



COM310: Interpersonal Communication

College of Science and Liberal Arts

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

COURSE SYLLABUS

Semester: Fall 2025

Class Meeting Days: Mondays & Thursdays

Instructor: Dr. Yao Sun

Office Location: CULM 435A

Office Hours: Mondays & Thursdays 1 – 2 pm or by appointment

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I. Welcome!

This is a course designed for you to survey theories and research about interpersonal communication in organizational and group settings. The course focuses on comprehensively understanding and effectively managing communication behaviors and social relationships in organizational and group activities.

II. Course Prerequisites

ENGL 102 with a grade of C or higher, and one History and Humanities GER 200 level course with a grade of C or higher.

III. How to Succeed in this Course

1. Students are encouraged to take notes in class, as the midterm and final exams will be completely based on the lecture slides.
2. Students are encouraged to participate in the case study discussion to learn case analysis skills.
3. Students are encouraged to discuss with the instructor about the midterm and final essays as well as specific learning goals.
4. Do not worry about particular knowledge, content, or skills that should have been mastered in previous courses. Exposure to new ideas is one objective of this course. Do the best that you can with skills that you have mastered up until now.

IV. Student Learning Outcomes

- Be able to comprehensively understand concepts and theories in group and organizational communication.
- Develop the ability to critically evaluate group and organizational communication research.
- Analyzing real-world group and organizational communication dynamics using case study approaches.
- Present and interpret findings derived from empirical studies on group and organizational communication.
- Apply group and organizational communication theories and analytical methods to scholarly research on human communication behaviors.

V. Course Readings and Materials

All required readings will be available in CANVAS at designated time periods throughout the semester.

Supplementary Materials:

- Joann Keyton. (2005). *Communicating in Groups: Building Relationships for Group Effectiveness* (3rd ed). Oxford University Press.
- Katherine Adams and Gloria Galanes. (2020). *Communicating in Groups: Applications and Skills* (11th ed). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Edward C. Brewer and Jim Westerman (2017). *Organizational Communication: Today's Professional Life in Context*. Oxford University Press: New York, NY.
- Eric M. Eisenberg, Angela Trethewey, Marianne LeGreco, and H. L. Goodall Jr. (Ed.). (2016). *Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint* (8th ed). Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Michael J. Papa, Tom D. Daniels, and Barry K. Spiker (2007). *Organizational Communication: Perspectives and Trends*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Andy Swann (2017). *The Human Workplace: People-Centered Organizational Development*. Kogan Page.

VI. Grading Scale

This course will adhere to the grading system below.

Grading Scale (%)	
93 – 100	A
87 – 92	B+
78 – 86	B
75 – 77	C+

65 – 74	C
60 – 64	D
Below 60	F

VII. Grade Categories and Weights

Assessment	Percent of Final Grade
Attendance + Reading Presentations	30% (9% + 21%)
Midterm Test	25%
Midterm Literature Review Essay	10%
Final Test	25%
Final Literature Review Essay	10%

VIII. Assessment

- In each Case Study Session, one group will lead the discussion of two case studies (available in Canvas). Discussion leaders are expected to 1) follow the instructions to summarize and present the case studies using PowerPoint slides, 2) propose one discussion question for each case study, and 3) propose a potential research topic relevant to each case study and explain why this topic will be interesting to study. Discussion of each case study will last about 40 minutes (30-minute presentation + 10-minute open discussion). Discussion leaders are expected to provide accurate summaries and lead a thought-provoking discussion. Active participation in class discussion is strongly encouraged.
- Midterm and Final Tests will be completely based on the lecture slides and will test students' understanding of fundamental concepts and principles in group and organizational communication. Detailed instructions will be offered.
- Midterm Literature Review Essay on Group Communication (Due Date: 11:59 pm, Sunday, Oct 26) and Final Literature Review Essay on Organizational Communication (Due Date: 11:59 pm, Friday, Dec 12) should be at least 500 words in length, not including titles, headers, identifying information, etc. Paper format, detailed instructions, and a grading rubric will be offered.

IX. Grade Dissemination

Your grades will be posted to CANVAS. When a rubric is present, the grading will be self-explanatory. You are responsible for keeping track of your own grades, assignment deadlines, and any missing assignments. Any issue with a grade for a specific assignment or quiz must be addressed within one week of the assignment deadline.

X. Course Schedule

Schedule	Modules	Mondays (Lecture Sessions)	Thursdays (Case Study Sessions)
Week 1	Introduction & Syllabus Overview		Case Study Setup

(Sep 4)			
Week 2 (Sep 8 & 11)	Principles and Foundations for Group and Organizational Communication	Session 1	Introduction to Real-World Org/Group Comm
Week 3 (Sep 15 & 18)	Communication in Groups I (Group Development and Communication Theories)	Session 2	Session 1
Week 4 (Sep 22 & 25)	Communication in Groups II (Working with Others in Groups)	Session 3	Session 2
Week 5 (Sep 29 & Oct 2)	Communication in Groups III (Group Climate and Comm Skills)	Session 4	Session 3
Week 6 (Oct 6 & 9)	Communication in Groups IV (Leadership and Conflict in Groups)	Session 5	Session 4
Week 7 (Oct 13 & 16)	Communication in Groups V (Decision Making and Creativity)	Session 6	Session 5
Week 8 (Oct 20 & 23)	Midterm Week	Midterm Test (In-class)	Midterm Essay on Group Communication (Due: Sunday, Oct 26 th)
Week 9 (Oct 27 & 30)	Organizational Communication I (Intra- and Interpersonal Experience)	Session 7	Session 6
Week 10 (Nov 3 & 6)	Organizational Communication II (Leadership in Organizations)	Session 8	Session 7
Week 11 (Nov 10 & 13)	Organizational Communication III (Conflict and Org Effectiveness)	Session 9	Session 8
Week 12 (Nov 17 & 20)	Organizational Communication IV (Change and Innovation)	Session 10	Session 9
Week 13 (Nov 24 & 25)	Organizational Communication V (Culture, Values, Diversity and Ethics)	Session 11	Session 10
Week 14 (Dec 1 & 4)	Group and Organizational Comm Revisit	Final Test (In-class)	Final Essay on Organizational Comm
Week 15 (Dec 8 & 11)	Final Week	Final Essay Q&A	Final Essay (Due: Friday, Dec 12 th)
Remarks			

**Note: The Course Schedule is subject to revision*

XI. Course Policies

Late Work Policy: There is no make-up for the midterm and final exams. Papers turned in late will be assessed a penalty: a half-letter grade if it is one day late, and a full-letter grade for 2-7 days late. Papers will not be accepted if overdue by more than seven days. No extension permitted. Plan early!

Grades of "Incomplete": The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. In other words, an "I" grade may be awarded to a student only when a small portion of the student's work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The time limit for removing the "I" is to be set by the instructor, and it will not exceed one semester from the original date grades were due for this course. An "I" grade not cleared within one semester (including summer sessions) will revert to the grade noted on the contract (an "IF" in most cases).

XII. Technology and Media

Canvas: This course will use CANVAS to distribute course materials and grades. If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please view the following videos or consult the Canvas help guides. You may also contact IST Department at 973-596-2900 or ServiceDesk@njit.edu.

Laptop Usage: Students are encouraged to use laptop only for learning purposes.

Classroom Devices/Student Recording: Tape recorders are not allowed.

Phone Usage: Phones should be on silent mode. Students are NOT encouraged to check messages or surf the Internet during class. It is preferred that students not take photos/video/audio recordings of the lectures.

Artificial Intelligence Use

You are expected to use generative AI tools (e.g, ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) with caution. You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty.

XIII. University Policies & Resources

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, and actively participate in class. Students are allowed one unexcused absence. Every unexcused absence after the "freebie" will cause your participation score to drop a full letter grade. Excused absences will be accommodated on a case-by-case basis.

Academic Integrity Policy: The essential quality of this Policy is that each student shall demonstrate honesty and integrity in the completion of all assignments and in the

participation of the learning process. Adherence to the University policy on Academic Integrity promotes the level of integrity required within the university and professional communities and assures students that their work is being judged fairly with the work of others. This Policy defines those behaviors which violate the principles of academic integrity, describes a range of appropriate sanctions for offenses, and identifies a method for promoting the principle of academic integrity on campus.

Accessibility Resources & Service Accommodations: The Office of Accessibility Resources and Services works in partnership with administrators, faculty and staff to provide reasonable accommodations and support services for undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and visiting students with disabilities who have provided our office with medical documentation to receive services. We strive to promote an inclusive environment that encompasses advocacy and access to all campus resources.

End of Semester Student Evaluations: All classes at NJIT make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Office of Academic Advising (OAA): The Office of Academic Advising (OAA) was established in order to assist in the advisement of students who are undecided in their major, transitioning into another major at NJIT, and those students who need additional support to graduate successfully and in a timely manner. OAA is a place where students will get intentional and intrusive advising, by a supportive academic advisor that will enable them to grow developmentally and give them the motivation they need to complete their degree.

The Writing Center: The Writing Center is a free resource which offers on-site tutoring. The center provides one-on-one and group tutoring sessions to students from all disciplines, during the fall and spring semesters. During Center hours, tutors are available to work with students on any aspect of their writing, from generating ideas and developing arguments, to working through drafts to their completion and revising effectively.