

Course Syllabus

Introduction to Communication Studies

Media Production (Applied Bachelor)

1. Course Identity

Component	Description
Course Title	Introduction to Communication Studies
Course Level	Undergraduate / First-Year Course
Credit Load	2 Credits
Total Meetings	16 Sessions
Learning Mode	Lecture, discussion, workshop, case analysis, media observation, group project
Semester	1

2. Course Description

This course introduces students to the fundamental concepts, theories, processes, contexts, and contemporary issues in communication studies. Students will learn communication as a symbolic, relational, social, cultural, technological, and strategic process. The course covers interpersonal communication, group communication, organizational communication, intercultural communication, mass communication, digital communication, media literacy, misinformation, communication ethics, and introductory research approaches.

The course combines classical communication foundations with contemporary communication problems in digital society. Students will analyze real communication cases from everyday interaction, social media, journalism, organizational campaigns, public issues, and creative media industries. By the end of the course, students are expected to understand communication not merely as message transmission, but as a process of meaning-making, relationship-building, identity construction, social influence, and public negotiation.

3. Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to:

Code	Course Learning Outcome
CLO 1	Explain the basic concepts, elements, models, and functions of communication.
CLO 2	Differentiate major contexts of communication: intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, organizational, public, intercultural, mass, and digital communication.
CLO 3	Analyze communication phenomena using basic communication theories and concepts.
CLO 4	Identify verbal, nonverbal, visual, and digital codes in communication practices.
CLO 5	Evaluate the role of media, platforms, algorithms, and audiences in contemporary communication.
CLO 6	Apply media literacy and critical thinking to assess information credibility, misinformation, and persuasive messages.
CLO 7	Demonstrate ethical awareness in communication, including privacy, representation, credibility, and cultural sensitivity.
CLO 8	Produce a simple communication analysis report or campaign proposal based on a real communication issue.

4. Assessment Scheme

Assessment Component	Description	Weight
Attendance and Participation	Active participation in class discussion, peer review, and reflection activities	10%
Weekly Reflection Notes	Short individual reflections based on weekly topics and readings	15%
Communication Observation Assignment	Individual analysis of interpersonal, organizational, media, or digital communication case	15%
Midterm Exam / Concept Test	Written test covering basic concepts, models, theories, and contexts	20%
Group Case Presentation	Group analysis of a current communication issue using course concepts	15%
Final Project	Communication analysis report or introductory campaign proposal	25%
Total		100%

5. Weekly Course Plan — 16 Sessions

Session 1 — Introduction to Communication Studies

Component	Detail
Main Topic	What is communication? Why study communication?
Key Concepts	Communication as process, meaning-making, symbols, context, feedback, noise, shared understanding
Learning Outcomes	CLO 1, CLO 2
In-Class Activities	Course briefing; diagnostic discussion: “What counts as communication?”; students map their daily communication activities; mini lecture on the scope of communication studies; group discussion on communication failures in everyday life.
Student Output	One-page reflection: “My communication habits and problems.”
Reading Materials	Gnach et al. (2022), introductory section on digital communication and meaning-making; Jensen & Lai, <i>Media and Society: An Introduction</i> .
Assignment	Students observe one communication interaction in daily life and identify sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback, noise, and context.

Session 2 — Communication Models and the Communication Process

Component	Detail
Main Topic	From linear models to transactional communication
Key Concepts	Sender-receiver model, interactional model, transactional model, feedback, channel, noise, context, encoding, decoding
Learning Outcomes	CLO 1, CLO 3
In-Class Activities	Mini lecture on communication models; model comparison exercise; students redesign a failed communication situation using the transactional model; group presentation of model application.
Student Output	Communication model diagram based on a real case.

Component	Detail
Reading Materials	Current communication textbook chapter on communication models; Gnach et al. (2022) for digital communication and multimodal meaning-making.
Assignment	Create a diagram of one real communication problem and explain where the breakdown occurred.

Session 3 — Verbal Communication and Language

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Language, meaning, discourse, and interpretation
Key Concepts	Denotation, connotation, ambiguity, discourse, framing, context, symbolic interaction
Learning Outcomes	CLO 1, CLO 4
In-Class Activities	Word-association activity; analysis of headlines and captions; discussion on how word choice changes meaning; short workshop on framing public issues through language.
Student Output	Comparative analysis of two headlines or social media captions.
Reading Materials	Gnach et al. (2022), sections on digital language, multimodality, and media linguistics.
Assignment	Analyze how three different media captions frame the same issue differently.

Session 4 — Nonverbal and Visual Communication

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Body language, space, gesture, image, and visual meaning
Key Concepts	Kinesics, proxemics, facial expression, gesture, gaze, posture, visual signs, visual framing
Learning Outcomes	CLO 4, CLO 7
In-Class Activities	Silent communication exercise; photo analysis; short group task on interpreting body language in public communication; discussion on cultural differences in nonverbal interpretation.
Student Output	Visual communication analysis sheet.

Component	Detail
Reading Materials	Gnach et al. (2022), multimodality sections; selected reading on visual and digital communication.
Assignment	Analyze one poster, Instagram post, or campaign visual using verbal and nonverbal codes.

Session 5 — Interpersonal Communication

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Communication in relationships
Key Concepts	Self-disclosure, listening, empathy, relationship maintenance, interpersonal conflict, digital intimacy
Learning Outcomes	CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 7
In-Class Activities	Active listening practice; role-play on misunderstanding; discussion on interpersonal communication through WhatsApp, Instagram, and face-to-face settings; peer feedback.
Student Output	Interpersonal communication reflection.
Reading Materials	Recent article on social media and interpersonal communication; Yus (2022), <i>Smartphone Communication: Interactions in the App Ecosystem</i> .
Assignment	Observe one interpersonal conversation and identify listening behavior, feedback, emotional tone, and possible barriers.

Session 6 — Group Communication and Team Dynamics

Component	Detail
Main Topic	How groups communicate, decide, and solve problems
Key Concepts	Group roles, leadership, cohesion, conflict, decision-making, groupthink, collaboration
Learning Outcomes	CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 8
In-Class Activities	Team problem-solving simulation; group role mapping; discussion on leadership and conflict in student projects; peer evaluation practice.
Student Output	Group communication role map.

Component	Detail
Reading Materials	Recent communication studies reading on collaboration and group communication; selected chapter from current communication textbook.
Assignment	Students write a short analysis of their own role in group communication.

Session 7 — Organizational and Professional Communication

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Communication in institutions, workplaces, and professional settings
Key Concepts	Formal communication, informal communication, organizational culture, internal communication, professional ethics, workplace media
Learning Outcomes	CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 7
In-Class Activities	Case discussion on miscommunication in an organization; email and memo analysis; simulation of professional briefing; discussion on communication flow in campus organizations.
Student Output	Professional communication improvement plan.
Reading Materials	Recent organizational communication reading; article on social media and professional communication practices.
Assignment	Rewrite one poor professional message into a clearer and more ethical communication format.

Session 8 — Midterm Review and Midterm Exam

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Review of Sessions 1–7
Key Concepts	Communication process, models, verbal communication, nonverbal communication, interpersonal communication, group communication, organizational communication
Learning Outcomes	CLO 1, CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 4
In-Class Activities	Concept review game; Q&A; midterm written test; short reflective discussion after exam.

Component	Detail
Student Output	Midterm exam answer sheet.
Reading Materials	All readings from Sessions 1–7.
Assessment	Midterm Exam / Concept Test — 20%.

Session 9 — Intercultural Communication

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Communication across cultures
Key Concepts	Culture, identity, stereotype, prejudice, high-context and low-context communication, cultural sensitivity, intercultural competence
Learning Outcomes	CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 7
In-Class Activities	Cultural misunderstanding case analysis; students compare communication norms across different cultural settings; discussion on international students, tourism, global media, and workplace diversity.
Student Output	Intercultural communication case note.
Reading Materials	Recent intercultural communication and digital society reading; selected article on intercultural communication ethics in the digital age.
Assignment	Analyze one intercultural communication issue in education, tourism, media, or workplace communication.

Session 10 — Public Communication and Persuasion

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Speaking to publics and influencing audiences
Key Concepts	Public speaking, rhetoric, persuasion, ethos, pathos, logos, audience analysis, message design
Learning Outcomes	CLO 3, CLO 4, CLO 8
In-Class Activities	Short speech practice; analysis of public campaign messages; audience mapping exercise; peer feedback on clarity and persuasiveness.
Student Output	One-minute persuasive speech.

Component	Detail
Reading Materials	Recent public communication reading; selected chapter on persuasion and audience analysis.
Assignment	Prepare a short persuasive message for a public issue relevant to students.

Session 11 — Mass Communication and Media Industries

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Media institutions, audiences, and society
Key Concepts	Mass media, media industry, audience, gatekeeping, agenda-setting, representation, media ownership
Learning Outcomes	CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 5
In-Class Activities	Mapping media platforms and ownership; news comparison exercise; group discussion on how media select and frame issues; short lecture on traditional and digital media industries.
Student Output	Media issue mapping.
Reading Materials	Cubbage, Coleman, and Jenkins, <i>Media, Industries, Society</i> ; Jensen & Lai, <i>Media and Society: An Introduction</i> .
Assignment	Compare how two media outlets report the same public issue.

Session 12 — Digital Communication and Platform Society

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Communication through digital platforms
Key Concepts	Social media, platforms, algorithms, digital identity, networked publics, participation, engagement, virality
Learning Outcomes	CLO 5, CLO 6, CLO 7
In-Class Activities	Social media timeline analysis; discussion on algorithmic visibility; students examine why some content becomes viral; platform affordance mapping.
Student Output	Platform affordance analysis.

Component	Detail
Reading Materials	Yus (2022), <i>Smartphone Communication</i> ; Gnach et al. (2022), digital communication and multimodality; Wei et al. (2022) on communication in immersive social VR.
Assignment	Analyze one digital platform and explain how its features shape communication behavior.

Session 13 — Media Literacy, Information Literacy, and Misinformation

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Evaluating information credibility in digital society
Key Concepts	Media literacy, information literacy, misinformation, disinformation, fake news, verification, source credibility, fact-checking
Learning Outcomes	CLO 5, CLO 6, CLO 7
In-Class Activities	Fake news detection workshop; source verification exercise; students apply SIFT-style verification: stop, investigate, find better coverage, trace claims; discussion on misinformation during crisis and elections.
Student Output	Information credibility checklist.
Reading Materials	Mathew et al. (2022), review of social media misinformation; Sharevski et al. (2022), folk models of misinformation; UNESCO MIL online curriculum resource.
Assignment	Select one viral claim and conduct a basic credibility audit.

Session 14 — Communication Ethics, Privacy, and AI-Mediated Communication

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Ethical communication in the age of platforms and AI
Key Concepts	Communication ethics, privacy, consent, digital footprints, AI-generated content, deepfakes, bias, accountability, representation
Learning Outcomes	CLO 6, CLO 7

Component	Detail
In-Class Activities	Debate on AI-generated content; privacy scenario analysis; discussion on responsible posting and reposting; ethical decision-making workshop.
Student Output	Ethical decision-making matrix.
Reading Materials	Rousi and Vakkuri (2023), ethics in digital communication; Saliu (2024), media literacy in the AI era; Shoaib et al. (2023), deepfakes and misinformation.
Assignment	Write a short ethical position paper on AI-generated communication content.

Session 15 — Basic Communication Research and Case Analysis

Component	Detail
Main Topic	How communication phenomena are studied
Key Concepts	Research problem, observation, interview, survey, content analysis, discourse analysis, audience analysis, qualitative and quantitative data
Learning Outcomes	CLO 3, CLO 8
In-Class Activities	Mini lecture on research approaches; students formulate a communication research question; simple content analysis practice using social media posts; group consultation for final project.
Student Output	Draft final project framework.
Reading Materials	Krippendorff, <i>Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology</i> ; recent digital communication research examples.
Assignment	Submit final project outline: issue, object, theory/concept, method, expected output.

Session 16 — Final Project Presentation and Course Reflection

Component	Detail
Main Topic	Applying communication concepts to real cases
Key Concepts	Communication analysis, media analysis, audience, message strategy, ethics, recommendation

Component	Detail
Learning Outcomes	CLO 1–CLO 8
In-Class Activities	Group final presentations; peer review; lecturer feedback; course reflection; discussion on how communication studies connects to media production, public relations, journalism, creative industry, digital platforms, and social change.
Student Output	Final presentation and final report.
Reading Materials	All course readings.
Assessment	Final Project — 25%.

6. Final Project Options

Students may choose **one** of the following final project formats:

Option	Description
Option A — Communication Case Analysis	Analyze a real communication problem using concepts from the course. Example: misinformation campaign, brand crisis, interpersonal conflict, student organization communication, public campaign failure.
Option B — Media Content Analysis	Analyze news, social media posts, campaign visuals, advertisements, or short videos using communication concepts.
Option C — Introductory Communication Campaign Proposal	Design a simple communication campaign for a public issue, campus issue, community issue, or creative media issue.
Option D — Digital Communication Audit	Evaluate how an organization, public figure, campus unit, or brand communicates through digital platforms.

Final Project Structure

1. Background of the communication issue
2. Object of analysis
3. Relevant communication concepts or theories
4. Data or material analyzed
5. Findings
6. Ethical considerations
7. Communication recommendation

8. References

7. Suggested Rubric for Final Project

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Problem Identification	Issue is clear, relevant, and well-contextualized	Issue is clear but context is limited	Issue is general	Issue is unclear
Use of Communication Concepts	Concepts are accurate and well-applied	Concepts are mostly accurate	Concepts are mentioned but weakly applied	Concepts are inaccurate
Analysis Quality	Deep, structured, evidence-based	Clear but not fully developed	Descriptive rather than analytical	Weak or unsupported
Ethical Awareness	Strong awareness of privacy, representation, credibility, and impact	Some ethical awareness	Limited ethical discussion	No ethical consideration
Recommendation	Practical and conceptually grounded	Relevant but general	Too broad	Not applicable
Presentation	Clear, concise, professional	Generally clear	Uneven structure	Unclear

8. Core Reading List — 2022 Onward

1. Gnach, A., Weber, W., Engebretsen, M., & Perrin, D. (2022). *Digital Communication and Media Linguistics*. Cambridge University Press. This is suitable for Sessions 3, 4, and 12 because it connects digital communication, multimodality, media linguistics, journalism, and social implications of language use.
2. Yus, F. (2022). *Smartphone Communication: Interactions in the App Ecosystem*. Routledge. This is useful for interpersonal and digital communication sessions because it focuses on smartphone-based interaction in app ecosystems.
3. Lull, J. (2022). *Evolutionary Communication: An Introduction*. Routledge. This can support the theoretical foundation of communication and mass communication because the Routledge catalog describes it as an accessible

core text for undergraduate and graduate mass communication, communication theory, and communication-and-society courses.

4. Jensen, K. B., & Lai, S. S. *Media and Society: An Introduction*. Routledge. This is appropriate for Sessions 11–12 because it frames media as a means of social connection in everyday life and society.
5. Cabbage, J., Coleman, R., & Jenkins, J. *Media, Industries, Society: Diverse Foundations in Mass Communication*. Routledge. This is useful for mass communication and media industry topics because it is positioned as an introductory textbook on media and mass communication industries.
6. Mathew, S. K., et al. (2022). “The disaster of misinformation: A review of research in social media misinformation.” This review is useful for Session 13 because it focuses on social media misinformation across sensitive domains including disaster and health communication.
7. Sharevski, F., Devine, A., Pieroni, E., & Jachim, P. (2022). “Folk Models of Misinformation on Social Media.” This study is relevant for media literacy because it examines how ordinary users conceptualize and respond to misinformation on social media.
8. Wei, X., Jin, X., & Fan, M. (2022). “Communication in Immersive Social Virtual Reality: A Systematic Review of 10 Years’ Studies.” This is useful for expanding digital communication discussion into immersive and virtual environments.
9. Rousi, R., & Vakkuri, V. (2023). “Introduction to ethics in the age of digital communication.” This is suitable for communication ethics because it discusses applied ethics in contemporary digital communication and professional practice.
10. Saliu, H. (2024). “Navigating media literacy in the AI era.” This supports Session 14 because it discusses how current media literacy concepts need to address AI-era issues and misinformation.
11. Shahbazi, M., et al. (2024). “Social media trust: Fighting misinformation in the time of crisis.” This supports crisis communication and misinformation discussion because it examines trust, shared situational awareness, and crisis response in social media contexts.
12. Zhang, Y., et al. (2023). “What Do We Mean When We Talk about Trust in Social Media? A Systematic Review.” This is relevant for discussions of credibility, trust, and platform communication.

9. Recommended Course Policies

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all sessions. Active participation is required because this course depends on discussion, observation, and communication practice.

Reading Preparation

Students must complete the assigned readings before class and prepare at least one question or comment for discussion.

Academic Integrity

Students must cite all sources used in assignments. AI tools may be used only for brainstorming, language support, or formatting, not for replacing original analysis. Any use of AI tools must be disclosed.

Ethical Communication

Students must avoid using private conversations, personal screenshots, or identifiable social media content without consent. Any case analysis must anonymize individuals unless the material is already public and ethically usable.

10. Weekly Assignment Summary

Week	Assignment
1	Daily communication observation
2	Communication model diagram
3	Headline or caption framing analysis
4	Visual communication analysis
5	Interpersonal communication observation
6	Group role reflection
7	Professional message revision
8	Midterm exam
9	Intercultural case analysis
10	One-minute persuasive message
11	Media issue comparison
12	Platform affordance analysis
13	Viral claim credibility audit
14	Ethical position paper on AI-generated communication
15	Final project outline
16	Final project presentation and report