SPRING 2014

Department of Communication
A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

This brochure has been prepared as an aid to graduate students and advisers. Course descriptions have been provided by instructors in response to a request for brief descriptions of graduate (500-level) and advanced undergraduate/graduate (400-level) courses they will offer in Spring 2014.

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This course focuses on macro-organizational communication issues. As such it consists of a study of organizations as units of analysis rather than individuals as units of analysis. For example, we might want to know why fast food organizations appear to use similar communication strategies, or why health care organizations are using fast food communication strategies. Each of these questions considers organizations rather than persons as units or foci of analysis. The questions we ask, the processes we study, and the answers we seek are therefore importantly different at this perspective or level. We now move from questions about human communication in organizations (micro-organizational behavior) to questions about the communication of organizations (macro-organizational communication).

The goal of the course this term is to explore theories (that is, explanations) and issues of such macro-organizational behavior. Most work in organizational communication has been an extension of interpersonal communication, and it remains dominated by an intra-organizational (rather than inter-organizational) focus. One of the possibilities for expanding the field of communication and increasing the strength of its explanations about human experience is in the area of inter-organizational relations. The experiences of individuals and their opportunities for efficacious communication, or for organizational efficiency and efficacy, can be understood as function of macro-organizational variables.

Several areas will be explored during the course.

I. Macro Organizational theories: implicit communication
   As our introductory and foundational unit, we begin with a view of the organization as a unit of analysis. In this unit we also examine macro theories of organization and their implications for communication.

II. Interorganizational relations: organizations communicate with each other.
   Once human behavior and communication becomes built-up into the patterns we call complex organizations, we need to examine the arrangements and connections among multiple organizations.

III. Organizational strategy: leaders and management chooses paths for an entire organization.
    Strategy refers to an overarching plan by which an organization seeks to achieve its long-term goals. It involves both internal and external assessments.

IV. Organizational culture: The symbol life of an organization develops both within and through the permeable boundaries of organizations.

V. Organizational ethics from a macro perspective. Ethics commonly refers to systems of values about moral behavior of individuals. But a macro perspective suggests that the systems are maintained by widely shared and enforced norms, rules, and regulations.
This course presents an overview of racial stereotypes in the mass media and the effects of stereotypical imagery on viewers. We will discuss the structural and social origins of stereotypic media from multiple perspectives. However, the majority of the course will focus on published scholarship that systematically assesses the content and effects of racial representations from a social scientific perspective. Much of the course will focus on the portrayal of African Americans, however, other racial/ethnic groups will also be examined. Intersections between race, ethnicity, class, and gender will also be explored.
Social marketing applies marketing concepts and practices to bring about behavior change for a social good. Social marketing is an approach to planning and implementing projects and programs that emphasizes a customer-centered mindset to learn what people want and need to change their behavior. The course is designed to give students a thorough orientation to the discipline of social marketing and its application to a range of problems with an emphasis on issues in health contexts. Topics will include audience research, segmentation strategies, communication channels, and marketing mix, and the application of behavior theory. Graduate students do focused work on theory application and logic model development. Students will acquire practical skills in the design, implementation, and evaluation of health intervention initiatives that use social marketing.
CMN 476, Sec. GR: “Commercialism and the Public,” Prof. Stole

4 hours
2:00-3:20 TR
1060 Lincoln Hall
CRN 54589

The course discusses the influences of advertising and commercialism upon our political culture and social institutions and explores how individuals, as consumers and citizens, negotiate this commercial impact. Each semester, class readings and discussion focus on six or seven specific issues. Past issues have included advertising in schools and universities; the relationship between advertising and mass media; the public relations industry; political advertising; pharmaceutical advertising; marketing to children; commercialism and the environment; tobacco advertising; advertising and body image, and product placement in mass media.
CMN 496, Sec. CJG: “Language and Cognition,” Prof. Jacobs

4 hours
3:30-4:50 TR
1027 Lincoln Hall
CRN 50664

This course explores (1) how the nature of human communication is shaped by the human ability to learn and use language, and (2) how the nature of human communication is shaped by the properties of the linguistic instruments humans have constructed. Topics include: animal communication; concepts and logic; grammar; language development; human biology and evolution; writing; computing machinery; plans, strategies, and inference as related to language.
Political Economy of Communication is a course for advanced, mature and highly motivated students. The course is devoted to helping students develop their talents and skills for abstract reasoning and critical thinking. The course highlights six recently published books that address major social problems in the United States and the world, and that often have a strong communication dimension. Students must successfully take 12 weekly exams to establish they have read the assigned books thoroughly or they will fail the course.
CMN 496, Sec. SJG: “Argumentation Theory and Evaluation,” Prof. Jacobs

4 hours
2:00-3:20 TR
1027 Lincoln Hall
CRN 50668

This course explores normative principles for reasoned discourse and reasonable decision-making. Topics include the nature of cogent reasoning, trustworthy evidence, reliable methods of justification, and ethical duties of advocacy. Special attention is given to fallacious patterns of argument as used in scientific, political, commercial and other forums for debate.
This graduate seminar will explore the various theoretical frameworks used by communication researchers across a range of contexts. Theories placing an emphasis on how messages impact the persuasion process will be reviewed. Moreover, theories that address how individuals cognitively and emotionally process these messages will be examined. By the end of the semester, students will have a greater understanding of numerous persuasion theories as well as how to apply these frameworks into their own studies of persuasion.
This course explores the uses of the past in the present through the lens of folklore, a special but pervasive mode of communication framed as tradition. We will explore some of the history of folklore scholarship and look at its methods of study, analysis and interpretation, from the collection of "folklore texts" to the ethnography of communities.

We will be reading books and articles by: Roger Abrahams, Richard Bauman, Keith Basso, Benjamin Botkin, Linda Degh, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Henry Glassie, Zora Neal Hurston, Edward Ives, John Szwed, Barre Toelken, among others. We will also be listening to audio and video recordings of performers of tradition.

Writing for the course will involve short weekly “reaction” papers and a final research paper, the topic to be decided in consultation with the professor.
CMN 529, Sec. IS: “Consumers, Consumption, and Commercialism,” Prof. Stole

4 hours
5:00-7:50 W
4103 Lincoln Hall
CRN 52000

During the past two decades, consumer studies have moved from obscurity into the mainstream of many academic disciplines. Thus “consumer studies” cannot be claimed as the “property” of any particular field but, rather, an interdisciplinary scholarly endeavor.

This seminar uses the lenses of advertising and mass media to explore the rise and development of consumer society. By tracing the birth of modern advertising and the many consumer issues that emerged in tandem, we’ll study their political, economic, and cultural impact. The goal is to create a fundamental framework for evaluating the modern proliferation of commercial expressions and contemplate their imprint on consumers and consumer society.

Few developments can be explained through structural forces alone. Thus, an equally important task will be to explore how people as citizens and consumers have negotiated their roles in an increasingly commercialized world. Through readings and class discussions we’ll evaluate books for their relevance to our understanding of these issues.

Particular attention will be paid to research methods and strategies and seminar participants will be encouraged (but obviously not obligated) to utilize archival sources (at the University of Illinois campus or elsewhere) as they write a research paper that’s part of course requirement.
This course provides graduate students with a survey of the sub field of communication known as organizational communication. The course surveys the foundations of the study of communication in organizations as well as current perspectives and theoretical debates, with an emphasis on the institutional perspective. Topics to be covered include culture, discourse, the constitutive approach, identity and identification, institutional theory, and structuration. The course will be taught with a combination of lectures and discussions. Participation, short reaction papers, a substantial literature review, and a final paper will be the basis for grading. The course is appropriate for graduate students studying organizational topics in business management, communication, human relations, labor and industrial relations, psychology, and sociology.
CMN 529, Sec. LK: “Communication and Relationship Development,” Prof. Knobloch

4 hours
2:00-4:50 M
4007 Lincoln Hall
CRN 50677

How do interpersonal relationships change over time? What are the underlying causes of relationship initiation, growth, decline, and dissolution? Which theoretical perspectives are useful for examining communication over the course of relationship progression? What are the strengths and weaknesses of those theories? What are the challenges facing researchers who seek to understand the dynamic interplay between communication and relationship development?

We will tackle these questions by reading, discussing, and critiquing the literature on interpersonal communication and relationship progression. We will (a) compare and contrast meta-theoretical perspectives that privilege organismic, transactional, and dialectical approaches to understanding relationship development, (b) examine programs of research that document qualitative and quantitative shifts in relationships over time, and (c) consider the methodological issues that underlie the study of communication and relationship progression.

No prior coursework is necessary for the seminar, but a familiarity with interpersonal communication theory would be helpful. Students with questions about the course should contact Professor Knobloch (knobl@illinois.edu or 333-8913).
We will discuss how language-use-in-context links speakers to a range of social and cultural realities. From this, we will see how talk not only reflects such realities, it also constitutes them. Specifically, we will examine how people not only use language to describe and refer to themselves and others, but to enact those identities.

We will cover a range of "micro" and "macro" approaches to the study of talk. That is, we will explore both how people display and infer identities within specific interactions, as well as how people may understand such identities through multiple, broader frameworks, to include race/ethnicity, class, generation, peer-group, gender, nation-state, diaspora, etc.

We will be concerned with developing analytic frameworks that can be applied to talk in a variety of social and cultural contexts. Students will have the opportunity to collect and analyze their own materials. No previous background is required for this course. Students must be willing, however, to read, synthesize, and discuss material from a range of disciplines. We will read work in semiotics, pragmatics, communication, sociolinguistics, social psychology, and anthropology.
This course is an introduction to cultural media studies. Through a critical perspective on media culture, the course examines the theories, debates, and methods of contextual analyses of race, class, gender, sexuality and ethnicity. As cultural theorists have argued, media culture provides the materials out of which many people construct their sense of class, of ethnicity and race, of nationality, of sexuality, and of “us” and “them.” In analyzing popular media and the critical readings that assess them, students will be working with the critical assumption that media culture is now the dominant form of culture, that no experience is unmediated, and that the media function both as social constructions and as reflections of personal and cultural knowledge.
Critical Communication Research is a graduate seminar designed to acquaint students with the critical tradition in communication research. The course emphasizes a rigorous examination of a wide range of cutting-edge recent monographs in the field, and a strong emphasis on students generating high-quality research questions and papers, possibly contributing to theses or dissertations.
CMN 529, Sec. SP: “Social Scientific Theory Construction in Communication,” Prof. Poole

4 hours
2:00-4:50 W
4103 Lincoln Hall
CRN 52670

This course has two goals:

1. This course will introduce you to the nature of theory and theory construction in communication studies. The topics it will explore include the following: the nature of explanation; theoretical types; strategies for theory construction; the relationship between theory and inquiry in communication research; evaluating and critiquing theories.

2. This course will also introduce you to a range of theories of communication. There are so many theories in such a wide range of contexts that we cannot pretend to be comprehensive. Instead we will focus on exemplars of good theory.

Students will construct a theory for their term project. This can either consist of critiquing and advancing an existing theory or building a new one.
This seminar explores the joys and dilemmas of the research approach known as “rhetorical history.” Conceived variously as the historical study of rhetorical events, the study of non-contemporary public address, the reading of history as a series of rhetorical problems, the study of rhetoric to reveal its connections to the history of ideas, or the privileging of the archive, rhetorical history is not a singular method to be juxtaposed to “theory” or “criticism.” Rather, it is a multifaceted perspective that is interested in teasing out the relationship of rhetoric to its times.

The course will be divided into three unequal parts. Part One will examine the conflicted and contentious role of history in rhetorical scholarship. Part Two takes up the role of the archive in rhetorical research and will pay special attention to what it means to “do recent history.” Part Three will function like a workshop, as students in the class research and write their own rhetorical history projects. Here, students will have the option of developing an idea they bring with them to class (e.g., revising a conference paper, exploring a potential dissertation topic) or collaborating on a group project in which they explore campus rhetorical histories using archival resources available locally. Shorter writing assignments will encourage students to reflect upon various approaches to rhetorical history as well as the rhetoric of the archive.

Readings include Arlette Farge’s *The Allure of the Archive*, Potter and Romano’s *Doing Recent History*, and the edited collection *Working in the Archives: Practical Research Methods for Rhetoric and Composition*.

This course is appropriate for any graduate student who is interested in exploring rhetorical/historical perspectives on research. Previous graduate-level coursework in rhetoric is recommended, but not required.