

CMST 1061 Fundamentals of Communication Syllabus

Summer 2014, MTWTF, Audubon 212

Instructor Information

Instructor	Email	Office Location & Hours
Sanela Elli Osmanovic	sosman3@lsu.edu	Coates 317; Monday and Wednesday 10:30-11:30 or by appointment

General Information

Description and Course Goals

CMST 1061 is a General Education Humanities Course designed to familiarize students with the study of human communication processes and practices. Through readings, class discussion, and critical thinking, we will seek to define communication, analyze how it works in everyday life, how is it affected by our personalities, culture, language. How does communication create worlds of meaning? As a result of this course, students should be able to provide a thorough answer to this question. The understanding of the impact of communication on one's life is meant to encourage students to analyze, prepare, and practice communication skills.

Course Requirements

Required Text

Various readings and videos to be posted on Moodle.

Assignments

Students will be graded on their work on:

- **Observation papers.** At the end of each week, students will select a concept discussed in class and observe its application in real world. Following the observation, students will write a paper discussing what they observed and concluded. The observation paper should be between 300 and 500 words long, and should report some of your thoughts about the selected concept. The template for the observation paper together with a list of questions to be answered for each paper can be found on Moodle.
- **Reflection paper.** Following the silent banquet activity, students will write a reflection paper on the event. Detailed guidelines for the paper can be found on Moodle.
- **Group presentations.** After the midterm exam, the class will be randomly assigned into groups of four. The groups will be provided with a choice of topics from the broad field of communication, and will prepare a 20-minute presentation on the selected topic. The presentations will be delivered during the last week of classes.
- **Midterm and final examinations.** The examinations will mostly consist of questions on the textbook and lectures. The format will be discussed in class.
- **Participation in class activities.** The nature of this course relies a great deal on the basic concept of any communication, which is interaction between the students and the instructor, as well as among the students and groups. We will have class activities every week, working on students' proficiency in communication. Each week of participation in class activities carries 20 points for a total of 140 points for the semester.

Final grades will be determined based on scores earned in these assignments. All work must be done during the semester and not made up after the fact.

Course Assignment	Percentage of the Grade	Maximum Points
Observation Papers	20%	200
Reflection Paper	10%	100
Group presentation	16%	160
Class Activities	14%	140
Midterm Exam	20%	200
Final Exam	20%	200
Total	100%	1000 points

Grading Scale

The final grade will be determined based on the usual scale: 90%-100% (900-1000 points) = A; 80%-89% (800-899 points) = B; 70%-79% (700-799 points) = C; 60%-69% (600-699 points) = D, below 60% (below 600 points) = F.

Classroom Decorum

As this class largely consists of dialogue, in-class exercises, and group discussion, please respect the work and the presentations of your classmates.

- Listen to conversations, participate in them. Show support. You will be required at one point or the other to provide feedback to your peers.
- Do not use your phone during the class. Turn your ringtone off, however lovely I am sure it is.
- Do not use personal computers, tablets, and similar devices during the class, especially on class activity days. You will learn how to deal with a distracted audience, but you don't need to play the part of that audience for your classmates.
- Be on time. Do not disrupt your classmates' dialogue with your late arrival.
- Controversial subjects may arise. Be open-minded about topics.

Course Schedule (Tentative)

Week 1	Topic	For this class
Mon, 06/09	Syllabus, class overview	Read the syllabus
Thu, 06/10	Introduction to communication	Reading posted on Moodle
Wed, 06/11	Introduction to communication	In-class activity
Thu, 06/12	Introduction to communication	Reading posted on Moodle
Fri, 06/13	Observation activity	Details posted on Moodle

Week 2	Topic	For this class
Mon, 06/16	Agent	Observation paper due, read Chapter 1
Thu, 06/17	Agent	In-class activity
Wed, 06/18	Audience	read Chapter 2
Thu, 06/19	Audience	In-class activity
Fri, 06/20	Message	Observation activity, read Chapter 3

Week 3	Topic	For this class
Mon, 06/23	Message	Observation paper due, In-class activity
Thu, 06/24	Meaning	read Chapter 4
Wed, 06/25	Meaning	In-class activity
Thu, 06/26	Verbal communication	Reading posted on Moodle
Fri, 06/27	Verbal communication	Observation activity

Week 4	Topic	For this class
Mon, 06/30	Nonverbal communication	Observation paper due, Reading posted on Moodle
Thu, 07/01	Nonverbal communication	In-class activity
Wed, 07/02	Midterm exam	
Thu, 07/03	Nonverbal communication	Observation activity
Fri, 07/04	No class	

Week 5	Topic	For this class
Mon, 07/07	Listening	Observation paper due, Reading posted on Moodle
Thu, 07/08	Listening	In-class activity
Wed, 07/09	Silence	Reading posted on Moodle
Thu, 07/10	Silent banquet	In-class activity
Fri, 07/11	Reflection activity	

Week 6	Topic	For this class
Mon, 07/14	Interpersonal communication	Observation paper due, Reading posted on Moodle
Thu, 07/15	Relational communication	Reading posted on Moodle
Wed, 07/16	Gender communication	Reading posted on Moodle
Thu, 07/17	Intercultural communication	Reading posted on Moodle
Fri, 07/18	Select week topics	Observation activity

Week 7	Topic	For this class
Mon, 07/21	Computer-mediated communication	Observation paper due, Reading posted on Moodle
Thu, 07/22	Small group communication	Reading posted on Moodle
Wed, 07/23	Group presentations	
Thu, 07/24	Group presentations	
Fri, 07/25	Group presentations	

Week 8	Topic	For this class
Mon, 07/28	Final exam review	Group feedback due
Thu, 07/29	Concentrated study period	
Wed, 07/30	Final exam	4:00-6:00 PM

Additional Information and Resources

Attendance and Participation

Attendance will be taken every class. Your attendance at each class meeting is expected. You are expected to attend all classes just as you would be expected to go to work every day if this was any other job. Your class participation grade will be determined based on in-class discussion participation, assignments/exercises, and analysis of in-class presentations throughout the semester.

Plagiarism

There will be no tolerance for plagiarism. You are to assume that all assignments in this course are individual assignments unless explicit instructions are provided for a group project. Any student found to have presented material not their own (either downloaded from the internet or written by another student) will immediately be reported to the Dean of Students. The Internet has made plagiarism very easy and very tempting. Hundreds of sites offer papers, research, writing, and editing. The ease with which such material is available over the Internet does not lessen the seriousness of claiming material from the Internet as your own. See the LSU policies on plagiarism here:

<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/instruction/plagiarism2.html>.

Extra Credit

No extra credit assignments will be allowed.

Missed Assignments and Exams

Summer is a short semester. If you know that you will miss an assignment or an exam due to a university-approved absence, please speak to me before the exam date so we can make appropriate arrangements. If you have an excused absence, accompanied by a note describing the date a reason of your absence, you can make up a missed midterm exam within one week of its date, in an essay form. No make-ups will be allowed after this time and zero (0) points will be given for that assignment.

A brief make-up period will be allowed for assignments and midterm exam missed due to an unexcused absence, with every day between the original speech/exam date and the make-up date carrying a 20% penalty to the assignment/exam grade.

Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitations Act of 1973 states: "If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations can be arranged." After you receive the accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

Do you have a major?

Business leaders and other professionals recognize the importance of developing communication skills and analysis. Alan Greenspan, for example, stated, "To succeed, you will soon learn, as I did, the importance of a solid foundation in the basics of education - literacy, both verbal and numerical, and communication skills." We hope this course contributes to your success.

To learn more about communication, you may want to major or minor in the Department of Communication Studies. The program explores how people sustain and change, experience, and make sense of the world through symbolic action. Students develop conceptual skills to analyze written, oral, and visual messages. Students gain practical experience in such areas such as public speaking, group decision-making, performance, and film. Such skills are elemental to careers in business, government, law, social services, and the arts.

A major in Communication Studies requires 36 hours including 12 hours of core classes and 12 hours at the 3000 or 4000 level. A minor requires 15 hours with one core class and 6 hours at the 3000 level or above.

More information is available at www.lsu.edu/cmst or by contacting our undergraduate advisor Mr. Kent Filbel (kfilli@lsu.edu), whose hours are posted at his office, 135 Coates Hall.