

**COMM 656: Information Technology and Organizational Communication**

The Ohio State University  
School of Communication

**Instructor:**

Axel Westerwick, Ph.D.  
3045B Derby Hall  
Building 025  
(614) 247-2558  
[westerwick.1@osu.edu](mailto:westerwick.1@osu.edu)

**Teaching Assistant:**

Vincent Cicchirillo  
3043 Derby Hall  
Building 025

[cicchirillo.1@osu.edu](mailto:cicchirillo.1@osu.edu)

**Office hours:**

Tuesday  
12:00-1:00 p.m.

**Office hours:**

Monday & Wednesday  
1:00-2:00 p.m.

**Course Objectives:**

Communication plays a vital role in the success and failure of almost any organization. To support their communication processes and to increase their performances, organizations use various information technologies and technological networks.

Thus, the course will demonstrate the influence of these technologies on communication and knowledge networks, and how technology changes the daily work of organizations, teams, and individuals.

Students will learn about technologies that impact organizational communication patterns, new organizational forms, and new challenges for organizational members as users of information technologies in a global business environment.

**Class is:** Monday and Wednesday  
2:30 p.m. to 4:18 p.m.  
Room CL 0277

**Used Text:**

DeSanctis, G. & Fulk, J. (Eds.) (1999). Shaping organizational form: Communication, connection, and community. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.  
*(recommended)*

Additional text and journal articles may be announced during class.

**Class Web site via Carmen:**

<http://telr.osu.edu/carmen>

*Please be sure to check Carmen at least twice a week for news, changes,...*

**Special Accommodations**

Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking assistance in a timely manner. Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in Room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct**

It is imperative that all work you submit be your own. When you use someone else's ideas, you must give proper credit to the original author(s). Please adhere to the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the APA manual of style when citing others' work.

According to the Committee on Academic Misconduct "Academic misconduct is defined as any activity which tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution, or subvert the educational process,"

(<http://oaa.osu.edu/procedures/1.0.html>). Further, the term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed and is illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). It is the responsibility of the Committee of Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource\\_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp)).

## Exams

The information taught before an exam will be tested on this exam. It will be not tested on the following exams again (exams in this class are not cumulative).

Exams will be multiple-choice (please bring a #2 pencil on exam days), based on the material from the readings and class discussions. Make-up exams will only be offered for medical or other similar, legitimate reasons.

Failure to take any exam will result in a zero for the exam.

Late Arrival: I reserve the right to exclude students from the exam if they arrive late. Exclusion will result in a zero for the exam.

## In-Class Assignments (ICA)

On some days there will be unannounced In-Class Assignments (7 over the whole quarter) where you should take a few minutes to write on an assigned topic. ICAs have to be completed during class. They should help you to reflect specific topics of the actual lecture.

One of them provides you the opportunity of bonus points. Only 6 of the 7 ICAs are necessary to obtain the chance to score 100% in this class.

*(Example: You have completed all 7 ICAs successfully = 12 regular points + 2 bonus points; you have completed 6 ICAs successfully = 12 regular points and 0 bonus points.)*

## Team Assignment

There will be a team assignment in the second half of the quarter. This assignment gives you the opportunity to apply your new knowledge about organizational form and communication technology based on the lectures of the class. This assignment has to be completed in small groups of 2-3 students.

All members of a team will get the same score, so that it is a question of fairness and honesty that everyone contributes actively to create an excellent paper. All papers have to be submitted within the given deadline. Late submissions or papers from individuals or more than 3 students won't be accepted.

All teams will have the opportunity to prepare PowerPoint presentations and present their papers in class at the end of the quarter to receive max. 5 bonus points.

Further details about the team assignment and paper presentations will be announced in class after the first exam.

**Evaluation**

In-Class Assignments	12%
Team assignment	20%
Exams (weighted equally)	68%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

**Class Schedule and Reading List**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
M	03/30/09	Introduction and Overview	
W	04/01/09	Communication Technology and Organizational Form	Chapter 1, DeSanctis/Fulk
M	04/06/09	In Search of a New Organizational Model	Chapter 2, DeSanctis/Fulk
W	04/08/09	Communication Technology for Global Network Organizations	Chapter 3, DeSanctis/Fulk
M	04/13/09	Network and Internet Technology	
W	04/15/09	The Role of Information Technology in the Transformation of Work	Chapter 4, DeSanctis/Fulk
M	04/20/09	Shaping Electronic Communication	Chapter 5, DeSanctis/Fulk
W	04/22/09	Team Based Organizations and Communication Flows	Chapter 6, DeSanctis/Fulk
M	<b>04/27/09</b>	<b>Exam I</b>	
W	04/29/09	The Founding of the Own Company – Team Assignment	
M	05/04/09	Organizational Culture, Communication Effectiveness, and Technology Use	Chapter 8, DeSanctis/Fulk
W	05/06/09	Communication in Networked Organizations	Garner, J.T., 2006

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
M	<b>05/11/09</b> <b><i>Deadline Team Assignment</i></b>	The Dark Side of new Organizational Forms	Chapter 14, DeSanctis/Fulk
W	05/13/09	Computer-Mediated Communication	
M	05/18/09	Computer-Mediated Communication (cont.)	
W	05/20/09	Knowledge Management	
M	<b>05/25/09</b>	<b>Holiday No Class</b>	
W	05/27/09	Knowledge Management (cont.)	
M	06/01/09	In-Class Presentations of Team Assignment	
W	06/03/09	An Outlook: Information Technologies and Organizations in 2019	
W	<b>06/10/09</b> <b>(1:30-3:18 p.m.)</b>	<b>Exam II (Final)</b>	

**Caveat**

I reserve the right to update or change portions of this syllabus in order to make the class a better experience for everyone. Any changes will be posted to Carmen.