Syllabus

CJT 751 Communication Theory
Fall 2016

Location: FB 213
Time: W 2-4:45

Contact information

Instructor: J. David Johnson
EGJ 242

Telephone: (859) 257-3621

E-mail: jdj@uky.edu

Office Hours: T 9:30-11; and by appointment

Course description

CJT 751 ADVANCED TOPICS IN COMMUNICATION THEORY CONSTRUCTION. (3)
Intensive examination of selected topics important to the construction, development, and testing
of communication theories and problems. Prereq: Completion of required first-year curriculum
for the Ph.D.

This seminar is intended to acquaint students with theory construction in communication. It
seeks to promote student creativity, understanding, analytical skills, and critical thinking that will
be essential to their later work in the discipline.

Course objectives

A. To provide the student with an appreciation of the multiple perspectives available for
theory construction.
B. To promote understanding of basic communication problems.
C. To increase understanding of controversies related to communication theory.
D. To provide students with a ‘toolkit’ for developing definitions of constructs, their
interrelationships, their embeddedness in contexts, and their limiting conditions.
E. To provide students with an opportunity to integrate all of these components into their own
coherent framework which demonstrates their ability to perform future creative work in theory
construction.
Textbooks


Recommended:


Other readings are available for download through UK library, on reserve for selected books, or from the instructor. See the assignments listed on the class schedule for more information on these readings.

Assignments

Due dates on course schedule. More detail will be given on the nature of assignments before they are due.

Many of the class sessions will be devoted to discussion and critique of the papers you present. Accordingly you will have the opportunity to critique (and hopefully) improve each others work. The ability to substantially modify your work in response to criticism (your own and others) is critical to your professional development.

**Reaction papers**: Specific topics will be related to companion course material and will be specified in separate handouts. 200 total points 50 points each, 2-4 pages each.

**Developmental papers**. These papers are intended to be the initial starting points, components for the final paper. These papers should specifically incorporate the more mechanical features of Zetterberg and Okasha that would be removed from the final paper.

**Definition paper**: Choose a central communication construct and conceptually define it. Select 5 other definitions in tabular format as an appendix. 100 points, 4-6 pages
Interrelationships (e.g., models, hypotheses, axioms), explanations paper: Specify interrelationships among your constructs. How do they relate to technology and/or cultural/diversity factors? 100 points, 4-6 pages

Embeddedness paper: Discuss how context, levels, embeddedness, and paradigm issues (in a subdiscipline or larger field) impact interrelationships. 100 points, 4-6 pages

Alternative paradigm paper. Discuss how your problem might be approached from another paradigmatic perspective. 100 points, 4-6 pages

Final paper: Incorporating critiques of the developmental papers and your own further reflections develop an integrated theory paper. 400 points, 20-25 pages

Point distributions and grades

1000-900=A
899-800=B
799-700=C
0-699=F

Instructor expectations

1. I expect you to attend every class session. The components are highly interrelated; missing a class will detract from your learning potential in subsequent sessions.
2. I expect you to be in the classroom and prepared to begin work at the scheduled starting time for each session.
3. I expect you to actively participate in the discussions. This is not the type of class where you can “sit back and listen.”
4. I expect you to submit papers using proper English grammar, syntax, and spelling. You are encouraged to use spell check and grammar check prior to submitting your written work. The Writing Laboratory is available to anyone who may need assistance. Grammar, syntax, correct style and spelling will account for 10% of the grade for written work.
5. I expect (and encourage) you to provide honest and timely feedback regarding the content and process of this course throughout the semester.
6. I require that each learner will utilize the APA Publication Manual as a guide for writing papers for this course.

Academic honesty

Academic honesty is highly valued at the University. You must always submit work that represents your original words or ideas. If any words or ideas used in a class assignment submission do not represent your original words or ideas, you must cite all relevant sources and make clear the extent to which such sources were used. Words or ideas that require citation include, but are not limited to, all hard copy or electronic publications, whether copyrighted or
not, and all verbal or visual communication when the content of such communication clearly originates from an identifiable sources (including comments/suggestions from others in class). Per University policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the University may be imposed. Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found at the following website: http://www.uky.edu/Ombud. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited. Senate Rules 6.3.1 (see http://www.uky.edu/Faculty/Senate/ for the current set of Senate Rules) states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission. When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or content from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else’s work (including, but not limited to a published article, a book, a website, computer code, or a paper from a friend) without clear attribution. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work, which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone. When a student’s assignment involves research in outside sources or information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content, and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas, which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain. Please note: Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

**Inclement weather**

The University of Kentucky has a detailed policy for decisions to close in inclement weather. The snow policy is described in detail at http://www.uky.edu/MicroLabs/documents/p-weather.pdf or you can call (859) 257-5684.

**Late work**
Late work will not be authorized for any unexcused absences.

Late work will be accepted without penalty only if:
   (1) authorized by instructor before the due date and/or
   (2) an authorized medical or other serious excuse is provided.
If these conditions are not met, then 10% of the points for the assignment will be deducted for every school day, or fraction thereof, that it is late.

**Extra credit**

No extra credit will be permitted.

**Attendance**

Students should be aware that for successful completion of the assignments regular attendance is a must.

**Accommodations**

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC coordinates campus disability services available to students with disabilities. It is located on the corner of Rose Street and Huguelet Drive in the Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407. You can reach them via phone at (859) 257-2754 and via email at drc@uky.edu. Their web address is http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/DisabilityResourceCenter/.

**Classroom Courtesy**

In all academic environments it is important that a person respect others who have come to learn. Personal conversations should not occur when the instructor or other students are presenting material. Also, you would be offended (and rightfully so) if we spent your class time reading the newspaper or engaging in other irrelevant and distracting tasks. Please accord presenters the same respect.

**Email policy**

Electronic correspondence from the University, the College, the Department of Communication, your instructors, and advisors, will be sent to your official University Email Address (UEA), as defined in the UK Account Manager. It is your responsibility to regularly check this account or forward this address to an account that you will check regularly. Log-in to the account manager (http://ukam.uky.edu) using LinkBlue to confirm your University Email Address and delivery location.
### TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

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<td>AUG 31</td>
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TENTATIVE LIST OF READINGS

AUG 24 Overview, Where to ideas come from?

M 1-15, Part 1


Recommended:

Z 1

O 1


See also McGuire article on October 8


AUG 31 Definitions

Z 2, 3

O pp. 103-112

Exemplars:


Also see Lane et al. reading on December 3.


SEP 7   Interrelationships, Explanations

Z 4

O 2, 3

Exemplar:


Recommended:


SEP 14   Interrelationships (organizing them), time

Z 5


SEP 21   Some persistent problems, philosophy of science

M Part1
Revisit O 1, 2, 3

Recommended:


SEP 28 Domains, context, levels, and limiting conditions


Recommended:


OCT 5 Testing and evaluating theories

Z 6, 7, 8

O 4, 5

M Part II, III

Recommended:


OCT 12 Metaphor, Critical/interpretive, paradox/dilemmas


Recommended:


OCT 19 Narrative, historical approaches

M Part 1 revisited


Recommended:


History and institutional factors in communication theory development


Recommended:

**Peters 1986?**


See also Nisbett August 24

The personal side


The following articles need to be read as a set, they are interrelated:


Recommended:


Summing up, pointing to the future

DEC 7

Recommended:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

J. DAVID JOHNSON (PH.D., Michigan State University, 1978) is currently a Professor in the Department of Communication. He has also held academic positions at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Arizona State University, Michigan State University, and the State University of New York at Buffalo and was a media research analyst for the U. S. Information Agency. He has been recognized as one of the most prolific scholars in the field of communication. His publications have appeared in over 50 different journals, including: *Academy of Management Review, Communication Theory, Human Communication Research, Journal of Communication, Communication Research, Communication Monographs, and Social Networks*. He has also received grants from the National Cancer Institute, Michigan Department of Public Health, Michigan Department of Transportation, and National Association of Broadcasters. He has published eight books. His major research interests focus on organizational communication structures, innovation, information seeking, and health communication. This semester he is completing a book focusing on symbolic innovations.

An Overview of Dr. Johnson's Teaching Philosophy and Style

I believe in an active, empirically based approach to graduate education. Perhaps the critical skill you will need later on in your career is a set of techniques you can apply to problems. The primary focus of this class is on developing your analytical skills.

Classic 'book learning' through reading is something I expect that active, engaged learners will do throughout their careers. Students learn by doing, and in the process learn how to learn. It is much more difficult; however, to develop on your own, later on, a systematic means of approaching problems, such as the toolkit we will develop in this course. I assume that all students are committed to learning and that it is the most important thing they are doing. I believe that what you get out of class largely depends on what you put into it and that this applies to myself as well.