



**School of Advertising & Public Relations**  
**COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION**  
University of Tennessee Knoxville

**Syllabus**

**PBRL 516—Seminar in Public Relations Issues**

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**Office Hours:** Wednesday, 2:30–4:30 p.m.

**Dates:** Aug. 19–Nov. 25, 2015

**Time:** 4:40–7:35 p.m.

**Location:** Comm. 463 Conference Room

**Dialogic Communication and its Role in Professional Communication**

**Description**

Dialogic communication refers to a series of concepts and principles that place emphasis on relational and co-creational approaches to relationship building. Dialogic communication has become an important theoretical concept among scholars and practitioners in an assortment of disciplines including public relations, advertising, marketing, interpersonal and organizational communication, politics, feminism, and others. The principles of dialogue originate in interpersonal communication and philosophy, but dialogue has become a dominant framework among many social media, technology, and political scholars and professionals. This course explores dialogic communication principles and how to enact and study dialogue at a variety of organizational levels including internally among individuals or groups, externally with stakeholders and publics, and in both contexts using mediated communication tools such as the Internet and social media.

**Student Course Objectives**

- To expose students to ethical issues in dialogic communication.
- To understand how to apply interpersonal communication and dialogic theories.
- To understand how to integrate technology as part of dialogic research activities.
- To evaluate research, theory, and practice from multiple disciplines as a way to understand dialogic communication.
- To analyze foundational thinkers and texts, philosophical paradigms, and theoretical and practical issues in dialogic communication.
- To analyze research trends impacting the adoption of dialogic principles.
- To further hone student speaking, writing, and research skills, and to encourage students to develop their own voice and research agenda.

**Readings (required)**

Kuhn, T. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

**APA style is required on all papers** and students should purchase a copy of the most recent APA guide if they do not own one. Buy it from Amazon for \$22.88—spiral bound recommended, it is easier to use ([www.amazon.com/dp/B00CPUBEEM](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00CPUBEEM)).

**See class reading schedule below for additional readings.** The class readings will consist of articles and book chapters made available via Dropbox.com, or flash drives brought to class for you to copy. Most readings are also available through the UTK library.

## Class Policies

- As graduate students and future colleagues, my preferred mode of communicating with you is face-to-face. Come see me during office hours or whenever I am there, and let's get lunch once in a while.
- Do your readings and come to class prepared to talk—if you are nervous about participating, come talk to me for some ideas about how to succeed.
- Bring printed and marked up hard copies of class readings to each class.
- Make an effort to spend time with each other outside of class in the flesh, not just on social media. Consider starting an FAC (Friday Afternoon Club), if you do not have one already, and getting together.
- Laptops are fine for note taking only. No smartphones, tablets, headphones, or other technology, open, secretly checked, or accessible during class.
- Readings and assignments are due in class on the date indicated.
- All assignments must be *printed*, **and** submitted electronically, and will be automatically checked via *SafeAssign*.
- *Careful proofreading, spell checking, and APA style is required on all papers.*
- My vision is not what it used to be. Consequently, I prefer a very legible font like *Bookman Old Style* 11 point. Do not use *Times New Roman*. *I will provide Bookman Old Style to you with the class readings.*
- If you intend to miss class because of a religious holiday, you need to tell me ahead of time (by the beginning of the semester), and make arrangements to make up for the missed class *before* you miss it.
- All work should be your own. Never cheat. Be aware that plagiarism by a graduate student is grounds for dismissal from the university. Cite whatever is not your own original ideas or writing (including prior papers from other classes). *Plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment and/or the class at my discretion, and will be reported as an academic integrity violation.* Note: Plagiarism detection software will be used for all assignments. These products work *very well* and check the Internet, journals, books, previous class papers submitted to the system across the world, and bespoke papers that teachers have uploaded. Why would you risk your career over a lower class grade? I got a few Cs on class papers in graduate School, and even a C in a class. Although I did not think the teachers were fair, a low grade is not the end of the world. Be sure to know the University of Tennessee's Academic Standards of Conduct and Honor Statement, in [Hilltopics](#).
- This is a graduate class, attendance is required or your final grade will be reduced. Don't ask me how many absences you get. Graduate students should never miss *any* classes.

## Diversity and Ethics

We are intellectuals. Consequently, we should respect diversity in all of its forms: race, sex, gender, age, religion, political orientation, country of origin, economic status, etc. Everyone in the U.S. (citizen or visitor) has a right to his/her opinion and should feel comfortable expressing their opinion. As citizens, we are under no obligation to agree with what other people believe, however, we must, as a civil society, support people's right to worship, act, look, and think, as they want. In this classroom, we will not tolerate any mistreatment of others because of how they look, what they believe, where they come from, or because of a lack of knowledge or skills beyond their control. The only thing that we will not be tolerant of is a lack of ethical and moral fiber. As Donald M. Erb said: "Do not be tolerant of misrepresentation, of superficiality, of the parading of false issues

as though they were real issues. Tolerance does not extend to intellectual dishonesty or ineptitude” —*Erb Memorial Union, University of Oregon, 1990.*

### Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that allows for accommodation, please contact me immediately. Be sure to also contact the Office of Disability Services, discuss your specific needs and obtain official documentation before the class begins. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services in Dunford Hall, at 865-974-6087, or by video phone at, 865-622-6566, to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

### Open Records

Public Law 93-380 requires me to protect the confidentiality of educational records for prospective, current, and former students. Grades cannot be discussed via e-mail, or with other people like friends, parents, etc.

### Grading

**A** 95-100, **A-** 90-94; **B+** 87-89, **B** 83-86, **B-** 80-82,  
**C+** 77-79, **C** 73-76, **C-** 70-72; **D+** 67-69, **D** 63-66, **D-** 60-62; **F:** 0-59

### Assignments

<b>Lead Class Discussion</b> (article/chapter assigned, handout required, 2-4 p. ss)	<b>10%</b>
<b>Exams</b> (non comprehensive, essay based, 20% each)	<b>40%</b>
<b>Reaction/Position Papers</b> (5-7 pp. d-spaced, of text, make argument, 10% each)	<b>20%</b>
<b>Final Paper</b> (25%) <b>&amp; Presentation</b> (5%) (18-25 pp. of text, double-spaced, 18+ sources [1-source per page average], APA style—conference/article appropriate, submit to top conference as student paper, write with journal in mind; for the presentation, prepare a 2 p. s-spaced handout and deliver paper as a conference style presentation)	<b>30%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Assignment Details

#### Lead Class Discussion

On one occasion (*you pick a day, you have a week to decide, first come first served*) you will be responsible for being an expert on one of the articles (*you still need to do all the other readings that week*), and be capable of leading the discussion on that article as we go over it in class. See sample handout at end of syllabus.

Be prepared with discussion questions of your own about the text, and be capable of answering student questions about passages, etc. (as I do). Come see me with your own questions for help. You also need to prepare a 2-4 page single-spaced handout with relevant information for the class. Go beyond the text here. Include brief biographic information about the author, a list of their major articles/books, some compelling quotations from the article, etc.

The handout should be single spaced, and formatted as a final draft document (i.e., it should be compelling, legible, and readable, and serve as a stand alone document with complete information on it): Include a title, your name and long-term contact information (a permanent e-mail, etc.), class information, a complete APA article citation, textual formatting cues to make it interesting and easy to follow (bold, italics, headings, etc.), some images or graphics if relevant such as a picture of the author, etc. A sample can be provided on request.

### **Exams**

There will be two exams. You will need to know the readings, and have kept up with the readings to do well on the exams. **Exam II** may be a take home exam. You will be given approximately ten essay questions to study a week before the exam, and then on the day of the exam, you need to be prepared to answer three of the questions when randomly selected during the exam period. The answer length is whatever it takes to answer the question but expect to write for about 1.5 hours. Answers should be original, and draw upon your own original thoughts, ideas, and support from the texts. **Note:** you may take the second exam early if you plan to leave for Thanksgiving holiday early. See me before the exam to make arrangements. Otherwise the exam will take place as scheduled during class.

### **Reaction Papers**

A reaction paper responds to ideas or concepts from a single author or several authors on a related topic. Essentially, a reaction paper is like the first 5–7 pages of an article, where you pique the interest of your readers, lay out your thesis or claim, outline the argument, and support your points by reference to other scholarly work. A reaction/position paper does not have to have more than a few scholarly citations/sources, but it does need to take a clear position and support it. Similarly, a reaction paper is not just a collection of quotations from someone else, it is your original argument and thought about an issue, subject, theory, etc. Ninety percent or more of this should be in your own voice. More details will be provided.

### **Final Paper**

The only requirements of the final paper are that the research is original to you, focuses on dialogue, meets the length requirements, is written with a particular journal and conference in mind, and is turned in on time. You can write about theory, practice, or pedagogy, conduct empirical, critical, historical, experimental, or qualitative research, etc. Details will be provided as the semester progresses.

## Class Schedule

Date	Week	Readings/Assignment	Assignment Due
Aug. 19	1	Intro., dialogic theory overview, set up dialogic rules for the class   <b>Select your day to lead class discussion by Friday.</b>	
Aug. 26	2	<b>Scope of Dialogue</b>   <b>Read:</b> Anderson, Cissna, & Arnett (1994), pp. v-156.	
Sept. 02	3	<b>Scope of Dialogue</b>   <b>Read:</b> Anderson, et al., pp. 157-311.	
Sept. 09	4	<i>Dialogic Social Media:</i> <b>Read:</b> Kent (2013); Kent and Taylor (2014); Taylor & Kent (2014)	
Sept. 16	5	<b>Understanding Revolutions</b>   <b>Read:</b> Kuhn (1970), pp. i-110.	
Sept. 23	6	<b>Understanding Interpersonal</b>   <b>Read:</b> Watzlawick, Beavin & Jackson (1967), pp. 48-71, 118-148.	
Sept. 30	7	<b>Dialogue and Activism</b>   <b>Read:</b> Freire (1970), pp. 75-118.	
			<b>1<sup>st</sup> Reaction/Position Paper</b>
Oct. 07	8		<b>Exam I</b>
Oct. 14	9	<b>Dialogue and Feminism</b>   <b>Read:</b> Noddings (1984), pp. 1-58   <i>Submit list of possible paper ideas by today, as well as a bibliography of at least 10 relevant scholarly sources.</i>	
Oct. 21	10	<b>Dialogic Foundations</b>   <b>Read:</b> Johannesen (1990), pp. 57-77; Buber (1970/1923), First Part, pp. 53-85; Rogers (1992/1957).	
Oct. 28	11	<b>Culture and Dialogue:</b> Laing (1969), 65-153.	
Nov. 04	12	<b>Dialogue Applied</b>   <b>Read:</b> Pearce & Pearce (2000); Lane (2014), pp. 13-22, 156-173.	
Nov. 11	13	Develop the rules for dialogic social media & create a dialogic social media interface. Be specific, use theory, write it up and present it.	
Nov. 18	14	<b>At NCA, work on your papers</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Reaction/Position Paper</b>
Nov. 25	15		<b>Exam II (May be take home)</b>
<b>Dec. 01</b>		<b>Papers &amp; Presentations Due during finals week</b> (location & time TBA)	

## Supplementary Bibliography—Course Readings (in bold)

- Anderson, R., Cissna, K. N., & Arnett R. C.** (Eds.) (1994). *The reach of dialogue: Confirmation, voice, and community*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
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