



Communication Studies Department

COM 3040 Organizational Communication

3 Units

Fall 2026

Meeting days/times: Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-10:45am

Meeting Location: Cabrillo Hall #202

Final Exam: 12/17/2026 10:30am-1:00pm

INFORMATION	SPECIFICS FOR THE COURSE
Instructor:	Dr. Johnny Capra
Phone:	619-849-2724
Email:	jcapra@pointloma.edu
Office location and hours:	Cabrillo Hall #207, Office Hours: Tuesday 11:00am-1:00pm, Thursday 11:00am-4:00pm, and by appointment.

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

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 is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description

A study of traditional, modern, and post-modern approaches to organizational communication as well as its functions, forms and consequences. Provides a theoretical overview of management theory and gives practical insights for communicating in a variety of organizations.

Course Learning Outcomes

This course is an examination of organizations from a communication vantage point and an exploration of the role of communication in the process of organizing. Combining the study of theoretical perspectives with skill development, you will build organizational communication competencies through understanding the nature of communication in the organizational context

and by practicing effective communication skills. Successful completion of the course should enable you to:

- Distinguish among the major schools of thought/ basic concepts in organizational theory
Identify communication problems in a variety of organizational contexts
- Apply various theoretical perspectives to organizational settings and situations
- Utilize scholarly research and theory to further understanding of organizational life

Program Learning Outcomes

As a required course for a degree in Organizational Communication, this course will contribute to the following PLOs

- Develop a sophisticated understanding of communication as the negotiation of meaning.
- Display communication competence both verbally and nonverbally in interpersonal, small group, organizational, and intercultural contexts.
- Formulate a thesis, organize a complex idea, and support it with appropriate evidence using proper grammar and punctuation.
- Demonstrate an ability to present themselves in a professional manner including resume, interview skills, and presentations.
- Demonstrate an understanding and ability to work collaboratively in a group.
- Analyze and conduct original communication research (quantitative and qualitative) using scholarly journals, data bases, and collecting and analyzing empirical data.
- Demonstrate an understanding of basic theoretical concepts relative to organizational behavior including scientific management, systems theory, and organizational culture.
- Integrate a Christian perspective of values and ethics in their communication in interpersonal, small group organizational and intercultural contexts.
- Develop an awareness of multiple approaches to leadership and develop a personal leadership philosophy.

For students taking this course to fulfill other degree programs, please visit the curriculum maps at <http://assessment.pointloma.edu/academic-assessment/departments-of-communication-theatre/curriculum-maps/> to identify which PLOs this class addresses for your course of study.

Course Credit Hour Information

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3-unit class delivered over 16 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

Eisenberg, E. M., Trethewey, A., LeGreco, M., & Jr., H.L. G. (2023). Organizational Communication (9th ed.). Macmillan Higher Education.

Each student must purchase access to the publication. You will need your access right away, before the end of the first week of class, in order to complete the required readings and assignments.

This course is part of our course material delivery program, [LomaBooks](#). The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your [LomaBooks](#) materials.

Communication

All communication for this course will take place via Canvas where you will receive reminders and updates related to the course regularly. Your instructor will utilize the Canvas page to communicate with the class as well as post the syllabus, reading materials, assignment descriptions, rubrics, grades, and any other information related to the course. Throughout the term it is essential that you actively check your canvas email and the course canvas page in order to succeed in this course.

Email: jcapra@pointloma.edu

I check my email frequently and try my best to respond to emails within 24 hours during the workweek (Monday- Friday). If you have not received a response from me within 48 hours, then please send me a follow up email.

General Course Concern Policy

If you have a concern related to the content or structure of this course, please bring your concern(s) to me (the instructor) in a timely manner, so that we have the opportunity to discuss your thoughts and work together toward a solution.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

COM 3040 Attendance Policy

Students are allowed two (2) absences during the course of the semester without penalty excluding university approved absences or Covid-related absences. Each absence over these two will result in a 15-point deduction from your final grade. Please notify me at least one week prior to excused absences. You are responsible for communicating with your instructor in order to make up missed work within one calendar week of the excused absence.

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for *one* of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Late Policy

In order to benefit from each class session and avoid interrupting the learning experience of their fellow classmates, it is important that students attend the entire class period. Tardiness exceeding 5 minutes at any point during the class period is taken note of. If a student demonstrates habitual tardiness points will be taken from their final grade.

Electronic Device Policy

The use of cell phones is prohibited in class. Laptops/tablets may be used for note taking or other class-related activities. If any of these devices becomes a distraction the student will be asked to put them away.

Reading Policy

This course requires that all assigned readings are completed prior to arriving in class on the day they are due. In-class time will be used to build on the concepts covered in the readings, not to review it. Come to class prepared to ask questions you have about the readings, and to thoughtfully analyze and apply the topics covered in the text.

Professionalism Policy

Please be respectful of your peers and instructor at all times by adhering to the guidelines provided below.

- Use your best communication skills. Actively engage in class discussions and be professional, positive, and supportive of others.
- Be respectful to your classmates and instructor.
- Use technology strictly for notetaking and course-related reasons.
- Put laptops away during in-person student presentations.
- Ensure appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation for all completed work.

Incomplete and Late Assignment Policy

Late assignments are not accepted in this course and should instead be submitted via Canvas on or before their assigned due date. If you are unable to attend class on the day an assignment is due for university excused reasons, communicate with your instructor and an alternative will be made available to you. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside California.

PLNU 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.

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. 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. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. Please consult the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Behavior Policy

Both faculty and students at Point Loma Nazarene University have the right to expect a safe and ordered environment for learning. Students are expected to take the initiative to learn and conduct themselves in a mature and civil manner in the classroom environment. Any student behavior that is disruptive or threatening is a serious affront to Point Loma Nazarene University as a learning community. Students who fail to adhere to these behavioral standards may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from class or further university sanctions. For a full definition of disruptive behavior, response procedures, and the appeal process, please consult the [Academic Behavior Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#).

PLNU Artificial Intelligence AI Policy

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Any reliance on AI tools in this course is subject to an academic honesty violation.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with

disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center, [by email](#) or phone at 619-849-2533. Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines approved accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their approved accommodations in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive; as such, clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability-related need should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. In accordance with ADA, accommodations cannot constitute a fundamental alteration to course outcomes; therefore, planning ahead is vital in establishing appropriate accommodations for equal access to this course. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC eligibility process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice-free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the [Title IX Office](#). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the [Title IX Office](#).

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact [Counseling Services](#) or [consult the list of campus pastors](#).

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

Loma Writing Center

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar, and polishing final drafts, and more.

Walk-ins are welcome, but we recommend making an appointment in advance. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- [Appointment Calendar](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Email](#)

Assignments and Grading

Exams (200 Points): Exams will be comprised of multiple choice, short answer, fill in the blank, and brief essays. There will be two exams – a midterm and a final – each will be worth 100 points.

“Where Do I (or Have I) Worked” Communication Analysis (50 points): Prepare a brief (2-3 page) essay on an organization for which you currently or previously have worked. Introduce this organization and your role within it (title, tasks performed, etc.). Then select the approach to organizational communication discussed in Chapter 2 that best describes communication within the organization you selected. Describe why/how it fits, providing examples (50 points).

Cultural Comparison Storyboard (50 points): You and a partner will select two competing organizations (e.g., Pete’s Coffee and OB Beans; Jensen’s and Trader Joes) and collect data from /about each organization. Data may include interviews and observations, advertisements, general environmental scans, Internet materials, pictures. (Note: It is wise to obtain permission before conducting interviews or taking pictures). Once the data have been collected, compare and contrast the two organizations. Using the concepts from Chapter 5 (reading ahead to Chapter 9 might be helpful, too), analyze how each organization develops and supports its culture through various messages and how it strategically positions and differentiates itself from the competition. This project does NOT ask you to report your findings in a paper; instead, you will create a PowerPoint storyboard that compares and contrasts the two organizations and tells their story visually and in text. (50 points).

Faith Paper (50 points): This assignment will require you to develop your answer to the question “What makes an organization a Christian organization?”. Further instruction and a detailed rubric will be provided in class. (50 Points).

Media Critique (50 points): This assignment will require you to identify and reflect on a depiction of work or organizational communication in media (music, film, television, art, etc.). You will write a brief (2-3 page) essay about the depiction, detailing how you believe this form of media exemplifies some form of content covered in the course thus far. Further instruction and a detailed rubric will be provided in class. (50 Points).

Group Proposal (100 points): This group assignment will require you to form groups of 3 students. Together, you will select an organizational problem or issue that has recently occurred in a California-based organization. This issue must have occurred within the last six months. Write about how you believe this issue relates to a construct, theory, or perspective talked about in the class (or covered in class readings). Define and describe the perspective, theory or construct. Next, talk about how that perspective, theory or construct could guide the individual(s) in the situation to a potential solution, or at least to another way of viewing the issue that was not discussed in the article. Your paper should be 5-7 pages (double spaced). Each group will then give a 10-15. Minute speech sharing their finding with the class (100 points).

Participation (50 Points): Quizzes, Homework, In-class Activities, Participation, etc.

Midterm Exam	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
“Where Do I (or Have I) Worked”	50 points
Cultural Comparison Storyboard	50 points
Faith Paper	50 points
Media Critique	50 points
Group Proposal	100 points
Quizzes, Homework, In-class Activities, Participation	50 points
Total Points Possible: 550	

Grading Scale: Grades are calculated by dividing the number of points you earn by the total points available (500). The grading scale is as follows:

A	93-100%	C	73-76%	D-	60-62%
A-	90-92%	C+	77-79%	F	59% and below
B+	87-89%	C-	70-72%		
B	83-86%	D+	67-69%		
B-	80-82%	D	63-66%		

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE:

Below you will find a detailed course outline. Please keep in mind that this is a living document that may change at any time. It is your responsibility to actively and regularly check the course canvas page, as well as your canvas email to stay up to date on any changes made to this outline.

Week	Dates	Topic/Activity	Reading / Assignment Due
1	9/1	Introduction/Syllabus	
	9/3	Ideal Organization Activity & Debrief/ Activity Reflection	
2	9/8	Communication and Work/ Paper Planes	<i>Ch.1</i>
	9/10	Changing World of Work Activity	
3	9/15	Organizational Communication/ Introduce “Where Do I (or Have I) Work(ed)” Communication Analysis”	<i>Ch.2</i>
	9/17		Due Sunday @ 11:59pm: “Where Do I (or Have I) Work(ed)” Communication Analysis
4	9/22	Early Perspectives	<i>Ch.3</i>
	9/24	Human Resources Activity	
5	9/29	Communication Perspectives	<i>Ch.4</i>
	10/1	Introduce Cultural Comparison Storyboards	
6	10/6	Cultural Studies	<i>Ch.5</i>
	10/8		
7	10/13	Critical Approaches	<i>Ch.6</i>
	10/15	Story Board Presentations	Due Tuesday @ 11:59pm: Cultural Comparison Storyboard
8	10/20	Review Day	
	10/22	NO CLASS-FALL BREAK!	Due Sunday @ 11:59pm: Midterm
9	10/27	Identity and Difference Introduce Faith Paper	<i>Ch.7</i>
	10/29	Identity Work Activity	Due Sunday @ 11:59pm: Storyboard group grading
10	11/3	Teams and Networks	<i>Ch.8</i>
	11/5	Introduce Media Critique	Due Sunday @ 11:59pm: Faith Paper
11	11/10	Leadership	<i>Ch.9</i>
	11/12	Historical Approaches to Leadership	

		Activity	
12	11/17	Organizational Alignment	<i>Ch.10</i>
	11/19	Competitive Strategies Activity	
13	11/24	Cont.	
	11/26	NO CLASS-THANKSGIVING!	Due Sunday @ 11:59pm: Media Critique
14	12/1	Individual Group Meetings	
	12/3	Individual Group Meetings	
15	12/8	Group Presentations	
	12/10	Group Presentations/Review Day	
16	12/15	Final Exam Wednesday, 12/17, 10:30 – 1:00 pm	Due Friday @ 11:59pm: Final Proposal