

# **SBS 246: Communication Theory**

## **1. Course Learning Outcomes**

SBS 246 is an introductory course. It will provide a first look at communication theory for students who have no background in communication theory. It will be conducted in a way that students can understand and appreciate what they have learned about communication. The purpose of this course is to provide the student with an overview of the ways in which human communication has been viewed by social scientists and practitioners. It will examine theories dealing with: messages, intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, group & public communication, and mass communication.

## **2. Resources Available to Students**

The course will depend heavily on class presentations by the students in the class. Each student will be assigned a number of theories discussed in the text. He/she will be expected to research these in the library and make class presentations on each one. (The text includes a free video CD that is very helpful for the student). The student will have complete charge of the class sessions in which class presentations are made.

*Textbook: Griffin, Em. , A First Look at Communication Theory, 5th Edition*

## **3. Grading Criteria**

Grades will be based on the professor's evaluation of: 1. Class attendance and participation, 2. Class discussions, 3. Mid-term exam and 4. Final exam. The professor may give different weights to the different performances depending on his evaluation of the development in the student's learning experience in the course. This may lead to an uncomfortable ambiguity. Perhaps it can counter that popular myth that university life isn't a "real" life.

## **4. Schedule**

- Symbolic Interactionism (George Herbert Mead)
- Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM) (Pearce and Cronen)
- Expectancy Violations Theory (Judee Burgoon)
- Interpersonal Deception Theory (Buller & Burgoon)
- Social Penetration Theory (Altman & Tator)
- Uncertainty Reduction Theory (Charles Berger)
- Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Leon Festinger)
- Functional Perspective on Group Decision Making (Hirokawa & Gouran)
- Adaptive Structuration Theory (Marshall Scott Pool)

- Information Systems Approach to Organizations (Karl Weick)
- Cultural Approach to Organizations (Geertz & Pacanowsky)
- Critical Approach to Organizations (Stanley Deetz)

### **Mid-Term Exam**

- The Rhetoric (Aristotle)
- Technological Determinism (Marshal McLuhan)
- Semiotics (Roland Barthes)
- Cultural Studies (Stuart Hall)
- Cultivation Theory (George Gerbner)
- Agenda-Setting Theory (McCombs & Shaw)
- The Spiral of Silence (Elizabeth Noelle Neuman)
- The Media Equation (Reeves & Nass)
- Anxiety Uncertainty Management (William Gudykunst)
- Face-Negotiation Theory (Stella Ting-Toomey)
- Speech Codes Theory (Gerry Philipsen)
- Genderlect Styles (Deborah Tannen)
- Muted Group Theory Cheri Karamarae)