

coms 145

summer 2023
intro to org comm
section 1, #50310, online, asynchronous

welcome!

Welcome to Intro to Organizational Communication, one of the most useful classes you will ever take, especially if you plan to have a career or participate in society as an informed citizen. In this fast-paced summer session, we'll be diving into organizational theory and processes that should sound familiar to you, like leadership, management, and decision making, as well as many others that will hopefully prompt you to rethink how you understand and act in organizations like school and work. It will be an action-packed five weeks, where each week is the equivalent of three in a regular semester. Since there is no time to waste, please start by reading this syllabus carefully and checking out the Modules on Canvas.

description

Introduction to Organizational Communication invites you 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 processes, decision making, culture and subcultures, identity, power, leadership, relationships, conflict, gender, diversity, and emotionality, among other topics. You will be asked to consider all of the various organizations in which you interact, including current and previous employers, schools, churches, stores, sports teams, 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



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 reflection 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; analyze arguments; write reflections; identify concepts in various media; and chat with your peers and me. 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 and asynchronous, 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. or Professor Malvini Redden. (Note, no hyphen!) Short version: Dr./Prof Malvini (pronounced Mal-vee-knee). If you send an email to Mrs. Redden, I will forward it to my mother-in-law. And she will probably answer.

coms 145 policies & requirements

late work/make-up exams

Late work and make-up exams will be accepted only in extreme circumstances such as serious illness, accidents, death in the family, etc. Please note that COVID is no longer considered a serious illness, according to university and CDC policy. Late work may 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. And given our short time frame, you must, must, MUST keep on top of deadlines. To give you a sense of the time commitment for this course, the assignments are listed on page five. To keep it simple, most assignments are due on Tuesdays at 11:59 p.m., and new modules start on Wednesdays.

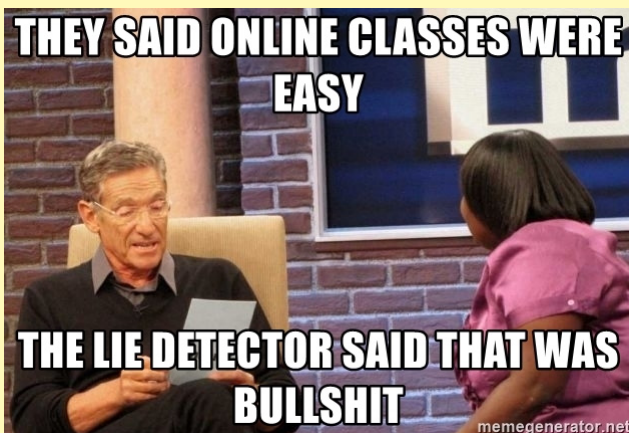
health and wellness

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 + “Three and Then Me” policy

Please remember that behind the computer screen is a person. Please treat e-mail with the same care and respect that you would a face-to-face interaction. I will attempt to return all e-mail promptly, within two business days. I do not regularly answer email after 5 p.m. or on the weekends. For a faster response, email me directly at malviniredden@csus.edu, rather than via Canvas messages.

If you have a question about an assignment or deadline, please follow the **Three and Then Me** policy. Aka, plan to seek out three resources before emailing me. Resources include assignment directions, the syllabus, Canvas modules (especially the Resources Module), colleagues, and Google. Plan to tell me the sources you tried. Note: I may not respond directly to questions when the information is readily available via these resources. Likewise, I may respond to questions that are pertinent to the entire class by posting a Canvas announcement, rather than replying directly.



resources for success in online classes

There are numerous resources to support success in online classes within the Resources Module on Canvas, including how to plan/keep up, goal setting, reading/academic writing, how to access campus resources and services. Please review them carefully. If you're having trouble accessing campus resources, especially CARES, please let me know ASAP and I will assist.

coms 145 policies & requirements

academic honesty, plagiarism and cheating

In this course, I am interested in your thoughts, reflections, applications, and analyses. It is expected that you will produce original work for COMS 145. Academic misconduct such as plagiarism, cheating, recycling papers from other classes, purchasing papers, or using online writing services/AI tools 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 instances of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Please acquaint yourself with the university's academic integrity policy: <http://www.csus.edu/umannual/student/stu-0100.htm>

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. To assist with learning and integrity, you will be asked to submit your writing to Turnitin which will enable you to check your paper for citations and plagiarism. Turn It In 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.

It is expected that you complete all elements of your work (finding sources, creating outlines, crafting citations, writing, editing, etc.) using your own intellect and talents, without AI support. Assignments flagged for AI-generated content will be heavily scrutinized and subject to the aforementioned plagiarism penalties. If your work is flagged for AI-generated content, you will be required to participate in a Zoom or face-to-face discussion of your writing process in order to continue the course. You may be asked to submit samples of your writing from previous courses via Turn It In, and/or complete a supervised writing exercise via Zoom in order for me to compare writing styles.

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 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. Note that writing assignments created on phones are rarely well-crafted and edited, and usually result in lower grades. **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 this class, you will have opportunities to demonstrate your understanding of org comm concepts and earn up to 1,000 points. Detailed criteria and requirements will accompany each assignment.

Note: Each week/module in a summer session is equivalent to three weeks of content during a regular term.

Weekly Module Activities (5 modules/points vary across modules)250 points

The course is divided into five modules arranged around a collection of textbook chapters (usually three).

Modules feature activities such as: Mini-lectures, blog posts, TED Talks, articles, case studies, discussion posts, and reflection activities. Activities (listed below) focus on applying/connecting concepts learned in each module. Module assignments (except Genius Points posts) are due Tuesdays by 11:59 p.m. (Learning domains: Understanding, Analysis, Application)

Module 1

- Intro post 20 points
- Syllabus & Canvas Quiz 20 points
- Academic Integrity Exercise..... 20 points
- Identifying Org Comm Activity..... 20 points

Module 3

- Gender Socialization Q&A 15 points
- Discursive Reflections 30 points
- Genius Points Post #2 50 points
- Super Quiz 2 125 points

Module 5

- Work/Life Boundary Q&A 15 points
- How You Plan to Change the World ... 30 points
- Genius Points Post #4 50 points
- Super Quiz 4 125 points
- Summative Self-Assessment 40 points

Module 2

- Historical Surprises Q&A 15 points
- Hot Tips for Managers 30 points
- Genius Points Post #1 50 points
- Super Quiz 1 125 points

Module 4

- Conflict Q&A 15 points
- Decisions, Decisions Case 30 points
- Genius Points Post #3 50 points
- Super Quiz 3 125 points

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

Each week, you will craft Genius Points posts where you will have the opportunity to stun me with your brilliance by applying org comm theory to work experience and organizational phenomena. These posts are due in Modules 2-5, on Saturdays by 11:59 p.m., and focus on linking textbook content and module articles with practical work/organizational experience. (Learning domains: Analysis, Application)

Super Quizzes (4 quizzes, 125 points each)500 points

Quizzes will cover the textbook, articles, and activities, and will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. A study guide will be provided. (Learning domains: Remembering, Understanding, Applying)

Summative Self-Assessment40 points

An important part of learning is the ability to self-assess how you are performing. You will craft an honest self-assessment about how well you met COMS 145 course learning objectives, considering grades on assignments and quizzes, professor feedback, and your subjective evaluation of your effort, achievement, and growth. It's strongly recommended that you keep a journal to capture reflections, quiz prep, questions, and analysis of your course engagement.

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 short assignments a few days after you turn them in. Exams and substantive assignments may take longer. Grades will be posted to Canvas with feedback in the “comments” section, on the document itself, or on a rubric. You may need to click around to find the feedback as Canvas isn’t the most intuitive.

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, 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. Be ready to chat about your studying or writing process as well. (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 and consider 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 three days to contest a grade from the time the assignment feedback was received. (Normally this is seven days, but has been condensed given the short time frame of the term)**

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

an aside

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. It’s expected that you will review assignment directions carefully and meet the minimum expectations (usually articulated in the directions and rubric). Because it’s summer, our pace is accelerated and all procrastination time is cut out. If you need help understanding assignments, please do not hesitate to reach out ASAP.

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

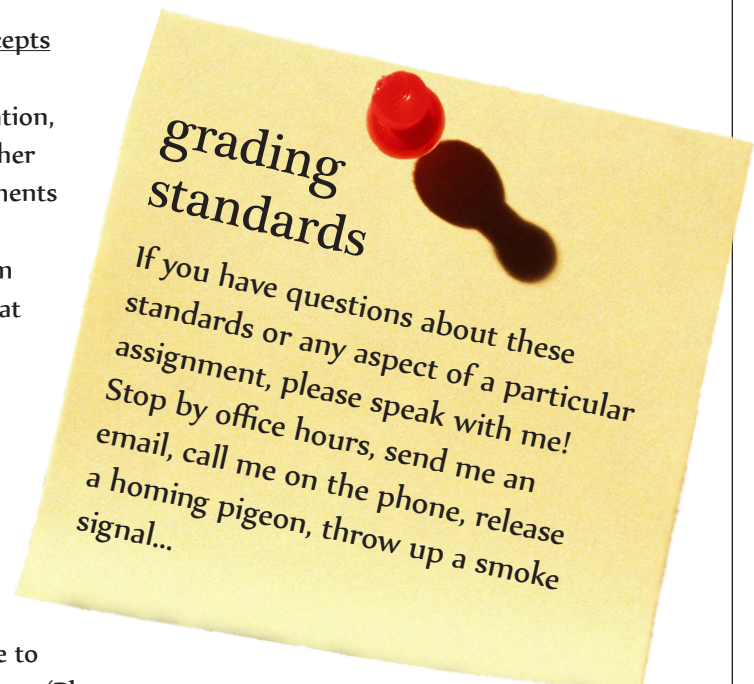
“C” work is marked by timely completion of the assignment, demonstrating a solid grasp of the material. “C” is the standard grade and all assignments are made with this in mind. Assume that fulfilling all aspects of the assignment well will result in a C. If you are looking for a grade higher than this, 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 formatting 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: Needs Substantive Improvement – Lack of understanding/Assignment does not meet most requirements

“D” is given for work that meets some of 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*

Our class runs from Wednesday, May 31 to Wednesday, July 5. New modules will start each Wednesday, with most materials due on Tuesday evenings by 11:59 p.m. Genius Points papers are due by Saturdays at 11:59 p.m. Deadlines are scheduled to keep you on pace with the material, and allow time to process and study for quizzes. You are strongly encouraged to work ahead, as it is possible in this short format. Please note that our last module spans a holiday. Please make plans to complete assignments early if you are heading out of town.

wk	date	readings/topics	assignment due
1	May 31 to June 6	Welcome/Introductions Chapter 1: The challenge of Organizational Communication Chapter 2: Classical Approaches “The Forgotten Story of the Radium Girls, Whose Deaths Saved Thousands of Workers’ Lives” by Kate Moore [on Canvas]	Module 1 activities due by Tuesday, June 6 at 11:59 p.m. - Intro post - Syllabus & Canvas Quiz - Academic Integrity Exercise - Identifying Org Comm Activity
2	June 7-13	Chapter 3: Human Relations & Human Resources Chapter 4: Systems & Cultural Approaches “Surviving Scamazon” by Albert Samaha [on Canvas] “Google was beloved as an employer for years. Then it laid off thousands by email” by Clare Duffy and Catherine Thorbecke [on Canvas]	GP#1 due on Canvas by Saturday, June 10 by 11:59 p.m. Module 2 activities due by Tuesday, June 13 at 11:59 p.m. - Historical Surprises Q&A - Hot Tips for Managers - Quiz 1
Super Quiz 1 (Ch 1-4) Opens Saturday, June 10 and closes Tuesday, June 13 at 11:59 p.m.			
3	June 14-20	Chapter 5: Constitutive Approaches Chapter 6: Critical and Feminist Approaches Chapter 7: Socialization Processes “Why Facts Don’t Change Our Minds: New Discoveries About the Human Mind Show the Limitations of Reason” by Elizabeth Kolbert [on Canvas] “The Deadly Truth About a World Built for Men--from Stab Vests to Car Crashes” by Caroline Criado-Perez [on Canvas] “How Men Continue to Interrupt Even the Most Powerful Women” by Tonja Jacobi and Dyland Schweers [on Canvas]	GP#2 due on Canvas by Saturday, June 17 by 11:59 p.m. Module 2 activities due by Tuesday, June 20 at 11:59 p.m. - Gender Socialization Q&A - Discursive Reflections - Quiz 2

Super Quiz 2 (Ch 5-7) Opens Saturday, June 17 and closes Tuesday, June 20 at 11:59 p.m.

wk	date	topic/readings	assignments
4	June 21-27	<p>Chapter 8: Decision-Making Processes</p> <p>Chapter 9: Conflict Management Processes</p> <p>Chapter 10: Organizational Change & Leadership</p> <p>“Do You Suffer from Decision Fatigue?” by John Tierney [on Canvas]</p> <p>“The ‘Other Side’ is Not Dumb” by Sean Blanda [on Canvas]</p> <p>“If Humble People Make the Best Leaders, Why Do We Fall for Charismatic Narcissists?” by Margarita Mayo [on Canvas]</p>	<p>GP#3 due on Canvas by Saturday, June 24 by 11:59 p.m.</p> <p>Module 2 activities due by Tuesday, Jun 27 at 11:59 p.m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflict Q&A - Decisions, Decisions Case Study - Quiz 3

Super Quiz 3 (Ch 8-10) Opens Saturday, June 24 and closes Tuesday, June 27 at 11:59 p.m.

5	June 28 to July 5	<p>Chapter 11: Emotion in the Workplace</p> <p>Chapter 12: Organizational Diversity</p> <p>Technology and Work/Life Integration [Video]</p> <p>*Note: We are not reading Chapters 13-14. They are too outdated.*</p> <p>“The Fear of Feelings at Work” by Bouree Lam</p> <p>“A Workplace-Diversity Dilemma” by Bouree Lam</p> <p>“Diverse employees are often working twice as hard” by Julia Carpenter</p> <p>“Have we forgotten how to be in work relationships?” by Jenni Field</p> <p>“‘Reclaiming my time’ Strategies from a scholar of chronemics, the study of time” by Lila MacLellan</p> <p>“9 future of work trends for 2023” by Emily Rose McRae and Peter Aykens</p>	<p>GP#4 due on Canvas by Saturday, July 1 by 11:59 p.m.</p> <p>Module 2 activities due by Wednesday, July 5 at 11:59 p.m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work/Life Boundary Q&A - How You Plan to Change the World (No Pressure) - Summative Self-Assessment - Quiz 4
---	-------------------	---	---

Super Quiz 4 (Ch 11-14) Opens Saturday, July 1 and closes Wednesday, July 5 at 11:59 p.m.