COMM 1210: Perspectives on Human Communication

Fall 2014

Lecture: Monday & Wednesday, 2.00 – 2.50 pm (CHEM 140)
One recitation per student (Thursday or Friday)

Instructors

Dr. David Boromisza-Habashi, Lecturer (dbh@colorado.edu)
office hours: MW 10.00-11.00 and by appointment (Hellems 78)

Alexandra Jackson (A.J.) Nevis, Lead Teaching Assistant (Alexandra.Nevis@colorado.edu)
office hours: M 10.30-12.30, and by appointment (Hellems 14)

Mary Caron, Teaching Assistant (Mary.Caron@colorado.edu)
office hours: M 3.30-4.30, TR 10.00-11.00, and by appointment (Hellems 65)

Nicole Castro, Teaching Assistant (Nicole.Castro@colorado.edu)
office hours: M 3.30-4.30, TR 10.00-11.00, and by appointment (Hellems 65)

Wayne Freeman, Teaching Assistant (Wayne.Freeman@colorado.edu)
office hours: W 12.00-1.30, TR 12.00-1.30, and by appointment (Hellems 3)

Dan Kim, Teaching Assistant (dhkim@colorado.edu)
office hours: W 12.45-1.45, F 11.00-12.00, and by appointment (Hellems 3)

Greg Russell, Teaching Assistant (Greg.Russell-1@colorado.edu)
office hours: TW 12.00-1.00, and by appointment (Hellems 14)

Communicating with instructors

You may communicate with us face-to-face or via e-mail. If you have a question or concern,
contact your TA first using the CU email address listed above (i.e. not through the D2L
website). Don’t expect an immediate response, but they will try to get back to you within 24
hours during the week (on weekends and holidays it is likely to be longer).

Use office hour visits to get feedback from your TAs about your progress in the course,
upcoming and past assignments. You can schedule appointments with your TAs outside their
office hours if it is absolutely necessary. However, keep in mind that your TAs have their own
coursework and research to take care of besides teaching and advising you. Plan your
appointments accordingly. For example, don’t wait to discuss your midterm with your TA until
the last week of classes!
About the course: Why/how do we use communication to live and act together?

This course is based on the notion that although no two humans can know the same thing we can use communication to live and act together in the world. COMM 1210 provides an introduction to communication as a way of thinking about and living and cooperating with others in a social world. It also introduces communication as a discipline and interlocking fields of study. We will read contemporary writings to make sense of communication as a form of social action, utilized by humans for the purpose of creating, inhabiting, and transforming social worlds. In the process of learning key concepts and theories, emphasis is placed on developing reflective self-awareness about the communication that we participate in and wider-ranging curiosity and care for the communicative lives of others. In the process, we will consider a range of embodied and technologically mediated forms of communication cutting across interpersonal, organizational, and public settings and relationships.

The material will be organized into four parts. All of these parts represent different but related perspectives on human communication. The first three parts have to do with imagining communication as a social process that involves managing a set of contingencies or features on which the success of communication depends.

- Part 1: The single contingency perspective on communication: Communication as sending effective messages
- Part 2: The double contingency perspective on communication: Communication as interacting and doing things together
- Part 3: The triple contingency perspective on communication: Communication in a pluralistic social world
- Part 4: A disciplinary perspective on communication: The institutional context of studying communication

Goals for students

- to learn about some dominant perspectives on human communication
- to learn how to think “socially” about communication, and “communicationally” about the social world
- to develop an interest in studying communication
- to find out about resources for the study of communication at CU and beyond

Evaluation

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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>15+10%</td>
<td>250 pts (exam portion + essay portion)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>150 pts (exam portion only)</td>
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<tr>
<td>RQs</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>300 pts (total of 3)</td>
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RQuizzes 15% 150 pts (total of 3)
Lecture participation 5% 50 pts (based on iClicker points)
Recitation participation 10% 100 pts (attendance + participation)

Total score 100% 1000 pts
Extra credit 1% 10 pts

Score Breakdown

0 – 59% F
60 – 62% D-
63 – 66% D
67 – 69% D+
70 – 72% C-
73 – 76% C
77 – 79% C+
80 – 82% B-
83 – 86% B
87 – 89% B+
90 – 93% A-
94 – 100% A

Remember:
- You will get one letter grade in this course: your final grade.
- We are not converting scores you receive on individual assignments into letter grades.
- Your final letter grade will be posted on your academic record, but not on D2L. Feel free to check in with your TA about your progress.

Readings and course materials

Book


Articles / book chapters


Pick up your copy of the required book (“*Messages: The communication skills book*”) from the CU Bookstore.

All other course readings will be made available on D2L. Remember to use a CU VPN client to access readings from off-campus.

**A tip for success!** Keep hard copies of all of your graded Reading Questions and your notes on readings in a three-ring binder or folder. Bring these materials to recitation. Your instructors will check if you have these materials with you at various points during the semester, and factor the state of your materials into your participation score.

You also need an iClicker for the course. Once you have one, you must register it through CUConnect, otherwise you will lose all of your participation points. Remember: iClicker participation does not directly correspond with a grade in this course! What this means is that you may get a low grade in the course even if you will have attended all lectures. **You cannot earn iClicker points for lectures you miss.** If you weren’t there, you did not participate. **If you accidentally leave your iClicker at home, you lose that day’s participation points.**

Reading assignments: Reading Questions (RQs) and Reading Quizzes (RQuizzes)
Reading is an important part of this class. It is a skill we would like to help you improve upon, and a medium through which a significant part of your learning will occur. Reading well is a skill that will serve you well throughout your undergraduate studies and beyond.

To direct you toward key ideas in the readings and maximize opportunities for you to learn, think about, and apply material in the class, we will give you reading guides. Sometimes these guides will require that you complete and hand in Reading Questions. Other times, they will provide the basis for a quiz that will be administered during lecture (generally on Wednesday). The more time you put into the readings, the more likely you are to succeed in this class and improve as a student.

Managing readings

- Unless otherwise noted, all readings are available on D2L (http://learn.colorado.edu)
- We recommend that you print out a hard copy of all readings and/or your reading notes and bring them to lecture and recitation with you every week. Keep them in a folder or three-ring binder.

Reading questions (RQs)

- 3 sets of RQs will be assigned. They will be due on weeks 5, 9, and 13.
- Electronic copies of RQs will be due on Friday by 11.59pm. Upload your RQ into the appropriate Dropbox. You don’t need to submit a hard copy. 15 points will be deducted from your score for each day your RQ is late.
- We ask you to submit RQs on D2L because Dropbox has an automatic plagiarism detection feature built into it.
- RQs must be uploaded to D2L in one of the following file types: Word, WordPerfect, PostScript, Acrobat PDF, HTML, RTF, or plain text (NOT .pages!). RQs using other file types will not be accepted. Your RQ will be considered late until you submit it using an acceptable file type.
- Because of class size, e-mailed RQs will not be accepted—except in the case of documented emergencies. Provide your TA with a doctor’s note and negotiate a deadline with them for submitting your missed RQ.
- Be sure to add your name, recitation leader, day/time of recitation, and RQ number on the sheet. You don’t need to add questions themselves to your response sheets. All answers must be typed to receive credit. Unidentifiable RQs will be considered late.
- RQs need to be completed by each student working as an individual. You may speak with a classmate to clarify what a question might be asking for, but the answer and words need to be your own. Remember: Dropbox automatically detects plagiarism.
- Please type in complete sentences, not bullet points or sentence fragments. Fragments are difficult to read and to assess whether or not you understand the material. Writing in complete sentences will also help you to prepare for the final exam.
TAs will evaluate RQs by using the following rubric:

“IMPRESSIVE!” (100 points) = student completed all questions in an exceptionally thorough and thoughtful manner, going significantly beyond what was asked for in the question by making relevant and insightful comparisons to authors and ideas from previous weeks

“WELL DONE!” (95 points) = student completed all questions in a thorough and thoughtful manner (i.e. all questions contain evidence of careful thought and insight)

“NOT BAD” (85 points) = student completed at least two questions in a thorough and thoughtful manner; or completed all questions in a complete and adequate manner

“OKAY” (75 points) = student completed at least two questions in a complete and adequate manner; or completed all questions in an incomplete or inadequate manner

“MINIMAL EFFORT” (65 points) = student completed only one question; or answered one or more questions incompletely or inadequately

“NOT EVEN CLOSE” (55 points) = student failed to complete more than one question; or answered half or more of the questions incompletely or inadequately

NO RQ (0 points) = student did not submit an electronic copy of the RQ in the assigned time frame.

Reading Quizzes (RQuizzes)

- We will have three RQuizzes, at the beginning of the Wednesday lecture on weeks 3, 7, and 11.
- Quizzes will consist of five multiple choice questions and one short-answer question (one paragraph) based on the readings covered since the last quiz.
- Quizzes must be completed independently.
- Quizzes submitted without student name, TA name and section number will be penalized.

Managing your grades

Your TAs will be entering your grades on D2L throughout the semester. It is your responsibility to monitor the grades that are recorded there and make sure they match the grade you received on the assignment or exam. We are very careful when we grade and enter scores, but occasionally we make mistakes. If you find a discrepancy between your posted grade and the one written on your homework or exam, you need to let your TA know within 10 days after the assignment is returned. Grades will NOT be changed except in cases where there was an error in recording, computation, or application of course grading criteria.

How to get good grades in this course?
How to get a C? Do everything that is required of you.

How to get a B? Do everything that is required of you, and show creativity and care about the study of communication.

How to get an A? Wow your instructor (TA). It can be done.

Technology use policy

You can use ONE electronic device in lecture for the sole purpose of note taking. If you do bring an electronic device to lecture you will be required to sit in the lecture hall where your TA can see you. Your TA will monitor your technology use throughout the semester. If s/he sees you abuse technology (e.g., texting, Facebooking, etc.) in lecture s/he will give you one warning after the midterm. If you continue abusing technology in lecture you will lose 50 points from your final score.

TAs have the right to set their own technology use policies in the recitations they teach.

Personal address policy

You may address the professor teaching the course in email correspondence or face-to-face as “Professor,” “Doctor Boromisza-Habashi,” “Doctor David,” or “David.”

Your TA will inform you how she or he wishes to be addressed.

Alternate-date and makeup exams

Alternate-date and makeup exams will be given ONLY:

- if the student is required to attend an officially sanctioned University athletic event as a participant and notifies the instructor in advance;
- in cases of a religious observance where the instructor is notified in advance;
- in cases of documented medical emergency;
- in cases of a documented family emergency;
- in cases of a documented legal obligation that cannot be adjusted (e.g. court appearances).

Students with special needs

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please give your TA a letter from Disability Services as soon as possible so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services
determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu.

If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

**Religious observances**

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, we ask you to let your TA know about your scheduling conflicts at least a week before they occur. See full details about the policy at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html)

**Maintaining a civil classroom environment**

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. We will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise your instructors of this preference early in the semester so that we may make appropriate changes to our records. See policies at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html) and at [http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code](http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code)

**Plagiarism and other cheating**

We take cheating seriously—on exams, quizzes, and with Reading Questions. All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic, dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (303-725-2273; honor@colorado.edu). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). For information on following the Honor Code with Reading Questions, see that handout. Other information can be found at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html) & [http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/](http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/).
## Course schedule

Unless otherwise noted, **readings** are available through D2L and you should complete them in the order listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>RQs / RQuizzes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 (of 8/25)</td>
<td>Communication perspectives: Single, double, triple contingency</td>
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<td>Week 2 (of 9/1)</td>
<td>(9/1 Labor Day – no class!) What does it mean to read / cite communication scholarship? SINGLE CONTINGENCY: Sending effective messages</td>
<td><em>Messages</em> (Introduction, Chs 1, 2, 3)</td>
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<td>Week 3 (of 9/8)</td>
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<td><em>Messages</em> (Chs 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)</td>
<td>RQuiz #1</td>
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<td>Week 4 (of 9/15)</td>
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<td><em>Messages</em> (Chs 9, 10, 11, 12)</td>
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<td>Week 5 (of 9/22)</td>
<td>DOUBLE CONTINGENCY: Interacting and doing things together</td>
<td>Cameron, “Communication culture” <em>(read the whole chapter)</em></td>
<td>RQ #1</td>
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<td>Week 6 (of 9/29)</td>
<td>A shared social space: The workplace</td>
<td>Tracy, “Nightmares, demons, and slaves” <em>(read pp. 148-150 [to the end of the first full paragraph], and the section titled “What Bullying Feels Like: Metaphors of Bullying, Bullies, and Targeted Workers” (pp. 158-171)]</em></td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>A shared social space: College</td>
<td>Engstrom, “Yes..., but I was drunk”</td>
<td>RQuiz #2</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>MIDTERM (on 10/15, all day on D2L)</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>TRIPLE CONTINGENCY: Interacting and doing things together in a pluralistic society</td>
<td>Simonson, “The streets of Laredo”</td>
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<td>Competing group interests: Politics</td>
<td><em>(read from the beginning of the paper to the beginning of the first full paragraph on p. 95, then skip to the section called “Driving Down, Phoning In” on p. 98 and read to the end of the last full paragraph on p. 119)</em></td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Competing group interests: Race/ethnicity</td>
<td>Covarrubias, “Of endearment and other terms of address”</td>
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<td><em>(read whole chapter)</em></td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Competing group interests: Race/ethnicity</td>
<td>Bailey, “Communicative behavior and conflict between African-American customers and Korean immigrant retailers in Los Angeles”</td>
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<td><em>(start reading on p. 89 at the start of the section called “Rhetoric of respect,” and read all the way to p. 99, until the end of the section called “Contrasting communicative patterns in service encounters”)</em></td>
<td>RQuiz #3</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>SUMMARIZING THE THREE CONTINGENCIES: The case of sexual consent and rape</td>
<td>Bussel, “Beyond yes or no”</td>
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<td>Harris, “Peanut butter sandwiches”</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Week 13 (of 11/17)</td>
<td>NCA (lecture on Monday ONLY, no recitations)</td>
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<td>COMM at CU</td>
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<td>RQ #3</td>
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<td>Week 14 (of 11/24)</td>
<td>FALL BREAK</td>
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<td>Week 15 (of 12/1)</td>
<td>Institutions of COMM</td>
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<td>Pathways</td>
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<td>(read the whole text)</td>
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<td>Week 16 (of 12/8)</td>
<td>Pulling it all together</td>
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<td>Final essays due</td>
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<td>12/17</td>
<td>FINAL (all day on D2L)</td>
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**Common excuses and justifications we will NOT honor**

“This policy isn’t fair! You should change it.” – You may not find some of our policies fair, and you are free to voice your opinion. However, we will not change the policies listed in this syllabus.

“I didn’t check my email.” – Email is the primary means of communication between you and your instructors in the course. Check your email on a regular basis.

“I didn’t get the email (my mailbox was full / my account doesn’t work).” – Because email is the primary means of communication between you and your instructors in the course, it will be your responsibility to keep your email account in working order throughout the semester.

“I couldn’t print it out.” (“My printer broke.”) – Spend time identifying a reliable printer. Don’t print your RQs 15 minutes before class!

“My paper was lost when the computer I was working on in the library / computer lab crashed.” – It is your responsibility to back up your files by saving them on a flash drive or by emailing them to yourself.
“My computer crashed / I lost my internet connection in the middle of an online exam.” – You are personally responsible for securing access to a computer and an internet connection that will allow you to complete exams on D2L.

“D2L crashed in the middle of an online exam. No, I don’t have evidence.” – We will need evidence from you that the crash indeed happened. Email your TA or Dr. Boromisza-Habashi a screenshot of the error message, or get someone from OIT to verify the crash.

(Two weeks after the end of the semester:) “I hadn’t done well in class because my TA was unfair.” – You can safely assume that your TAs will assess your work in COMM 1210 fairly. However, you are free to talk to your TA or to Dr. Boromisza-Habashi about unfair treatment until the last day of classes.

(Two weeks after the end of the semester:) “I hadn’t done well in class because I have a learning disability / debilitating illness. I was diagnosed last week.” – You will need to provide documentation of your disability or illness immediately when you find out about it, or at least by the last day of classes. You should give such documentation to your TA.

(Two weeks after the end of the semester:) “I hadn’t done well in class because I was coping with my aunt’s death.” – Personal tragedy happens unexpectedly. You will need to provide documentation (i.e., the hard copy of a signed letter from a parent or a family member, along with their contact information) to your TA when the tragic event occurs, or at least by the last day of classes.

“Why did I get this grade? I worked so hard on my papers, and spent hours studying for my exams!” – It is your private decision how much work you are willing invest into this course. Your instructors are only concerned about the quality of your work.

“Why did I get this grade? I have never missed a lecture or a recitation!” – We think of attendance as a basic requirement, not a remarkable accomplishment.
I have read the syllabus, understand its contents, and commit to using it as a guide to success in COMM 1210.

In addition, I understand that instructors will not make exceptions to the policies listed in this syllabus unless I provide appropriate documentation.

_______________________________________   _______________________
Name (printed)       Section #

_______________________________________   _______________________
Name (signed)        Date