

COMM 320: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Saint Louis University Madrid, Fall 2012

Padre Rubio Hall, 13. Mondays & Wednesdays 1530-1645

With Dr. Blair, blairsn@slu.edu Padre Arrupe Hall, top floor

Office Hours: Mon 16:45-17:45, Weds 11:50-12:50, 16:45-17:45 Fri 10-11:00, 12:00-14:00

Course Description:

This 3 credit course is designed to guide the student through the issues and literature related to communication within organizations. Organizational communication concerns the theories (explanations) of organized behavior, conceptions of organizations, the study of bureaucracy and its alternatives, metaphors for organizational communication, power, conflict, and strategic communication in organizations. This course focuses on the behavior of individuals and groups within organizations.

Course Objectives

Students satisfactorily completing this course should have the following competencies:

- Understanding of founding and contemporary organizational communication approaches
- Understanding of enduring and emerging organizational communication processes
- Ability to compare and contrast various approaches and processes
- Ability to apply approaches and processes in the analysis of case studies
- Ability to use organizational communication to analyze personal experience
- Ability to create specific recommendations for facing the challenges of organizational life (e.g. giving feedback, dealing with conflict, providing social support, and implementing technological change).

Materials:

--Book: Organizational Communication: Approaches and Processes (6th edition). By Katherine Miller, 2011. Use earlier editions at your own risk.

--Course readings posted on SLU Global.

Note: it is not required that you print out the readings, but you will need to have access to them during class. So feel free to print them out or take notes that you can bring to class.

Assignments:

Organizational Analysis Project (100pts / 20%)

This project consists of a group presentation based on Organizational Analysis of SLU Madrid. The presentation will be 30-35 minutes plus 15 minutes of questions from the professor and other invited audience members.

For this assignment, you will work together to analyze SLU Madrid as an organization. We will form groups for this project in the second week of the semester. All students will take "field notes" on their subject organization throughout the semester (this process will be explained at more length during the second week of class). In addition, information can be obtained from interviews with key personnel, organizational records and texts (employee handbooks, public relations materials, corporate annual reports, house newsletters, and so on), and a variety of other sources. During the beginning of the project, I will help you select a focus for your analysis.

You can break up the analysis by having individuals gather information separately (e.g. one member examines technology, another socialization) but you will need to work together to create an analysis of the organization. Your view of the organization needs to match up. For example, if one student presents the argument that the organizational culture values egalitarian policies and another argues that the hierarchical structure dominates types of communication, it will be obvious that you did not work together.

As part of the presentation, you will need to develop insights and recommendations for the organization. These should be theoretically informed, which means at minimum it needs to utilize at least 6 sources (not including the textbook). You will create and turn in an executive summary of the findings, and this process will be detailed in class. See the group presentation guidelines and rubric posted on SLU Global for more detail.

Quizzes (100pts / 20%)

There will be 11 quizzes based on the reading worth 10 points each. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Quizzes are posted on SLU Global. You have 15 minutes to complete each quiz and you can only make one attempt per quiz. Quizzes open Thursday at 10am, must be completed by Monday 10am.

Midterm Exam (100pts / 20%)

This will be an in-class exam consisting of multiple choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions.

Discussion leading & Participation (50pts/10%)

During the second week of class, each of you will select a class meeting during which you will lead discussion. You will be asked to guide the class in a conversation about the assigned readings. You can do this through the use of discussion questions and/or an activity.

Participation points are earned by asking questions, responding to other student's remarks, and routinely contributing to our discussions. At minimum, you should complete the readings before each class in order to actively add to our conversations. Though I may not comment on it during class, sleeping, texting, Facebooking, or working on other courses will detract significantly from your participation grade.

This is a small class, and it will be obvious if you have not read the material. More importantly, it will detract from our class discussions. My goal is not to cover all of the assigned readings in each class; rather, I seek to augment the readings and probe important concepts further during our time together. You are responsible to know the material in the readings whether or not it is discussed explicitly in class. I suggest reading the material a few days before class to let concepts sink in and any questions to arise.

Application Paper (50pts/10%)

You will write a short (2-3 pages) essay that gives you an opportunity to apply the theories we explore in class to your own organizational experiences. More detail and a rubric will be provided in class.

Final Exam (100pts / 20%)

The take home final exam is based on your analysis of SLU Madrid. Possible questions will be posted online. The exam will be distributed December 12th and due via email December 19th 2330. **No late exams will be accepted.**

Course Policies:

You are welcome to turn in assignments early. All written assignments must be submitted in the following format: Typed, Times New Roman 12pt Font, 1 inch margins, double spaced, correct grammar and spelling, with page numbers.

Late work will be deducted 10% of the grade each day it is late.

Grade Discussions: I am open to discussing any grade with you in my office. I do not discuss grades via email or in front of other students. If you have a complaint about a grade, please come prepared with: 1) your graded assignment, 2) a copy of the assignment description, and 3) a prepared statement about what you think I missed during the grading process. Please wait 24 hours after an assignment is handed back to discuss grades with me. This allows a short cooling off period.

Attendance is required. Late arrivals are highly discouraged since they disrupt the class. Arriving 15 minutes late or more will count as an absence. If you are unable to attend class, it is your responsibility to find out what assignments, handouts, activities, or instruction you missed. Only university events/ trips will be officially excused. However, it is your responsibility to make sure these trips do not interfere negatively with your performance in class. I will use my discretion to excuse medical situations.

You are allowed 3 unexcused absences. More than 3 unexcused absences will significantly lower your grade (5 point deduction per unexcused absence after the third). Missing 5 or more classes will be grounds to earn a failing grade. If you are sick and can't come to class the day an assignment is due, send it to me by email.

Accommodation Statement

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.

University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to http://spain.slu.edu/academics/learning_resources.html

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at +34 915 54 58 58, ext. 204, send an e-mail to counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu, or to visit the Counseling Office (San Ignacio Hall).

Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity, such as would be expected at a Jesuit, Catholic institution. As members of this community, students, faculty, and staff members share the responsibility to maintain this environment. Academic dishonesty violates it. Although not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, it can be said in general that soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of any work submitted toward academic credit is dishonest. It not only violates the mutual trust necessary between faculty and students but also undermines the

validity of the University's evaluation of students and takes unfair advantage of fellow students. Further, it is the responsibility of any student who observes such dishonest conduct to call it to the attention of a faculty member or administrator.

Examples of academic dishonesty would be copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed-book exam, submitting materials authored by or editorially revised by another person but presented as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, tampering with another student's work, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students to engage in an act of academic dishonesty.

Where there is clear indication of such dishonesty, a faculty member or administrator has the responsibility to apply appropriate sanctions. Investigations of violations will be conducted in accord with standards and procedures of the school or college through which the course or research is offered. Recommendations of sanctions to be imposed will be made to the dean of the school or college in which the student is enrolled. Possible sanctions for a violation of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University. The complete SLU Academic Honesty Policy can be found at the following link: http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic_advising/docs/Academic_integrity.pdf

Important Dates

Sept. 17 – Last day to drop a class without a grade of W or to add a class

Oct. 4 – Last day to choose audit (AU) or pass/no pass (P/NP) options

Oct. 15 - Last day to submit transfer application for spring semester

Nov. 2 – Last day to drop a class and receive a grade of W

Nov. 7 – Registration for spring semesters open

Grade Breakdown

Quizzes: 100pts (20%)

Discussion Leading & Participation: 50pts (10%)

Application Paper: 50pts (10%)

Mid Term Exam: 100pts (20%)

Organizational Analysis Project: 100pts (20%)

Final Exam: 100pts (20%)

Total: 1000 points/ 100%

Points Grading Scale

940-1000 A

900-939 A-

870-899 B+

840-869 B

800-839 B-

770-799 C+

740-769 C

700-739 C-

600-699 D

>600 F

Meeting	Topic	Assignments
Weds September 5th	Introduction	
Monday September 10 th	The Challenge of Organizational Communication	Ch 1 & Ch 14 Quiz due at 10:00am
Weds September 12 th	Classical Approaches	Chapter 2
Monday September 17 th	Classical Approaches Cont.	Course Packet Quiz due at 10:00am
Weds September 19 th	Classical Approaches cont.	Course Packet
Monday September 24 th	Human Relations & Human Resources	Ch 3 Quiz due at 10:00am
Weds September 26 th	Human Relations & Human Resources cont.	Course Packet
Monday October 1	Systems Metaphors	Ch 4 Quiz due at 10:00am
Weds October 3	Systems Metaphors	Course Packet
Monday October 8 th	Cultural Metaphors	Ch 5 Quiz due at 10:00am
Weds October 10 th	Cultural Metaphors cont.	Course packet
Monday October 15 th	Cultural Metaphors	
Weds Oct 17 th	Organizational Analysis Work Day	Application Papers Due
Monday October 22 nd	Midterm Exam	Midterm grades due
Weds October 24 th	Critical Metaphors	Ch 6
Monday October 29 th	Critical Metaphors	Course Packet Quiz due at 10:00am
Wednesday October 31 st	Conflict	Ch 9
Friday November 2 nd		Last day to drop for W grade
Monday November 5 th	Conflict	Course Packet Quiz due at 10:00am

Weds November 7 th	Leadership	Ch 10
Monday November 12 th	Leadership	Course Packet Quiz due at 10:00am
Weds November 14 th	Emotion in the workplace	Ch 11
Monday November 19 th	Issues of Difference in Organizations	Ch 12 Quiz due at 10:00am
Weds November 21 st	Difference in Organizations cont.	Course Packet
Monday November 26 th	Decision Making	Ch 8 Quiz due at 10:00am
Weds November 28 th	Technological Processes	Ch 13
Monday Dec 3 rd	Group Work Day	Course Packet Quiz due at 10:00am
Weds Dec 5 th	Presentation Day	Group Presentation Due
Monday Dec 10 th	Presentation Day	Group Presentation Due
Weds Dec 12 th	Ethics and Corporate Responsibility	The Corporation Final Exam Distributed
Dec 19 th	Final Exam due via email Dec 19th 1130pm	Final Exam due -- Late exams not accepted!

*** Course calendar subject to change at instructor's discretion**