

coms 180

“sherlock time” final project guidelines

Objectives:

- To demonstrate mastery of course objectives (see syllabus)
- To communicate a sophisticated understanding of organizational communication concepts
- To develop practical applications from organizational communication research and be able to communicate them to lay/professional audiences

Basic directions: To demonstrate an understanding and synthesis of course concepts, you will propose and complete a fun and creative research project about an **organizational communication** topic of your choice. The idea is to combine original research (read: interviews/focus groups/observations/surveys) with knowledge from published organizational communication scholarship to provide important insights for organizations.

The project can be completed alone, in pairs or small groups (groups of 4 or fewer). Projects will be presented during the final exam period (with potluck party!). Time will be allotted in class to check-in and strategize with groups, if needed. Interim assignments included. **For those thinking about graduate school who might want to present this project at a conference, see me about Human Subjects/Ethics review ASAP**

Requirements:

- Projects must incorporate at least seven scholarly, peer-reviewed ORG COMM* RESEARCH sources (you may have many more sources, including professional or educational, of course)
- References should be formatted in *correct* APA style
- Projects must incorporate substantive original research data (interviews, focus groups, or observations, etc.)
- Projects must include a scholarly rationale/discussion
- Projects must include a practical application for organizations (a set of recommendations or a deliverable like training program/brochure/flyer/website/blog/infographic)

Project Milestones

- **Final Project Idea—Due Monday, February 19 on Canvas, 15 points possible**
Please post a brief description of your tentative final project topic idea. Include as much detail as possible and whether you’re thinking about working alone or in a partnership or small group. This idea is flexible... you can change it up until your proposal is due on Monday, March 12.
- **Final Project Proposal—Due Monday, March 12 on Canvas, 25 points possible**
Craft a detailed final project proposal including a scholarly rationale for your topic/context, a description of your methods for original research, and a description of your proposed practical application/deliverables. Include a references section and detailed timeline of milestones you plan to achieve (including the formal check-ins and workshops listed on the

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syllabus). If you're working in a partnership or group, include how you plan to divide up the project and your plan for dealing with social loafing/non-performing group members.

- **Final Project Check-in #1—Due Mon, April 2 on Canvas, 15 points possible**
Provide a detailed update on your project's progress. What have you accomplished? What's next? Who's doing what? What help do you need?
- **Final Project Check-in #2—Due Mon, April 16 on Canvas, 15 points possible**
Provide a detailed update on your project's progress. What have you accomplished since the first check-in? What's next? Who's doing what? What help do you need?
- **Workshop #1, Project Drafts Due—Mon, May 7 in HARD COPY, 15 points possible**
Bring THREE hard copies of your draft project to class for workshopping.
- **Workshop #2, Project Draft Due—Mon, May 9 in HARD COPY, 15 points possible**
Bring THREE hard copies of your REVISED draft project to class for workshopping.
- **Final Project & Presentation (with Potluck Party!)—Monday May 16, 10:15 a.m. on Canvas AND hard copy, 200 points possible**
Upload your project to Canvas AND bring a hard copy to class. (Final projects without both submission methods will NOT be graded.) Prepare a brief 4-5 minute presentation sharing your main findings and tells us about your practical application deliverable.

* Your topic and research should advance our knowledge of some facet of organizational communication. Thus, you should focus your research on organizational communication scholarship. Start by looking at the journals *Management Communication Quarterly* and *Journal of Applied Communication Research*. You might find sources in other journals, but make sure they reference organizations and communication, otherwise they may not count toward the minimum.

** The requirements are left purposefully vague so you have creative freedom to develop a meaningful and interesting project. I strongly recommend you think about how to leverage this project for future/current employment. For instance, if you know you want to work in Human Resources, you might consider exploring a topic you know would be of interest to someone hiring you into that field and emphasize the practical application/deliverable. Or if you're thinking about going on for a master's degree, you might want to emphasize the scholarly rationale/discussion and provide practical applications/recommendations rather than a tangible deliverable.