

COMM 150: COMMUNICATION THEORY

Citrus College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Fall 2025
Credits:	3
Total Contact Hours:	54
Lecture Hours :	54
Lab Hours:	0
Hours Arranged:	0
Outside of Class Hours:	108
Total Student Learning Hours:	162
Strongly Recommended:	ENGL C1000.
District General Education:	C2. Humanities, D2. Behavioral Science
Transferable to CSU:	Yes
Transferable to UC:	Yes - Approved
Grading Method:	Standard Letter

Catalog Course Description

This course is a survey of the discipline of Communication with emphasis on multiple theoretical concepts relevant to the process of human communication, particularly mass communication. This course will introduce the basic history, assumptions, principles, processes, variables, methods, and different specializations of human communication relevant to the systematic inquiry and pursuit of knowledge about human communication. Focus will be placed on how communication theory applies to a broad range of communication phenomena. 54 lecture hours.

Course Objectives

- Explain and apply basic concepts of the field of communication.
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the specializations comprising the communication discipline.
- Evaluate communication theories based on their scope, appropriateness, value, validity, parsimony, and openness.
- Understand the major research traditions and varying approaches to studying human communication.
- Explain the contextual, cultural, and social foundations of communication.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of ethics in communication.
- Apply appropriate theories to specific communication contexts (e.g. business, leadership, educational, and/or health contexts).
- Summarize and explain an expanded world perspective that demonstrates an appreciation of the diverse range of viewpoints.

Major Course Content

1. Introduction basic principles of the field of Communication Studies
2. History of communication study
3. Theoretical overview of the major traditions in the field of communication
4. Basic communication theory

5. Basic communication research
6. Specializations in communication theory. May include:
 - a. Overview of human communication: Rhetoric, forensics, argumentation, persuasion, interpersonal communication, small group communication, oral interpretation/performance
 - b. Public Communication: Intercultural, gender, organizational, family communication
 - c. Mass Communication
 - i. Social Penetration Theory
 - ii. Cognitive Dissonance Theory
 - iii. Media Ecology
 - iv. Semiotics
 - v. Uses and Gratifications
 - vi. Cultivation Theory
 - vii. Agenda-Setting Theory
 - d. Communication Ethics
 - e. Emerging Specializations
7. Social and cultural issues

Suggested Reading Other Than Required Textbook

Find a journal article or a book written by one of the authors of a key theory in the textbook. Look for similarities and differences between the primary material and the descriptive secondary material in our textbook. Be prepared to discuss these in class.

Examples of Required Writing Assignments

Writing, example 1: Find a journal article from a peer-reviewed communication journal that has been published within the last five years. Write a two-page summary including how the article is connected to a specific communication theory from the class textbook and discuss and critique the methodology used in the article.

Example 2: Write a 1-2 page response paper articulating how you see the theories demonstrated in your own life experiences.

Examples of Outside Assignments

Group Theory Presentation: In groups of 4-5 students select one theory listed in the course schedule. Develop a presentation to teach and demonstrate the theory to the class. Presentations should be creative applications of a few key concepts of a particular theory and show how this theory applies in our everyday lives. The presentation should be about 20 minutes in length, should go beyond what is covered in the text, and should engage the class in some way. In other words, do not just read and/or lecture to them from the book. You will be graded on depth, clarity, and creativity.

Instruction Type(s)

Lecture, Online Education Lecture

IGETC Area 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences

4. Social and Behavioral Sciences