COMM 362: Organizational Communication
Spring 2012
Online Course

Dr. Jennifer Mize Smith

Office:	165 Fine Arts Center	Phone:	745-5147
E-Mail:	jennifer.mize.smith@wku.edu	Office Hours:	M/W 1:00 – 3:00 pm
			T 10:00 – 11:00 am (virtual)
			and by appointment

Course Description

Organizations are an integral part of our daily life (e.g., schools, businesses, governments, healthcare systems, nonprofits, churches, etc.). All of these organizations are created, sustained, changed, and sometimes destroyed by communication processes. Therefore, whatever your career goal, communication will be central to the organizational experience.

The purpose of an organizational communication course is to increase your awareness of the ways in which individuals shape and are shaped by their interactions with the organizations around them. This course surveys various theoretical approaches to management and the study of communication processes in organizations. From a variety of perspectives, you will analyze how communicative processes are utilized, coordinated, and controlled to achieve collective organizational outcomes. Communication is critical to understanding how organizations work, and a better understanding of organizational communication processes will enhance your ability to engage with all kinds of organizations.

The course is comprised of lectures, discussions, case studies, classroom activities, application exercises, and oral presentations. Students are encouraged to bring their personal insights into the classroom and to use class concepts to understand and evaluate their own organizational experiences.

"Communication is the lifeblood of the organization's functions, the thread that ties the system together, the force that pervades the organization, and the building agent that cements all relationships."

--Gerald Goldhaber (1986)

Course Objectives

The goals of this course are the following:

1. To examine and critique the role of communication in contemporary organizations

2. To explore, understand and apply the major concepts and theories relevant to communication in organizational contexts

3. To develop critical thinking skills in the process of understanding, analyzing, and evaluating communication processes

4. To enhance respect for diversity of peoples, ideas, and cultures within organizational contexts.*

5. To identify, analyze and propose solutions to problematic organizational communication systems, structures, and processes

6. To enhance students' research, writing, analytical, and presentational skills for more effective performance in organizational contexts

7. To understand how knowledge about organizational communication can be put to work to address relevant concerns in the community and society*

8. To cultivate awareness of opportunities of responsible citizens living and working in a global society.*

---

* These course objectives integrate student learning outcomes outlined in WKU's Quality Enhancement Plan. See

Required Course Materials

- An active email account (WKU account or any other web-based account) updated on TopNet
- Textbook: Miller, K. (2012*). Organizational communication: Approaches and processes (6th Ed.*)
- Any supplemental readings placed on Blackboard throughout the semester
- Regular computer access including high-speed Internet, sound capability, Adobe PDF reader, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft PowerPoint

Required Skills for Online Course

- Ability to navigate Blackboard, including reading and posting messages to the discussion boards.
- Ability to navigate Tegrity Campus to access audio lectures and PowerPoint slides.
- Ability to navigate the Web (use a browser) and handle multiple open windows
- Ability to browse Web pages
- Ability to open and navigate PDF files using Adobe Acrobat
- Knowledge of how to create, send, open, close, and save files and attachments with Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint
- Basic word processing skills

Technical Assistance

If you are experiencing technical difficulties with Blackboard, call WKU's IT Help Desk (270-745 -7000) IMMEDIATELY. If the issue is not resolved and may affect your ability to complete an assignment, call 745-5147 and leave a message in my voicemail box explaining your situation. For help on how to navigate Tegrity Campus and open, download, or print video files, visit the TS Online website at www.wku.eku/tsonline. You may also find the following web sources helpful:

- http://www.wku.edu/infotech/index.php?page=123
- http://www.wku.edu/online/bbtutorial.html#AdRequire
- http://www.wku.edu/helpdesk

Teaching Philosophy

I believe that a teacher's responsibility is not to prepare the path for the child, but to prepare the child for the path. Today's students will embark on numerous life and career paths, none of which can be mapped or predicted in a world where perhaps the only constant is change. Success that was once ensured by the mastery of a set body of knowledge now rests upon one's ability to continuously learn and relearn the skills required for increasingly diverse, changing, and challenging environments. As such, my goal as a teacher is not merely to impart content knowledge, but to construct an engaging learning environment in which students can enhance their critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and presentational skills.

<p align="center">**Policies and Expectations**</p>

Online Participation

Every online course requires a high level of maturity and self-motivation to stay on schedule and to work independently to complete assigned tasks. Your active participation is absolutely necessary to successfully accomplish the goals in this course. Please take care to allot the appropriate amount of time in your schedule. In other words, this is still a 3-hour course and should be treated as such. I would suggest setting aside an hour 2-3 times per week to check Blackboard, post to discussion boards, and review lecture materials. Build that time into your weekly schedule just as if you were attending a face-to-face class.

Written Assignment Guidelines

All assignments must be typewritten and submitted through the Assignments page in Blackboard. *Do not send your assignments to my email address.* For assistance with how to turn in an assignment in Blackboard, view the tutorial at http://www.wku.edu/infotech/atech/videotutoriasl/assignment_student.htm. Directions for how to name each assignment when saving and submitting will be provided with assignment instructions.

Written work should be in a standard Microsoft Word format including 12 point font, double spacing, and 1 inch margins. In the case of multiple pages, the paper must include a footer located in the bottom right corner with a page number and your name on every page. The final paper assignment must adhere to APA style guidelines. For help with APA style, see online sources such as http://owl.english.purdue.edu. Errors in APA, as well as spelling and grammar, will result in point deductions.

Assignment Deadlines

Deadlines are imposed to allow a reasonable amount of time to complete assignments and to give and receive feedback in a timely manner. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments must be submitted by the due date provided, and all times are Central Standard Time. Late work MAY be accepted at my discretion but only when arrangements are made in advance. IF accepted, late papers will be penalized one letter grade per weekday the assignment is late. Late work WILL NOT be accepted more than 3 days after the original due date.

Class Environment

Our class may be virtual, but it is still important for us to create an open and respectful learning environment. In the absence of nonverbal cues, virtual communication may be easily misinterpreted. Therefore, it is important that we follow certain ground rules when interacting within the context of this course. These rules of civility include but are not limited to:

1. Displaying respect for all members of the classroom community, both your instructor and fellow students.

2. Being open to understanding different perspectives and experiences.

3. Avoiding racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom community.

4. Reading and re-reading your comments and questions before posting to avoid hasty, ill-conceived responses.

Academic Integrity

Western Kentucky University maintains a "zero tolerance" policy on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. As a student at Western Kentucky University, you are expected to demonstrate academic integrity, as outlined in the University Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities (WKU Catalog, 260) in all coursework. Violations of this code of conduct include but are not limited to cheating (by giving or receiving unauthorized information before or during an exam or assignment), dishonesty (including misrepresentation and/or lying), and plagiarism.

Plagiarism consists of presenting work that is not your own without proper acknowledgment of its origin. This includes quoting or paraphrasing material (orally or written), copying from a book, and pasting text from web pages without proper citation. It also includes using an Internet source to obtain a full paper or part of a paper. Student work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.

In short, **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE** for telling your audience or reader whether you are:

1. directly quoting from a source

2. paraphrasing closely from a source, which means using significant portions of another source's sentences or language

3. using the ideas advanced by a different source

In addition to plagiarism, other forms of academic dishonesty include falsified medical excuses, presenting another

student's work as your own, using the same work for assignments in different classes, or sharing exam information.

Penalty for Academic Dishonesty

Western Kentucky University and the Department of Communication are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on an exam, or purchasing papers, speeches, or other assignments will immediately receive a failing grade on the assignment and in the course, and will be reported for disciplinary action. As you can see, these are extreme measures for academic offenses that we believe are serious. If you have any questions, please contact me well in advance of the due date for your assignment.

Student Disability Services

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center, A-200. The phone number is 270 745 5004. If you have a special need that may require an accommodation or assistance, please inform the instructor as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second class meeting. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

COURSE ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

Discussion Boards

Purpose: To engage students in the course material and with each other by questioning, explaining, and applying organizational communication concepts and theories

A collaborative learning environment will be both more interesting and beneficial for everyone. Discussion boards attempt to replicate the exchange of ideas and information that occurs in a traditional face-to-face class. Therefore, you are expected to participate fully in the course by posting to discussion boards. You are required to post **at least 2 times per discussion board**, including 1 original post and 1 response to another classmate. The comments you post should reflect your knowledge and understanding of the week's readings. Therefore, you will need to have read and thought about the week's topic so that you can offer insightful responses and suggest appropriate examples. ***Note that discussion board comments should integrate course concepts.***

You have the opportunity to earn 10 points per discussion board. Discussion boards will be graded on both quantity and quality. For example, a comment of "I agree or disagree" is not sufficient and will not be awarded points. Also, posting at the last minute will not receive full point value since it does not give time for classmates to respond. Overall, points will be awarded as follows:

10 pts = excellent: *more than* 2 posts AND timely, thoughtful comments demonstrating excellent knowledge of course concepts

7 pts = average: minimum of 2 posts (but could be more) of good quality but with less rationale or integration of course concepts and/or may have been posted late

4 pts = below average: minimum of 2 posts that fail to really contribute to the discussion or demonstrate an understanding of concepts; shows minimal effort

0 pts = no participation: fails to meet minimum requirements of 2 posts (1 original and 1 responding) within the designated timeframe

Application Exercises

Purpose: To offer practice opportunities for students to apply course concepts

A series of application exercises will be assigned throughout the semester to help you better understand and apply course concepts before being expected to apply them on an exam or in your major paper. Application exercises will be located under Assignments on Blackboard. The instructions for each exercise will be at the top of the

Microsoft Word document. Please read carefully and follow the instructions. Specific due dates and times are available on the course calendar.

Chapter Quizzes

Purpose: To encourage students to read the textbook and other assigned readings prior to engaging course material through online discussions and related assignments

Ten open-book quizzes will be made available under Quizzes on Blackboard. Each quiz includes 10 multiple choice or T/F questions covering the textbook chapter and/or any other assigned readings for that week. Please note that quizzes will be timed. Once you open the quiz, you must complete it within 1 hour. You may not re-open the quiz once it is closed. Questions must be completed in the order given, and responses may not be changed after submission. Specific dates and times are available on the course schedule.

Exams

Purpose: To objectively measure student comprehension and application of course concepts and theories

Three exams will be comprised of multiple choice, matching, and/or true/false questions covering material from online mini lectures, readings, online discussions, and other assignments.   Chapters covered on each exam are listed on the course schedule. Exams are application-based and open book.

Each exam will open at a specific time on Blackboard and will have a deadline for completion. Specific dates and times are available on the course schedule. Make-up exams or extensions will not be given. Please note that exams will be timed; you will have 2 hours to complete each exam. Please also note that although you have several days in which to open the exam, once the exam is opened you must complete it within 2 hours.

Organizational Case Study

Purpose: To integrate course concepts, theories, data collection and personal experience into an analysis of a real-world organization

The culmination of the course is an 8-10 page paper examining and analyzing an organization of your choice to demonstrate your ability to synthesize organizational theory and practice. Overall, the organizational case study will be evaluated on organization selection, application of theories, and the use of relevant sources. Complete details of content, format, and grading criteria are provided in separate documents posted under Assignments on Blackboard.

Assignments and Point Distribution

	Points Possible	Your Score *Track your scores here.*
Chapter Quizzes (10 x 10 pts. each)	100	
Exams (3 x 100 pts. each)	300	
Exercises (5 x 20 pts. each)	100	
Discussion Boards (5 x 10 pts. each)	50	
Organizational Case Study	200	
TOTAL	**750**	

Grade Distribution (in Total Points Earned)

A = 675-750	C = 525-599
B = 600-674	D = 450-524
	F = 449 and below

NOTES ABOUT GRADES:

- Final grades will be distributed according to the above scale. Do not expect final grades to be curved, and do not ask to be awarded those couple of extra points needed to reach the next letter grade.

- It is your responsibility to keep up with your point totals. If at any time you have a question about a grade, it should be addressed within one week of receiving the grade. Grades will not be reassessed or changed after that time period. In other words, do not wait until the end of the semester to look at or question the points you have earned.

- *Grades will not be provided to students via e-mail.*

STUDENT ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE

Below are some resources you may wish to take advantage of should you require academic assistance:

- WKU Writing Center - Trained writing instructors will assist you in the writing process. The Center takes appointments (745-5719) and drop-ins.

- The Learning Center (DUC A330) provides free supplemental education programs for all currently enrolled WKU students. TLC at DUC offers certified, one-on-one tutoring in over 200 subjects by appointment or walk in. Online tutoring is offered to distance learners. TLC is also a quiet study area, with side rooms designated for peer to peer tutoring, and offers a thirty-two machine Dell computer lab to complete academic coursework. Additionally, TLC has three satellite locations. Each satellite is a quiet study center and is equipped with a small computer lab. These satellites are located in Douglas Keen Hall, McCormack Hall, and Pearce Ford Tower. For more information, or to schedule a tutoring appointment, please call TLC at (270) 745-6254. www.wku.edu/tlc

- Purdue Online Writing Lab – Online assistance with APA formatting and other writing/grammar. Located online at http://owl.english.purdue.edu

NOTE: The procedures and schedule in this course are subject to change as needed.

COMM 362 ONLINE Course Schedule *(subject to change as necessary)*

Week of	Class Topic	Assignment Due	Reading Assignment
1/23	Introduction to Course	**SYLLABUS QUIZ** Opens Mon. 1/23 at 8:00 am Closes Wed. 1/25 at 11:00 pm **Discussion Board (no grade)** Opens Tue. 1/24 at 8:00 am Closes Fri. 1/27 at 11:00 pm	Course Syllabus
1/30	Organizations, Communication and the Contemporary World of Work	**QUIZ 1** Opens Fri. 1/27 at 8:00 am Closes Mon. 1/30 at 11:00 pm **Discussion Board #1** Opens Tue. 1/31 at 8:00 am Closes Fri. 2/3 at 11:00 pm	Chapter 1 Chapter 14
2/6	Classical Approaches	**QUIZ 2** Opens Fri. 2/3 at 8:00 am Closes Mon. 2/6 at 11:00 pm **Discussion Board #2** Opens Tue. 2/7 at 8:00 am Closes Fri. 2/10 at 11:00 pm	Chapter 2
2/13	Human Relations and Human Resources Approaches	**QUIZ 3** Opens Fri. 2/10 at 8:00 am Closes Mon. 2/13 at 11:00 pm **Discussion Board #3** Opens Tue. 2/14 at 8:00 am Closes Fri. 2/17 at 11:00 pm	Chapter 3
2/20	Synthesizing the Traditional Approaches	**Organization Selection Form for Organizational Case Study** DUE Tue. 2/21 at 11:00 pm **Application Exercise #1** Banana Time article questions DUE Fri. 2/24 at 11:00 pm	Roy (1959) Banana Time Article (posted under Course Documents on Blackboard)
2/27 *** note: exam opens on Sunday 2/26*	First Exam (100 pts.) Chapters 1, 2, 3, and Banana Time article	**Timed Exam (2 hours)** Opens Sun. 2/26 at 8:00 am Closes Tue. 2/28 at 11:00 pm	

Week of	Class Topic	Assignment Due	Reading Assignment
3/5	SPRING BREAK		

3/12	Systems Approaches	**QUIZ 4**
		  Opens Fri. 3/9 at 8:00 am
		  Closes Wed. 3/14 at 11:00 pm
		***note: this quiz is open longer due to Spring Break*
		
		Application Exercise #2
		Systems Approaches
		  DUE Fri. 3/16 at 11:00 pm
			Chapter 4

3/19	Cultural Approaches	**QUIZ 5**
		  Opens Fri. 3/16 at 8:00 am
		  Closes Mon. 3/19 at 11:00 pm
		
		Application Exercise #3 Cultural Approach
		  DUE Fri. 3/23 at 11:00 pm
			Chapter 5

3/26	Critical Approaches	**QUIZ 6**
		  Opens Fri. 3/23 at 8:00 am
		  Closes Mon. 3/26 at 11:00 pm
		
		Discussion Board #4
		  Opens Tue. 3/27 at 8:00 am
		  Closes Fri. 3/30 at 11:00 pm
			Chapter 6

4/2	The Critical Perspective in a Real-World Organization	**NO QUIZ THIS WEEK** **Application Exercise #4** Critical Perspective Case Study questions DUE Fri. 4/6 at 11:00 pm	Barker (1997) (posted under Course Documents on Blackboard)

4/9
** note: exam opens on Sunday 4/8
	Second Exam (100 pts.)
	Chapters 4, 5, 6, and Barker (1997) case study
		Timed Exam (2 hours)
		  Opens Sun. 4/8 at 8:00 am
		  Closes Tue. 4/10 at 11:00 pm	

4/16	Socialization Processes	**QUIZ 7**
		  Opens Fri. 4/13 at 8:00 am
		  Closes Mon. 4/16 at 11:00 pm
		
		Application Exercise #5
		Socialization
		  DUE Fri. 4/20 at 11:00 pm
			Chapter 7

Week of	Class Topic	Assignment Due	Reading Assignment
4/23	Technological Processes	**Organizational Case Study** DUE Tue. 4/24 at 11:00 pm **note: Most assignments are due on Fridays. However, your major paper is due on Tuesday so that I can grade and return them prior to your final exam. Please plan accordingly.* **QUIZ 13** Opens Wed. 4/25 at 8:00 am Closes Fri. 4/27 at 11:00 pm *note change in regular quiz opening and closing*	Chapter 13
4/30	Emotion in the Workplace	**QUIZ 11** Opens Fri. 4/27 at 8:00 am Closes Mon. 4/30 at 11:00 pm **Discussion Board #5** Opens Tue. 5/1 at 8:00 am Closes Fri. 5/4 at 11:00 pm	Chapter 11
5/7 ** note: final exam opens on Sunday 5/6	Final Exam (100 pts.) Chapters 7, 11, 13	**Timed Exam (2 hours)** Opens Sun. 5/6 at 8:00 am Closes Tue. 5/8 at 11:00 pm	