

# ADVANCED ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION (COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS THEORY)

January 4, 2015

CMN139 Advanced Organizational Communication  
293 Kerr Hall  
Tuesday Thursday 9:00-10:20

Professor George A. Barnett  
370 Kerr Hall  
[gbarnett@ucdavis.edu](mailto:gbarnett@ucdavis.edu)  
(716)998-5040 (emergencies only)  
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-12:00 or by appointment

CMN139-Advanced Organizational Communication provides an in depth treatment of the process of communication both within and among social organizations. It represents a continuation of the material first introduced in CMN136-Organizational Communication. The goal of the course is for the student to explore formal organizations from the perspective of the organization as a communication (information processing) system. The student will obtain the theoretical knowledge (systems theory and analysis-- General Systems Theory, Input-Output Analysis, Structural Functionalism, Cybernetics, Network Analysis) that will facilitate their understanding of organizational communication.

## READINGS:

The textbook for the course is:

Monge, P.R., & Contractor, N.S. (2003). *Theories of Communication Networks*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

All other required readings, all lecture notes and handouts (assignments) for the course will be posted on the course's website on UC-Davis Smart Site <https://smartsite.ucdavis.edu>. Please read the assignments prior to class. This will facilitate discussion and understanding of the material. After all, this is supposed to be a seminar.

## MANNERS:

Students are expected to arrive on time for class and stay for the duration. I will begin each class soliciting questions. I will close the door when I am finished answering the questions and begin my lecture. At which time, students will not be allowed to enter the classroom because it is disruptive and rude. Also, no electronic devices (telephones, tablets or computers) will be allowed during class. See the Shirky article for justification.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/09/25/why-a-leading-professor-of-new-media-just-banned-technology-use-in-class/>

## GRADING:

The final grade for the course will be based on the following assignments:

1. **A Midterm Examination.** It will be a take home essay examination due in class on **Thursday, February 12.** It will cover the material from the first six weeks (through communication networks). Students are encouraged to work in groups to complete this examination. Individual papers, however, are required. It will count 40% of the final grade. **Late papers will not be accepted!!!**
2. **A comprehensive final examination.** It will also be a take home essay examination. It will count 50% of the final grade. It is due on **Saturday March 21, 12:30 P.M.** **Late papers will not be accepted!!!**

As an alternative, students may write a research paper on a topic of relevance to organizational communication. This may be a group project. Dr. Barnett must approve the topic. It may be empirical research or simply a formal literature review that leads to a research proposal. A short proposal for the paper must be received by the mid-term examination. This will allow sufficient time to provide feedback and direction. It will count 50% of the final grade. The paper is due on **Saturday, March 21, 12:30 P.M.** **Late papers will not be accepted!!!**

3. The final 10% of the grade will be based on participation in the class. Note that you cannot participate if you don't complete the readings and attend class.
4. Extra credit at Dr. Barnett's discretion may be earned by participating on his research.
5. Finally, incompletes will be given only for medical emergencies or deaths in the immediate family.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

1. Introduction 1/6

Barnett-Organizational Communication Videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNp2xtj4AcM> - org 1 updated

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2WH2SLoj94> - org 2 updated

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuClv\\_fEcZU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuClv_fEcZU) - org 3

Barnett-Organizational Communication.ppt

**(NO CLASS -- JANUARY 6 & 8 AT HICSS)**

2. Models & General Systems Theory 1/13

Barnett-Communication and the Diffusion of Information

3. General Systems Theory 1/15

Barnett-Organizational Communication Systems: The  
Traditional Perspective  
Parsons-Social Systems  
Rapoport-General Systems Theory

4. Input-Output Analysis 1/22

Knight-Organizations as Complex Systems  
Leontief-Input-Output Analysis

5. Structural-Functionalism 1/29

Levy-Structural Functional Analysis

6. Cybernetics 2/5

Barnett-Applications of Communication  
Theory and Cybernetics to Technical Communication  
Knight-Planning and Control in Open Systems

7. Communication Networks/Organizational Structure & Design 2/12

Rogers & Agarwala Rogers-Communication Networks in  
Organizations  
Monge & Contractor-Theories of Communication Networks  
Galbraith

## **MIDTERM EXAMINATION DUE IN CLASS THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14**

8. The Environment 2/26
9. Information Load & Distribution 3/5
- Farace, Monge & Russell-Communication Load  
Galbraith-Organizing Modes
10. Organizational Learning & The Future of Organizational  
Communication 3/12
- Huber-Organizational learning: A guide for executives in  
technology-critical organizations  
Barnett-An Introduction to Self-Organizing Systems

## **FINAL EXAMINATION OR RESEARCH PAPER DUE MARCH 21**