

COM 2733 – Introduction to Communication Technologies

Course Materials Handbook

(Summer 2005)

Prepared by

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for

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Department of Communication

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## SYLLABUS

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### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course facilitates understanding of historical and current use of communication technologies. In particular, this course will provide an overview of media and networks used for entertainment and information distribution, storage, and retrieval. Emphasis is placed on the interrelationships among technology, economics, policy, society, and culture. An equally important function of this class is to foster students' insight into the technologies used for mediating communication so that students are able to apply course-related concepts to the development of communication strategies.

Lectures, discussion, classroom exercises, written assignments, oral presentations, and in-class and out-of-class observations will be used to aid the development of knowledge and skills relating to the study of communication technology.

The aim is to merge theory and practice throughout the classroom experience. To this end, we will maintain a stimulating, interactive, open, and friendly classroom environment that fosters self and other insight, critical thinking, intellectual growth and communicative competence. The following objectives are core to the course:

- Developing critical thinking and analytical skills related to use of communication technologies
- Developing specific skills and competencies needed by communication professionals
- Developing a good understanding of the fundamental principles of communication technologies

### **TEXT**

Bucy, E. P. (2005). *Living in the information age: A new media reader* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

### **POLICIES**

**Cheating, plagiarism and collusion will not be tolerated.** All work submitted must be the original work of the student, for this course only (no submitting the same assignment in more than one class). The penalty for plagiarism, cheating or collusion may include failing the assignment, failing the course, or expulsion from the University depending on the severity of the infraction. Please see the University's Student Code of Conduct for information regarding these policies.

**Course requirements must be fulfilled in order to successfully pass the course.** Late assignments will not be accepted. Incompletes will be given only in very limited cases and only when they meet the Policy for Incompletes on file in the Department of Communication office, as well as the University requirements for Incompletes as specified in the Handbook of Operating Procedures. Please see your Course Materials Handbook for further information on assignments, grading criteria and course schedule. All other University policies will be followed.

## ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

In order for this course to be a successful learning experience for you, active and committed participation on your part is crucial; therefore, as specified in the Information Bulletin, **students are expected to attend class**. All assignments are due according to the Schedule of Assignments in the Course Materials Handbook. Students are expected to take examinations and turn in assignments at the scheduled time. Students who may miss an examination or assignment deadline due to an authorized University activity should make arrangements to complete the assignment in advance, which includes approval from the student's Dean. **Late assignments or examinations will not be accepted**. Please also see the Handbook of Operating Procedures for policies regarding attendance.

The Americans With Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require special accommodations, please see a coordinator at Disability Services (MS 2.03.18) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible.

## ASSIGNMENTS

**Examinations:** Students will be assessed on knowledge of course material through examination. Two exams will cover approximately one half of the course each and will consist of a variety of types of questions: multiple choice, true-false, and identification (100 points each).

**Communication Technology Design:** Students will investigate and design a technology for the distribution, storage or retrieval of information. Students will be required to prepare and electronically submit a written document describing the communication technology as well as a schematic drawing indicating the process (100 points).

**Informative Presentation:** Students will prepare and present a 3 minute informative speech about their communication technology design utilizing technological tools such as computer software. Students will be required to electronically submit an outline of the speech as well as a PowerPoint slide presentation (100 points).

**Quizzes:** Students will be quizzed four times during the semester. Quizzes will not be announced in advance and will comprise material from the reading and/or from class lectures (25 points each).

A full description of each of these assignments can be found in the Course Materials Handbook, which is located in WebCT, or through the Student Section at <http://www.hpleblanc.com/>.

## DIVISION OF ASSIGNMENTS

EXAMINATIONS (100 pts each):

Unit I Test  
Unit II Test

GRADING SCALE:

90.0 - 100: A  
80.0 - 89.9: B  
70.0 - 79.9: C  
60.0 - 69.9: D  
BELOW 60.0: F

COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

DESIGN ASSIGNMENT (100 pts)

INFORMATIVE PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT (100 pts)

QUIZZES (25 pts each)

Grades are earned and will be calculated on a cumulative scale. Grades can be calculated by dividing the raw score of the assignment by the total points possible for the assignment. Grades are calculated using a 500 point scale. For example, if the total number of points that can be achieved on the Design Assignment is 100, then the assignment is worth 20% of the final grade. However, a raw score of 85 on the Design Assignment will yield only 17% rather than the 20% of the final grade possible for that assignment. Likewise, a raw score of 70 on the Unit I Test is 14% of the final grade. Extra credit will not be assigned for any student due to poor performance or missed assignment. **Grades are not rounded.** You may use the Grade Monitoring Form located in the Course Materials Handbook to calculate your grade average in the course at any time. Furthermore, you may obtain your current grade for assignments in WebCT for this course.

## GRADING RATIONALE

- A** Exceptionally well-prepared completion of assignment indicating effort, individualized style, and impact expected of effective communication.
- B** Unusually well-prepared completion of assignment indicating original application of course materials and individual imagination distinctly superior to average effort.
- C** Satisfactory completion of assignment indicating effort normally expected of the majority of students (basic preparation, correct procedure, and disciplined technique.)
- D** Unsatisfactory completion of assignment indicating technical irregularity, misperceived objectives, and methods, and unorganized effort.
- F** Failure to complete assignment during the scheduled time through lack of evident effort.

All students will be expected to follow the instructions as they are presented, meet the grading criteria, and turn in each assignment by the due date in order to earn a "B." All course requirements and deadlines are explicitly written in the Course Materials Handbook.

LIST OF IMPORTANT DATES

- July 11: Classes begin.
- July 12: Final date for adding the course.
- July 13: Final date for dropping the course without receiving a grade of “W”.
- July 21: Assignment # 1 due by 8:00 am.
- July 26: Unit One Exam.
- July 28: Final date for dropping course.
- August 8: Assignment # 2 slides and outline due by 1:00 pm.
- August 9: Assignment # 2 presentations begin.
- August 10: Last Day of Class. Assignment # 2 presentations continue.
- August 12: Final Exam period: Unit Two Exam (8:00-10:30am).
- August 16: Final grades due by 2:00 pm.

Readings for the text and supplemental readings will be listed on WebCT before they are due. Be sure to check WebCT for daily updates.

Dates for class assignments and exams will not be altered. We will meet during the Final Examination period for this section. Unless otherwise indicated, assignments are due at the beginning of the class period as assigned.

GRADE MONITORING FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Banner ID: \_\_\_\_\_

GRADING SCALE:

90.0 - 100:    A  
80.0 - 89.9:   B  
70.0 - 79.9:   C  
60.0 - 69.9:   D  
BELOW 60:     F

EXAMINATIONS:

Test 1:                    Total: \_\_\_\_\_   Possible: 100

Test 2:                    Total: \_\_\_\_\_   Possible: 100                    Tests Total: \_\_\_\_\_

ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignment 1:            Total: \_\_\_\_\_   Possible: 100

Assignment 2:            Total: \_\_\_\_\_   Possible: 100                    Assignments Total: \_\_\_\_\_

QUIZZES:

Quiz 1:                    Total: \_\_\_\_\_   Possible: 25

Quiz 2:                    Total: \_\_\_\_\_   Possible: 25

Quiz 3:                    Total: \_\_\_\_\_   Possible: 25

Quiz 4:                    Total: \_\_\_\_\_   Possible: 25                    Quizzes Total: \_\_\_\_\_

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FINAL GRADE            Total: \_\_\_\_\_   Possible: 500    Percent: \_\_\_\_\_    Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

## OVERVIEW OF EXERCISE ASSIGNMENTS 1 AND 2

The purpose of the following assignments is: 1) to assist you in thinking critically about the development of communication technologies, and 2) to assist you in developing your own presentation skills related to communication technology design.

For both assignments electronic documents will be created. You must submit these documents in electronic form as an attachment (but not as text embedded in an e-mail) in a standard format such as Microsoft Word, Excel or PowerPoint. **Assignments created and submitted in Microsoft Works format will not be accepted.** When you submit the assignment in electronic form, use the following file naming protocol: **LastnameF1.doc** (as in LeBlancP1.doc), where “F” represents the first letter of your first name and “1” represents the assignment number. It is critical that you use this naming convention to avoid confusion and assure credit as each student will be sending multiple assignments in this fashion. **All assignments should be submitted through the WebCT Assignments link for this class.** The timestamp on the assignment submission will serve as documentation for meeting the deadline for the assignment. Remember to attach all files for the given assignment before pressing the submit button, as you will not be given the opportunity to submit multiple times to a given assignment link in WebCT. The assignments feature in WebCT is designed not to accept submissions after the deadline. You will be notified automatically via the e-mail address you provide when your assignment has been submitted. Failure to attach the document will not serve as grounds for accepting late assignments.

Furthermore, submit all assignments with your name, the assignment number and the date in the document itself. Students are expected to be prepared to present at the beginning of class. Students will be randomly assigned speaking order. Failure to be present when your name is called will result in a zero for the assignment. For all assignments, **failure to properly follow these general instructions or the instructions for any assignment will result in a ten percent deduction on the grade for that assignment.**

ASSIGNMENT # 1:  
Communication Technology Design

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to describe and diagram a technologically mediated communication process.

Directions: This written assignment requires research of a current or near future communication technology. In essay form, you will describe the process of communication from source to recipient through each stage. The essay should begin with a descriptive title labeling the communication technology to be described. The essay should then describe the process of message production, transmittal, distribution, reception and decoding in sequential order. The essay should be written in formal style, following the conventions of the APA or MLA. The essay should be one full page, single-spaced, with one inch margins and Times New Roman 12 point font.

Additionally, you will diagram the communication process of the technology you described in the essay for this assignment using the flowcharting and drawing tools available in Microsoft Excel. Please see the list of flowcharting symbols on the following page. In Excel, these flowcharting symbols are available in the Autosshapes option on the Drawing Toolbar in Excel. In a flowchart, each process stage is described by the use of the appropriate symbol, and the flow of information from one stage to the next is described by a directional arrow. To assist you in the flowcharting project, I recommend these two websites:



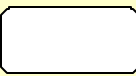
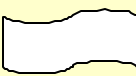
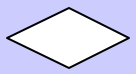

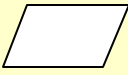



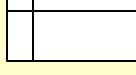







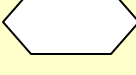



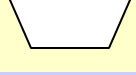





<http://www.nos.org/htm/basic2.htm>  
<http://www.aicpa.org/pubs/jofa/oct2000/lehman.htm>

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Title: (10 pts)
- II. Description: (40 pts)
  - A. Inclusion of all stages in the communication process: (10 pts)
  - B. Logical order of process sequencing: (10 pts)
  - C. Grammar and mechanics: (10 pts)
  - D. Length requirements: (10 pts)
- III. Diagram: (40 pts)
  - A. Inclusion of all stages as described in the essay: (20 pts)
  - B. Use of appropriate symbols for each stage: (20 pts)
- IV. Instructions followed? (10 pts.)

You are required to submit electronically both the descriptive essay and the process diagram. Please see Overview of Exercise Assignments 1 and 2 in the Course Materials Handbook for instructions on how to submit electronic assignment materials. Be sure to include your name and title on both the essay and diagram. Both the descriptive essay and the process diagram should be submitted in advance of the deadline as specified in the List of Important Dates in the Course Materials Handbook.

## Flowchart Symbols

Symbol	Description	Symbol	Description
1 	Process	15 	Card
2 	Alternate process	16 	Punched tape
3 	Decision	17 	Summing junction
4 	Data	18 	Or
5 	Predefined process	19 	Collate
6 	Internal storage	20 	Sort
7 	Document	21 	Extract
8 	Multidocument	22 	Merge
9 	Terminator	23 	Stored data
10 	Preparation	24 	Delay
11 	Manual input	25 	Sequential access storage
12 	Manual operation	26 	Magnetic disk
13 	Connector	27 	Direct access storage
14 	Off-page connector	28 	Display

ASSIGNMENT # 2  
Informative Presentation

Objective: To learn the techniques for effective informative presentation.

Directions: This public speaking assignment requires research of a current communication technology. This assignment should be focused toward a mixed audience. Therefore, you will research a subject, then organize and present an informative presentation about the subject to the class, utilizing current technological tools such as presentation software (see Using Presentation Software in the Course Materials Handbook).

Evaluation of the presentation will be based on these criteria for a speech to inform:

- I. Allotted time. (3 minutes, -2 pts per :30, 5 pts. total, **Stopped at 4:00.**)
- II. Eye contact. (5 pts.)
- III. Extemporaneous delivery. (10 pts.)
- IV. Dramatic delivery: body and vocal. (10 pts.)
- V. Treatment of topic:
  - A. Citation of sources. (10 pts.)
  - B. Logical explanation of communication process. (10 pts.)
  - C. Implications of the use of the communication technology. (10 pts.)
- VI. Use of visual aids: unobtrusive and handling. (10 pts.)
- VII. Written outline:
  - A. Organization (introduction, body, and conclusion). (5 pts.)
  - B. Sources referenced. (10 pts.)
  - C. Mechanics: spelling, grammar, etc. (5 pts.)
- VIII. Instructions Followed? (10 pts.)

You are required to submit electronically the speech outline of the form specified on the Outline for a Speech and an electronic version of any visual aids you intend to use in your speech. The visual aids should be prepared using PowerPoint, and contain no more than three slides. Please see Overview of Exercise Assignments 1 and 2 in the Course Materials Handbook for instructions on how to submit electronic assignment materials. Both the speech outline and the PowerPoint slides should be submitted in advance of the presentation date as specified in the List of Important Dates in the Course Materials Handbook.

The presentation should reflect your personal style while achieving the goal of informing the audience. You must present the material in a manner that can be understood by a general audience. To further assist the development of the presentation, please see Using Presentation Software and the Outline for a Speech in the Course Materials Handbook.

## USING PRESENTATION SOFTWARE

The purpose of visual presentation is to enhance and not detract from the oral presentation. Expertise is demonstrated through what you know!

All presentations for this course should be delivered extemporaneously. Limit the use of visual aids, including presentation slides, to the bare minimum necessary to get the point across.

1. Choose a template or background that promotes the information to be presented.
  - a. Templates should not be animated, overly busy or contrasty, or utilize sound clips.
  - b. Templates should be light or dark in color to contrast with the text.
  - c. Style of templates should be consistent throughout.
  
2. Text should be presented in a clear and concise manner.
  - a. Choose a standard, legible font (Times Roman, Arial, Garamond).
  - b. Text should be large enough to be viewed in the back of the room.
  - c. Choose a color which contrasts with the background template (i.e. light color letters with a dark background, or dark color letters with a light background).  
Suggestions: yellow text with navy background, blue text with white background.
  - d. The color scheme and text font should be consistent throughout.
  
3. Content of the presentation should be clear.
  - a. Create a title slide with a title of the presentation and your name.
  - b. Put only one main point per slide.
  - c. Use only well-worded, concise phrases.
  
4. Use supplemental information sparingly.
  - a. Charts should be self-explanatory and not too detailed.
  - b. Tables should summarize: do not give raw data.
  
5. Be very comfortable with your presentation.
  - a. Proofread your presentation for errors and readability.
  - b. Practice with your presentation a minimum of three times.
  - c. Do not read your presentation to your audience.
  - d. Use the “Blank Screen” feature between slides.

Finally, be sure to save your presentation on more than one storage device.

## OUTLINE FOR A SPEECH

### I. Introduction

- A. Statements to arouse attention: \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Statements to motivate attention: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1. Relate the speech topic to the audience: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2. Show relationship between speaker and topic: \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Statements to orient audience to central idea: \_\_\_\_\_  
and to motivate intelligent listening: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1. State central idea in a concise (10 words or less), declarative sentence:  
\_\_\_\_\_
    - a. Clarify definitions if necessary: \_\_\_\_\_
    - b. Cite brief history of topic if necessary: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2. Preview your main points in concise, declarative sentences: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3. Transition to the body of the speech: \_\_\_\_\_

### II. Body of Message

- A. State first main point exactly as phrased in the preview: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1. State first subordinate point: \_\_\_\_\_
    - a. Provide amplification through examples, analogies, statistics, etc.: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2. State second subordinate point: \_\_\_\_\_
    - a. Provide amplification: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3. Restate the first main point and transition to next point: \_\_\_\_\_
- B. State second main point exactly as phrased in the preview: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1. State first subordinate point: \_\_\_\_\_
    - a. Provide amplification: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2. State second subordinate point: \_\_\_\_\_
    - a. Provide amplification: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3. Restate the second main point and transition to next point: \_\_\_\_\_
- C. State subsequent main points as above and transition to the conclusion: \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Conclusion

- A. Provide a summary by briefly restating the main points: \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Restate the central idea: \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Provide a final statement of closure: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: This blank outline serves only as a reference. Assignments should be typed and submitted electronically according to the general and specific instructions for each assignment as specified elsewhere in the Course Materials Handbook.

COURSE FEEDBACK FORM

I have enjoyed discussing communication technologies in the course. However, I would like to know what particular areas you liked or did not like. Please answer the following questions.

1. What do you remember most about communication technologies as discussed in class?
  
2. Please go back and carefully examine the topics listed on the Schedule of Assignments.
  - a) What topics did you find most intriguing and why?
  
  - b) Do you wish more time were spent in a particular area or less time in another?
  
3. What do you think about the course structure: the number or type of assignments, the form of tests?
  
4. What do you think about the course packet, the website or the Course Materials Handbook?
  
5. What do you think about me as an instructor?
  
6. What suggestions do you have for improvements in the course?
  
7. Are there any other issues relevant to the course that you would like to discuss?

Thank you for your feedback.

H. Paul LeBlanc III, Ph.D.