

This copy of Andrew Ledbetter's syllabus for Communication Theory is posted on www.afirstlook.com, the resource website for *A First Look at Communication Theory*, for which he is one of the co-authors.

**COMMUNICATION STUDIES 20223: Communication Theory
TR 11:00-12:20 AM, Moudy South 320, Class #70959**

Syllabus Addendum, Fall Semester 2014

Instructor: Dr. Andrew Ledbetter

Office: Moudy South 355

Office Phone: 817-257-4524 (terrible way to reach me)

E-mail: a.ledbetter@tcu.edu (best way to reach me)

Twitter: @dr_ledbetter (also a good way to reach me more publicly)

IM screen name (GoogleTalk): DrAndrewLedbetter (this works too)

Office Hours: TR 10:00-10:50 AM & 12:30 PM-2:00 PM; W 11:00 AM-12:00 PM (but check with me first); other times by appointment. When possible, please e-mail me in advance of your desired meeting time.



Course Text: Em Griffin, Andrew Ledbetter, & Glenn Sparks (2015), *A First Look at Communication Theory* (9th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Course Description

From TCU's course catalog: Applies communication theory and practice to a broad range of communication phenomena in intrapersonal, interpersonal and public communication settings.

You are about to embark on an exciting adventure through the world of communication theory. In some sense, you already inhabit this "world"—you communicate every day, and you may even be very good at it. But, if you're like me, sometimes you might find yourself wondering: *Why did she say that? Why did I say that in response? What there something that I could have said that would have been better? How could I communicate better with my friends? My parents? At school? At work?* If you've ever asked any of these questions—and it would be hard for me to believe that there is anyone who hasn't!—then this course is for you! By the end of our time together, I hope you will come to a deeper, fuller understanding of the power and mystery of human communication. For a list of communication questions we'll explore in this course, see the last page of the syllabus.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

Course objective	How you'll demonstrate it to me
Describe the essential features of several important theories of human communication.	Quizzes; exams
Articulate to an audience how a real-world or fictional example demonstrates a specific communication theory.	Discussion assignment
Compare and contrast communication theories in order to understand and evaluate communication behavior.	Discussion assignment
Critique communication theory according to the standards appropriate for the theory's metatheoretical tradition (i.e., scientific, interpretive, or both).	Exams; Discussion assignment

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

- 1. Class Attendance and Participation:** In college courses, I don't believe in awarding points based on attendance—your voluntary presence in college and enrollment in this course suggests to me that you have a passionate interest in learning this material! Why else would you (or someone else) be paying to come to college? However, I do believe that course attendance is the best and easiest way to learn the course material and thus earn a good grade in this course. As a teacher, I commit to making class time valuable for you as a student. Likewise, I hope you will feel that coming to class is a valuable use of your time!

For the good of others in the class, if you are engaging in any behavior that is disruptive to me or other students, I will ask you to stop such behavior. If you do not do so, you will be asked to leave the class for the day.

- 2. Deadlines:** All written work is due **electronically** (uploaded via eCollege to the appropriate dropbox) by the start of class on the designated due date. To be clear, unless otherwise instructed, **DO NOT SUBMIT A HARDCOPY OF YOUR PAPER**. I will accept late work, but an assignment's tardiness will influence how I read and grade the assignment. As a general rule, assignments turned in within 24 hours of the due date will receive approximately half credit, and assignments submitted over 24 hours late will receive minimal or no credit.

I understand that legitimate situations arise when work cannot be submitted on time (such examples include serious illness, death of a family member or close friend, jury duty, cultural and religious holidays, and university-sponsored events such as participation on a sport team). If such a situation arises, please notify me **as soon as possible!** Specifically, for situations that can be anticipated in advance (e.g., a religious holiday), you should notify me sometime during the first week of class. My willingness to grant an extension will be based on (a) the legitimacy of the situation (including ability to document it upon request) and (b) your timeliness in notifying me of it. Please note that quizzes administered prior to your enrollment in the class cannot be made up under any circumstance.

- 3. Writing Quality:** Papers are expected to reflect university-level writing quality. In other words, spelling, organizational, and grammatical errors will **greatly reduce** your final grade. I strongly encourage you to think about self-presentation and impression formation as you put together your written and presentational assignments. If you desire writing assistance, you may want to check out TCU's Center for Writing (<http://www.wrt.tcu.edu/>).
- 4. Academic Misconduct:** TCU's mission is "to educate individuals to think and act as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community." The ideals of ethics and responsibility are completely incompatible with academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating on tests, presenting someone else's assignment or paper as your own work, and not documenting papers with the source of word-for-word or paraphrased material. **Please also note that TCU's academic misconduct policy forbids submitting the same paper (or portions thereof) to multiple classes without prior instructor approval.** You can find a more extensive definition of academic misconduct at TCU in the Student Handbook, http://www.studenthandbook.tcu.edu/student_handbook.pdf. The master syllabus also contains information about what constitutes academic misconduct in this course and at TCU. In this course, paying money to another student currently in the course for information such as class notes, completed review sheets, and so forth is considered a form of academic misconduct.

If you have questions concerning what constitutes academic misconduct, please discuss this with me. Not knowing the definition of academic misconduct does not excuse you from the consequences. **In this course, any form of academic misconduct will result in automatic failure (i.e., grade of "F") for the relevant assignment(s) and recommendation to the academic dean that the offender be dropped immediately from the course with a grade of "F". In a group project, all project members will, by default, receive the same penalty.** TCU's undergraduate and graduate catalogs provide information about appeal procedures in cases of alleged academic misconduct.

- 5. Turnitin.com:** Consistent with item #4 (Ethical Conduct), I reserve the right to examine submitted papers using the turnitin.com plagiarism detection service.

6. **Electronic Devices:** Use of electronic devices is permitted in this class for academic purposes only. You may use a laptop or tablet to take class notes, consult course web material, and for other instructionally-relevant purposes. Generally, cell phones do not serve any academic purpose in this course, and I ask that you refrain from using them. If you have an emergency that requires you to call or text someone, please step out of class for a moment and attend to that emergency. If I see you using a cell phone in class, or using other technology in a way that interferes with my teaching or your peers' learning, I will ask you to stop. In contrast, you are especially encouraged to use technology in ways that enhance your learning or the learning of others. On exam days, and during the presentations of other students, use of any electronic devices is prohibited. This policy is **especially** enforced while other students are giving their presentations. If I notice you using an electronic device during a student-led presentation, you will lose 10 points from your own presentation grade.
7. **Scantrons:** Exams will be administered using scantron response sheets. I will be providing these scantron sheets for you—you can thank SGA for providing these to you!
8. **Recording Class Sessions:** Class sessions contain my own and others' intellectual property. Except when I have granted prior written approval, recording audio or video from class sessions is prohibited and will be treated as academic misconduct (see #4).
9. **E-mail Availability:** During the weekday, I generally (though not always) check my e-mail frequently between the hours of 9 AM and 4 PM. I may not respond quickly to your e-mail outside of this timeframe.
10. **Grade discussion and changes (“24/7 policy”):** If you have questions about any grade you receive in the course, I am more than willing to discuss your grade with you! However, I find that such discussion tends to be more effective after some time has passed since when you learned your grade—thus, I have a “24/7” grade discussion policy. Unless the issue is minor, I ask that you please refrain from discussing your grade with me until after 24 hours have elapsed after receiving the graded copy of your assignment. Be sure to check returned papers on a computer—I offer feedback using the track changes feature in Word, and such comments don't always show up on mobile devices. After you receive your graded assignment, you have one week (7 days) to discuss your grade. After that week has elapsed, the grade is final and will not be changed for any reason. Note that the 24/7 policy does not preclude your right to initiate a grade appeal according to procedure outlined in the TCU Student Handbook (pp. 19-20). (For grade changes on assignments/exams at the end of the term, please see the note below.)

Grade changes for completed assignments are rare. Such changes only will occur when, with clear, logical argumentation, you can show me that the grade I assigned is inconsistent with the expectations laid out in the assignment sheet and rubric, the course materials (e.g., the readings), and your submitted work. **Grade changes will NEVER be given based on external circumstances (e.g., loss of scholarship money or ability to graduate), the amount of effort invested in the assignment (grades are assigned by the quality of the submitted work, not effort), or simple desire (e.g., wanting to earn a “B”).**

Please also note: Individual requests for extra credit will always be denied. If extra credit is available, it will be offered to the entire class.

11. **Communication with parents:** In high school, your parents had complete access to your academic record. As a college student (and for most of you, as legal adults), by federal law that is no longer the case. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA; also known as the Buckley Amendment), passed in 1974, requires that colleges and universities keep your academic records private, even from your parents, unless you give consent. For information on TCU's compliance with FERPA, and how to grant your parents or others access to your academic information, see <http://www.reg.tcu.edu/privacy.asp>.

Please also note that waiving FERPA restrictions for a parent (or another person) only means that a professor may discuss your grade with the parent—it does not require a professor to do so. As a general rule, I will not discuss your academic performance in this class with your parents or other individuals, even if you have waived your

FERPA rights. You are an adult, and I believe that your personal growth as an adult will only occur as you take initiative and responsibility for your own academic career, including discussing concerns with me in a timely fashion. If you do have questions about your academic record in this class, of course I am more than happy to speak with you individually about them.

- 12. Disability Statement:** Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator. Guidelines for documentation may be found at http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp.

Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.

- 13. TCU Campus Resources for Students:** Many resources exist on the TCU campus that may be helpful to students: Mary Coats Burnett Library (257-7117); Center for Academic Services (257-7486, Sadler Hall. 1022); the William L. Adams Writing Center (257-7221, Reed Hall 419); Student Development Services (257-7855, BLUU 2003); and Office of Religious & Spiritual Life (257-7830, Jarvis Hall), Campus Life (257-7926, Sadler Hall 2006), and the Counseling, Testing, and Mental Health Center (257-7863, Brown Lupton Health Center).

Course Assessment

Section Exams (3 exams, 150 points each) – You will complete three exams. Each exam will contain a mixture of true/false, matching, and multiple choice questions.

Quizzes (6 quizzes, 5 points each) – At six times throughout the semester, you will have the opportunity to take a quiz on the reading for the day. These quizzes are worth a small number of points; they are intended as a low-risk assignment that allows you to “practice” for the exams. Because quizzes are worth a small number of points, you will only be allowed to make up a quiz with documentation excusing your absence.

Research Participation (or alternative) (20 points) – You will have the opportunity to participate in two research projects this semester (earning 10 points for participating in each). If you do not wish to participate in these projects, you may complete two alternative assignments available on eCollege.

Discussion Assignment (100 points) – Working in pairs, you will present an *artifact* (such as a video clip or a website) that serves as an example of a specific theory. See the assignment sheet for additional detail.

Grading

There are 600 points possible, with the grade breakdown as follows:

<p>Excellent Work: A = 558-600 points A- = 540-557 points</p> <p>Good Work: B+ = 522-539 points B = 498-521 points B- = 480-497 points</p> <p>Satisfactory Work: C+ = 462-479 points C = 438-461 points C- = 420-437 points</p>	<p>Poor Work: D+ = 402-419 points D = 378-401 points D- = 360-377 points</p> <p>Failing Work: F = 0-359 points</p>
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Please note:

- You may examine your grade at any time by logging into eCollege and examining the gradebook. Comments on papers will be returned to you via e-mail (I often make comments using Word's track changes feature).
- "A"- and "B"-quality work goes above and beyond the formal requirements/expectations of an assignment; in other words, an "A" or a "B" is an above-average grade. "C"-quality work meets the expectations for the assignment; in other words, "C" is an average grade. "D"- and "F"-quality work fails to meet the expectations for the assignment; they are below-average grades. The master syllabus contains further information about departmental grading policies. For more information about the formal requirements/expectations for major course assignments, see the assignments sheets and grading rubrics posted on eCollege.
- Because "A" and "B" grades are above-average, many students will not receive them. **Do not take this course with the expectation of an easy A or B.**
- After final grade assignment for a course, you cannot complete additional work in order to increase your grade.
- To be fair to all students, I will not round point totals up or down at the end of the semester. **In other words, the point breakdown listed here is the standard for determining grades for everyone in the course.** Please also note that grades are assigned by points, *not* by percentages.
- If you wish to discuss grades for work that was completed and graded at the very end of the course (e.g., the final exam), I am more than happy to do so; however, such discussion and review may have to wait for the start of the next major (i.e., Fall or Spring) academic term.

Date	Course Content	Assignments/Readings Due
<u>COMMUNICATION THEORY OVERVIEW</u>		
T 8/26	Course introduction and syllabus discussion	Syllabus
R 8/28	Launching your study of communication theory	Griffin, Ch. 1
T 9/2	Talk about theory and weighing the words	Griffin, Ch. 2 & 3
R 9/4	Example Objective Theory: Expectancy Violations Theory (Burgoon)	Griffin, Ch. 7 QUIZ #1
T 9/9	Example Interpretive Theory: Relational Dialectics (Baxter & Montgomery)	Griffin, Ch. 11
R 9/11	Mapping the territory	Griffin, Ch. 4
<u>THEORIES OF INTERPERSONAL AND GROUP COMMUNICATION</u>		
T 9/16	Symbolic Interactionism (Mead)	Ch. 5 QUIZ #2
R 9/18	*Social Penetration Theory (Altman & Taylor)	Ch. 8
T 9/23	*Uncertainty Reduction Theory (Berger)	Ch. 9
R 9/25	Exam #1	
T 9/30	*Social Information Processing Theory (Walther)	Griffin, Ch. 10
R 10/2	*Communication Privacy Management Theory (Petronio)	Griffin, Ch. 12
<u>THEORIES OF RHETORIC AND PERSUASION</u>		
T 10/7	*Social Judgment Theory (Sherif)	Griffin, Ch. 14 QUIZ #3
R 10/9	*Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo)	Griffin, Ch. 15
T 10/14	FALL BREAK: NO CLASS	
R 10/16	*Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger)	Griffin, Ch. 16
T 10/21	*The Rhetoric (Aristotle)	Griffin, Ch. 22 QUIZ #4
R 10/23	*Dramatism (Burke)	Griffin, Ch. 23

<u>THEORIES OF GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS</u>		
T 10/28	*Functional Perspective (Hirokawa & Gouran)	Griffin, Ch. 17
R 10/30	Exam #2	
T 11/4	*Symbolic Convergence Theory (Bormann)	Griffin, Ch. 18
R 11/6	*Communicative Constitution of Organizations (McPhee)	Reading online (see eCollege)
T 11/11	*Cultural Approach to Organizations (Geertz & Pacanowsky)	Griffin, Ch. 19
<u>THEORIES OF CULTURE</u>		
R 11/13	*Cultivation Theory (Gerbner)	Griffin, Ch. 29 QUIZ #5
T 11/18	*Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles)	Griffin, Ch. 31
R 11/20	NATIONAL COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION CONVENTION: NO CLASS	
T 11/25	*Face-Negotiation Theory (Ting-Toomey)	Griffin, Ch. 32
R 11/27	THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS	
T 12/2	*Genderlect Styles (Tannen)	Griffin, Ch. 34 QUIZ #6
R 12/4	*Muted Group Theory (Kramarae)	Griffin, Ch. 36
T 12/9	Common Threads in Comm Theories / Final Exam Review	Griffin, Ch. 37
T 12/16, 11:30 AM- 1 PM	Final Exam (not cumulative) The final exam will be held in our regular classroom, Moudy South 320.	

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COMMUNICATION QUESTIONS

Here are a few of the communication questions we'll explore together in this course. Notice that each question contains a form of the word *communication* or *message*—that's how you know these are communication questions in a communication course! Which of these most interest you?

1. How do we react to nonverbal communication that we don't expect? (Expectancy Violations Theory)
2. How does communication create and manage tension between people in relationships? (Relational Dialectics)
3. How does language shape the self? (Symbolic Interactionism)
4. How do we communicate to draw close to other people? (Social Penetration Theory)
5. How and why do people communicate to get information about other people? (Uncertainty Reduction Theory)
6. How does the nature of a communication medium change how relationships develop? (Social Information Processing Theory)
7. How do people communicate to control information about themselves? (Communication Privacy Management Theory)
8. What messages change attitudes? (Social Judgment Theory)
9. How do we process persuasive messages? (Elaboration Likelihood Model)
10. How do we respond to messages that produce a feeling of internal contradiction? (Cognitive Dissonance Theory)
11. By what means can a speaker communicate to persuade an audience? (The Rhetoric)
12. How does a speaker generate a sense of identification with an audience? (Dramatism)
13. How can groups communicate to best solve problems? (Functional Perspective)
14. How do groups communicate to generate a sense of cohesion? (Symbolic Convergence Theory)
15. How does communication create organizational culture? (Cultural Approach to Organizations)
16. How do television messages change the way viewers think? (Cultivation Theory)
17. Why do people choose to use the communication media that they do? (Uses & Gratifications Theory)
18. How do we adapt our communication behavior to those with whom we're communicating? (Communication Accommodation Theory)
19. How do we communicate to manage our own and others' self-image? (Face-Negotiation Theory)
20. Why and how do men and women communicate differently? (Genderlect Styles)
21. How does the communication of a dominant group limit the communication of a marginalized group? (Muted Group Theory)