Texas A&M University

Core Curriculum

Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Social and Behavioral Sciences. Courses in this category focus on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human. Courses involve the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

The proposed course must contain all elements of the Foundational Component Area. How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

COMM 320—Organizational Communication is designed to give students an overview of organizational communication theory and application from a social science perspective. Students will develop an historical as well as a contemporary understanding of organizations and communication, exploring theoretical approaches and examining particular processes that affect the individual in the workplace. Additionally, organizations are not considered to be stand-alone, neutral spaces and institutions but are rather complexly constructed sites of communication and human interaction. This means that the course not only talks about what happens in an organization, but we will also examine assumptions people have of work and organizations in society. An important component of learning about work and the workplace involves observing and analyzing organizations. As such, this course integrates a practical component where students will apply relevant concepts to organizations via case studies and observations to achieve a working knowledge of the science that describes the human endeavor of organizing from a communication perspective.

Core Objectives

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

The proposed course is required to contain each element of the Core Objective.

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

A critical key to the study of organizational communication is the ability to list, categorize and then synthesize the range of communication phenomena in contemporary organizations. Inquiry across texts and descriptive schema require students to analyze and evaluate competing organizing models. Creative thinking and innovation come into play as students synthesize the research on these phenomena and then construct a useful representation for themselves and their teams of a multi-variant, interactive model. Examples of communication phenomenon in organizations include organizations from the inside, organizations and society, organizing, stakeholders, transfer of meaning from unit to unit, and so forth. These schema must account for diverse and wide-ranging phenomena such as business presentations, workplace violence, what organizations communicate to society and the relative worth communicated to a worker in an organization by management, to name a few. Case studies are employed as context for application of the critical analysis. The mastery of synthesis of an organizational scheme for communication phenomena in the field of organizational...
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Communication is assessed by student performance in pod activities, a writing assignment and response to standard examination items.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

The study of organizational communication involves the process of transfer of meaning by one organizational stakeholder to another organizational stakeholder or group of stakeholders through verbal, nonverbal, and mediated messages. (See, for example, Deetz.) Therefore, students study and are engaged in the practice of message creation in writing, in the spoken word and through visual/mediated means within pods and across pods. In this course, students study this process and engage in this process within organizational pods. The classroom mimics an organization with units (pods) and a head (professor.) Students describe organizational communication theory and the field of organizational communication. Assessment of communication in an organizational setting is assessed by student performance in visual products from pod activities, a writing assignment, oral explanations and response to standard examination items.

Empirical and Quantitative Skills (to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions):

Empirical skills are employed to manipulate and analyze observable facts in organizations from an organizational communication perspective. Students analyze and critique organizational communication employing the tools and methods of collected data introduced in the course. These methods may include experiments, surveys and content analysis. Data is collected through direct observation and through analysis of video interactions, published documents and participant observer accounts. Students draw informed conclusions about the nature of organizational communication based on analysis and synthesis of the data collected. The ability to employ empirical methods to the study of organizational communication is assessed through student response to pod activities, a writing assignment and response to standard examination items.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

Key in the accurate descriptions, interpretation and evaluation of organizational communication is the synthesis of knowledge of intercultural norms, including but not limited to genderlects, as well as generational, ethnic, contextual, national and societal considerations. These cultures include, but are not limited to, geographic constructs. In order to use the social science involved in organizational communication, each of these factors must be extrapolated across the wide array of organizational communication phenomena. Organizational theory is applied to the 'real world' of organizing. Communities at every level of analysis and across geopolitical designators are included in this analysis. Bolstered with this knowledge and skill, communicators will be prepared to engage in communities both similar to and diverse from their own. The ability to exhibit social responsibility in organizational communication is assessed through student response to pod activities, a writing assignment and response to standard examination items.
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Please be aware that instructors should be prepared to submit samples/examples of student work as part of the future course recertification process.