

COURSE CONCEPT:

The course is intended as an introduction to the study of organizational communication. Both classic and contemporary readings will be included. Basic course objectives include: (a) development of familiarity with the major theoretical and research orientations related to taking a communication perspective to the study of organizations; (2) development of a working knowledge of concepts and research results regarding leading communication issues in organizations; (3) development of understanding of how communication processes are related to the representation of interests, decision making, productivity, personnel development, and social well-being; and (3) an increase in the capacity to conduct research in the organizational context.

TEXTS

Handel, M. J. (Ed.) (2003). *The sociology of organizations: Classic, contemporary, and critical readings*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Deetz, S. (1992). *Democracy in an age of corporate colonization: Developments in communication and the politics of everyday life*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

EXPECTATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

The course assumes a working familiarity with contemporary communication theory and basic theories of organizational behavior, but no specific prior course work is required. Needless to say, all class members are expected to attend regularly, read assigned as well as other relevant materials, and actively participate in class.

The course grade will be based on class discussions, reading summaries, a research and a final exam.

The reading summaries are a way to develop understanding of the course concepts by putting them into one's own words. During the semester, each student will complete **five** summaries, which ask you to address four questions about a reading in a relatively succinct manner: **(a) The thesis of the reading**, **(b) the author's (or authors') main points** (note: do not simply list a set of bullet points—instead, you should paraphrase, describe, and explain), **(c) your critical evaluation of the reading**, and **(d) at least two discussion questions** (these will frequently be used to guide discussion in class). The summary should be *at most* 2 single-spaced pages. You will bring a copy for me, as well as for each other student in class. This will serve to not only summarize and critique the readings to enhance your understanding, but also to provide handy notes for others—who will want a summary of the article when studying for exams (both in this course and comprehensive).

The research paper for the course should identify an interesting organization problem and show how a particular theory of organizational communication helps us conceptualize, research and respond to it. Other projects based on the class member's ethnography or continuing research agenda are possible. The paper (5000-6000 words in length) is due December 8th and should be

in final form following the APA style sheet. I encourage everyone to turn in earlier drafts so that I may offer writing suggestions and be involved in the formative processes.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to submit their own individual and original work in this course, and to follow both the CU Honor Code (see it at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>) and the University of Colorado's policy on academic misconduct on pp. 41-42 of the *University of Colorado Catalog*.

ROUGH SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction to the Study of Organizational Communication

Read:

- Deetz, S. (2001) "Conceptual Foundations." In Jablin, F. M., & Putnam, L. L. (Eds.) *The new handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Reed, M. (1996). Organizational theorizing: A historically contested terrain. In S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, & W. R. Nord (Eds.), *Handbook of organization studies* (pp. 31-56). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Week 2: Bureaucratic Rationality and Managerial Communication: The Classical Legacy

Read:

- Weber, M. (1924/1968). Bureaucracy and legitimate authority. *Economy and society*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (in Handel)
- Taylor, F. (1911/1967). Selections from *The principles of scientific management*. New York: Harper and Brothers. (in Handel)
- Barnard, C. (1968). The theory of formal organization. *The functions of the executive*, pp. 82-95. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. (in Handel)
- Braverman, H. (1974). Selections from *The degradation of work in the twentieth century*. Monthly Review Foundation. (in Handel)

Week 3: Human Resources, Institutional Theory and Resource Dependencies

Read:

- Homans, G. C. (1941), The Hawthorne experiments (in Handel)
- McGregor, D. (1957), The human side of enterprise (in Handel)
- Walton, R. E. (1985), From control to commitment in the workplace (in Handel)
- Pfeffer, J. & Salancik (1978). Selections from *The external control of the organization: A resource dependency perspective*. (in Handel)
- DiMaggio, Institutional theory (in Handel)

Week 4&5: Systems, Structures, Technologies and Networks

Read:

- Powell, W. W. (1990). Neither market nor hierarchy: Network forms of organization (in Handel)
- Jackson, M. H., Poole, M. S., & Kuhn, T. (2002). The social construction of technology in studies of the workplace. In L. A. Lievrouw & S. Livingstone (Eds.), *Handbook of new media: Social shaping and consequences of ICTs* (pp. 236-253). London: Sage.

- Barley, S. R. (1986). Technology as an occasion for structuring: Evidence from observations of CT scanners and the social order of radiology departments. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 31, 78-108.
- Stohl, Globalizing organizational communication (in *Handbook*)

Week 6: Organizational Culture

Read:

- Pacanowsky, M., & O'Donnell-Trujillo, N. (1983). Organizational communication as cultural performance. *Communication Monographs*, 50, 126-147.
- Jackall, R. (1988). The world of corporate managers from *Moral Mazes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (in Handel)
- Taylor, B. C. (1999). Browsing the culture: Membership and intertextuality at a Mormon bookstore. *Studies in Cultures, Organizations, and Societies*, 5, 61-95.
- Martin, J., & Meyerson, D. (1988). Organizational cultures and the denial, channeling, and acknowledgement of ambiguity. In L. R. Pandy & R. J. Boland & H. Thomas (Eds.), *Managing ambiguity and change*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Week 7: Organizational Discourse Studies

Read:

- Putnam & Fairhurst, Discourse analysis in organizations ()
- Selections from Boden, D. (1994). *The business of talk*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Selections from Schwartzman, H.B. (1989). *The meeting: Gatherings in organizations and communities*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Clair, R. (1993). The use of framing devices to sequester organizational narratives: Hegemony and harassment. *Communication Monographs*, 60, 113-136.
- Thackaberry, J. A. (in 2004). Discursive opening and closing in organizational self study: Culture as the culprit for safety problems in wildland firefighting. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 17.

Week 8 & 9: Postmodern and Critical Theories

Read:

- Deetz, S. (1992). *Democracy in an age of corporate colonization: Developments in communication and the politics of everyday life*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Martin, J. (1990). Deconstructing organizational taboos: The suppression of gender conflict in organizations. *Organization Science*, 11, 339-59.
- Knights, D. and Morgan, G. (1991). Corporate strategy, organizations, and subjectivity: A critique. *Organization Studies*, 12: 251-273.
- Hopwood, A. (1987). The archaeology of accounting systems. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 12: 207-234.
- Deetz, S. (2003). Disciplinary power, conflict suppression and human resource management. In M. Alvesson and H. Willmott (eds.), *Studying management critically* (pp. 23-45). London: Sage.

Week 10: Gender and Feminist Theories

Read:

- Kanter, R. M. (1977). Men and women of the corporation (in *Sociology*)

- Ferguson, K. (1994). On bringing more theory, more voices and more politics to the study of organizations. *Organization: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Organization, Theory, and Society*, 1, 81-100.
- Ashcraft, K. L., & Mumby, D. K. (2004). Reworking gender: A feminist communicology of organization. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (Ch. 1 only: Feminist Organization Studies in the Wake of the Discursive Turn)
- Collinson, D. (1988). "Engineering humour": Masculinity, joking, and conflict in shop floor relations. *Organization Studies*, 9, 181-200.
- Martin, J. (1994). The organization of exclusion: Institutionalization of sex inequality, gendered faculty jobs, and gendered knowledge in organization theory and research. *Organization*, 12, 419-425.
- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender and Society*, 4, 139-158.

Week 11: Organizational Change and Development

Read:

- Lewis, L.K. & Seibold, D.R. (1998). Reconceptualizing organizational change implementation as a communication problem: A review of literature and research agenda. In M.E. Roloff (ed.) *Communication Yearbook 21* (pp. 93-152). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lewis, L.K., Hamel, S.A., & Richardson, B.K. (2001). Communicating change to nonprofit stakeholders: Models and predictors of implementers' approaches. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 15, 5-41.
- Argyris, C. (1990). *Overcoming organizational defenses: Facilitating organizational learning*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Chia, R. (1999). A 'rhizomic' model of organizational change and transformation: Perspective from a metaphysics.... *British Journal of Management*, 10(3), 209-228.
- Tsoukas, H., & Chia, R. (2000). On organizational becoming: Rethinking organizational change. *Organization Science*, 13(5), 567-582.

Week 12: Workplace Participation and Democracy

Read:

- Cheney, G., Straub, J., Speirs-Glebe, L., Stohl, C., DeGooyer, D. Whalen, S., Garvin-Doxas, K. & Carlone, D. (1998). Democracy, participation and communication at work: A Multidisciplinary Review. In M.E. Roloff (ed.), *Communication Yearbook 21*, pp. 35-91. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Deetz, S. (in press). Corporate governance, communication and CRS. In S. May, G. Cheney, and J. Roper (eds.), *The debate over corporate social responsibility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rubinstein, S. (2002). A different kind of company. (In Handel)
- Rothschild-Whitt, J. (1979). The collectivist organization. *American Sociological Review*, 44, 509-527.
- Whyte, W. F., Blasi, J. & Kruse, D. (2003). Worker ownership, participation and control. (in Handel)

Week 13: Identity, Identification, Socialization

Read:

- Alvesson, M., & Willmott, H. (2002). Identity regulation as organizational control: Producing the appropriate individual. *Journal of Management Studies*, 39, 619-644.
- Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 14, 20-39.
- Covalleski, M. A., Dirsmith, M. W., & Samuel, S. (1998). The calculated and the avowed: Techniques of discipline and struggles over identity in big six public accounting firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 43, 293-327.
- Jablin, Organizational entry, assimilation, and disengagement/exit (in *Handbook*)
- Holmer-Nadesan, M. (1997). Constructing paper dolls: The discourse of personality testing in organizational practice. *Communication Theory*, 7, 189-218.

Weeks 14: Issues in Power, Control, Consent and Resistance

Read:

- Knights, D. and Willmott, H. (1989). Power and subjectivity at work: From degradation to subjugation in social relations. *Sociology*, 23: 535-58.
- Deetz, S. (1998). Discursive formations, strategized subordination, and self-surveillance: An empirical case. In A. McKinlay & K. Starkey (eds.), *Foucault, management and organizational theory*, (pp. 151-172). London: Sage.
- Alvesson, M. (1993). Cultural-ideological modes of management control. In S. Deetz (ed.), *Communication Yearbook 16*, pp 3-42. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Barker, J. (1993). Tightening the iron cage—Concertive control in self-managing teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38, 408-37.
- Treatheway, A. (1997). Resistance, identity, and empowerment: A postmodern feminist analysis of clients in a human service organization. *Communication Monographs*, 64: 281-301.

Weeks 15: Knowledge and Organizational Learning

Read

- Weick & Ashford, Organizational learning (in *Handbook*)
- Nonaka, I. (1994). A dynamic theory of organizational knowledge creation. *Organization Science*, 5, 14-37.
- Orlikowski, W. J. (2002). Knowing in practice: Enacting a collective capability in distributed organizing. *Organization Science*, 13, 249-273.
- Cook, S. D. N., & Brown, J. S. (1999). Bridging epistemologies: The generative dance between organizational knowledge and organizational knowing. *Organization Science*, 10, 381-400.