

COM 623, Organizational Communication**Syllabus***Fall 2010*

Professor	Tom Kelleher, Ph.D.
Contact Info.	956-9944 Crawford Hall 321 tkell@hawaii.edu
Meeting Times and Place	Wednesday, 2:30-5:00 p.m. Kuykendall Hall 304
Office Hours	Monday, 10-noon Tuesday, 1:30-3 p.m. Thursday, 12:30-2 p.m. By appointment.

Course Overview**Description**

In COM 623, we will read, analyze, discuss and write about major concepts and processes of strategic organizational communication and public relations. COM 623 is a core course in the communication M.A. for students specializing in organizational/intercultural communication. The catalog description reads: *Theories, concepts and applications of strategic communication and public relations to achieve organizational goals.*

We will learn about the following:

- communication as a central process in organizations
- classical theories of organizational communication
- applied contemporary organizational theory
- public relations theory
- strategic organizational communications and public relations
- use of information technologies in organizational contexts

Objectives

Success in this course means you will:

1. write well about perspectives of organizational communication and public relations
2. orally discuss perspectives of organizational communication and public relations
3. analyze strategic communication processes
4. apply communication concepts to your own experience in organizations
5. apply organizational communication theory and public relations theory to your academic and professional interests (e.g., research project development)
6. offer informed critique of strategic communication practices
7. explore your scholarly and professional options in strategic communication

Expectations

Your final grade will be based on weekly writing, class participation, a midterm exam, a term paper and in-class presentations including a book review of a general org com or public relations textbook.

Final Grade Requirements

- A = 90-100%
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
D = 60-69%
F = Below 60%

Grading Weight

Weekly writing	30%
Participation & attendance	10%
Book review	10%
Exam	20%
Term paper (written audit or review)	20%
Oral presentation (audit or review)	10%

Weekly Writing (30%)*Primary Objectives: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6*

By midnight on most Tuesdays (see course timeline), you're required to e-mail me a written response (no more than 500 words) in which you discuss and react to the assigned reading material for that week. Here's what I'll look for in the response e-mail:

- *Grammar and style.* Poorly constructed sentences can be an obstacle to meeting all the criteria that follow.
- *Clarity.* These short writing assignments can be written in a conversational tone, but clarity is key. Clear writing reflects clear thinking.
- *Evidence that you've read the material carefully.* I don't expect you to respond to each and every point made in each assigned reading, but an e-mail that lacks any meaningful reference to at least some of the more subtle details of the assigned readings will make me wonder.
- *Application.* Are you able to apply the concepts you've learned to real-world events, including your own experiences?
- *Evidence that you've thought critically about the material.* While it should be clear from reading your e-mail that you're familiar with the material as it was presented, don't forget the "response" part. This is where your informed opinion counts, and where you get to show off those critical thinking skills. Keep in mind that critical thinking doesn't necessarily mean negative thinking.

Participation and Attendance (10%)*Primary Objectives: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*

The participation portion of your grade will reflect your contributions as an individual and as a member of the class as a whole. Your participation in class discussions should reflect your reading and preparation. Here are some examples. Of course, many combinations of factors are possible. These are only examples.

Participation Grade	Example
10	perfect attendance in class; regularly made resourceful and constructive comments in class discussions that reflected reading, preparation and a solid understanding of the material covered; always prepared to make connections between required readings and outside literature, research projects, etc.; recognized by peers as class leader in discussions
9	good attendance, participated regularly in class, clearly kept up with reading
8	good attendance, getting a little behind on the reading at times made it hard for this student to get involved in discussions of more advanced concepts
7	good attendance and participation, but didn't seem to take non-graded assignments and deadlines very seriously
6	attendance issues, often seemed unprepared

Book Review Assignment (10%)*Primary Objectives: 1, 2, 3*

In small groups, you will select a general organizational communication or public relations textbook to review. You will summarize the main points made in the book, evaluate the approach the authors take, and explain why you would or would not recommend the book to other students and faculty. The review will include a written report and an in-class presentation on September 29. Assignment details will be discussed in class near the beginning of the semester.

Midterm Exam (20%)*Primary Objectives: 1, 3, 5*

This will be an open-book, open-note exam in class on October 27. Laptops are welcome. Basically, the exam will include a few open-ended questions or scenarios that will serve as prompts. Your job will be to respond to the prompts by choosing appropriate concepts and theories covered in class and applying those.

Term Paper (30% = 20% written plus 10% oral)

Choose one of two options: a communication audit or a topic-oriented theoretical review.

- **Communication Audit.** The communication audit option requires you to get (or already have) access to a real organization, to study first-hand its internal and external communications and to report your findings and recommendations in writing. The oral presentation part of the assignment should simulate a business presentation to organizational management highlighting your recommendations and reasoning behind those recommendations.
Primary Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 6, 7
- **Theoretical Review.** The topic-oriented theoretical review should cover theories and research that can be used to better understand and practice organizational communication or public relations. This paper will require APA style. The paper should basically answer the following question: "What does theory and research tell us about [insert your interests here] and strategic organizational communication?" The oral part of this assignment is for you to teach a short lesson on your topic. The lesson need not be as theoretically detailed as the paper. *Primary Objectives: 1, 2, 5, 7*

Seeking Help

This course should provide a great learning experience for all of us. The success of the course depends largely on effective student-teacher interaction. Don't feel like you have to have a pressing problem to talk to me. I look forward to hearing your input. I'll be available during my office hours unless announced otherwise. Of course, I'm often in and available at times not posted as office hours. Generally, I'll leave my office door open if I'm available. If my door is closed, that either means I'm out or that I'm in but working on deadline or getting ready for class. In any case, we can set an appointment if that works better.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring special accommodations must notify me and present appropriate supporting documentation by the end of the second week of class.

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty of any sort will not be tolerated. I take plagiarism very seriously. Please see me if you have any questions about academic honesty, and I'll be happy to discuss such issues *in advance* of you submitting your work.

Preliminary Class Timeline

This should give you a general overview of what we'll cover. Additional readings, speakers and assignments may be added as we go.

Class Days	General Topics	Assignments and readings
August 25	Course overview and syllabus	Review syllabus by 8/25. Coffman, J. (2004, October). <i>Strategic communication audits</i> . Washington, DC: Communications Consortium Media Center. Retrieved August 8, 2010 from http://www.mediaevaluationproject.org/WorkingPaper1.pdf University of Washington. (n.d.). <i>Writing a psychology literature review</i> . Retrieved August 8, 2010 from http://depts.washington.edu/psywc/handouts/pdf/litrev.pdf
Sept 1	Applied organizational communication	Harris, T.E., & Nelson, M.D. (2008). Adopting a perspective. In <i>Applied organizational communication</i> , 3rd ed. (pp. 1-34) New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Richmond, V.P., & McCroskey, J.C. (2009). The nature of organizations. In <i>Organizational communication for survival: Making work, work</i> (pp. 1-15). Boston, MA: Pearson. Watson, T., & Sreedharan, C. (2010). The senior communicator of the future – Competencies and training needs. Paper presented to the <i>13th International Public Relations Research Conference</i> , March 10-14, Miami, FL. Weekly writing.
Sept 8	Organizational communication: history and challenges Discuss text review assignment	Lippert, L. R., & Aust, P.J. (2004). Introduction and history of organizational communication. In J.R. Baldwin, S.D. Perry, & M.A. Moffitt (Eds.) <i>Communication theories for everyday life</i> (pp. 287-306). Boston, MA: Pearson. Miller, K. (2009). The challenge of organizational communication. In <i>Organizational Communication: Approaches and Processes</i> , 5th ed. (pp. 1-15). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Weekly writing.
Sept 15	Systems, networks, and other related theory	Cutlip, S.M., Center, A.H., & Broom, G.M. (2000). Theoretical underpinnings: adjustment and adaptation. In <i>Effective public relations</i> . (pp. 219-248). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. Littlejohn, S. (2002). Communication and organizational networks. In <i>Theories of human communication</i> , 7th ed. (pp. 281-302). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Weekly writing. Notify professor of text to be reviewed.
Sept 22	Public relations and strategic communication	Coombs, W.T., & Holladay, S. J. (2010). Public relations and transparency. In <i>PR strategy and application: Managing influence</i> . (pp. 38-55). West Sussex, United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell. Coombs, W.T., & Holladay, S. J. (2010). Public relations as strategic communication. In <i>PR strategy and application: Managing influence</i> . (pp. 56-79). West Sussex, United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell. Weekly writing.
Sept 29	Textbook reviews	Textbook review assignments
Oct 6	Managing organizational communications	Clegg, S., Kornberger, M., & Pitsis, T. (2008). Introducing the field of managing and organizations. In <i>Managing and organizations</i> . (pp. 1-45). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Aguirre, D.M., Howell, L.W., Kletter, D.B., & Neilson, G.L. (2005). <i>A global checkup: Diagnosing the health of today's organizations</i> . Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.: McLean, VA. Weekly writing.

Oct 13	Internal communication	<p>Kennan, W.R., & Hazleton, V. (2006). Internal public relations: social capital and the role of organizational communication. In <i>Public Relations Theory II</i>. (pp. 311-338). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.</p> <p>Mishra, K.E., & Boynton, L. (2009). <i>Talk-the-talk: Using internal communication to build trust with employees</i>. Paper presented to the International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, FL, March 11-15.</p> <p>IABC Research Foundation and Buck Consultants. (2010). <i>IABC Research Foundation and Buck Consultants employee engagement survey: Survey results</i>. San Francisco, CA: Buck Consultants, LLC. [Also read press release file.]</p> <p>Weekly writing.</p>
Oct 20	Managing public relations	<p>Wilcox, D.L., & Cameron, G.T. (2010). Communication. (pp. 170-192). In <i>Public relations strategies and tactics</i>, 9th ed. Allyn & Bacon: Boston.</p> <p>Kelleher, T. (2007). Managing public relations in real time. (pp. 123-136). In <i>Public relations online: Lasting concepts for changing media</i>. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.</p> <p>Wilson, L.J. (2001). Extending strategic planning to communication tactics. In R.L. Heath (Ed.). <i>Handbook of public relations</i>. (pp. 215-222). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.</p> <p>Weekly writing.</p>
Oct 27	Midterm	Midterm
Nov 3	Academic research	<p>Kelleher, T. (2001). Public relations roles and media choice. <i>Journal of Public Relations Research</i>, 13 (4), 303-320.</p> <p>Kelleher, T., and Miller, B. M. (2006). Organizational blogs and the human voice: Relational strategies and relational outcomes. <i>Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication</i>, 11(2), 395-414.</p> <p>Kelleher, T., & Sweetser, K.D. (in press). Social media adoption among university communicators. Accepted for publication in <i>Journal of Public Relations Research</i>.</p> <p>University of Washington. (n.d.). <i>Writing a psychology literature review</i>. Retrieved August 8, 2010 from http://depts.washington.edu/psywv/handouts/pdf/litrev.pdf</p> <p>Weekly writing.</p>
Nov 10	Audits	<p>Diggs-Brown, B. (2007). The communication audit. In <i>The PR styleguide: Formats for public relations practice</i>, 2nd ed., (pp. 40-47). Belmont, CA: Thompson.</p> <p>Coffman, J. (2004, October). <i>Strategic communication audits</i>. Washington, DC: Communications Consortium Media Center. Retrieved August 8, 2010 from http://www.mediaevaluationproject.org/WorkingPaper1.pdf</p> <p>Goldhaber, G.M. (1979). The ICA communication audit. (pp. 8-11). In <i>Auditing organizational communication systems: the ICA communication audit</i>. Dubuque, Iowa : Kendall/Hunt.</p> <p>Goldhaber, G.M. (1979). Interpreting the audit. (pp. 31-53). In <i>Auditing organizational communication systems: the ICA communication audit</i>. Dubuque, Iowa : Kendall/Hunt.</p> <p>Weekly writing.</p>
Nov 17	Work sessions for term-papers, peer discussion and editing	Project examples
Nov 24	Work sessions for term-papers, peer discussion and editing	Rough draft due for peer editing
Dec 1	Student presentations	
Dec 8	Student presentations	Term paper due