

JOMC 705.001 – Theories of Mass Communication
Course Syllabus
Fall 2015

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Class Hours: 11:00am-12:15pm TR

Classroom: 340A

Overview and Objectives

JOMC 705 is an introduction to mass communication theories and conceptual frameworks. The course opens with a brief discussion of theory building, provides an overview of the history of mass communication theory, and then surveys some of the major social science theories and models used in the field. We'll end the course with visits from JOMC faculty who will explain how they incorporate theory into their research activities. This class should mesh with what you are learning in JOMC 701 so that you can understand how theory and research methods work together. This class is designed to lay the foundation for taking topic-specific seminars and for producing a theoretically grounded thesis or dissertation in mass communication.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Articulate the components of social science theory and the steps in theory building;
- Trace the historical development of mass communication theory;
- Critique the major theories that have guided mass communication research; and
- Develop a theoretically-based argument in relation to a specific research question.

With the exception of the first day of class, you are expected to do all of the assigned readings ahead of time to be able to participate in class. You are not expected to fully understand every word that you read prior to class, but if you do not do the readings beforehand, you will not be prepared to ask questions that might help you understand them, nor will you benefit from classmates' questions.

Missing class is strongly discouraged. You will be responsible for getting notes and other materials if you miss class.

Final Paper:

The final paper in this course is a full write-up of a pilot study that supports the research proposal submitted in the first year research methods course that complements this theory course.

Unless you choose to do a law paper (this cannot be the same law paper as is completed in the core law course), you are required to follow the formatting and citation style of the APA 6th Edition manual. There are many online reference websites that allow you to review APA format without needing to purchase the manual. The manual is also available in the libraries.

Based on the research tradition you choose, your paper will include some version of the following sections (Length expectation: 17 to 25 pages of text proper, excluding appendices):

- Introduction (approx. 1-2 pages in length)
- Literature Review / argumentation (approx. 5-8 pages in length)
- Research Questions or Hypotheses (if appropriate, and if not interspersed within the previous section)
- (aim for 7 to 10 pages before the method section)
- Method (approx. 3 to 7 pages, length is very dependent on the norms of the chosen research tradition)
- Results (approx. 4 to 7 pages, length also dependent on the norms of the chosen tradition)
- Discussion (approx. 2 to 4 pages)
- References (first item of the appendix)
- Figures (if appropriate—put in appendix; do not intersperse within previous sections)
- Tables (if appropriate—put in appendix; do not intersperse within previous sections)

The literature review written for the theory course is expected to be the same text used in the methods course. The method section written for the theory course should describe a smaller version of the method proposed in the final research proposal turned in to the method course. In fact, based on what you learn from pilot-testing your proposal in the theory course, you might submit a more refined, revised, and thorough method section for your final paper in the method course.

To this end, it is highly advised that you take advantage of class projects/exercises in the methods course to gather the data you will analyze and report in your theory course.

Possibilities for gathering data include:

- In-class survey, intercept survey outside the dining hall, or survey built in Qualtrics and sent through the UNC mass e-mail system
- Secondary data analysis of publicly available data set (e.g., Pew Internet Research)
- Small treatment/control experiment using 24 student volunteers
- Small content analysis of 2 hours' worth of video or audio media, or 20 news articles, or other
- In-depth interviews with 2 or 3 people, each lasting no more than 30 minutes
- One focus group lasting no more than 1 hour
- One site observation of an event or location

This paper, depending on the extent of data collection (please keep time management in mind), might constitute a viable conference submittal or publication-worthy paper. However, it is the assumption that more data will need to be collected in the spring in order to make the paper viable for submission.

Evaluation of Final Paper:

This final paper will not be graded based on the extent of data collection. Rather, the paper will be evaluated based on:

- Clarity of writing,
- Grammar,
- Logic of argument,
- Strength of argument (i.e., there needs to be an argument rather than a mere listing and description of studies in paragraph form),
- Relevance of reviewed literature to the research question(s) and/or hypothesis(es),
- Ability of proposed method to address the research question(s) and/or test the hypothesis(es),
- Correspondence between drawn conclusions and actual findings,
- Relevance of discussion to the literature reviewed.

Of these, the most important criteria involve the structure and thoroughness of the argument.

Typically, your literature review will present your argumentation. Specific elements include:

- A comprehensive and critical review of relevant academic literature on a mass communication topic and specific research question,
- Definitions of key terms and concepts,
- A statement of theoretical linkages among concepts, preferably presented as a model and incorporating, applying or modifying an existing relevant theory(ies),
- A tentative set of hypotheses or suggestions for research that follow from the conceptual.

We will work through each of the pieces during the semester, and then you will put it all together in a coherent package in the end. You will get feedback and receive preliminary grades (for markers only to be aware of what needs improvement) for the following:

- Outline of Literature Review (argumentation and research questions/hypotheses)
- Draft 1 of Literature Review (argumentation and research questions/hypotheses)
- Draft 1 of Introduction and Method (include Literature Review for context)
- (Draft 2 of Literature Review will be reviewed by your peers in the methods course)
- Draft of Results and Discussion (include intro, lit review, and method as well)

Then you will turn in the final paper for your course grade.

These are the due dates for the above sections of the final paper (all due at beginning of class period):

- Outline due Sept. 22
- Draft 1 Lit due Oct. 13
- Draft Intro/Method due Oct. 27
- Draft Intro/Lit/Method/Results/Disc due Nov. 24
- Final paper due Dec. 7 by midnight

Again, your papers will be graded for both content and form. Again, please remember that strong literature reviews tend to focus on outlining an argument, concentrating on what is known rather than what scholars did what and when. In other words, challenge yourself to avoid starting sentences with “So-and-so (date) did such-and-such and found...”. Instead, think about what the important lessons of the previous work are, and lead your sentences with concepts and findings rather than names and dates.

Overall Course Grade:

Your course final grade is heavily based on your final paper, but part of the grade is also based on your class attendance and participation. You will receive notification halfway through the semester if there is any indication that you will receive less than a “P” (see below) for class attendance and participation. However, you are encouraged to ask in private about your status in class attendance/participation at any time, and especially before the last month of the semester.

90% of your final course grade is based on the grade assigned to your final paper.

10% of your final course grade is based on the grade assigned to your class attendance and participation.

Grading scale:

- H – Student reads and critically engages with all of the assigned material. Participation in discussion and written assignments exhibits the ability not only to apply the material, but also to extrapolate ideas, expand into new areas, and contribute to the body of scholarship in the area. Reserved for truly extraordinary work.
- P – Student usually reads and engages critically with the assigned material. Able to apply material and extrapolate ideas. Consistently good work done on time.
- L – Student reads and engages critically with little of the assigned material. Able to apply the material and extrapolate ideas in only some instances.
- F – Student occasionally misses class, rarely reads the material, fails to critically engage with it, and is unable or unwilling to apply the material.

Late papers will not be accepted.

Tentative Course Schedule

	Topic	Readings
Aug 18	Approaching Theory (and Annotated Bibliographies vs Literature Reviews)	(none – there is an in-class writing assignment today)
Aug 20	Introduction to Communication Theory	Kuhn, T. S. (1962). <i>The structure of scientific revolutions</i> . (173 pages – read throughout the semester, because we'll talk about this toward the end of the semester) Craig, R. T. (1999). <i>Communication theory as a field</i> . (38 pages) Shannon, C. E. (1948, July). <i>A mathematical theory of communication</i> . (Read pp. 1 and 2 only) Baran, S. J., & Davis, D. K. (2012). <i>Mass communication theory: Foundations, ferment, and future</i> . (Read Ch. 1, pp. 5-20, 15 pages)
Aug 25	History of Mass Communication Theory	Baran, S. J., & Davis, D. K. (2012). <i>Mass communication theory: Foundations, ferment, and future</i> . (Read Ch. 2 pp. 22-41, Ch. 4 pp. 73-95, Ch. 6 pp. 135-173, and Ch. 8, 209-215, total of 85 pages)
Aug 27	Building Theory and Concept Explication (be thinking about your research topic)	Shoemaker, P.J., Tankard, J.W., & Lasorsa, D.L. (2004). Theoretical Concepts. In <i>How to Build Social Science Theories</i> (pp. 15-35). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Chaffee, S. H. (1991). <i>Communication concepts I: Explication</i> . (73 pages) Kiouisis, S. (2002). Interactivity: a concept explication. (25 pages) Sundar, S. S., Kalyanaraman, S., & Brown, J. (2003). Explicating website interactivity: Impression-formation effects in political campaign sites. (Read pp. 30-38, 7 ½ pages)

Sept 1	Media Effects, Agenda-Setting, Priming	Media Effects OBO Agenda Setting OBO Priming OBO
	(consult about your research topic ideas)	<p>McCombs, M., & Shaw, D. (1972). The agenda-setting function of mass media. (11 pages)</p> <p>Collins, A. M., & Loftus, E. F. (1975). A spreading-activation theory of semantic processing. (21 pages)</p> <p>Dillman Carpentier, F. R. (2014). Agenda setting and priming effects based on information presentation: Revisiting accessibility as a mechanism... (21 pages)</p>
Sept 3	Public Opinion, News Framing	Public Opinion OBO News Framing OBO
		<p>Entman, R. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. (8 pages)</p> <p>Scheufele, D. A. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. (16 pages)</p>
Sept 8	Strategic Communication, Advertising, Elaboration Likelihood Model, Heuristic-Systematic Model	Strategic Communication OBO Advertising OBO Elaboration Likelihood Model OBO
	(begin researching your topic)	<p>Cacioppo, J. T., Petty, R. E., Kao, C., & Rodriguez, R. (1986). Central and peripheral routes to persuasion: An individual difference perspective. (12 pages)</p> <p>Griffin, R. J., Neuwirth, K., Giese, J., & Dunwoody, S. (2002). Linking the Heuristic-Systematic Model and depth of processing. (27 pages)</p>
Sept 10	Reasoned Action, Construal-Level Theory	Reasoned Action OBO
		<p>Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. (32 pages)</p> <p>Trope, Y., & Liberman, N. (2010). Construal-Level Theory of Psychological Distance. (23 pages)</p> <p>Dhar, R., & Kim, E. Y. (2007). Seeing the forest or the trees: Implications of construal level theory for consumer choice. (4 pages)</p>

Sept 15	Public Relations, Co-Orientation Theory, Communication Campaigns, Crisis Communication	Public Relations OBO Communication Campaigns OBO Crisis Communication OBO
		Newcomb, T. M. (1953). An approach to the study of communicative acts. (11 pages)
Sept 17	Risk Communication, Inoculation, Third-Person Effect, Social Comparison (work on outlining argument)	Risk Communication OBO Third Person Effect OBO
		Banas, J. A., & Rains, S. A. (2010). A meta-analysis of research on inoculation theory. (30 pages)
		Davison, W. (1983). The Third-Person Effect in Communication. (14 pages)
		Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. (23 pages)
Sept 22	Social Cognition, Narrative Persuasion DUE: Outline of argumentation in literature review	Social Cognition OBO Narrative Persuasion OBO
		Bandura, A. A., Ross, D., & Ross, S. A. (1961). Transmission of aggression through imitation of aggressive models. (7 pages)
		Green, M. C., & Brock, T. C. (2000). The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives.
Sept 24	Entertainment, Cultivation, Perceived Realism	Entertainment OBO Cultivation OBO Perceived Realism OBO
		Gerbner, G. (1969). Toward "Cultural Indicators": The analysis of mass mediated public message systems. (12 pages)
		Shrum, L. J. (1996). Psychological processes underlying cultivation effects: Further tests of construct accessibility. (22 pages)
		Vorderer, P., Klimmt, C., & Ritterfeld, U. (2004). Enjoyment: At the heart of media entertainment. (20 pages)

Sept 29	Uses-and-Gratifications, Selective Exposure, Mood Management Theory (begin turning outline into draft of lit review)	Uses and Gratifications OBO Selective Exposure OBO Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1973). Uses and gratifications research. (14 pages) Zillmann, D. (1988). Mood management through communication choices. (13 pages)
Oct 1	Cognitive Dissonance, Balance Theory	Cognitive Dissonance OBO Festinger, L., & Carlsmith, J. M. (1959). Cognitive consequences of forced compliance. (7 pages) Zajonc, R. B. (1960). The concepts of balance, congrui- ty, and dissonance. (16 pages)
Oct 6	Stereotypes, Intergroup Communication, Social Identity Theory	Stereotypes OBO Intergroup Communication OBO Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour. (17 pages)
Oct 8	Information Processing, Computer-Mediated Communication, Technology Acceptance Model	Information Processing OBO Computer Mediated Communication OBO Lang, A. (2007). The limited capacity model of mediated message processing. (24 pages) Venkatesh, V., & Davis, F. D. (2000). A theoretical extension of the technology acceptance model: Four longitudinal field studies.
Oct 13	Communication Networks, Social Media, Diffusion of Innovations, Mobile Communication DUE: Draft 1 Literature Review	Communication Networks OBO Social Media OBO Mobile Communication OBO Rogers, E. M., Singhal, A., & Quinlan, M. M. (2009). Diffusion of innovations. (19 pages)

(Fall Break begins Oct 14 5pm and ends Oct 19 8am)

Oct 20	Intercultural Communication, Codes and Cultural Discourse (work on introduction and method sections)	Intercultural Communication OBO Codes and Cultural Discourse OBO Carbaugh, D. (2007). Cultural Discourse Analysis: Communication Practices and Intercultural Encounters. (15 pages) Airhihenbuwa, C. O, & Obregon, R. (2000). A critical assessment of theories/models used in health communication for HIV/AIDS. (10 pages) Schudson, M. (1989). How culture works: Perspectives from media studies on the efficacy of symbols. (27 pages)
Oct 22	Interpretation / Reception / Sense-making, Visual Communication	Interpretation Reception Sensemaking OBO Visual Communication OBO Hall, S. (1993). Encoding, decoding. (13 pages) Barnhurst, K. G., Vari, M., & Rodríguez, F. (2004). Mapping Visual Studies in Communication. (28 pages)
Oct 27	Media Sociology, Journalism, Gatekeeping DUE: Draft of Introduction and Method (include Literature Review, as well, for context)	Media Sociology OBO Journalism OBO Gatekeeping OBO Tuchman, G. (1972). Objectivity as strategic ritual: An examination of newsmen's notions of objectivity. (19 pages) Shoemaker, P. J. & Vos, T. P. (2008). Media gatekeeping. (14 pages)
Oct 29	Public Sphere	Public Sphere OBO Habermas, J. The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (book), Introduction: Preliminary Demarcation of a Type of Bourgeois Public Sphere (13 pages) Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. (24 pages)

Nov 3	Media Ecology, Community Structure	Media Ecology OBO Community Structure OBO
	(work on collecting data)	Carey, J. W. (1989). <i>Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society</i> (book), Chapter 1: A Cultural Approach to Communication (18 pages)
		Donohue, G. A., Tichenor, P. J., & Olien, C. N. (1973). Mass media functions, knowledge and social control. (7 pages)
Nov 5	Media Dependency	Media Dependency OBO
		Ball-Rokeach, S. J., & DeFleur, M. L. (1976). A dependency model of mass-media effects. (17 pages)
		Ball-Rokeach, S. J. (1985). The origins of individual media-system dependency: A sociological framework. (24 pages)
Nov 10	Media Literacy	Media Literacy OBO
		Hobbs, R. (1998). The seven great debates in the media literacy movement. (16 pages)
Nov 12	Feminist Theory	Feminist Theory OBO
		Steeves, H. L. (1987). <i>Feminist Theories and Media Studies</i> .
		Cato, M., & Carpentier, F. D. (2010). Conceptualizations of female empowerment and enjoyment of sexualized characters in reality television. (18 pages) – for example of blending perspectives
Nov 17	Philosophy of Science and Paradigm Shifts	Kuhn, T. S. (1962). <i>The structure of scientific revolutions</i> . (173 pages – remember this one?)
	(should be analyzing data)	Popper, K. R. (1972). <i>Objective knowledge: An evolutionary approach</i> . (25 pages)
Nov 19	Revisiting Concept Explications	(in-class exercise/discussion – explicate “media”)

(also revisiting the Venn
Diagrams)

(also bring in your earlier Venn Diagram and 'elevator
speech' from the first day of class)

Nov 24 Reserved for faculty panel (none)
(proseminar visit)

DUE: Draft of
Results/Discussion (include
Introduction, Literature Review,
Method for context)

(Thanksgiving Break begins Nov 25 8am and ends Nov 30 8am)

Dec 1 Reserved for faculty panel (none)
(proseminar visit)

(Classes End Dec 2; Exam Period Ends Dec 11)

Dec 7 Final Paper due by midnight