



Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: <https://catalog.uvu.edu/>

Semester: Spring

Year: 2025

Course Prefix: COMM

Course and Section #: 3050-003

Course Title: Theories of Communication

Credits: 3

Course Description

This class is a survey of theories in the field of human communication. In this class, we will explore theories that explain communication behavior between pairs of people, within groups, in organizations, through the media, in the act of persuasion, between cultures, and in societies. Course content focuses on the identification of various theories and the development of support messages appropriate for prescribed research problems or mediums.

Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:

- General Education Requirements
- Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
- Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
- Discipline Core Requirements in Program
- Elective Core Requirements in Program
- Open Elective

Other: *Click here to enter text.*

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Natalie Greco

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Define, explain, and illustrate transmission and ritual views of communication
2. Analyze the lived experience of human interaction through the symbolic interactionist perspective
3. Describe the relationship between mass communication and mass democracy
4. Define, explain, and illustrate critical theories of communication, including structuralism/semiotics, post-structuralism, and post-modernism
5. Apply communication theories (including transmission, ritual, and critical theories) to contemporary modes of mediated communication

Course Materials and Texts

Griffin, E.M. (2023). *A first look at communication theory, 11th ed.* New York: McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 978-1259913785.

Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy

Attendance and Participation: 70 Points

This class uses “hands-on” learning, so you are required to attend every class. The material in this class is cumulative in nature, so if you miss a class, you will fall behind on the material and it will be very difficult to catch-up. You are allotted 3 excused absences. Please use these excused days wisely, and plan accordingly around your schedule to avoid penalty. Each subsequent absence is a 5-point deduction from your attendance score.

Journals (4): 80 Points

- Define the theory
- Apply it to something in your life—current event, tv show, or personal experience. You must cite the page number from the text that inspires your idea, or you will lose points.
- During the semester you will submit five journal entries through Canvas, each of which relates a specific theory to everyday life. These journals should both explain the theory and demonstrate that you can apply it to something in your world. They should be formatted in the 5-paragraph essay format with a clear introduction, thesis, organizational strategy, and conclusion.
- A few of the journals have more specific examples—make sure you read the directions for each one.

Quizzes (5:) 100 points

- Throughout the semester, you will complete 5 quizzes to evaluate your comprehension of key course concepts. These quizzes are comprised of lecture and reading materials.

Research Proposal and Assignments: 150 points

- One important thing that is learned in this class is how to write a lit review and research proposal.
- You will find articles in scholarly publications that illustrate how some of the theories we study can be applied to communication in one or more contexts. You need five different scholarly research articles demonstrating that theory to research that particular context.
- You will write a 5–7-page paper using the research articles that you find. This paper needs to use APA format and be well written with an introduction, clear thesis, conclusion, and bibliography. Your similarity score on Unicheck Plagiarism Review will need to be less than 20%. This should be your words not a series of quotes.

Submission, Grading Procedures, and Course Assignments

- All assignments are to be completed and submitted online through Canvas.

Grading Scale: This scale represents your percentage of total points.

Percent	Grade
94-100%	A
90-93.9%	A-
86-89.9%	B+
83-85.9%	B
80-82.9%	B-
76-79.9%	C+
73-75.9%	C
70-72.9%	C-
66-69.9%	D+
63-65.9%	D
60-62.9%	D-
59.9% and below	E

Activity	Points	Percent of Grade
Attendance & Participation	70	20%
Journals (4)	80	20%
Quizzes (5)	100	20%
Research Proposal and Assignments	150	40%
Total	400	100%

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments

All required readings use chapters from course textbook and student guidebook that align with lectures and assignments.

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion

Module 1: Introductions and Course Orientation

- Course Overview/Syllabus
- Instructor Information
- Communication Librarian

Module 2: Launching Your Study of Communication Theory

- Mapping the Territory

Module 3: Writing a Research Proposal

- Peer-Reviewed Article Information

Module 4: Interpersonal Communication

- How Language Shapes the Way We Think
- Expectancy Violation Theory

Module 5: Relationship Development

- Uncertainty Reduction Theory

Module 6: Relationship Maintenance

- Dialects

Module 7: Persuasion

- Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Module 8: Public Rhetoric

- Persuasion concepts continued

Module 9: Group Communication

- Functional Perspective vs. Symbolic Convergence Theory

Module 10: Organizational Communication

- Organizational Culture

Module 11: Intercultural Communication

- Communication Accommodation Theory

Module 12: Media and Culture

- Agenda Setting Theory

Module 13: Media Effects

- Uses and Gratification Theory
- Cultivation Theory

Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative AI

Use of AI, including ChatGPT, is a tool available to students, however, to adhere to our scholarly values, students must cite any AI-generated material that informed their work (this includes in-text citations and/or use of quotations, and in your reference list). Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution qualifies as academic dishonesty. Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. In such cases, no more than 25% of the student work should be generated by AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me for a conversation before submitting your work.

Using Remote Testing Software

This course does not use remote testing software.

This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

Required University Syllabus Statements

Accommodations/Students with Disabilities

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at DHHservices@uvu.edu

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

Academic Integrity

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: Student Code of Conduct](#).

Equity and Title IX

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

Religious Accommodation

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu. If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed

by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a [specially dedicated space](#) for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.