**COMM 7000: Communication Theory**

Fall 2016

Location: LNCO 2630

Time: Friday 12:55 PM – 3:55 PM

Professor:

Jakob (Jake) Jensen

Associate Professor, Department of Communication

Associate Dean for Research, College of Humanities

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Office: LNCO 2618

Office Hours (by appointment): Monday, 2:45 – 4:35 pm

**Prerequisites:**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**Course Description:**

COMM 7000: Communication Theory is a graduate-level introduction to theoretical frameworks utilized by communication scholars across the field. It is ideal for students at both the masters and doctoral level as well as students from other fields looking to gain exposure to communication theory.

**Course Objectives:**

* Become familiar with theoretical frameworks used by a wide range of communication scholars
* Learn how to develop, apply, and refine theoretical frameworks
* Learn how to visually depict theoretical frameworks for research and presentations

**Required Texts:**

There is no required text for the course. All readings will be posted to the course CANVAS page under “Files>Readings”

**Requirements and Grading:**

Assignments % of final grade Due date

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Sketchbook Assignments | 20% | December 2nd (in class) |
| Paper #1 | 20% | October 3rd (11:59 pm) |
| Paper #2 | 60% | First 5 pages:  October 19th (11:59 pm)  Next 5 pages:  November 7th (11:59 pm)  Full Draft:  December 9th (11:59 pm) |

**Sketchbook Assignments:**

All students are required to purchase a good sketchbook and a pencil or pen, and bring it to class with you every day. [Here’s a good example](https://www.amazon.com/Acad%C3%A9mie-Spiral-Sketchbook-Heavyweight-54404/dp/B00260VPTM/ref=sr_1_4?s=office-products&ie=UTF8&qid=1468449154&sr=1-4&keywords=sketchbook) of sketchbook that would work. We will be using the sketch books to draw pictures of theories, constructs, and for brainstorming activities. You will hand it in at the end of the semester, and occasionally share your drawings with the class. Why? Because theoretical thinking often starts in a [sketchbook](http://darwin-online.org.uk/graphics/illustrations.html).

See also:

“Theories may assume different shapes as they evolve. Darwin’s theory of natural selection began as a mental image of an irregularly branching tree, then became notes in a journal, then a lengthy systematic treatise written in natural language, and later a concept expressed mathematically by evolutionary biologists. On the other hand, Einstein’s special theory of relativity was expressed mathematically from the outset (although in this case, too, mental images played an important role in the theory’s creation). Perhaps more relevantly, Burke’s theory of symbolic action was rendered initially at great length impressionistically across multiple volumes (e.g., 1953, 1954, 1961) and was later systematized and cast in the form of propositions by Duncan (1968). Differences in theoretical form no doubt arise for many reasons, but especially important in this context is the point that these differences have significant consequences for theory testing and more generally for what is done with a theory (i.e., for theoretical implementation).”

J. J. Bradac, *Uncertainty Theories Compared*, p. 466-467

**Paper #1:**

Identify a theory or construct you are interested in and craft a 1-page synthesis of what we know about it. 1 page (plus reference page). Single-spaced. Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.

**Paper #2:**

Review an existing theory or explicate a construct.

20 pages (plus reference page). Double-spaced. Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.

**Plus/Minus System:**

COMM 7000 uses a plus/minus system with one twist: there is no A+ or A- because the U does not recognize an A+ (thus making the A- problematic).

**Grade Calculation:**

One's course grade will be determined by the (weighted) average of the grades on each of the three assignments.

Course Average Course Grade

90% and up A

87% and up B+

83% and up B

80% and up B-

77% and up C+

73% and up C

70% and up C-

67% and up D+

63% and up D

60% and up D-

59% and below F

**The Americans with Disabilities Act**.

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services (CDS; <http://disability.utah.edu/>; 162 Olpin Union Building; (801)-581-5020). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the CDS.

**Addressing Sexual Misconduct**.

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which Includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information.  If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066.  For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776.  To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

**The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities**.

The code, which specifies student rights as well as conduct involving cheating, plagiarism, collusion, fraud, theft, etc., is provided at <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>.

**Wellness Statement**.

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness, <http://wellness.utah.edu/>; 801-581-7776.

**Course Attendance**:

Students **are expected to be in class**. If you need to miss class, then contact Professor Jensen ASAP. Unexcused absences will drop the student’s final letter grade by 1/3rd (for every absence).

**Note**:

Professor Jensen reserves the right to alter this syllabus at any time. He will announce any changes in class. Students are expected to routinely check the online syllabus for changes.

**Fall 2016 Calendar**

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| Day 1:  Aug 26 | **Explicating Constructs**   * Chaffee, S. H. (1991). *Explication*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.   Optional Reading:   * McCroskey, J. C. (1997). Willingness to Communicate, Communication Apprehension, and Self-Perceived Communication Competence: Conceptualizations and Perspectives. In Daly, et al. *Avoiding communication: Shyness, Reticence, & Communication Apprehension*, (pp. 75-108). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press. * Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, *117*(3), 497-529. * Harreveld, F., Nohlen, H. U., & Schneider, I. K. (2015). The ABC of ambivalence: Affective, behavioral, and cognitive consequences of attitudinal conflict. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *52*, 285-324. |
| Day 2:  Sept 2 | **Explication Debate: The Confounded Self-Efficacy Construct**   * Williams, D. M., & Rhodes, R. E. (2016). The confounded self-efficacy construct: Conceptual analysis and recommendations for future research. *Health Psychology Review, 10*(2), 113-128. * Beauchamp, M. R. (2016). Disentangling motivation from self-efficacy: Implications for measurement, theory-development, and intervention. *Health Psychology Review, 10*(2), 129-132. * Schwarzer, R., & McAuley, E. (2016). The world is confounded: A comment on Williams and Rhodes (2016). *Health Psychology Review, 10*(2), 133-135. * Brewer, N. T. (2014). Building better boxes for theories of behavior: A comment on Williams and Rhodes (2016). *Health Psychology Review, 10*(2), 136-139. * de Vries, H. (2016). Self-efficacy: Skip the main factor paradigm! A comment on Williams and Rhodes (2016). *Health Psychology Review, 10*(2), 140-143. * Williams, D. M., & Rhodes, R. E. (2016). Reviving the critical distinction between perceived capability and motivation: A response to commentaries. *Health Psychology Review, 10*(2), 144-147. |
| Day 3:  Sept 9 | **Communication Theory as a Field**   * Craig, R. T. (1999). Communication theory as a field. *Communication Theory*, *9*(2), 119-161.   Optional Readings:   * Ch. 1 from: Littlejohn, S. W., & Foss, K. A. (2008). *Theories of human communication*. 9th ed. Belmont, CA: Thomas Wadsworth. |
| Day 4:  Sept 16 | **Theory & Communication Science**   * Slater, M. D., & Gleason, L. S. (2012). Contribution to theory and knowledge in quantitative communication science. *Communication Methods & Measures*, *6*, 215-236.   Optional Reading:   * Slater, M. D., Peter, J., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2015). Message variability and heterogeneity: A core challenge for communication research. *Communication Yearbook, 39*, 3-32. * O’Keefe, D. J. (2003). Message properties, mediating states, and manipulation checks: Claims, evidence, and data analysis in experimental persuasive message effects research. *Communication Theory, 13*(3), 251-274. |
| Day 5:  Sept 23 | **Theory: 5 Examples**  Inoculation Theory   * Banas, J. A., & Rains, S. A. (2010). A meta-analysis of research on inoculation theory. *Communication Monographs, 77*, 281-311.   Exemplification Theory   * Zillmann, D. (1999). Exemplification theory: Judging the whole by the some of its parts. *Media Psychology, 1*, 69-94.   Excitation Transfer Theory   * Bunce, S. C., Larsen, R. J., & Cruz, M. (1993). Individual differences in the excitation transfer effect. *Personality & Individual Differences, 15*(5), 507-514.   Need for Closure Theory   * Roets, A., Kruglanski, A. W., Kossowska, M., Pierro, A., & Hong, Y. (2015). The motivated gatekeeper of our minds: New directions in need for closure theory and research. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 52*, 221-283.   Moral Foundations Theory   * Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 47*, 55-130. |
| Day 6:  Sept 30 | **Theory At A Crossroads (Yet Again)**   * Glass, T. A., & McAtee, M. J. (2006). Behavioral science at the crossroads in public health: Extending horizons, envisioning the future. *Social Science & Medicine*, *62*, 1650-1671. * McGuire, W. J. (1973). The Yin and Yang of progress in social psychology: Seven Koan. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 26*(3), 446-456. * Cappella, J. N. (2006). Integrating message effects and behavior change theories: Organizing comments and unanswered questions. *Journal of Communication, 56*, S265-S279.   Optional Reading:   * DeFleur, M. L. (1998). Where have all the milestones gone? The decline of significant research on the process and effects of mass communication. *Mass Communication & Society, 1*(1/2), 85-98. |
| Day 7:  Oct 7 | **The Biological Perspective to Communication**   * Weber, R. (2015). Biology and brains – methodological innovations in communication science: Introduction to the special issue. *Communication Methods & Measures, 9*, 1-4. * Weber, R., Mangus, J. M., & Huskey, R. (2015). Brain imaging in communication research: A practical guide to understanding and evaluating fMRI studies. *Communication Methods & Measures, 9*, 5 – 129. * Falk, E. B., Cascio, C. N., & Coronel, J. C. (2015). Neural prediction of communication-relevant outcomes. *Communication Methods & Measures, 9*, 30-54. * Sherry, J. L. (2015). Neuroscience and communication. *Communication Methods & Measures, 9*, 117-122. |
| Oct 14 | No Class: Fall Break October 8 – 16 |
| Day 8:  Oct 21 | **Why Are There So Few Communication Theories? A Chautauqua Via Communication Monographs**   * Berger, C. R. (1991). Communication theories and other curios. *Communication Monographs, 58*, 101-113. * Burleson, B. R. (1992). Taking communication seriously. *Communication Monographs, 59*, 79-86. * Redding, W. C. (1992). Response to professor Berger’s essay: Its meaning for organizational communication. *Communication Monographs, 59*, 87-93. * Purcell, W. M. (1992). Are there so few communication theories? *Communication Monographs, 59*, 94-97. * Berger, C. R. (1992). Curiouser and curiouser curios. *Communication Monographs, 59*, 101-107.   Optional Reading:   * Craig, R. T. (1993). Why are there so many communication theories? *Journal of Communication, 43*, 26-33. |
| Day 9:  Oct 28 | **Theoretical Comparison & Form**   * Gerend, M. A., & Shepherd, J. E. (2012). Predicting human papillomavirus uptake in young adult women: Comparing the health belief model and the theory of planned behavior. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine, 44*(2), 171-180. * Brewer, N. T, & Gilkey, M. B. (2012). Comparing theories of health behavior using data from longitudinal studies: A comment on Gerend and Shepherd. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine, 44*(2), 147-148. * Bradac, J. J. (2001). Theory comparison: Uncertainty reduction, problematic integration, uncertainty management, and other curious constructs. *Journal of Communication*, *51*, 456-476. |
| Day 10:  Nov 4 | **Can Theories Be Retired?**   * Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes, 50*, 179-211. * Fishbein, M., & Yzer, M. C. (2003). Using theory to design effective health behavior interventions. *Communication Theory*, *13*, 164-183. * Sniehotta, F. F., Presseau, J., & Araujo-Soares, V. (2014). Time to retire the theory of planned behavior. *Health Psychology Review, 8*(1), 1-7. * Azjen, I. (2014). The theory of planned behavior is alive and well, and not ready to retire: A commentary on Sniehotta, Presseau, and Araujo-Soares. *Health Psychology Review, 8*(1), 1-7.   Optional Reading:   * Head, K. J., & Noar, S. M. (2014). Facilitating progress in health behavior theory development and modification: The reasoned action approach as a case study. *Health Psychology Review, 8*(1), 34-52. * Schwarzer, R. (2014). Life and death of health behavior theories. *Health Psychology Review, 8*(1), 53-56. * Kok, G., & Ruiter, R. A. (2014). Who has the authority to change a theory? Everyone! A commentary on Head and Noar. *Health Psychology Review, 8*(1), 61-64. * Rhodes, R. E. (2014). Improving translational research in building theory: A commentary on Head and Noar. *Health Psychology Review, 8*(1), 57-60. * Noar, S. M., & Head, K. J. (2014). Mind the gap: Bringing our theories in line with the empirical data – A response to commentaries. *Health Psychology Review, 8*(1), 65-69. |
| Nov 11 | No Class: NCA November 10 – 13 |
| Day 11:  Nov 18 | **False Findings & Replication**   * Ioannidis, J. P. A. (2005). Why most published research findings are false. *PLoS Medicine*, *2*(8): e124. * Moonesinghe, R., Khoury, M. J., & Janssens, A. C. J. W. (2007). Most published research findings are false – but a little replication goes a long way. *PLoS Medicine*, *4*(2), e28. |
| Nov 25 | No Class: Thanksgiving Break November 24th – 25th |
| Day 12:  Dec 2 | **Future of the Discipline**   * Benoit, W. L., & Pfau, M. (2004). Introduction to the special issue: The state of the art in communication theory and research, part 1*. Journal of Communication, 54*(4), 588. * Anderson, J. A., & Baym, G. (2004). Philosophies and philosophic issues in communication, 1995-2004. *Journal of Communication, 54*(4), 589-615. * Bryant, J., & Miron, D. (2004). Theory and research in mass communication. *Journal of Communication, 54*(4), 662-704. * Parrott, R. (2004). Emphasizing “communication” in health communication. *Journal of Communication, 54*(4), 751-787. * Walther, J. B., Gay, G., & Hancock, J. T. (2005). How do communication and technology researchers study the Internet? *Journal of Communication, 55*(3), 632-657.   Optional Reading:   * Pencil, M. (1976), Salt passage research: The state of the art. *Journal of Communication*, *26*, 31-36.   **\*Hand in sketchbook at end of class.**  **\*Final paper due December 9th by 11:59 pm** |