

COMM 175, Sec. 205: Introduction to Communication
Instructor: Mark A. Pollock, Ph.D.

TTH 2:30-3:45
SOC 010

This course introduces you to the study of communication as both a practical experience and an academic discipline. Students will examine a number of communication issues and theories that seek to explain and predict the ways in which human construct, adapt, consume, and resist various communication strategies. We will identify basic elements of the communication process, including the nature and function of language and other forms of symbolic interaction. Moreover, we will consider the impact of communication on our perceptions of reality, values, identity and relationships.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify specific elements of the communication process and assess their impact on particular communication events
- Critically discuss the influence of and limits on linguistic choices
- Analyze ways in which communication situations are shaped by power, reproduce power, resist power and/or produce power
- Analyze ways in which communication patterns and choices shape individual and group identity
- Analyze ways in which communication patterns and choices shape our understanding of reality
- Identify different standards of communication effectiveness and argue for the relevance of particular standards in analyzing specific communications
- Readings will be available via Sakai

Assessments

Exercises (15%): Exercises from the book must be submitted at the start of the class meeting during which we begin discussion of the relevant reading.

Three exams (20% each)

Final paper (25%): December 16 at 4:15 pm. Students will write a 7-10 page paper in which they apply course concepts to an audiovisual text. Further instructions will be provided.

Rules

Academic integrity: Students are required to read the SOC Statement on Academic Integrity, found [here](#). Violations of the statement will result in failure of the course and will be reported to your academic dean.

Grade scale

100-94 (A), 93-90 (A-), 89-87 (B+), 86-84 (B), 83-80 (B-), 79-77 (C+), 76-74 (C), 73-70 (C-), 69-67 (D+), 66-60 (D), 59-0 (F)

Late assignments and makeup work

Please check Sakai ahead of time for all readings and other assignments. It is your responsibility to check Sakai for course updates and assignments. Ordinarily, no “make-ups” will be given without a University or medical excuse. Exercises will not be accepted late.

Attendance and Class Participation

Regular attendance is expected. Occasionally, sickness, family emergencies, or a job interview may cause you to miss a class. Alert me ahead of time if you are able. You are responsible for all notes and films on days that you are absent. Please identify a classmate from whom you can get notes on the days you miss.

Class participation is not simply “showing up.” It’s also your active engagement in class discussions and/or raising questions about readings or lecture topics, as well as timely completion of short assignments and/or oral reports. The expectation is you’ll come to class having closely read this material, and ready to raise or respond to questions from the instructor or others about readings.

What questions arise for you from the readings or lectures? You can contribute to the class by commenting or taking a position on a lecture, or on readings you consider controversial or simply wrong!

IMPORTANT NOTE: After two unexcused absences, one point will be deducted from your final course average for each absence.

Office hours

By appointment, in person or via email or phone. My office is 907 LT downtown; I am near LSC MWF this semester, so we will meet near campus on those days. If you have questions or concerns, or if you want to discuss topics from the class, please contact me: mpolloc@luc.edu. (I have multiple accounts, so it’s possible that you may also receive a reply from me at mpolloc@rcn.com or isadreamalie@gmail.com.) If you are having difficulty with lectures or readings, it is best to discuss this with me early in the semester.

Disability Statement

Any student with a learning disability who needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student’s needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student’s responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

Provisional schedule

Week 1 (8/29) Course introduction; Read Pollock, pp. 1-3; complete Exercises 1-3

Week 2 (9/5) Read Pollock, pp. 4-9; complete Exercise 4; Watch “Darmok” episode; take notes for Exercise 5

Week 3 (9/12) Discuss Exercise 5; intro Theories of Language; Read Pollock, pp. 20-29; complete Exercise 6

Week 4 (9/19) Read Pollock, pp. 29-40; complete Exercise 7; no class 9/21 -- Rosh Hashanah

Week 5 (9/26) Read Pollock, pp. 49-62; complete Exercises 8 & 9; Review first two units

Week 6 (10/3) First exam (10/3); review exam; intro Communication & Reality; Read Pollock, pp. 69-74; complete Exercises 10 & 11

Week 7 (10/10) No class T; Read Pollock, pp. 75-87; complete Exercises 12 & 13

Week 8 (10/17) Read Pollock, pp. 87-96; complete Exercise 14; Read Pollock, pp. 97-108; complete Exercise 15

Week 9 (10/24) Review Communication & Reality; Second exam (10/26)

Week 10 (10/31) Review second exam; intro Communication & Identity; Read Pollock, pp.120-139; complete Exercise 16

Week 11 (11/7) Read Pollock, pp. 139-159; complete Exercise 17; Read Pollock, pp. 160-173; complete Exercise 18

Week 12 (11/14) Read Pollock, pp. 200- 225; complete Exercise 20; Review Communication & Identity; Screen film

Week 13 (11/21) Screen film; Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 (11/28) Third exam; Review exam

Week 15 (12/5) Prep for final paper