Syllabus
Communication 3140
Dangerous Liaisons
Spring 2013

**Description**
Communication 3140 is designed as an introduction to interpersonal and organizational communication. It does so by exploring the dark side of communication—the side that allows us to lie, con, exploit, spin, disrupt, deny, obstruct, misguide, resist, and all that is commonly considered less desirable practice. Along the way, it provides the opportunity to explore a variety of theoretical perspectives and apply them to the everyday problems we each face.

**Goals**
The goals of this course are to (a) further develop one’s critical learning skills, (b) gain knowledge about interpersonal and organizational theory and performance, (c) develop and test practical applications in everyday problems in interpersonal relationships and organizational practice, and (d) further one’s proficiencies in the critical analysis of communication.

**Course Activities**
Course activities include a series of foundational classroom activities, the careful engagement of the course texts, the completion of a portfolio of personal achievement, and a group-based case development and presentation.

**Procedures**

*Overview—A Learning Organization*
This course is designed to produce a “learning organization”. A learning organization is one that uses the power of coordinated action and collective effort to achieve agreed upon objectives. Members are organized into cooperative workgroups that establish (a) their own local goals appropriate to the objectives of the larger organization, (b) their own administrative structure, and (c) their own work procedures. An Administrative Committee composed of representatives elected from the work groups and the instructional staff provides the connecting coordination to ensure that the workgroups have the needed administrative and production resources and that the output of the work groups will flow together.

*Class Structure*
This is a hybrid course that makes use of classroom activities, work groups and Canvas. Classroom activities include lectures, discussions, performances and group presentations. Work groups will develop part of the course content and present it to the other class members. Canvas is used to post all assignments. As a *learning organization*, we are all teachers and all students. Authority for the success of the class is shared with all class members.
**Workgroup Activities**

Once constituted, the cooperative workgroups would develop their structure and operating procedures with their first task being to post a workgroup web page identifying the group and establishing their mission statement. The homepage will be posted on (or accessed through) the course’s Canvas site. All workgroups will keep detailed minutes of their meetings. The products of the group will be its homepage, its record of work, its case development and its classroom presentations. Workgroup products will be evaluated on the claims, evidence, logic, clarity, accessibility, and quality of presentation. Group work is graded by the quality of the entire portfolio not by its component parts.

**The Individual Portfolio**

The individual will prepare a portfolio documenting individual activities and achievements appropriate to the course goals and personal objectives. The portfolio will include:

1. A statement of the individual's educational objectives relevant to this class;

2. Evidence of the careful engagement of the content of the course to be composed of reading notes, lecture/presentation notes, reflections, and cases;

3. Evidence that demonstrates (a) the further develop one’s critical learning skills; (b) a gain in knowledge about communication theory; (c) an effort to develop and test practical applications of this theory for everyday problems in interpersonal relationships, media engagement, and organizational practice; and (d) the furtherance of one’s proficiencies in the critical analysis of theory.

4. Evidence of participation as a supervised and evaluated group member in knowledge production activities.

Individual Portfolios will be graded five times—at the end of each of the topic segments and at the end of the semester. (For more information, see Grading below.)

**Initial Assignment**

Your first assignment will be to print out and sign the agreement at the end of this syllabus (this is the only action **required of all class members**), and establish your personal web page. Your web page need only have your name, contact information and a short biographical sketch, though you may add whatever else you wish. The signed agreement is due and the web page is to be posted by January 19th.

**The Case Study Group Activity**

A case study is a teaching/learning tool. (There is no better way to learn something than to try to teach it to someone else.) The group case study is an opportunity to teach some substantive topic in interpersonal/group/organizational communication through the method of interrogating a
compelling narrative. The case is composed of three parts: a thorough analysis of the underlying concepts that are to be exemplified in the narrative and taught through the question-driven analysis, the narrative that provides a particular example of the concepts in action, and the analytical questions that direct the learning process. For an example of an extended case study see the Harassment Grades Case in The Organizational Self (p. 203).

Steps: The first step is to locate the area of interest and the concepts you wish to teach. You are presented with a huge field of opportunity, so the problem will be in attaining focus. Start by selecting a major topical domain like: friendship, family dynamics, power or resistance in organizations, team work, small group dynamics, etc. Then focus it down: How do males and females negotiate friendships across same sex friends? That question would lead you to the differences between males and females in constituting friendships and to the theories and concepts that engage that difference. Consult your experience; consult the literature; consult with your instructors.

The second step is to build the narrative. (The narrative should be very plausible, but does not have to be true). Start with a story from someone in the group that establishes the setting, characters, action, and narrative arc. (There are lots of sites that can help you with this writing; see http://www.sandhills.edu/academic-departments/english/film/narrativearc.html for an example). Adjust the narrative so that it captures the concepts you wish to teach.

Finally, frame a set of analytical questions that require the student of the case to extract the concepts that are to be learned. (For example: In this case John and Mary were both faced with conflicts between family obligations and friendship responsibilities. How did they each resolve these conflicts? How do the differences in the resolutions reflect friendship differences across genders? What were the qualities that marked the differences between the friendship constituted by John and Joe and by Mary and Maureen?) The challenge here is to build a case that will support substantial questions that in turn will require a reasonable complexity of interpretation without deception or trickery. (Cases are not riddles.)

Can you use a published narrative? Yes, with certain restrictions and consequences. As a conceptual starting point with no further use of the text, simply provide the citation. There are no points at risk. As a basis for your narrative to which you add a substantial portion, provide a footnote that contains the citation, and a description of what was used and what was added. The more you depend on someone else’s narrative, you may lose points (up to 100, but recoverable). If you rely substantially or entirely on a published narrative, provide the citation. You will lose 150 points for the case, but might make them up in outstanding work in conceptual development and/or analytical interrogations.

Instructional Staff

Instructor of Record: Professor James A. Anderson
Office: 2517 LNCO
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Office hours:  Tuesday and Thursday, 2:30-4:00 by appointment or whenever the door is open. Email is the fastest, surest way to reach me. To make an appointment contact Karen Klc at 801.581.6888

Co-Instructor:  Professor Connie Bullis
Office Location: LNCO 2425
Office Hours: T, Th 12:00 – 1:00, or by appointment
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Co-Instructor:  Professor Heather Canary
Office Location:  LNCO 2860
Office Hours:  Walk-in, T, Th 1:00- 2:30 pm; other times by appointment
Email: heather.canary@utah.edu (best method of contact for questions or appointments)
Office Phone (no voicemail):  801-581-7633

Co-Instructor:  Russ Wood Ph. D.
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Office Hours: By appointment
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Cell Phone: 801-913-8544

Texts:

Doctor Wood’s Unit 1 readings are available on the Canvas site
Professor Canary’s Unit 2 readings are available on the Canvas site. See Course Calendar for order of readings
Note: Royalties that might ordinarily fall to J. Anderson are donated to The Road Home.
Kouzes & Posner.  The Leadership Challenge

Announcements

This course is governed by all of the appropriate university policies available at http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html

Honor Code and Disabilities Act

Participants are bound by the student honor code posted on the University web site.

The course operates under the Americans with Disabilities Act and reasonable accommodations will be provided for those covered by the Act. Students requesting those accommodations must do so at the beginning of the semester. The instructional staff will work with the Center for Disability Services to develop those accommodations.

Public Postings
All work in this course is published on the course’s Canvas site and is open to all members of the class.

Attendance Policy

More than three absences is considered excessive. Ten points are deducted from the total that can be earned for participation on the fourth absence. Twenty points are deducted from the total that can be earned for each subsequent absence. Participation points are calculated at the end of the semester based on the total points available to be earned.

Signing another person’s name on the attendance sheet is consider plagiarism and will be handled according to University policy.

Member Evaluations

Group member evaluations are taken twice during the semester. These evaluations are confidential—but not anonymous, administered on-line through the Canvas site, and are the basis of the individual contribution coefficient.

Grading

This is a points-based course. Other than signing the consent document, there are no requirements that must be completed. However, **points lost are points lost forever**.

Each individual’s grade is composed of 25 percent (400 points maximum) from the group portfolio, 12.5 percent from each of the four topic areas (200 points maximum from each) and 25 percent from the overall individual portfolio performance (400 points maximum). That is 1,600 points total. Points do not transfer across these ledgers.

The individual performance score is based on the timely and appropriate completion of all individual assignments: Unit portfolio sections (200 points each) completion of the portfolio (400 points), and insurance (web page (20 points), group member evaluations (20 points each) and participation (100 points).

The group score for each individual member is calculated by multiplying the group score times the individual’s contribution coefficient. The group score is the value (0-400) given to the group’s overall performance by the instructional staff. This score is based on the timely completion and quality of all tasks (web site, case write-up and presentation, group practices, minutes). The individual’s contribution coefficient is the proportion (.00-1.00) assigned by the instructional staff based on the average member evaluation score given to the individual by his or her co-group members in two member evaluations. For example, if the group’s semester work scores a 300 and an individual was considered by his or her co-members to have contributed at 80 percent of everyone else, the group contribution score (given no mitigating circumstances) would be (.80 x 300) or 240 points.

**Group Portfolios are due Friday April 26th by 5 PM**
Individual Portfolios are due April 29th by 5 PM.

A passing grade requires a minimum of 1120 points. Points lost are points lost forever!

**COMM 3140 – Course Calendar**

**Unit 1: Dangerous Interpersonal Liaisons**

**Week 1: 1/8 – 1/10**

(1/8 – Introduction to the class—ALL INSTRUCTORS—Syllabus, etc.)

1/10 – Foundations: Interpersonal/Relational introduction—from “normal” to troubled liaisons
   Reading: “Communication and Competence” (Ch 1) and “Building Interpersonal Relationships” (Ch 2), in S. Trenholm & A. Jensen (2011) *Interpersonal Communication*

**Week 2: 1/15 – 1/17**

1/15 – Misunderstanding

1/17 – Problematic Interaction Episodes

**Week 3: 1/22 – 1/24**

1/22 – Relational Change, Transitions, and Turning Points

1/24 – Relational Transgressions and Forgiveness

**Week 4: 1/29 – 1/31**

1/29 – The Trouble with Computer Mediated Interpersonal Communication

1/31 – Unit Summary Discussion
** Unit 1 Portfolio Section Due

Unit 2: Dangerous Organizational Liaisons

Week 5: 2/5 – 2/7

2/5 – Introduction to Organizational Communication
Organizational communication: A critical approach

2/7 – Teamwork in Organizations
Destructive organizational communication: Processes, consequences, and constructive ways of organizing

Week 5: 2/12 – 2/14

2/12 – Workplace Incivility & Bullying
Reading: “Workplace Bullying: Causes, consequences, and corrections” by P. A. Lutgen-Sandvik, G. Namie, & R. Namie, in Destructive organizational communication

2/14 – Workplace Incivility & Bullying (continued)

Weeks 6 & 7: 2/19 – 2/26

2/19 – Introduction to case study writing

2/21 – Alternatives to the Dark Side
Reading: “Responses to destructive organizational contexts: Intersubjectively creating resilience to foster human dignity and hope” by P. M. Buzzanell, S. Shenoy, R. V. Remke, & K. Lucas, in Destructive organizational communication
Assignment: View the movie “The Devil Wears Prada” (2006). Write a 2-page reflective evaluation of the interactions, issues, and tensions in the movie, drawing on concepts from Unit 2. Include this in your Unit 2 section of your Learning Portfolio.

2/26 – Unit Summary Discussion
** Unit 2 Portfolio Section Due
Unit 3: Power, Opposition, Resistance, and Conflict

End of Week 7: The problem of ethics and culture

2/28 – The empowerment and oppression of culture
   Readings: A & E Chapter 3

Week 8 – The organizational agent
3/5 – Identity
   Readings: A&E Chapter 4

3/7 – Subjectivity
   Readings: A& E Chapter 5

Week 9: SPRING BREAK

Week 10 – Power, resistance, opposition, and conflict

3/19 – Power and resistance
   Readings: A&E Chapter 7

3/21 – Opposition and conflict

Week 11 – Critical organizational study

3/26 – The joy of resistance
   Readings: A& E Chapter 9
   ** Unit 3 Portfolio Section Due

Unit 4: A return to the light: Case study development

End of Week 11

3/28
Readings Kouzes & Posner: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process

Week 12

4/2
Readings Kouzes & Posner: Enable Others to Act, Encourage the Heart

4/4
How could Kouzes & Posner’s principles be used in a case such as Enron? Could the use of these principles prevent the kinds of problems Enron developed? Include this essay in your Unit 4 portfolio.

Week 13

4/9 – Case presentations?

4/11 – Case presentations?

** Unit 4 Portfolio Section Due

Week 14

4/16 – Case presentations?

4/18 – Case presentations?

Week 15

4/22 – To the Future

Changes and Corrections to the Calendar

Should substantive corrections be necessary or changes appropriate, they will be developed with the advice and counsel of the Administrative Committee and posted on the home page of the course site. Members are expected to manage typographical and obvious calendar errors.
Agreement

I have read the foregoing syllabus, understand its terms, and agree to participate in Communication 3410 as a member of a workgroup. I recognize and accept that I and my fellow course members share the authority and responsibility for this course. I am committed to exercising that authority and discharging that responsibility at an appropriate level of performance. I understand that all grading will be conducted by the instructional staff. I understand that a significant portion of my grade will be based on my group’s performance, that I will be evaluated (but not graded) by my fellow group members, that all work (not grades) is publicly available, and that public presentation is part of the course. I also understand that if the terms of this syllabus change, those changes will be posted on the web site in agreement with the Administrative Committee.

Signed __________________________ Date __________

Please print your name: ________________________________