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CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM 2001-2002

NON-GENERAL EDUCATION PROCESS A

DEADLINES: Deadline dates for 2001/2002 submissions: Regular proposals: October 19, 2001 to be implemented in Fall 2002; Short-Term proposals: December 7, 2001 to be implemented in Fall, 2002; Regular proposals February 15, 2002 to be implemented in Spring, 2003; March 22, 2002 for short-term courses to be implemented in Spring 2003.

PROPOSAL TITLE: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION THEORY AND RESEARCH 0601-221

SPONSOR(S): LORIN BASDEN ARNOLD & LINDY CRISON

DEPARTMENT: COMMUNICATION STUDIES

COLLEGE: COMMUNICATION

IF LAS CHECK ONE: History/Humanities Math/Sciences Social/Behavioral Sciences

Check one: Undergraduate Graduate

THE ATTACHED **NON-GEN-ED** PROPOSAL IS BEST DESCRIBED BY THE ITEM(S) CHECKED.

New non-gen-ed course

Short-term non-gen-ed course

Minor curricular changes (fewer than three) to:

- existing non-gen-ed course
- non-gen-ed degree requirements
- major
- minor, specialization, concentration, track, certificate program

DEPARTMENT
(Signature indicates approval)

Cynthia Lawson 10/11/01
Dept. Curriculum Chair / Date

Cynthia Lawson 10/15/01
Dept. Chairperson / Date

CADEMIC DEAN

Approved Not Approved Comments:

Dean's Signature/Date: [Signature]

(1-1-01)

COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Date of open hearing (if necessary) _____ Approved Not Approved _____

Comments:

signature of College Chair/Date: Donald R. Hill 2/14/02

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Date Received/Processed _____

Comments:

Curriculum Chair Signature Janeetta M. Reel Date Announced At Senate 1/29/02

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT/PROVOST

Approved _____ Not Approved _____ If no, reasons are as follows:

Student Credit Hours _____ Faculty Load Hours _____ Equalized Credit Hours _____

Official Copy & Approval Sheet Filed (Date): _____ Executive VP/Provost Signature/Date Jeter G. G. Jr
4/29/02

REGISTRAR

Date Approved Course Description Received _____ Hegis Taxonomy & Course Number Assigned 0601-221

Registrar Signature/Date E. E. E. J. D. 10/15/02

NOTIFICATION FORWARD

Senate Curriculum Committee Chairperson

Department Chairpersons

Academic Dean(s)

Registrar

(146)
Instit. Reel
T 10/24/02
Sponsor(s) (AC)

Course Proposal

1. Details

- a) Course Title: Organizational Communication Theory and Research
- b) Sponsor: Lorin Basden Arnold, Assistant Professor, and Cindy Corison, Chair, Communication Studies Department, College of Communication
- c) Credit Hours: 3 credit hours
- d) Course Level: 200-level undergraduate
- e) Curricular Effect: As part of a curricular change in the Department of Communication Studies, this class will be a recommended course for students pursuing the Interpersonal/Organizational track within the department. The class will also have utility for students pursuing degrees in business.
- f) Prerequisites: Comp II (1501, 112)
- g) Time/Scale of Implementation: Fall 2002/one section
- h) Resources: With consideration of current faculty as well as anticipated new hires in the next few years, the faculty will be available. The course should not require new facilities or computer equipment. Additional library acquisitions may be required in time.

6. Course Description

Organizational Communication Theory and Research

Prerequisite: Comp II (1501, 112)

Organizational Communication theory and research introduces students to the basics of organizational communication. The class will focus on how scholars and researchers study and understand the communication patterns and relationships that go on in organizations. Students will be asked to consider a variety of perspectives and theories of organizational communication while comparing them to each other and to their own experiences as organizational actors.

2. Rationale

In the next year, the Department of Communication Studies will be reorganizing its curriculum. As part of this reorganization, the Department will house two “tracks” or areas of focus. One of these tracks is an examination of interpersonal and organizational communication. In the development of this track, a basic course in organizational theory and research is foundational.

Organizational communication is a growing part of the communication studies discipline. In the most recent study of reputations of graduate programs in communication studies, organizational communication was one of the six areas on which programs were ranked (NCA, 1996). While it is one of the “newer” areas of study in the field of communication research, organizational communication studies have become a strong part of graduate education in the field. Thus, to prepare our students well to be a part of the discipline of communication studies, we need to offer coursework in organizational communication.

Of course, many of our students will not take their education to the level of graduate work. However, the study of communication in general, and organizational communication in particular, have pragmatic value as well as scholarly value. A large study conducted by the Roper Starch organization for the National Communication Association in 1998 indicated that only half of the adults surveyed feel they are “very effective” at communicating with their superiors at work and only slightly more feel they are “very effective” at communicating with peers. Scholars of the area have posited the practicality and applicability of communication theories and concepts as diverse as feminist theory (i.e. Mattson & Buzzanell, 1999, and Mumby & Stohl, 1998), information processing (i.e. Allen & Griffith, 1997), dialectics (i.e. Kellett, 1999), paradox (i.e. Stohl & Cheney, 2001), and the work of Redding, Habermas, and Goffman (i.e. Buzzanell & Stohl, 1999; and Chriss, 1995). This list is but a fragment of the studies that show the pragmatic value of the theories and research conducted in the organizational communication area.

A class in organizational communication, therefore, offers value to the college and its students. Due to our focus on the study of communication and the theoretical underpinnings of the field, the Department of Communication Studies, within the College of Communication, offers the best resources for this course and this track. The department possesses the faculty needed to teach this course and anticipates further strengthening of this aspect of the faculty. Additionally, this focus is in alignment with the examples being set by the best Communication Studies departments across the country. While such a course, and track, are best served by positioning within the Department of Communication Studies, we embrace the potential of interdisciplinary work with other departments (such as Composition and Rhetoric within the College of Communication and the various programs in the College of Business) in the implementation of this course.

3. Essence of the Course

a) Objectives

The proposed course has three primary objectives

(i) To familiarize students with the basic theories, concepts, and approaches to the study of organizational communication.

(ii) To engage students in the process of reading, understanding, synthesizing, and utilizing organizational communication theory and research.

(iii) To help students develop critical thinking skills as they assess and evaluate organizational communication theory and research.

b) Topical Outline

This course offers the following components:

(i) Course Introduction: Students will be introduced to the field of organizational communication and the study will be positioned within the scholarly and pragmatic realms.

(ii) Foundations of Organizational Communication Theory: The course will provide students with discussion of the basic areas of organizational theory including: Scientific and Classical Management, the Human Relations movement, Human Resource Development, Systems, Workplace Democracy, and Feminist Theories.

(iii) The Communication Process of Organizations: Various aspects of the communication process in organization will be discussed and studied. Topics to be considered include: communication functions, organizational structure, group relationships, organizational leadership, information technology, and computer mediated communication.

(iv) The Dynamics of Organizational Culture: Organizational culture and its relationship to communication will be considered. Various features of organization related to culture will be discussed, including cultural control, diversity, power, and conflict.

(v) Strategic Communication: The role of strategy in the formulation of effective organizational communication will be addressed. Topics that may be considered include organizational indoctrination, occupational safety, compensation and

benefits, morale, satisfaction, organizational change management, and organizational crisis communication.

c) Course Assignments

Course assignments will reflect the Department of Communication Studies' focus on critical thinking, research, and writing. As such, students will be asked to complete various assignments including:

- (i) Examinations that test students' understanding of the theories and their ability to synthesize, critically analyze, and utilize the information.
- (ii) A research paper project that will consist of multiple stages or steps to provide students the opportunity to hone their understanding of scholarly research and writing. This project will allow students to develop their understanding of a particular aspect of organizational communication research with more depth.
- (iii) Reflection/respondent papers and projects that require students to read course texts with depth and responsivity.
- (iv) Classroom exercises and participation designed to promote collaborative learning among students and strengthen critical thinking abilities.

d) Sample Course Outline

Week 1	Go over the syllabus, etc. Do "get to know you" exercises. Discuss paper assignment in greater detail Lecture on "how to write a paper." Discuss the general study of organizational communication
Week 2	Discuss control theories of organizations These may include: Scientific and Classical Management, Transitional theories, Human Relations movement, and Human Resource Development
Week 3	Discuss "Biology" theories of organizations These may include: Systems Theory, Equivocality Reduction Theory, Evolutionary Psychology and Sociobiology
Week 4	Discuss "new" theories of organizations These may include: Critical Theory, Work Teams and Concertive Control, Workplace Democracy, Feminist Theories, and Emancipation

- Week 5 Discuss the role of communication in organizations
- Week 6 Discuss organizational structure and communication, including formal, informal, and network
- Week 7 Discuss group relationships
Topics to be considered include: group norms, group values, problem solving, decision-making, and roles
- Week 8 Discuss organizational leadership including leadership types, behavior, development, and control
- Week 9 Discuss information technology and computer mediated communication. Consider both recent advances in technology and its effects on the workplace
- Week 10 Discuss organizational culture and communication. Concepts to be considered may include traditionalist perspectives, interpretivist perspectives, critical perspectives, fantasy theme analysis, metaphor analysis, rites and rituals.
- Week 11 Discuss cultural control, diversity and change. Some aspects to be addressed are gender/sex, race/ethnicity, physical ability, and age.
- Week 12 Discuss power in organizations and various views of power including traditional views, critical views, and a feminist perspective.
- Week 13 Discuss conflict in organizations with attention to sources of conflict, conflict management, bargaining and negotiation, and interpersonal conflict.
- Week 14 Discuss strategic communication and the use of communication perspectives and strategies to facilitate organizational change, satisfaction, etc.
- Week 15 Finish discussion of strategic communication. Provide course review and discuss student research.

e) Evaluation and Grading Procedures

The final course grades will be based on faculty evaluation of student work throughout the duration of the class. Course participation grades will be assessed on student activity during general classroom discussion, group exercises, and student presentations.

f) Course Evaluation

The proposed course will be evaluated using the College of Communication student evaluation. Student response will provide information concerning the quality and suitability of course content, teaching effectiveness, assignments, and course texts. In addition, faculty members in the Department of Communication Studies will engage in ongoing evaluation of the course via observation in the classroom, syllabus review, and discussions during faculty meetings.

4. Results of Consultations

a) Consultants: Suzanne Sparks FitzGerald, Public Relations/Advertising Department; Janice Rowan, Chair, Composition and Rhetoric Department; Michael Banutu-Gomez, Department of Management/MIS, Carl Hausman, Chair, Journalism

b) Consultants' Written Statements: See Attached documents (additional documents forthcoming)

5. Additional Supporting Information

a) Recommended Texts

Texts recommended for this class would be based primarily in organizational communication theory and research. Texts should take an in-depth look at the major theories in the field. Texts that are solely intended as behavioral guides for organizational communication (i.e. “How to Communicated Effectively in Business Setting”) would not be appropriate for this course. Some suggested texts that would fulfill the course goals include:

Corman, S. R., Banks, S. P., Bantz, C. R., & Mayer, M. E. (1995). *Foundations of organizational communication: A reader, 2nd ed.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Daniels, T. D., Spiker, B. K., & Papa, M. J. (1997). *Perspectives on organizational communication, 4th ed.* Chicago: Brown & Benchmark.

Eisenberg, E., & Goodall, H. Jr. (2001) *Organizational communication, 3rd ed.* New York: Bedford/St. Martins.

Miller, K. (1999) *Organizational communication: Approaches and processes, 2nd ed.* New York :Wadsworth.

Neher, W. W. (1997). *Organizational communication: Challenges of change, diversity, and continuity.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

b) Additional Course Resources

While these texts currently would not serve well as a main text for the course, they can offer additional insight to particular areas for both faculty teaching the course and students taking the course. All journal articles noted here are available through the Rowan library system.

Buzzanell, P. M. (2000). *Rethinking organizational & managerial communication from feminist perspectives*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Byers, P. Y. (1997). *Organizational communication: Theory and behavior*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Cheney, G. (2000). Thinking differently about organizational communication. *Management Communication*, 14 (1), 132-142.

Clegg, S. R., & Hardy, C. (1999). *Studying organization: Theory and method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clegg, S. R., & Hardy, C. (1999). *Managing organization: Current issues*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cox, S. A. (1999). Group communication and employee turnover: How coworkers encourage peers to voluntarily exit. *The Southern Communication Journal*, 64 (3), 181-193.

Coyle-Shapiro, J. A-M (1999). Employee participation and assessment of an organizational change intervention: A three-wave study of total quality management. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 35 (4), 439-457.

Cragan, J. F., Shields D. C. (1999). Translating scholarship into practice: Communication studies reflecting the value of theory-based research to everyday life. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 27 (2), 92-107.

Cushman, D. P. (2000). Stimulating and integrating the development of organizational communication: High-speed management theory. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 13 (3), 486-502.

Dougherty, D. S., & Krone, K. J. (2000). Overcoming the dichotomy: Cultivating standpoints in organizations through research. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 23 (1), 16-41.

Drake, B., Yuthas, K., & Dillard, J. F. (2000). It's only words--impacts of information technology on moral dialogue. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 23

(1), 41-60.

- Heintze, T., & Bretschneider, S. (2000). Information technology and restructuring in public organizations: Does adoption of information technology affect organizational structures communications, and decision making? *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 10 (4), 801-831.
- Herrick, J. W. (1999). "And then she said": Office stories and what they tell us about gender in the workplace. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 13 (3), 274-297.
- Jablin, F. M., & Putnam, L. L. (2000). *The new handbook of organizational communication*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kassing, J. W., & Avtgis, T. A. (1999). Examining the relationship between organizational dissent and aggressive communication. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 13 (1), 100-116.
- Kellett, P. M. (1999). Dialogue and dialectics in managing organizational change: The case of a mission-based transformation. *The Southern Communication Journal*, 64 (3), 211-232.
- Kristiansen, M., & Bloch-Poulsen, J. (2000). The challenge of the unspoken in organizations: Caring container as a dialogic answer? *The Southern Communication Journal*, 65 (2/3), 176-191.
- McPhee, R. D., & Trethewey, A. (2000). The Emergent organization: Communication as its Site and Surface. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 14 (2), 328-335.
- Morgan, J. M. (2001). Are we "out of the box" yet? A case study and critique of managerial metaphors of change. *Communication Studies*, 52 (1), 85-103.
- Peterson, G. L. (2000) *Communicating in organizations: A casebook*, 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Shadur, M. A., Kienzle, R., & Rodwell, J. J. (1999). The relationship between organizational climate and employee perceptions of involvement. *Group & Organization Management*, 24 (4), 479-504.
- Scheibel, D. (1999). "If your roommate dies, you get a 4.0": Reclaiming rumor with Burke and organizational culture. *Western Journal of Communication*, 63 (2), 168-193.
- Shockley-Zalabak, P. (2002) *Fundamentals of organizational communication:*

Knowledge, sensitivity, skills, and values, 5th ed.
Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Sotirin, P. (2000). "All they do is bitch bitch bitch": Political and interactional features of women's officetalk. *Women and Language, 23* (2), 19-26.

Stohl, C. (1995). *Organizational communication: Connectedness in action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Symon, G. (2000). Information and communication technologies and network organization: A critical analysis. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 73*, 389-415.

Ulmer, R. R., & Sellnow, T. L. (2000). Consistent questions of ambiguity in organizational crisis communication: Jack in the box as a case study. *Journal of Business Ethics, 25* (2), 143-156.

Sources Noted

- Allen, D. G., & Griffith, R. W. (1997). Vertical and lateral information processing: The effects of gender, employee classification level, and media richness on communication and work outcomes. *Human Relations, 50* (10), 1239-1261.
- Buzzanell, P. M., & Stohl, C. (1999). The Redding tradition of organizational communication scholarship: W. Charles Redding and his legacy. *Communication Studies, 50* (4), 324-337.
- Chriss, J. J. (1995). Habermas, Goffman, and communicative action: Implications for professional practice. *American Sociological Review, 60* (4), 545-566.
- Kellett, P. M. (1999). Dialogue and dialectics in managing organizational change: The case of a mission-based transformation. *The Southern Communication Journal, 64* (3), 211-232.
- Mattson, M., & Buzzanell, P. M. (1999). Traditional and feminist organizational communication ethical analyses of messages and issues surrounding an actual job loss case. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 27* (1), 49-73.
- Mumby, D. K., & Stohl, C. (1998). Commentary: Feminist perspectives on organizational communication. *Management Communication, 11* (4), 622-634.
- National Communication Association. (1996). A study of the reputations of doctoral programs in communication. *National Communication Association Website*. <<http://www.natcom.org/ComProg/GPDHTML/Scripts/reputationstudy.htm>> (2001, June 15).
- National Communication Association. (1998). How Americans Communicate. *National Communication Association Website*. <http://www.natcom.org/research/Poll/how_americans_communicate.htm> (2001, June 15).
- Stohl, C., & Cheney, C. (2001). Participatory processes/paradoxical practices. *Management Communication Quarterly, 14* (3), 349-408.



Composition and Rhetoric

October 10, 2001

Dr. Lorin Arnold
Department of Communication Studies
Bozorth

Dear Dr. Arnold:

I have consulted with Dr. Erin Herberg, who teaches Writing for the Workplace (as do I), an undergraduate course, and Managerial Communication in the M.A. in Writing program. We agree that the course you are proposing, Organizational Communication Theory and Research, does not overlap with the content of our present course offerings. In fact, we think that the course would be a fine foundation for students enrolling in Writing for the Workplace as well as for students pursuing graduate work.

Week nine's work, as outlined in your proposal, focuses on "information technology and computer mediated technology," topics addressed in our some of our courses, such as Writing, Research, and Technology (undergraduate) and Writing for Electronic Communities (graduate). However, we believe the topics are treated quite differently in our courses, and, in some cases, the topics are a focus of the course rather than one among many topics. Therefore, there is no perceived problem of overlap.

We support the introduction of this course. Thank you for consulting with our department.

Sincerely,

Janice Rowan
Chair, Composition and Rhetoric



TO: University Curriculum Committee
FROM: Suzanne Sparks FitzGerald, Ph.D., APR
DATE: October 7, 2001
RE: Organizational communication course

Suzanne Sparks FitzGerald

Organizational communication promises to serve as a key course in the new Interpersonal/Organizational specialization. Students need to understand the role of communication in organizations as well as group relationships--this theoretical base can be put to practical application in almost any communication discipline including public relations and advertising.

As a member of the public relations/advertising department, I support this course as a building block of communication theory. I also look forward to students applying it in their respective careers.



Department of Management/MIS

October 15, 2001

Lorin Basden Arnold
Department of communication Studies
Bozorth Hall

Letter of Support

Dear Dr. Arnold,

I enjoyed reading your new course proposal titled “ Organizational Communication Theory and Research”. After careful review of your proposal, I here by offer support on behalf of Department of Management/MIS for your Department to house and teach this new course for communication students.

This new course would be great for communication students as well as none management majors. As a professor teaching Organizational Behavior in the College of Business, I strongly recommend this new course titled “ Organizational Communication Theory and Research” to be implemented by the Department of Communication Studies because the Department of Management do not teach communication course. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review your new course proposal.

Sincerely,

Michael Ba Banutu-Gomez, Ph.D.

Department of Management/MIS

Bunce 333

banutu-gomez@rowan.edu

X5425



Date: October 16, 2001

To: Lorin Basden Arnold

From: Carl Hausman, Chair, Journalism and Creative Writing

Re: Organizational Theory and Research

This course fits well into your plans for revising the curriculum, and of course the placement of the course within Communication Studies is logical.

You mention that the course will benefit business majors. I agree. I note that two of the recent major controversies in American business have involved organizational communication: the fumbled and insensitive management (in some firms) of stunned employees after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and the erosion of loyalty in firms caused by clumsy handling of terminations and disciplinary actions.

This course has my endorsement.