

**Regent University**

***School of Communication and the Arts***

**Com 504 – Introduction to Communication**

**Summer 2008 (Online)**

**Instructor: Karen Legg**

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**Course Description:**

As you enter a new field of study, it is important to master a basic overview of the “scholarly discussion”, or what people in field have studied in the past and what they are currently looking into. This course is designed to be an overview of the field of communication. It will take you through many different exercises designed to give you a greater understanding and appreciation for the foundations of our field, the sub- disciplines of the field, communication research and writing, and how your Christian worldview fits into the picture.

**Required Texts:**

Marsden, George. *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Trenholm, Sarah. *Thinking Through Communication*. 5th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 2007.

**Incomplete Grades**

Students desiring an incomplete must submit their request to the course instructor (or Academic dean) **prior to the end of the term**. An incomplete grade will be given in a regular course only for legitimate deficiencies due to illness, emergencies, or extraordinary reasons acceptable to the professor and/or Academic dean including equipment breakdown or shortages, and not because of neglect on the student's part. Incomplete grades require the final approval of the school dean or his or her authorized representative. A regular grade will be given by the instructor if all requirements for the course are submitted by the end of the following academic term. The instructor will submit the new grade to the Registrar's Office no later than two weeks after the beginning of the subsequent term. If all work is not submitted by the end of the term following the granting of the incomplete, a grade of FX (NP for pass/fail courses) will be posted automatically unless a Request for Extension of Incomplete has been approved and submitted to the Registrar's Office. The FX shall be counted as an F in the computation of the GPA. Any student desiring reinstatement to the course after

an FX or NP has been posted must register for the course in a subsequent term and pay the full current tuition for the course.

Because this course is taught by a Ph.D. student, the same person may not be instructing the course from one semester to the next. This adds another level of difficulty for students wishing to obtain an incomplete.

## Academic Integrity

The Regent University community of teachers and scholars affirms that the biblical principles of truth and honesty are absolutely essential. Indeed, the Bible contains numerous admonitions against false witness, dishonesty and cheating. Upholding the standard of academic integrity with its reliance on honesty is a responsibility of both faculty and students. Conduct that violates academic integrity includes:

Dishonesty. This is a lack of integrity exhibited through lying, cheating, defrauding or deceiving. Examples of dishonesty include: copying from the examination paper of another, allowing one's own examination paper to be copied, reading without the instructor's consent a copy of the examination prior to the date it is given, giving or receiving unauthorized aid on a take-home examination; use of unauthorized aids; submitting the same work product in more than one course without the express permission of the instructor(s); or disclosing or accepting information if one takes a test at a different time than other students in the same course.

Plagiarism. This is stealing or using the ideas or writing of another as one's own. It involves failure to acknowledge material copied from others or failure to acknowledge one's indebtedness to another for the gist of important thoughts in a formal statement, written or oral. Plagiarism has been on the rise in recent years because of the emergence and expansion of the Internet, and serves as a strong threat to academic integrity. Instructors need resources to assist them in accurately detecting plagiarism and preventing plagiarism before it occurs, as well as safeguarding the academic integrity of the work of students who have properly researched and properly cited their sources. Hence, Regent University has currently subscribed to TurnItIn.com, an online collaborative community learning tool for faculty, which supports members of the Regent academic community in their quest to uphold academic integrity. For a full discussion of this program, please refer to the following website:

<http://www.regent.edu/it/helpdesk/document/turnitin/>. Student submissions may be submitted to the scrutiny of the TurnItIn software or other academic integrity software. Note that these submissions of assignments to TurnItIn or other software do not necessarily constitute an accusation or suspicion of plagiarism on the student's part.

Charges of violating academic integrity shall be handled according to established student discipline procedures published in the Catalog and the Student Handbook

## **Integration of Faith and Learning**

I believe that, as a Christian University, we have a unique opportunity and obligation to approach everything we do from the standpoint of our faith in Jesus Christ. Everything we do should be done for the honor and glory of God! We have been called to represent Christ to the world. A task this important cannot be taken lightly. In order to best represent and glorify Him in our academic pursuits, we must integrate our faith with our academic learning and research.

In order to help accomplish this goal, you will be reading George Marden's *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (1997). It is a powerful exposition of the ways in which integrating faith and scholarship is beneficial not only for growing in and witnessing our religious faith, but also for enriching the academy and the world of ideas. Faith-based (particularly evangelical Christian) perspectives can augment academic study not only by suggesting particular and understudied subjects and novel ways of studying them, but also by correcting for the ideological and methodological biases that exist in academic culture. So by working hard at cultivating our thinking and our scholarship from a distinctly Christian worldview, we should not only enrich our faith and allow us to present it more compellingly to others, but we should also enrich the world of ideas.

## **Module One: Foundation of Communication Studies**

The purpose of this module is to introduce you to the field of communication including definitions of communication, various rhetorical traditions and methods as well as to the concept of language.

### ***Topic One: Rhetorical Traditions***

- Identify key terms associated with classical rhetoric
- Identify key characteristics of each period of rhetoric
- Define rhetoric
- Define and discuss Aristotle's canons of rhetoric
- Discuss the two main approaches to studying communication

### ***Topic Two: Defining Communication***

- Identify the difference between a definition of discovery and a definition of construction
- Discuss the breadth of communication definitions
- Answer key questions about the nature of communication
- Determine your own definition of communication

- Identify three key perspectives of communication

### ***Topic Three: Models of Communication***

- Determine the differences between various types of communication models
- Determine which communication model best fits your definition of communication

### ***Topic Four: What is Meaning?***

- Define decoding and encoding
- Give examples of decoding and encoding in everyday discourse
- Define perception
- Explain why perception is an active rather than a passive process

### ***Topic Five: Verbal Language***

- Define language
- Discuss how language is symbolic
- Define the subsystems of language
- Discuss language and social identity
- Identify key language choices made in everyday discourse

### ***Topic Six: Nonverbal Language***

- Define nonverbal language
- Define the key characteristics of nonverbal communication
- Identify nonverbal codes used in everyday discourse

## **Module Two: Sub-disciplines of the Communication Field**

The purpose of this module is to introduce you to some of the major sub-disciplines of communication. While an exhaustive list of sub-disciplines is not presented, the topics offered in this module are quite representative of the major areas scholars are actively researching and writing about within the field. In addition, this module will introduce to the faculty of the College of Communication and the Arts.

### ***Topic One: Communication Studies***

- Describe key definitional elements of this area of study
- Identify key areas of research

### ***Topic Two: Rhetoric***

- Describe key definitional elements of this area of study
- Identify key areas of research

### ***Topic Three: Mass Media (Film and Television)***

- Describe key definitional elements of this area of study
- Identify key areas of research

### ***Topic Four: Journalism***

- Describe key definitional elements of this area of study
- Identify key areas of research

### ***Topic Five: Theater***

- Describe key definitional elements of this area of study
- Identify key areas of research

### ***Topic Six: Interpersonal Communication***

- Describe key definitional elements of this area of study
- Identify key areas of research

### ***Topic Seven: Group Communication***

- Describe key definitional elements of this area of study
- Identify key areas of research

### ***Topic Eight: Organizational Communication***

- Describe key definitional elements of this area of study
- Identify key areas of research

### ***Topic Nine: Intercultural Communication***

- Describe key definitional elements of this area of study
- Identify key areas of research

## **Module Three: Communication Research and Writing**

A competent communication scholar is able to research and write according to the accepted standards within the field. To this end, this module shall introduce you to the primary resources utilized by communication scholars as well as the standards used for writing about one's research.

### ***Topic One: Researching***

- List the characteristics of scholarly research
- Explain the five common tasks in communication inquiry
- Identify popular research methodologies
- Identify the role of theory in the process of researching

### ***Topic Two: Writing***

- List the characteristics of scholarly writing
- Utilize MLA and APA as editorial styles

## **Module Four: Worldview and Communication**

As a Christian institution, Regent University is committed to developing Christian leadership for the world. This module will introduce you to the concept of Christian scholarship and how you might integrate your worldview into your scholarship.

### ***Topic One: Defining a Worldview***

- Identify key characteristics of a worldview
- Describe how a worldview operates within an academic context

### ***Topic Two: Christian Scholarship***

- Discuss the role of Christianity in scholarship
- Identify your own personal contribution as a Christian scholar to your sub-discipline