CAS 101N: Introduction to Human Communication

Summer Semester, 2021 MTWTF - 12:45 - 2:00

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| Instructors: | Caroline Koons, Graduate Teaching Assistant, [ckk5123@psu.edu](mailto:ckk5123@psu.edu) |
| Mailboxes: | 200 Sparks Building |
| Office Hours: | *Tuesday & Thursday 12:00 - 12:45 pm, zoom.* |
| Office: | 316 Sparks, but I’m not physically on campus during the summer |
| Web Page: | CANVAS Website (access for course participants only) |

## ***Course Description***

CAS 101N exposes students to the role that communication plays in our modern world. Among friends, families, corporations, classrooms, and mass media, communication is the means by which humans define their identity, express their needs, and share ideas. When communication is 30effective, healthy relationships and societies are more likely. When habits of communication are ineffective or problematic, societies tend to be more partisan and relational conflict is hard to manage. To understand the essential role that communication plays in the twenty-first century, this class introduces students to the academic study of communication’s processes and practices.

CAS 101N pursues three distinct goals. First, it provides students who are considering a major or minor in Communication Arts & Sciences with knowledge about the discipline. Second, it provides non-majors with insight into how communication is a ubiquitous part of society. Third, it teaches every student how they can both produce and evaluate communication more effectively. Toward that end, this course will:

1) expose students to the basic concepts and best practices of communication.

2) prepare students to excel in advanced communication classes.

3) help non-majors incorporate essential communication theories and principles into their own fields of study and future professions.

CAS 101N is an “Integrative Studies” class. It contributes 3 credits to PSU’s general education requirement of 6 integrative studies credits. To accomplish this end, it provides students with readings, assignments, and lectures that feature three distinct domains of inquiry—humanistic, social scientific, and critical/cultural. (For details about the GE requirements and the “N” designation see <https://gened.psu.edu/integrative-studies-courses>).

***Class Reading***

This course does not have a textbook, but you are required to read articles, essays and other material that the instructors place on the CANVAS website or identify in the library’s database systems. Our readings will come in three forms—required common readings or videos that prepare students for class lecture; activity readings that are essential to complete a class activity; student choice readings in which you must read one essay among several. As the course unfolds, the reading assignments may shift. The instructors will announce any changes to the reading schedule in class, but you should check CANVAS each week to see that week’s reading.

***Assignments and Grading Procedures***

\*With the exception of the reaction papers for which there is a penalty for late work, no other work will be accepted beyond the date and time that it is due. If you have a circumstance that will make this policy challenging, speak to an instructor in advance. Computer failures are not an excuse. We suggest you use google docs so you don’t lose your work should your computer crash. We also suggest that you try to complete your work in advance of the moment it’s due to avoid unforeseen circumstances.

**Two Reaction Papers (30% of total grade)**

Students will write 2 reaction papers this semester, each at least 4 full pages but no more than 5 pages long. Papers are due:

* July 19
* August 9

Each paper will evaluate a research article provided by the instructors in CANVAS. Students are expected to choose their articles from one of three folders—the Humanistic Research Folder; the Social Science Research Folder; the Critical Theory Research Folder. Additional information about a) how to read a research article and b) the rubric that instructors will use to grade your paper will be discussed on **July 12th and July 28th.**

The purpose of this assignment is to both expose students to the methods, values, and goals of research in communication AND allow students to experience how these methods, values, and goals differ depending on the broader epistemology or paradigm of research being employed. Part of what an “integrative” approach to scholarship means is learning how different perspectives or approaches has strengths and weaknesses. For example, the humanistic approach to researching communication provides enormous depth and texture for a single instance of communicative phenomena, but it cannot be generalized very far beyond the specific moment and geographic location of that communication practice. Likewise, the social scientific approach to communicative phenomena can provide enormous insight (and theory) into broad patterns of behavior but it struggles to explain the often hidden impact of ideology or power within a community or society.

Each 3-4 page reaction paper must be double-spaced, 12pt. Times New Roman font with 1” margins on the tops and sides. The bibliography/works cited page is not considered part of the paper’s page count. Students must submit the reaction papers to CANVAS by the deadline noted.

**Please Note**: You are not allowed to make-up a missed reaction paper for full credit. Students who have an excused absence on the day that the paper is due are required to turn in their paper before the due date. Missing the deadline on the day the paper is due will result in the loss of a full letter grade. Each day beyond that will result in the loss of a full letter grade for every day that it is late.

**2 Exams (35% of total course grade)**

The midterm is a “take home” exam and will be available on Monday, July 26th and due on Friday, July 30th. The final exam will be released during the last week of classes and due during finals. **Because students have multiple days to complete exams, no late submissions will be accepted. Do not wait until the last minute to complete and submit your work.**

The exams are NOT cumulative; each will cover only the material that we have read or discussed in class since the last exam. The average of the two exams will constitute your grade for this portion of the course.

The exams will consist of short answer questions that invite you to apply your understanding of course ideas. Quizzes that you take during the semester will feature similar questions, so think of the quizzes as important preparation for the exams.

**Activities (15% of total grade)**

Throughout the semester, we will engage activities that invite small group discussion and either a group or individual submission associated with the discussion.

Possible grades for these assignments are: 100%, 85%, 70%, or “no credit”. Excellent, complete work that accurately addresses the prompt will receive full credit. Work that accurately addresses the prompt and is solid, though perhaps lacking in various ways will receive 85%. Completion of the assignment that indicates some effort was made but is lacking in thoroughness, detail, and quality will receive 70%. Failure to complete the assignment or work that is sorely inadequate will receive no credit.

The lowest activity grade of each student will be dropped from the aggregate score for this assignment.

**Quizzes (20% of total grade)**

Like the activities, quizzes can be the subject of small group discussion. We encourage you to brainstorm ways to think about the questions in order to provide thoughtful, critically considered responses. Each quiz will consist of five to seven questions and **will need to be submitted by the due date and time for credit**.

## ***Online Course Structure***

To successfully participate in this course, please pay very close attention to the course schedule. This schedule will note when we will meet as a FULL class, when we don’t have formal class, and when you will meet with your discussion section or have open office hours. Full class zoom meetings will be for purposes of sharing general course information and visits by special guest speakers.   
  
In lieu of making you zoom in and listen to lectures, your instructors are making content videos. It is REALLY important that you have watched these videos and taken notes with comments or questions so you can participate in your discussion sections. The videos are also pretty crucial to your ability to complete assignments and be successful on quizzes and exams.

In addition, you will be assigned to an Activity Pod. This pod will consist of 4-6 students for the purpose of completing activities, quizzes, and for having more in-depth discussions about course content.

## ***Class Conduct***

Please be considerate of others and their opinions so we can all enjoy a dynamic, engaging, and comfortable environment. Disruptive, distracting, or inconsiderate behavior will not be tolerated. It is so easy to disengage in an online-learning environment. Not only in this class, but in all classes and meetings that you will participate in virtually, do yourself a favor and close down other sites and your phone to help you stay focused on the tasks at hand.

We will not always synchronously meet, which makes it all the more important that you are “present” during synchronous meetings. If you know you will have to miss a class or are able to provide a documented reason for absences such as sickness, please contact us as soon as possible. Given the nature of our assignments, it is very difficult to receive a final grade of B or better if you do not regularly attend class or fully engage in planned asynchronous learning.

Everyone has the right to be addressed and referred to in accordance with their personal identity and gender preference. You are invited but not required to inform the instructors of the name that you wish to use for this class and the pronouns that you prefer. Given that identity is not static, we understand that these may change. You are welcome to express your preferences “in person” or via email.

## ***Grading Standards and Distribution***

1. To receive a passing grade, **you must complete every assignment for this course.** Furthermore, incompletes will be allowed only for **extraordinary** circumstances. If you feel that you require an incomplete for the class, speak with Caroline Koons. If we concur, we will construct a contract that includes a schedule of expectations that all parties must sign.

In this course, we will be using both points and letter grades. With respect to these grades, an A signifies achievement that is outstanding relative to the course requirements. B signifies achievement that meets the course requirements. C signifies achievement that is worthy of credit, although it fails to meet all of the course requirements. F signifies that the work was not worthy of credit or not completed. Please note that these are the criteria established by Penn State University. Final grades will be on based on these percentage guidelines:

A 93.5%-100% C+ 76.5%-79.4%

A- 89.5%-93.4% C 70%-76.4%

B+ 86.5%-89.4% D 60%-69.9%

B 83.5%-86.4% F 59%- 0

B- 79.5%-83.4%

The path to an A is fairly narrow. It requires that you miss only one activity and quiz ***and*** that you perform in the A range on the graded assignments. The path to a C+ or B- is fairly broad, because you can make up the difference by either performing very well on the graded assignments or completing all of the quizzes and activities.

## ***Course Technology and Email***

1. Students should use Penn State’s CANVAS website as a resource. That page contains digital copies of the syllabus and course schedule, lecture slides, assignment descriptions, etc. Individuals grades and averages will be available from CANVAS, as well.

If you would like to communicate to the instructors through email, please do so. When you send the email, please type “[CAS 101]” in the subject line before your description. Using [CAS 101] helps us see and prioritize your email.

## ***Statement Regarding Accommodations***

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the campus disability liaison as soon as possible. For additional information, check the university web site: <http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods/> NOTE: Accommodations require documentation from the office of disability services.

If you are a Penn State athlete, please inform the instructors as soon as possible. You will be excused from class when your games/matches require travel, but only if you inform the instructors, in writing, before the date that you are absent. If you miss a class without advance notice, we may not count the absence as “excused.”

## ***Academic Honesty***

All Penn State policies regarding ethics and honorable behavior apply to this course (see links below for policy statements). Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution. All University policies regarding academic integrity apply to this course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. *Please see* [*http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/student-services/academic-integrity/liberal-arts-policies-and-procedures*](http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/student-services/academic-integrity/liberal-arts-policies-and-procedures) *for more detailed information. If you are worried about whether your paper constitutes plagiarism, please go to the following link:* [*http://tlt.its.psu.edu/plagiarism/tutorial*](http://tlt.its.psu.edu/plagiarism) *and read the examples and information carefully.*

***Course Development Acknowledgement***

This course, syllabi, and pedagogic materials have been extensively developed over many semesters by Dr. Kirt Wilson and Lori Bedell in the Department of Communication Arts & Sciences.

***Pet Policy***

If a pet, sibling, or offspring enters the camera frame during class, we will pause our discussion for an introduction to that pet and admiration by all. Dogs, cats, rabbits, hamsters, birds, snakes, iguanas, ferrets, etc. are all welcome.

***Topic and Assignments Schedule***

The schedule below is subject to change based on time constraints and class progress.  
The most up to date schedule and our reading assignments are on the CANVAS website.

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| **Date** | **Zoom or async** | **Topic** | **Assignments to be complete for class that day** |
| W 6/30 | zoom | Introduction to the course – **Synchronous Zoom – Full class** | Read syllabus policies and schedule thoroughly. |
|  |  | **Communication: A Field and Discipline** |  |
| Th 7/1 | zoom | **The Institution(s) of Higher Education** |  |
| F 7/2 | async | Modes of Inquiry in Communication Studies – Caroline Video – CANVAS  Communication as a Discipline – Caroline Video – CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”** | **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”**  **Also view:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSCSWVrcCtA>  **Reading:** PDF on Canvas - A First Look at Communication. Ch 1: Launching your study of Communication Theory, Ch 4: Mapping the Territory (Seven Traditions in the Field of Communication Theory) |
| M 7/5 |  | ***NO CLASS - Independence Day Holiday*** |  |
| T 7/6 | async | History of the Field, 1890s to WWII – Caroline video – CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”**  **Also view**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s16YLhKzfNI>  History of the Field, WWII to 1980s – Caroline video – CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”**  **Also view:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L90smU0SOcQ> | **Reading:** PDF on Canvas - J. M. O’Neill, “The National Association” Quarterly Journal of Speech, 1915 |
| W 7/7 | zoom | **Guest Speaker Dr. Michael Steudeman.** Why is Public Speaking so central to the field of Communication? | **Reading: TBD**  **QUIZ#1 RELEASED – Due Friday by 5pm**  **Activity: By 9am Monday, 2/8, respond to Canvas discussion question on scholarship and diversity. Richly engage with at least one other’s comments.** |
| Th 7/8 | async | Self and Identity – Caroline Video – CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”**  **View:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RWOpQXTltA> | **Readings:**  Self and Identity – **Pod Activity and CANVAS group submission by 5pm, Friday, 7/9.   Share findings and responses to questions below.**  **Activity:**  **Have each individual take two minutes to come up with as many characteristics, experiences, abilities as possible that are unique to just them.**  **Then, take 4 minutes to list as many characteristics, experiences, abilities, etc. that you all share.**  **As a team answer the following: -What was easy or difficult about this?**  **-What kinds of contexts explain differences?**  **-What explanations can you think of for what is shared?**  **-What do these say about the nature of identity?**  **-How do your characteristics influence how you communicate and how others communicate to you?  -Have a conversation about whether identities are given/inherited or constituted. Can you come to an agreement about your thinking on this idea? Please explain.** |
| F 7/9 | async | Communication and Meaning – Caroline Video - CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”**  **View:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JtJu9HdQVM> | **Quiz 1 Due.**  **Activity:**  **CANVAS POD ACTIVITY, DUE MONDAY, 7/12 BY 5pm.**  **As a pod, view Childish Gambino’s “This is America. Spend some time talking through both the Social Science and Humanities’ approaches to Meaning Making as they would relate to the video.**  **As a POD, discuss what each approach uncovers in your consideration of the video? In each case, try to recognize and challenge one another to consider how your own social position affects your viewing of the video and your ability to see various elements. Try to explain to one another why you see what you see.**  **As a POD, submit a 2-page (double-spaced) paper that describes your groups viewed and understood the video as informed by each approach (Social Science and Humanities)** |
| M 7/12 | zoom | How to read communication research;  **Reaction Paper Assignment Discussion and assignment of papers.** | **Reaction Paper #1 (the Social Scientific Approach) due 7/19 by 5pm** |
|  |  | **The Social Scientific Approach** |  |
| T 7/13 | async | Interpersonal Communication, Foundations – Ashley Peterson Video – CANVAS | **Readings:** PDF on Canvas: A First Look at Communication Theory. Ch 6: Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM) |
| W 7/14 | zoom | Interpersonal Communication, Relationships – Dr. Andy High, guest speaker | **Quiz 2 Released, due Friday by 5 pm**  **POD Activity: How does each stage of Knapp's model (e.g., initiating, experimenting, intensifying, etc.) play out among you and your peers as you initiate and terminate romantic relationships.**   * + **For example, in relation to the initiating stage, how do you reduce uncertainty about those with whom you're interested in pursuing a relationship? Do you look at their social media? How do you assess the potential for a relationship (i.e., if you have chemistry)?**   + **We want you to walk us through each stage of the staircase model.**   + **Feel free to discuss (or not discuss!) how COVID has or has not shaped this process.** * **Is there anything within the model that you would add, remove, or change?**   + **If so, what and why?**   + **For example, do people typically skip a step, are some steps out of order, should two steps be on the same level? Again, feel free to include (or not include!) COVID into these considerations.**   **If not, consider why it might be that these stages are consistent across generations. What does this tell us about the nature of interpersonal romantic relationships or interpersonal relationships in general?**  **You are responsible for: (1) providing a well-considered 150-200 word (approximately) response, (2) providing a thoughtful 75-100 word comment on a peer’s response, (3) ensuring the all questions in the prompt have been thoroughly addressed by your group as a whole (for example, each stage of the model has been discussed, even if you only mentioned two of the stages).**    **Due 5pm on Thursday, 7/15.**  **Consider how romantic relationships progress for college students today.** |
| Th 7/15 | async | Guest Speaker - Dr. Brian Manata, Organizational Communication | **Readings:** PDF on Canvas - A First Look at Communication Theory, Ch. 19 - Cultural Approach to Organizations, Ch 20 - Communicative Constitution of Organizations |
| F 7/16 | async | Emotion – Dr. Youllee Kim Video – CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”** | **Quiz 2 Due**  **Activity: Engage in pod activity and answer the following questions as a group by 5pm Monday, 7/19.**  **· Each individual will search for one health message about COVID-19. You can look up official websites of World Health Organization and Centers for Disease and Control, or search Public service announcements on YouTube. Take about 5 minutes to find one health message each.**  **· Share the message you found with a group.**  **· As a group, take 10 minutes to discuss (a) the factors that make the health messages effective, and (b) ways that can improve the message effectiveness (To answer this question, think about ways why people are not following the recommendations in the message).**  **· As a team answer the following:**  **1. What are some of the factors that a person who designs a health message needs to consider?**  **2. What are some of the qualities of effective health message?**  **3. During the discussion, if your group thought of creative ways to design a health message that can motivate people to engage in preventive behaviors against COVID-19, please share them!** |

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| M 7/19 | zoom | **Synchronous Zoom – Full class**  Political Communication – Deliberation – Dr. John Gastil, guest speaker | **First Reaction Paper (Social Scientific Approach) Due by 5pm**  **Read:** Gastil - Canvas |
| T 7/20 | zoom | Guest Speaker - Dr. Denise Solomon, conflict and relational turbulence. |  |
| W 7/21 | async | Recorded Video on Persuasion – Dr. Jim Dillard, guest speaker  **Quiz 3 Released - Due Friday by 5pm** | **Read:** “Is Persuasion Dead?”; “The Art of Political Persuasion” – CANVAS |
| Th 7/22 | zoom | **Optional Exam Review**  **MIDTERM EXAM RELEASED – DUE Monday 7/26 by 5pm** |  |
| F 7/23 | zoom | Conflict and Argument – Caroline Video – CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”** | **Quiz 3 Due**  **By 5pm Monday, 7/26 respond to Canvas discussion question on Political Communication** |
|  |  | **The Humanistic Approach** |  |
| M 7/26 | async | Rhetorical Studies – Caroline – Video - CANVAS  Rhetorical Criticism and Theory– Caroline – Video – CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”** | Midterm due by 5pm  **Readings:** PDF on Canvas - Introduction from James Jasinski, Sourcebook on Rhetoric. |
| T 7/27 | async | Rhetoric and Demagoguery – Caroline – Video – CANVAS  **Listen:** <https://www.democracyworkspodcast.com/demagoguery/>  **Optional Reading:** “Rethinking Rhetorical Education in Times of Demagoguery: - CANVAS | **Readings:** PDF on Canvas - Introduction to Rhetoric and Demagoguery by Patricia Roberts-Miller |
| W 7/28 | zoom | Discuss Reaction Paper #2 Humanistic Approach  **Quiz 4 Released - Due Friday 7/30 by 5pm** |  |
| T 7/29 | zoom | **Synchronous Zoom – Full class**  Political Rhetoric – National Politics – Dr. Mary Stuckey, guest speaker | Pod Activity TBD |
| F 7/30 | async | ***No*** ***synchronous class; video***  Critical Cultural Studies  Guest Lecture - Derek Lewis | **Quiz 4 due** |
| M 8/2 | async | Mass Media – Radio, TV, and Film – Caroline – Video – CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”** | **Reading:** PDF on Canvas. Ch 1: The Rhetorical Invention of “Mass Communication” in Refiguring Mass Communication: A History by Peter Simonson |
| T 8/3 | Zoom | **Guest Speaker** - Dr. Rosa Eberly - Digital Archives and Mediated Voices. |  |
| W 8/4 | async | Digital Media and Technology – Caroline – Video – CANVAS  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”**  **Quiz 5 Released - Due Friday 8/5 by 5pm** | **Reading TBD** |
| Th 8/5 | async | ***No Synchronous Zoom* – Recorded video on Canvas**  Popular Culture and Communication –Dr. Lauren Camacci  **Review associated “Questions for consideration/discussion.”** | **Activity: Pod Activity TBD on Popular Culture Due by Friday, 8/6 at 5pm on CANVAS** |
| F 8/6 | zoom | Argumentation lecture -- Christopher Jackson | **Quiz 5 due.**  **Reading TBD** |
| M 8/9 | zoom | Communication Ethics - Dr. Steve Browne | **Reaction Paper #2 Due by 5pm** |
| T 8/10 | zoom | **Last Day of Class and Study Session for Final**  **FINAL EXAM RELEASED AT 2 PM – DUE FRIDAY 8/13 BY 5PM** | **Final exam due Friday 8/13** |
| W 8/11 | zoom | **Open Office Hours** |  |
| F 8/13 |  | **Final Exam Due** | **Final Exam Due by 5pm** |