COURSE OUTLINE

Speech 120 (C-ID Number: COMM 180)
Introduction to Communication Theory
(C-ID Title: Introduction to Communication Theory)

Catalog Statement
SPCH 120 introduces students to the process of human communication through the study of basic communication models, fundamental theories, and relevant research findings. Emphasis is placed on achieving an understanding of the various forms of human communication, and the ways in which researchers contribute to the communication field. Coursework encourages students to research, analyze and apply communication theories to everyday communication practices. SPCH 120 prepares students for upper division coursework in the communication discipline.

Total Lecture Units: 3.0
Total Laboratory Units: 0.0
Total Course Units: 3.0

Total Lecture Hours: 48.0
Total Laboratory Hours: 0.0
Total Laboratory Hours To Be Arranged: 0.0
Total Faculty Contact Hours: 48.0

Recommended Preparation: Eligibility for ENGL101. ESL students should have completed ESL 155.

Course Entry Expectations

Prior to enrolling in the course, the student should be able to:

- organize and write thesis-based essays which meet the standards for English 101 entrance;
- use organized, detailed examples, facts, logical explanations, and other appropriate support for thesis statements;
- critically analyze selected works that deal with important contemporary issues;
- summarize, analyze and synthesize information, express and apply standards for judgment, compare and contrast, and evaluate evidence in order to form and state reasoned opinions;
- gather and organize information through library research;
- demonstrate a command of grammar, diction, syntax and mechanics sufficient for English 101 entrance: communicating (both orally and in writing) in standard English, with few major errors in grammar and punctuation;
- apply strategies appropriate to improving communication with native speakers;
- critically evaluate classroom presentations and analyze the validity of their academic content;
• select and participate in modes of presentation and discussion appropriate for a given academic topic;
• apply knowledge of culture-appropriate presentation style, using effective body language and appropriate level of language.

Course Exit Standards

Upon successful completion of the required coursework, the student will be able to:
• discuss the history of the study of human communication;
• explain the importance of theory as it relates to communication research and communication practice;
• evaluate a theory using at least four criteria identified in the course;
• discuss and evaluate at least three approaches to communication theory and research;
• analyze a communication event from two different theoretical perspectives;
• describe the theoretical approach embodied in a piece of communication research;
• summarize, critique and apply communication theories to social and professional life.

Course Content

Total Faculty Contact Hours = 48.0

History of Communication Study (6 hours)
  Defining Communication
    Verbal and nonverbal communication
    Models and perspectives
Traditions in Communication (3 hours)
Communication Theory Fundamentals (12 hours)
  Theory definition Functions of theories
    Organize/categorize
    Explain
    Predict Control
    Guide further research
Naive versus rigorous theories
Criteria for evaluating theories
  Clarity
  Parsimony/elegance
  Logical consistency
  Empirical validity
  Testable quality
  Usefulness
  Heuristic value
  Theoretical scope
The Process of theorizing
  Thinking
  Gathering information
Organization
Critical analysis
Data analysis
Construction

The basics of research
  Literature search strategies
  Using electronic databases
  Designing research projects
    Qualitative
    Quantitative
    Mixed methods

Approaches to Communication Theory (9 hours)
  Cognitive and behavioral
  Rules, laws and systems
  Humanistic and scientific
  Critical and interpretive

Context-Specific Applications (12 hours)
  Interpersonal communication theories
  Small group communication theories
  Intercultural communication theories
  Rhetorical theories
  Organizational communication theories
  Mass communication theories
  Gender communication theories
  Emerging specializations
    Health and sciences communication
    New technologies communication
    Computer mediated communication

Integration (6 hours)
  Common threads in communication theories

Methods of Instruction

The following methods of instruction may be used in this course:
  • classroom lecture and discussion;
  • collaborative group learning (e.g. role playing, problem solving and decision making exercises, conflict resolution exercises, panel discussions, and symposium forum discussions);
  • educational technologies including word processing, Internet, and electronic presentation.

Out of Class Assignments

The following out of class assignments may be used in this course:
  • essays that respond, explain, analyze, argue, and/or evaluate a communication theory (e.g. prepare a written comparison of the message theories that would help you best communicate while traveling in a part of the world where you do not speak any of the native languages and people generally speak little or no English.);
  • reading assignments from textbooks and/or journal articles;
  • quizzes;
Methods of Evaluation

The following methods of evaluation may be used in this course:

- discussions;
- group and individual oral presentations;
- self and peer evaluation papers;
- oral and written assignments of sufficient length and complexity to require students to demonstrate independent research, organization, critical thinking and communication skills;
- quizzes;
- comprehensive final exam.

Textbooks

12th Grade Reading Level. ISBN-13: 978-0073523927

12th Grade Reading Level. ISBN-13: 978-0205902354

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the required coursework, the student will be able to:

- articulate basic human communication theories and principles;
- demonstrate an understanding of human communication within particular contexts;
- apply communication theories to social and professional life.