



## **COM 340 Organizational Communication**

*Department of Communication & Theatre*

Fall 2016 ♦ 3 Units ♦ M/W/F 10:55 a.m.-12:05p.m.

### **Dr. Melissa Newman**

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Office hours: Tue 10-12; 1-2:30; Th 3-5 & Google hangouts/appointments upon request

### **PLNU Mission**

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

### **Course Description**

This course is a study of traditional, modern, and post-modern approaches to organizational communication as well as its functions, forms and consequences. It also provides a theoretical overview of management theory and gives practical insights for communicating in a variety of organizations. More specifically, the course is based on the assumption that organizations are “collections of conversations” which both shape and are shaped by communicative interaction. To that end, topics will include: models/approaches to organizational theory and communication, interpersonal dynamics evidenced in networks, stress and social support, impression management, and issues of diversity.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Gain sophistication with the terms, concepts, and theories of organizational communication.
2. Increase understanding and appreciation of the complexities of communication and organizational life.
3. Develop competencies in organizational analysis and change strategies.
4. Demonstrate written and oral communication, as well as conceptual and analytical thinking.

### **Required Texts**

Bramson, Robert M. (1988). *Coping with Difficult People*. New York: Dell.

Littauer, Florence. (1992) *Personality Plus: how to understand others by understanding yourself*. Revell.

Miller, Katherine. (2012). *Organizational Communication: Approaches and Processes*. Boston: Cengage.

### **Assessment and Grading**

Below you will find the assignments for the semester. Your grade will be calculated by dividing the number of points you earn by the total number of points at the end of the semester. Course assignments and scheduling are subject to change due to the nature of the course. All changes will be made orally in class, provided in writing and posted on Canvas.

1. Text/Lecture Quizzes (points vary)

2. Organizational Culture Report: Students will analyze an assigned organization based on course material. (100 points)
3. Exams: 3 Exams over course material. (100 points each)
4. "Difficult People" Presentation: In a randomly assigned group, students will present on one of six types of categorically difficult people. (50 points)
5. Article Reviews: Students will complete 1 or 2 thought papers based on articles from the *Harvard Business Review*. Papers should include a brief summary of the article, an opinion of the concept, and personal connections. All papers for this class should be 3-4 typed pages, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman Font with one-inch margins. (25 points each)
6. *Personality Plus* Reflection: Students will write a 3-4 page reflection of their highest score on the *Personality Plus* Inventory. Be sure to include a thorough description of the style, strengths and weaknesses, and examples. (25 points)
7. *Personality Plus* Group Presentation: You and your assigned group will do a 10 minute presentation on your personality type according to *Personality Plus*. Each group member is expected to have a speaking role during the presentation. Be sure to include a thorough description of the style, strengths and weaknesses, and examples. You will be graded on content, creativity, delivery and staying within time constraints. There will be one grade for the group (barring extreme circumstances). 50 points
8. Inventories, Case Studies and Participation: Students are required to be on time and thoughtfully participate in lectures, group work and presentations. Students will also do written work on academic articles discussed in class. Absences will result in a points deducted at the professors discretion.

### Grade Scale

- A- = 90-93%; A = 94-97%; A+ = 98-100%:Excellent (*superior, first rate/class, exceptional, superlative paper and tests; engaged in class lecture and discussion, attendance, posture, interest, etc. Comprehensive excellence is needed for a superlative grade in this course.*)
- B- = 80-83%; B = 84-87%; B+ = 88-89%:Above average
- C- = 70-73%; C = 74-77%; C+ = 78-79%:Average (*mediocre, commonplace, ordinary, passable, fair, midpoint between extremes of excellence and failure.*)
- D- = 60-63%; D = 64-67%; D+ = 68-69%:Below average
- F = 59% and below: Failure (*omission or lack of satisfactory performance of action or task, inadequate, impassable, etc.*)

### Method of Instruction

The course is taught through lecture, discussion, class activities, and a semester project in a collaborative environment all designed to help you develop critical thinking abilities as they relate to organizational life. Lectures will often introduce material beyond that which is covered in readings and will assume information supplied in the text. Lecture and text should complement, not substitute for each other. It is your responsibility to come to class ready to think, challenge, analyze, and apply the material covered. Additional norms include:

1. Students are expected to attend class and be on time (especially after chapel). Failure to make presentations on schedule will result in a failing grade for that presentation. In the event of absence students seek missed information/notes from classmates.
2. All written work must be typed, and attention should be paid to form (including grammar, punctuation, spelling, APA formatting and general appearance) as well as content.
3. Integrity is of great importance. Plagiarism of any sort will not be tolerated and will result in a

grade of “F” for the project and possibly the course. See university notifications below for specifics.

4. Classroom disruption by cell phones or other electronic devices (i.e. text messaging) is prohibited. All laptops, cell phones and similar electronic devices must remain turned off and out of sight for the duration of class. A student may face a zero and/or failure in the class if an electronic device is used for cheating during a test.

5. Please DO NOT disrupt class while students and faculty are presenting. This includes walking in/out of the classroom or having side conversations. These community norms will be discussed in greater detail the first week of class.

6. Your PLNU email account should be checked daily. This is the way that we will most frequently communicate with you outside of class, and it’s also the way the university distributes important information.

7. This syllabus serves as the contract between the students and professor. Your continued enrollment in the course serves as agreement to abide by the policies and information set forth here within.

### Course Schedule

Please note: Due to the nature of this course, the schedule is subject to change. All changes will be posted on Canvas and announced in class.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Plan</b>	<b>Preparation</b>
Aug 30 (Tuesday)	(1) Course introduction, orientation and success strategies	(1) Review Syllabus and put important dates in planner or phone with “alerts” set. Extensions will not be granted after due date has passed.
Aug 31	(1) Introduction to Organizational Communication	(1) Read Miller Chapter 1
Sept 2	OYO: Examples of Bad Org Com	Post example to Canvas Discussion Board
Sept 5 Labor Day	No Class	Take Personality Plus Inventory (blank copy on canvas if your book is used)
Sept 7	Lecture: “The Challenge of Organizational Communication” (Miller Ch 1)	Finish reading <i>Personality Plus</i> Write <i>Personality Plus</i> reflection
Sept 9	OYO: Personality Plus Group Planning	(1) Prepare for Quiz 1 (2) Work with group on <i>Personality Plus</i> presentation
Sept 12	(1) <b>Quiz</b> on Miller Chapter 1 (2) <b>Personality Plus Reflection Due</b>	Finish <i>Personality Plus</i> presentation
Sept 14	<b>Personality Plus Presentations</b>	(1) Read Miller Chapter 2
Sept 16	Lecture: “Classical Approaches” (Miller Ch 2)	(1) Prepare for ch 2 Quiz (2) Read Miller Chapter 3
Sept 19	(1) Lecture: “Human Relations and Human Resources Approaches” (Miller	Read Miller Chapter 4

	Ch 3) (2) Quiz on ch 2	
Sept 21	Case Studies in Org Com	Complete case study journal
Sept 23	Lecture: "Systems & Cultural Approaches" (Miller Ch 4)	Study for Exam 1
Sept 26	Lecture: "Systems & Cultural Approaches" cont.	Study for Exam 1
Sept 28	<b>Exam 1 (Chapters 1-4)</b>	
Sept 30	TBD	Read Miller Chapter 5
Oct 3	Lecture: "Constitutive Approaches" (Miller Ch 5)	
Oct 5	Lecture: "Constitutive Approaches" cont.	
Oct 7	OYO: Artifact Assignment	Complete Artifact Assignment and presentation
Oct 10	<b>Artifact Presentations</b>	
Oct 12	<b>Artifact Presentations</b>	
Oct 14	OYO: Artifact Update and Submission	Read Miller Ch 6
Oct 17	(1) Chapter 6 reading quiz (2) MOCM Advising	HBR Article Review : Executive Women and the Myth of Having it All
Oct 19	(1) Lecture: "Critical and Feminist Approaches" (Miller Ch 6) <b>(2) Article Review Due via Canvas</b>	Read Miller Ch 7
Oct 21 Fall Break	No Class	
Oct 24	Lecture: "Socialization Processes" (Miller Ch 7)	
Oct 26	Socialization and Fraternization	
Oct 28	Discussion Post for HR policy	Read Miller Ch 8
Oct 31	Lecture: "Decision Making Processes" (Miller Ch 8)	Study for Exam 2
Nov 2	Lecture: "Decision Making Processes" cont. Org Culture Project Description	Study for Exam 2
Nov 4 *last day to drop class	<b>Exam 2</b>	Read Miller Chapter 9
Nov 7	Lecture: "Conflict Management" (Miller Ch 9)	Read Miller Chapter 10
Nov 9	Lecture: "Conflict Management & Change" (Miller Ch 10)	Read Miller Chapter 11
Nov 11	Case Studies	
Nov 14	Lecture: "Emotion in the Workplace" (Miller Ch 11)	Read HBR Article and Miller Chapter 12

Nov 16	Lecture: Organizational Diversity	Work on Org Culture Reports
Nov 18	Org Culture Reports	Finish Org Culture Report and Presentation Prep
Nov 21	Org Culture presentations	Read Miller Chapter 14
Nov 23	No Class: Happy Thanksgiving	
Nov 25	No Class: Happy Thanksgiving	
Nov 28	Lecture: Changing Landscape of Organizations (ch 14)	Read Miller Chapter 14
Nov 30	(1) Lecture: Changing Landscape of Organizations cont. (2) Difficult People Intro	Read Difficult People material on reserve at Ryan Library
Dec 2	OYO: Difficult People Project Work Day	Complete Difficult People Presentations
Dec 5	<b>Difficult People Presentations</b>	
Dec 7	<b>Difficult People Presentations</b>	Study for Exam 3
Dec 9	<b>Difficult People Presentations</b> Exam 3 Review	Study for Exam 3
Final Exam Date: _____  Time: _____	<b>Exam 3</b>	

### University Notifications

#### **Attendance & Participation**

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member has the option of filing a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice. If the date of de-enrollment is past the last date to withdraw from a class, the student will be assigned a grade of W or WF consistent with university policy in the grading section of the catalog. Every absence in this class will result in a five point deduction from final points earned. See Academic Policies in the (undergrad/graduate as appropriate) academic catalog.

#### **Academic Honesty and Dishonesty**

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As explained in the university catalog, academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Violations of university academic honesty include cheating, plagiarism, falsification, aiding the academic dishonesty of others, or malicious misuse of university resources. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for a) that particular assignment or examination, and/or b) the course following the procedure in the university catalog. Students may appeal also using the procedure in the university catalog. See Academic Policies for further information.

#### **Final Course Grades**

Final course grades will be submitted electronically at the conclusion of the semester by the deadline set forth by the university. Any questions regarding final grades need to be addressed within two weeks of the class ending and must be sent in writing to the professor. Grade inquiries beyond that time will not be allowed.

#### **Academic Accommodations**

While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations. At Point

Loma Nazarene University, students must request that academic accommodations by filing documentation with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual needs of the student. See Academic Policies in the (undergrad/graduate as appropriate) academic catalog.

**Final Exam Policy**

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the "Class Schedules" site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

**Copyright Policy**

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.