

coms 145

summer 2021
intro to org comm

section 1, #50326, M/W, online, asynchronous

description

Introduction to Organizational Communication invites students to learn the theories, practices, and methods used to understand communication in and by organizations. In this course, we will explore how communication functions within organizations and between organizational members, as well as how communication structures organizations broadly. Throughout the class, we'll examine organizational structures, decision making, culture and subcultures, identity, power, leadership, relationships, conflict and emotionality, among other topics. Students will be asked to consider all of the various organizations with which they interact including current and previous employers, schools, churches, stores, and government agencies.

Catalogue description: "Basic concepts of interpersonal and inter-group communication within formal and informal social organizations. Current techniques of auditing and evaluating organizational communication. Prerequisite: COMS 100A."

texts & materials

1. **Required:** Miller, K. (2015). *Organizational communication: Approaches and processes* (7th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning. ISBN 978-1-4129-6315-2
2. **Required:** Other readings, as assigned. (Available free online or Canvas)
3. Recommended: American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed). Washington: APA.

course objectives

1. To **know** the major theories and approaches for studying organizational communication
2. To **describe** the complex ways that communication structures and is structured by organizations
3. To **apply** communication concepts and theories to organizational contexts and issues
4. To **understand** the role(s) of organizational communication in today's society
5. To **develop and practice** communication skills that are valued in organizations

feedback

Throughout the class you will have many opportunities to provide feedback about the course. I always welcome student input and realize if we wait until the end of the term during university evaluations, I cannot make changes that will help you. So, please share your suggestions and concerns with me in an open and constructive manner *during* the course whether privately during office hours, via e-mail or anonymously.



coms 145 policies & requirements

the process of teaching & learning in coms 145

Learning is an active process which means that you will be directly involved through discussion and activity. Not only does it make the process more enjoyable (read: not boring), but your learning will be more effective, increasing your competence in the subject matter.

Effective learning happens when:

- * you understand and can describe organizational communication in ways more sophisticated than when you began the course
- * you are conscious of the communication choices made by organizations as well as communication choices you make as a member in various organizations
- * you are able to identify and explain organizational communication phenomena

You will facilitate these outcomes by:

- * mindfully completing reading and written assignments
- * keeping up with online activities like watching course videos and commenting on discussions
- * being prepared and willing to share ideas and dialogue with colleagues that are relevant to the class
- * looking for connections between real life experiences and the ideas and concepts encountered throughout the course to build a deep, complex understanding of communication processes
- * asking insightful questions

The class is organized in modules that encourage independent thinking as well as student-to-student and student-to-professor interaction. You will: write about your ideas; develop, present and analyze arguments; write reflections; and identify concepts in various media. I will post occasional mini-lectures designed to guide your thinking. **We will not regularly meet synchronously via Zoom, although I may host Zoom meetings for Q&A.**

Because we are online, you will need to be self-motivated and push yourself to stay engaged with the material. Please let me know how I can help you!

behavior & virtual the class environment

Keeping the **golden rule** in mind, you should treat others as you wish to be treated. I intend to treat each student with respect, dignity and courtesy. I assume that your classmates and I will receive the same treatment from you. You are expected to participate in activities on time, fully prepare for online discussions, and act in a professional, respectful manner.

Specifically, I want to build a climate that is comfortable for all. It is especially important to:

- * display respect for all members of the class – including the instructor and students
- * avoid racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may create a hostile or uncomfortable environment
- * share arguments and critiques respectfully
- * disagree with ideas without disparaging others
- * practice empathy and perspective taking

preferred names

Use a different name than what's on the school roster? No problem. Just let me (and the class) know. You can call me Dr. Malvini Redden, or Professor Malvini, or Dr. Redden or any derivative, EXCEPT Mrs. I'll think my grandma is here.

coms 145 policies & requirements

late work/make-up exams

Late work and make-up exams will be accepted only in extreme circumstances (read: you are in a full body cast and cannot type) and will be marked down by one letter grade for each day late.

virtual attendance & engagement

Like a face-to-face class where punctuality and attendance are important, virtual attendance and engagement are vital to your success in this class. Your presence is expected on Canvas—watching videos, reading content, interacting with colleagues' posts, etc. Minimally, you should log into Canvas several times per week to catch announcements and see what's happening in class. And given our short time frame, you must, must, MUST keep on top of deadlines.

health and wellness

Your engagement in class is a top priority. However, I do not want you to sacrifice your physical or mental wellbeing. If you need help finding resources to support your mental and physical health, please use the FREE health and wellness services available to you via the Well: <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/>

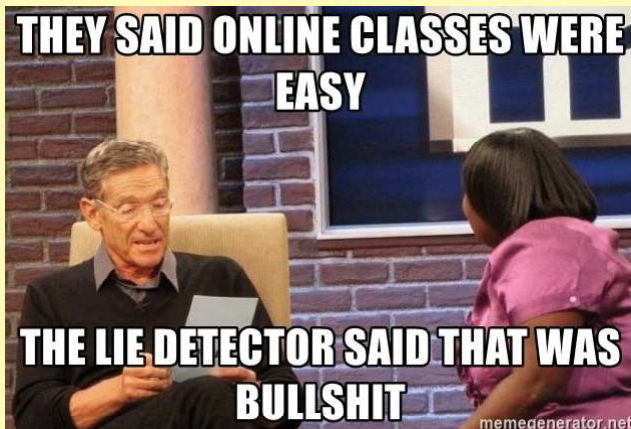
e-mail etiquette

Please remember that e-mail should be treated with the same care and respect that you would a face-to-face interaction. This is especially important when our entire relationship is facilitated online. Please compose e-mail carefully, using a pertinent subject line, an appropriate greeting and a concise message, without grammatical errors. I will attempt to return all e-mail promptly, within two business days. Messages received after 6 p.m. may not be addressed until the following day. Please note that I may not always respond to questions when the information is readily available in the syllabus or on Canvas. Likewise, I may respond to direct questions that are pertinent to the entire class by posting in the Canvas announcements.

add/drop policy

I follow the department/university policy on adding and dropping. For assistance with administrative details, please contact Vicenza Weeks from the Communication Studies department via moscariello@csus.edu

resources for success in online classes



- ✦ 10 Netiquette Guidelines Online Students Need to Know <https://www.rasmussen.edu/student-experience/college-life/netiquette-guidelines-every-online-student-needs-to-know/>
- ✦ 30 Motivation Hacks to Stay Motivated While Studying Online <https://www.classcentral.com/report/mooc-motivation-hacks/>
- ✦ 8 Strategies for Getting the Most Out of an Online Class <https://www.northeastern.edu/graduate/blog/tips-for-taking-online-classes/>

coms 145 policies & requirements

academic honesty, plagiarism and cheating

The very best way to fail this course? Plagiarize or cheat. Academic misconduct will result in, at the very least, a zero on the assignment in question, and may include a failing course grade and/or possible university sanctions. All plagiarism will be reported to the university.

Please be aware that plagiarism is the stealing of ideas which happens when you use someone else's material (including words, figures, images, structure, style, etc.) without giving the creator proper credit. This course requires the use of APA citation style. Please familiarize yourself with it ASAP.

Note that "recycling" papers from other classes or purchasing papers online also falls under academic misconduct and will not be tolerated. All work completed for COMS 145 must be original. Please acquaint yourselves with the university's academic integrity policy, which can be found here: <http://www.csus.edu/manual/student/stu-0100.htm>

To assist with student learning, honesty, and integrity in academic processes, you may be asked to submit your essays to Turnitin which will enable you to check your paper for citations and plagiarism. TurnItIn also allows me to compare your work with prior publications and papers. You will be able to submit papers multiple times to see the amount of matching and adjust any mis-cited sources appropriately before the final deadline.

assignment formatting

Proper grammar, correct spelling and articulate writing style are imperative for all written work. Assignments neglecting these elements will receive lower grades as a result.

For formal course papers, please use **one-inch margins**, double-spacing and 12-point Times New Roman or Garamond font. For discussion posts and reflection assignments, single spacing is fine. APA style will be required for in-text citations/references only. Please make sure to always include a page number for direct quotations.

Please create your assignments in a Word or Google doc and then save them to Canvas, so that you keep a separate record of your written work. Expect that Canvas will try to ruin your life--save a record of everything and submit EARLY in case of tech problems.

on figuring out "what she wants"

Every semester, I overhear students discussing "what she wants" on homework and papers, or "what she REALLY wants," as opposed to what's written on assignment sheets. Please know that I spend a significant amount of time developing assignment directions with purpose statements, learning goals, grading rubrics, etc. that spell out the basics of what I'd like to see you accomplish.

What I *really* want is for you to take that structure and then do your **best work**. Be creative. Think hard. Write drafts and re-write. Care about your work because putting in time and attention will help you think better and learn more overall. Worry less about "getting it right" because there are many ways to accomplish the same assignment and all of them may be just fine, if they also meet the minimum requirements (read: the assignment sheet). Be confident and have fun. I'm already looking forward to reading your ideas.

coms 145 policies & requirements

assignments & evaluations

Throughout summer session, you will have a number of opportunities to demonstrate your understanding of org comm concepts. Along the way, you can earn up to 1,000 points, which are distributed across the assignments listed below. Detailed criteria and requirements will accompany each assignment.

Chapter Modules (50 points x 5 modules..)250 points

Each chapter is associated with various activities including: Mini-lectures, TED Talks, short articles, quizzes and activities requiring short reflections. (Learning domains: Understanding, Analysis)

Genius Points (4 weekly posts x 50 points)200 points

You will have the opportunity to stun me and your colleagues with your brilliance by applying org comm theory to work experience and organizational phenomena via discussion board writing assignments. (Learning domains: Analysis, Application)

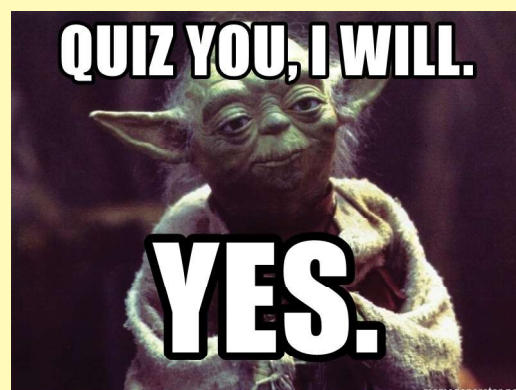
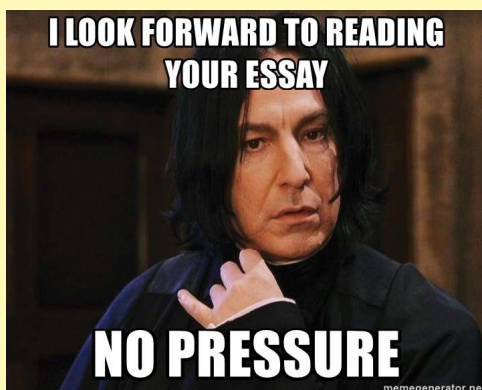
Research Translation Paper250 points

Academic research is often criticized for being inaccessible to lay audiences, in part because of paywalls that block access to the original work, and also the esoteric terms and dense language that often characterizes research. Exceptions exist in publications like the Harvard Business Review or Psychology Today, which break down research into easier-to-read language and “real world” applications. Your task will be to translate a piece of organizational communication scholarship into a short, catchy article aimed to teach a lay audience something useful about communication in organizations. (Learning domains: Analysis, Evaluation, Creation)

- Article choice & rationale..... 10 points
- Article outline with great quotes..... 20 points
- Full, POLISHED draft 20 points
- Peer Review..... 25 points
- Final paper..... 175 points

Super Quizzes (4 quizzes, 75 points each)300 points

The quizzes will cover material from the textbook, articles, and activities, and may consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. A study guide will be provided. (Learning domains: Remembering, Understanding, Applying)



coms 145 policies & requirements

grading perspectives

Grades are part of the teaching and learning process. Keep in mind that you earn your grade based on how well your work meets class objectives, fulfills requirements and reflects the academic skills expected of college students. Grades are not assigned based upon effort. It is your responsibility to understand why you have achieved a certain grade and what steps can maintain or improve your grade (see “Grading Questions” below and “Grading Standards” on page 7).

assignment feedback

I will do my best to evaluate regular assignments to a few days after you turn them in. Exams and papers may take longer. Grades will be posted to Canvas with feedback in the “comments” section or on a rubric.

grading scale

Final grades will not be rounded.

≥ 94%A	≥ 88%B+	≥ 78%C+	≥ 68%D+	< 60%.....F
≥ 90%A-	≥ 84%B	≥ 74%C	≥ 64%D	
	≥ 80%B-	≥ 70%C-	≥ 60%D-	

grading questions

If you have questions about a grade or evaluation, I am more than happy to speak with you. You will never, ever, ever have a grade lowered because you raise concern or voice an inquiry about it. It is ALWAYS in your best interest to talk with me and ask how something was graded or what could be done to improve scores next time around (See “Grading Standards” for more information).

Please note, however, I will not discuss grades for an assignment on the day I post grades/feedback. All such discussions will take place at least one day after the grade has been received. This is to give you time to read the comments/evaluation. If you wish to contest a grade, write out your argument clearly, concisely and completely, and set up a meeting with me. **You have seven days to contest a grade from the time the assignment feedback was received.**

*** If you are concerned about your achievement in the course, please speak to me early and often. ***

an aside

As this is an upper division course, much of the discussion and activities will be centered around your questions, observations and contributions. As seasoned college students, it is expected that your work be polished and thought-provoking, and that you consistently engage with the material and assignments. Because it's summer, our pace is accelerated and all procrastination time is cut out.

coms 145 grading standards

A: Outstanding – Original, appropriate criticism of course concepts

“A” work constitutes superior handling of the mechanical and conceptual material covered in class. Not only will “A” work synthesize and interact with the ideas and materials covered, but it will also show some originality of thought, an unusual degree of clarity in expression, and an ability to contextualize ideas, explore implications, and/or raise meaningful questions. “A” serves as a reward for superior presentation of extremely diligent consideration given to conceptually complex work. Such quality of work is achievable, but it is not common.

B: Very Good – Thorough, appropriate synthesis of course concepts

“B” work is marked by a timely completion of the assignment, demonstrating not only a grasp of the material under consideration, but the ability to synthesize and interact with that material, rather than simply repeat it. “B” work goes beyond minimum requirements outlined in the assignment, but not in a disorganized or rambling manner. Not every attempt to go beyond the minimum requirements will succeed. The grade of “B” represents work that is above average, having succeeded by surpassing the standard requirements in the quality of the finished product.

C: Adequate – Solid comprehension of course concepts

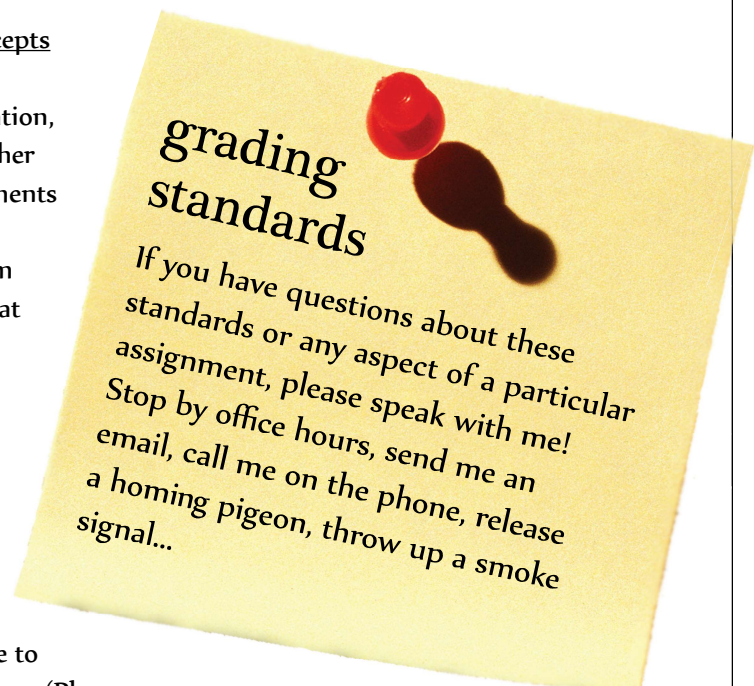
“C” work is marked by timely completion of the assignment, demonstrating a solid grasp of the material. “C” is the standard grade and all assignments are made with this in mind. Assume that fulfilling all aspects of the assignment well will result in a C. If you are looking for a grade higher than this, you will have to go beyond the minimum requirements outlined in the assignment. (Please note, that “going beyond” the minimum does NOT generally entail things like fancy cover sheets, colored fonts, or exceeding the assigned length of the assignment. “Going beyond” almost always applies to the conceptual concerns of the course, fine tuning clarity of expression, etc.)

D: Poor – Lack of understanding/Assignment does not meet most requirements

“D” is given for work that meets the requirements established, but demonstrates serious flaws either in conceptual formation or mechanical limits. “D” work could be seen in, for example, a good idea expressed very poorly or, conversely, a well-written paper that actually says nothing. “D” work: requires major revision; strays from or confuses audience and purpose; lacks substantive development; is overly generalized or uses facts that have questionable credibility; is formatted or designed in a way that is confusing or misleading; demonstrates an inconsistent or sometimes muddled style; demonstrates unsatisfactory mastery of standard written English where required.

F: Fails – Does Not Meet Assignment Requirements

“F” is given for an assignment that fails to meet the mechanical or conceptual requirements of university work. Mechanical requirements would be matters such as turn-in times, length of assignment, grammatical concerns, focus of assignment, etc. Conceptual matters would revolve around the comprehension of ideas and relationships between ideas. “F” work: fails to meet most of the stated assignment requirements; lacks focus on a subject or appropriate audience; includes unsatisfactory format; includes content that is weak, poorly developed, inadequate; lacks logical connections between ideas, sentences, paragraphs; lacks consistency in style and tone; demonstrates habitually poor writing skills where required.



violence, discrimination & sexual assault support services

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources via the Sac State Violence and Sexual Assault Services Program. More information: <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/sexual-violence-support/>, Sac State Victim Advocate: 916-278-3799, Student Health and Counseling: 916-278-6461; Office of Student Conduct: 916-278-6060.

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment. I hope you feel comfortable sharing your life experiences in classroom discussions, in written work, and in meetings. However, I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility regarding sexual misconduct. This means I am specifically required to report sexual misconduct to the university. If you share that type of information with me, I will try to keep it private, but I cannot guarantee it. I can, however, help you find completely confidential resources such as Student Health and Counseling.

crisis assistance & resource education support (CARES)

If you are experiencing a crisis, or challenges in the area of basic needs like food, transportation, wellness, and/or stable housing, Sacramento State offers support. Please visit <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/crisis-assistance-resource-education-support/> to learn more.

reading & writing resources

It is expected that you write at a level appropriate for an upper division course, with clear structure, clarity, grammar, and style. If you need help, visit the Writing Center or PARC, both which have virtual appointments, including over the summer. For more information, <https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html> and <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/>

unique academic needs/disabilities

If you have a disability or unique academic need and require assistance, please inform me as soon as possible. You will need to provide disability documentation to the Office of Services to Students with Disabilities, Lassen Hall 1008, <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/> or call 916-278-7239.

academic support services

Many services are available on campus to support to your academic career, including counseling, tutoring and career advising via the Student Service Center: <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/>

free health and wellness services

Need to see a doctor, speak with a counselor, or get prescription or over-the-counter meds? You can do all of that for FREE, and participate in free wellness/health classes. Learn more: <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/>

incompletes

Following university policy, incompletes will only be considered due to an extreme personal situation when most of the course assignments have been completed. Substantive documentation and a concise plan and time line for completing the course will be required.

coms145 tentative course calendar*

wk	date	reading due/topic for class	assignment due
1	May 31 to June 4	Welcome/Introductions Chapter 1: The challenge of Organizational Communication Chapter 2: Classical Approaches [Plus articles on Canvas]	Module 1 activities due by Friday, June 4 at 11:59 p.m.
2	June 7-11	Chapter 3: Human Relations & Human Resources Chapter 4: Systems & Cultural Approaches [Plus articles on Canvas]	GP#1 due on Canvas by Tue, Jun 8 by Noon GP#1 comments by Wed, Jun 9 at 11:59 p.m. Module 2 activities due by Fri, Jun 11 at 11:59 p.m.
Super Quiz 1 (Ch 1-4) Opens Wednesday, June 9 and closes Sunday, June 13 at 11:59 p.m.			
3	June 14-18	Chapter 5: Constitutive Approaches Chapter 6: Critical and Feminist Approaches Chapter 7: Socialization Processes [Plus articles on Canvas]	GP#2 due on Canvas Tue, Jun 15 by Noon GP#2 comments by Wed, Jun 16 at 11:59 p.m. Module 3 activities due by Friday, June 18 at 11:59 p.m.
Super Quiz 2 (Ch 5-7) Opens Wednesday, June 16 and closes Sunday, June 20 at 11:59 p.m.			
4	June 21-25	Chapter 8: Decision-Making Processes Chapter 9: Conflict Management Processes Chapter 10: Organizational Change & Leadership [Plus articles on Canvas]	GP#3 due on Canvas Tue, Jun 22 by Noon GP#3 comments by Wed, Jun 23 at 11:59 p.m. Module 4 activities due by Friday, June 25 at 11:59 p.m.
Super Quiz 3 (Ch 8-10) Opens Wednesday, June 23 and closes Sunday, June 27 at 11:59 p.m.			
5	June 28 to July 2	Chapter 11: Emotion in the Workplace Chapter 12: Organizational Diversity Technology and Work/Life Integration [Video] Chapter 14: The Changing Landscape of Organizations [Plus articles on Canvas]	GP#4 due on Canvas Tue, Jun 29 by Noon GP#4 comments by Wed, Jun 30 at 11:59 p.m. Module 5 activities due by Friday, July 2 at 11:59 p.m. Polished Drafts due by Friday, July 2 by 11:59 p.m.
Super Quiz 4 (Ch 11-14) Opens Wednesday, June 30 and closes Tuesday, July 6 at 11:59 p.m.			
6	Jul 5-9	Research Translation Papers	Peer Reviews due Tue, July 6 by 11:59 p.m. Research Translation Paper due Sat, July 10 by 10:00 a.m.