



Office of the University Registrar (MC 0134)

Proposal for New and Revised Courses (Version 1.9)

Proposal Date	September 20, 2016	Department	Communication
Course Designator and Number (Cross-listed Course Designator and Number):	COMM 1014		
Title of Course	Introduction to Communication	Credit Hours	3
Course Transcript Title (ADP) (30 Character Maximum)	Introduction to Communication		
Instructor and/or Departmental Contact	Marlene Preston		
Contact Phone	231-9832	Contact E-Mail	mpreston@vt.edu
Please refer to Office of University Registrar for guidelines and policy requirements: https://registrar.vt.edu/governance.html			

Please count this course toward the following Scorecard Metrics areas:

Study Abroad
 Service Learning
 Experiential
 Undergraduate Research
 Scorecard Metrics Definitions can be found here: <http://www.registrar.vt.edu/faculty/forms/scorecard-metrics.html>

Please insert an X if this course should count toward First-Year Experience:

First Year Experience (FYE) Include approval letter from FYE Director. More information can be found here: <http://www.fye.vt.edu>

Select ONE of the following boxes

New Course & Inclusion in Pathways General Education
 Revised Course for Inclusion in Pathways General Education
 Revision > 20% Revision < 20% X

For non-Pathways courses, form can be found here: <https://registrar.vt.edu/governance.html>

*Please include a summary of course revisions to the Justification section of proposal

A:	Attach statement from Dean or Departmental Representative as to whether teaching this course, and/or inclusion of the course in the Pathways will require or generate the need for additional departmental resources.		
B:	Attach appropriate letters of support from affected departments and/or colleges.		
D:	Effective Term:	Fall 2022	
D:	Change in Course Title From:	Introduction to Communication Studies	
	To:	Introduction to Communication	
E:	Change in Transcript Title (ADP) From:	Intro to Comm Studies	To: Introduction to Communication
E:	Change in Lecture and/or Lab Hours From:		To:
F:	Change in Credit Hours From:		To:
G:	Change in Lecture and/or Lab Hours From:		To:
H:	Course Number(s) and Title(s) to be deleted from the Catalog with APPROVAL:		

Approval Signatures

Department Representative		Date	
College Curriculum Committee Rep		Date	
College Dean		Date	

Commented [BS1]: This SAMPLE completed form is being provided by the UCCGE to serve as both an example and a learning tool. This does NOT mean there won't be feedback on various aspects of this proposal at the different phases of review. Despite efforts to ensure consistency among reviewers, they are people and differences will arise.

Please read the comments down the right side. Some hit on things the review committee appreciate. Some provide alternative ways to fill out the proposal. Others are reminders of the Pathways course guidelines.

This proposal is filled out on Version 1.5 (header) but all Version 1s are accepted.

Commented [AN2]: 75 characters and spaces max; If the course title does not exceed 31 characters and spaces, the ADP title should match.

Commented [AN3]: This is who will be contacted regarding the proposal. More than one contact can be listed.

Commented [AN4]: Proposals changing the course designator/department or number are considered NEW courses.

Commented [AN5]: Required for all courses outside of your department

Commented [AN6]: This section to be used when an existing course will be replaced with a new course number or department. Not to be used for course revisions.

Part I: Course Information

Catalog Description

Survey of the communication discipline across areas of specialization from interpersonal to mediated and mass communication. History and fundamental concepts, theories, contexts. Emphasis on ethical human behavior and message analysis. (3H, 3C)

Commented [AN7]: This section can be written in sentences or phrases.

Commented [BS8]: The PGEERC needs to see alignment of verbiage across the Course Description, Learning Objectives, and Syllabus

Here there is alignment with the Pathways core and integrative outcomes

Learning Objectives

Having successfully completed this course, the student will be able to

1. Identify disciplinary areas of specialization and contexts for application.
2. Explain how historical changes have influenced the development of the communication discipline.
3. Define foundational disciplinary terms and concepts. (Pathways SS -- LI #1)
4. Analyze human behavior in communication contexts related to the application of disciplinary theories. (Pathways SS -- LI #2)
5. Analyze the ways values and beliefs influence messages. (Pathways SS -- LI #4)
6. Explain and contrast theories that integrate communication and ethics. (Pathways ER – LI #1)
7. Identify ethical issues in complex communication contexts. (Pathways ER – LI #2)
8. Explain implications of disciplinary considerations on personal practice.

Commented [MP9]: Notice how all learning objectives are written in the format of 'the student will be able to...'

Also, the UCCGE appreciated how the Pathways outcomes/indicators (broad) were mapped to the course objectives (usually more specific). Notice that not all course objectives map to a Pathways outcome/indicator. However, without this explicit connection to Pathways a reviewer should be able to recognize this alignment and correlation to each outcome/indicator chosen.

Language from the integrative outcomes (e.g. 'ethical issues', 'global issues', 'intercultural contexts', etc.) should appear somewhere in these objectives.

This proposer started with the Pathways Outcomes/Indicators, then merged them with the existing learning objectives to ensure alignment.

As this was a revised course, some of the original learning objectives were no longer necessary and were therefore removed in the proposal revision.

In developing these objectives, the proposer used verbs appropriate for the level and nature of the student learning. These align with Bloom's taxonomy. Learn more at www.bloomstaxonomy.org for verbs and examples or just get the [chart here](#) by searching 'blooms taxonomy verbs.'

Justification

This course is needed at VT because it is foundational in the departmental curriculum as a common requirement for all majors. The course has also been long-standing part of general education and has served non-majors well. Regardless of their fields of study or their eventual employment, students will communicate with classmates, colleagues, clients, and citizenry. Understanding the complexity of that communication will help them to more carefully consider the choices they will make and the ethical implications of those choices in terms of messages, audiences, and methods of communication.

This revision of the course includes a name change, disciplinary content updates, and general education updates. The name change request reflects an updating from the course originally approved in 1994. At that time, the department's name was "Communication Studies," and its name reflected the department's title. The Department of Communication changed its name in 2004, and now has a major named "Communication Studies," which is one of three majors in the department. In order to avoid confusion and to continue to reflect the broad disciplinary scope of the course as an introduction to the field, the name change is requested. The course content has also been slightly shifted, dropping a previous section on communication criticism, which is now covered in a different course. Instead, the focus of this course as an introduction to the discipline is on terms, concepts, and theories that form the basis of different approaches to communication in general and message analysis in particular. In addition, communication contexts are addressed, allowing students to grasp the variety of social, professional, and academic opportunities the discipline offers. The course also includes attention to ever-evolving communication technology. The importance of social and ethical issues and questions in the communication discipline are emphasized throughout each context. The learning outcomes have been shifted to reflect the Pathways curriculum, merging the learning indicators for social sciences and ethical reasoning with the communication content.

This course is taught at the 1000- level because it is an entry-level survey course of the communication discipline. No background is required for students to be successful in this course. Communication majors and minors go into greater depth on various theories in upper-level courses for which this course is a prerequisite.

Prerequisites and Corequisites

None

Texts and Special Teaching

Required:

West, R. & Turner, L. *Introducing Communication Theory: Analysis and Application* (6th ed.) McGraw/Hill, 2017. pp. 640

Commented [AN10]: Use header to identify whether text is required or recommended. If no required text, state "Required: None. No text is required because..." provide justification for no required course. Then under header "Recommended" provide examples of journals or other resources that will be used or provided.

Use APA 7th or MLA 8th format to cite reference materials, order citations alphabetically, and include reference to page numbers.

Syllabus

Topic	Percent of Course
1. Communication discipline and areas of specialization in context	15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialization including study of rhetoric and culture; developing/delivering content for print, broadcast, and internet; study of multimedia journalism and effects; developing/delivering public relations tools for clients; study of organizational communication Contexts including application in areas of gender, health, international, diversity, advocacy, corporate, non-profit, sports, politics, social media, news, entertainment, gaming 	
2. Fundamental concepts, theories and applications related to ethical human behavior and message analysis	75%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theoretical frameworks – historical development and ethics across frameworks Intrapersonal, Interpersonal Group and Organizational Public Communication Mass Communication Culture and Diversity 	
3. From theory to ethical personal practice – college, post-graduate studies, career	10%
Total	100%

Old (Current) Syllabus

Topic	Percent of Course
The nature of communication – theory and models	15%
Approaches to the study of communication – rhetorical, scientific, semiotic, critical	20%
Major areas of study in communication – rhetoric and speech, journalism, film and photography, broadcasting, advertising and public relations, popular culture, interactive technologies	50%
Ethical and value issues in communication	10%
Career opportunities	5%
Total	100%

Commented [AN11]: If this is a new course, simply indicate "N/A"



Part II: General Education Information

Pathways General Education Mission

As a central component of the undergraduate experience at Virginia Tech, the Pathways curriculum will guide students to examine the world from multiple perspectives and integrate their knowledge across disciplines and domains of learning through a hands-on, minds-on approach.

Pathways General Education Principles

1. Integration. The promotion of integration in students' learning is crucial to students' ability to create meaning, explore connections, and build knowledge and skills for their academic, professional, civic, and personal lives. Students will meet many of the learning outcomes by taking sequenced courses that build upon one another, adding a dimension of depth to the curriculum. As they participate in one of three paths through general education, undergraduates will have opportunities to make meaning of their general education curriculum through the integration of diverse ways of knowing, recognizing that the whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts. The incorporation of the integrative learning outcomes--Ethical Reasoning and Intercultural and Global Awareness—throughout the curriculum will further enable students to connect the courses and identify various perspectives on these themes. This ability to integrate new learning into their ways of seeing the world will help students build a competency they will need for the rest of their lives.
2. Inclusivity. The Pathways curricular structure will address the needs and challenges of populations of students and acknowledge the diverse paths they have taken to Virginia Tech, including such groups as first-semester freshmen, first-generation college students, transfer students, and veterans. In turn, the Pathways curriculum will prepare these diverse groups of students to become contributors to the global society in which they will live and work. To support this effort, inclusive pedagogies that foster deep learning in all students will be adopted. Extending this principle, all students will be encouraged to examine issues of diversity and inclusion, such as gender, race, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation. This will be accomplished through the integration of outcomes in intercultural and global knowledge across the Pathways curriculum. Note: this principle speaks to *how* the class is taught (pedagogies, classroom environment, etc.) as much as the *what* is taught.
3. Relevance. The Pathways curriculum will be relevant to students' personal development, helping them to integrate new learning into their lives for current and long-term application. The curriculum will challenge undergraduates in fundamental areas of learning, which will be relevant to major courses and activities across the undergraduate years and beyond. Students will also develop the skills they will need for success in every area of their lives: communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, ethical behaviors, inquiry, and creativity.

Pathways General Education *cont.*

Select one of the following by inserting an X:

- New Course Existing CLE Course Existing Course NOT in the CLE

Narrative: Describe how this course will fit the mission and each of the three principles (integration, inclusivity, relevance) of Pathways. Why would a student take this course? Who is the audience for this course? *Limit your response to less than 400 words.*

This course has historically enrolled 300-500 students per year, students of all majors.

Integration: The course has always included considerations of ethical communication related to human behaviors and message construction. While most sections of this class are large lecture, students are challenged to consider ethical questions about the development and presentation of messages. Because the topic has such broad application in a student's life, students also can easily integrate this introductory study of communication with their subsequent studies in any major. The course actually addresses both integrative outcomes.

Inclusivity: Certainly there are no barriers to enrollment—not even a prerequisite. Beyond that, students taking the course not only feel included themselves, but they also consider the need for analyzing an audience in preparation for developing and delivering a message. That analysis demands considerations of culture and perspective. Since this is a 1000-level course,

Commented [GJ12]: Although not done in this proposal, please include a paragraph at the top of this section indicating how the course meets the mission of Pathways. The mission can be found at the very top of this page.

The reviewers appreciated how each principle is addressed separately. However, because there may be a great deal of overlap, a proposer might weave these into a unified narrative as long as it is clear each principle is addressed.

students can begin to understand early in their academic careers that every interaction requires sensitivity to readers and listeners. Intercultural awareness is a basic tenet of the course.

Relevance: Communication majors take the course as an intro to the major; they want to understand the directions in which the major might take them. Minors and other non-majors recognize the importance of communication in any career. They are interested in understanding the roles communication might play in various contexts. Students can see themselves building on the fundamentals of communication (concepts and theories) as they interact with faculty and peers on campus and also as they develop competencies for their future careers.

Outcomes

A. Core Outcomes

Please select the outcome(s) this course will meet by inserting an X. Then click on the outcome(s) you need to address to move to that section of the form. A course may be approved for no more than two outcomes.

[Discourse](#)

[Quantitative and Computational Thinking](#)

[Reasoning in the Natural Sciences](#)

[Critique and Practice in Design and the Arts](#)

[Reasoning in the Social Sciences](#)

[Critical Thinking in the Humanities](#)

Commented [BS13]: A Pathways course can meet one or at maximum two core outcomes.

B. Integrative Learning Outcomes

Please select either or both of the Integrative Learning Outcomes by inserting an X. Then click on the outcome(s) you need to address to move to that section of the form.

[Ethical Reasoning](#)

[Intercultural and Global Awareness](#)

Commented [BS14]: A course can meet one or both integrative outcomes (see comment in integrative outcome section)



Reasoning in the Social Sciences

You can hide this section from viewing and printing by clicking on the section title, then clicking on the little arrow that pops up to the left... unless you are using a Mac, in which case you will just need to delete the sections that don't apply to you...

Reasoning in the Social Sciences is the utilization of quantitative and qualitative methods to explain the behavior and actions of individuals, groups, and institutions within larger social, economic, political, and geographic contexts. Courses meeting this outcome will help students to understand that they are a small part of a larger global community and to engage with diverse individuals, groups, and ideas that have shaped or continue to shape the worlds they inhabit. Courses or course sequences addressing this outcome must meet a majority of the learning indicators.

Credit hours: 6 credits

Choose at least a majority of the indicators of learning for this core learning outcome by putting an X in the box next to the indicator. As you complete the descriptions, please use real-world examples, particularly to explain discipline-specific vocabulary.

Note: This class is taught mostly as a large lecture (approximately 200 per semester). While the class delivery is engaging in many ways, the tests are necessarily objective. Students are not submitting essays or projects. Smaller sections are offered online in Winter Session and Summer I and can include more student writing and/or reflection; however those sections are not the norm. The responses below reflect the large lecture.

Table row 1: x Identify fundamental concepts of the social sciences. Guiding prompts: What are some fundamental concepts of the social sciences explored in this course? In what ways might an instructor evaluate students on the acquisition of this knowledge? Because the course is taught in various sizes and formats, the evaluation might be an essay in smaller courses but is most likely an objective test in the large lecture (the dominant format for the course). Concepts: Social behavior—relationships, power, gender, etc. Evaluating acquisition of knowledge: Objective examination of understanding of theoretical concepts related to interpersonal relationships, small group and organizational roles, power, stereotypes, "muting" gendered communication, etc.

Commented [MP15]: Proposer emphasized class size because of the impact on student demonstration of learning. This note is not necessary, but provides the reviewer with context for why the course is the way it is

Table row 2: x Analyze human behavior, social institutions and/or patterns of culture using theories and methods of the social sciences. Guiding prompts: Identify examples of behavior, institutions, or cultural patterns students will explore in this course. What are some theories or methods students will employ to analyze them? In what ways might an instructor evaluate students on the acquisition of this skill? Because the course is taught in various sizes and formats, the evaluation might be an essay in smaller courses but is most likely an objective test in the large lecture (the dominant format for the course). Examples: strategies to overcome cognitive dissonance; uncertainty reduction strategies; overcoming transgressions resulting in de-penetration in relationships; recognizing objective and subjective elements of a culture; identifying strategies of "silencing" and employing strategies to resist silencing; priming, framing, gate-keeping, and agenda-setting functions of media, etc. Evaluating acquisition of knowledge: Objective examination of understanding and application of theoretical assumptions and concepts to evaluate examples.

Commented [BS16]: For each indicator, the proposer has sufficiently answered each guiding question. Here there are even underlined headings to guide the reviewer to those responses.

Identify interconnections among and differences between social institutions, groups, and individual.

Commented [MP17]: While this indicator is met in this course, the proposer selected the minimum number of required indicators. For any indicator chosen, student learning must be documented not only for course purposes but also for general education.

x Analyze the ways in which values and beliefs relate to human behavior and social relationships.

Guiding prompts: How might students explore this relationship? In what ways might an instructor evaluate students on the acquisition of this skill?

Because the course is taught in various sizes and formats, the evaluation might be an essay in smaller courses but is most likely an objective test in the large lecture (the dominant format for the course).

Analysis of Symbolic Interaction Theory, media Uses & Gratifications Theory or media Cultivation Theory. For example, students might watch clips from video “Killing Us Softly,” and evaluate advertisements, songs, music videos, etc. in light of relevant communication theories. Evaluating acquisition of knowledge: Objective examination of understanding and application of theoretical assumptions and concepts to examples.

Commented [BS18]: The PGECRC greatly appreciates ‘Such as’ and ‘For example’ statements in each indicator response box. This paints a clear picture for how students might meet this indicator. The proposer is NOT bound to these statements down the road... this is a proposal...

[Go back to Core Outcome Table \(if you wish for this course to meet two core outcomes\)](#)

[Go to Integrative Outcome Table \(as every course must meet at least one integrative outcome\)](#)

[Go to end of proposal form](#)

Commented [BS19]: This proposer has deleted all sections they aren't filling out (e.g. Reasoning in the Natural Sciences, etc.) This is very helpful.

Ethical Reasoning

You can hide this section from viewing and printing by clicking on the section title, then clicking on the little arrow that pops up to the left... unless you are using a Mac, in which case you will just need to delete the sections that don't apply to you...

Ethical Reasoning is the principled evaluation of moral and political beliefs and practices. In today's complex and diverse world, ethical behavior requires more than just the desire to do the right thing. Foundational learning of ethical theories, issues, and applications provides tools that enable students to deliberate and to assess for themselves, claims about ethical issues in their personal, public, and professional lives. Courses addressing this outcome must meet a majority of the learning indicators.

Credit hours: This learning outcome will be met in conjunction with Core Outcomes. No extra hours will be necessary.

Please choose a minimum of two indicators by putting an X in the box next to the indicator. As you complete the descriptions, please use real-world examples, particularly to explain discipline-specific vocabulary.

x	Explain and contrast relevant ethical theories.
<p>Guiding prompts: What are some relevant ethical theories students will explore within the context of the core outcome? In what ways might an instructor evaluate students on the acquisition of this knowledge?</p> <p><i>Because the course is taught in various sizes and formats, the evaluation might be an essay in smaller courses but is most likely an objective test in the large lecture (the dominant format for the course).</i></p> <p>Semantic Perspective; Critical Theory; Muted Group Theory; Standpoint Theory; Cultivation Theory. Such theories – relevant to communication and ethics--will be explored and compared as they relate to standards for ethical practice. Instructor evaluation of student acquisition of knowledge by objective examinations.</p>	

x	Identify ethical issues in a complex context.
<p>Guiding prompts: What are some ethical issues students might explore that fit within the context of the core outcome? In what ways might an instructor evaluate students on the acquisition of this skill?</p> <p><i>Because the course is taught in various sizes and formats, the evaluation might be an essay in smaller courses but is most likely an objective test in the large lecture (the dominant format for the course).</i></p> <p>Asymmetrical power-related issues between genders; “triggers” and “micro-aggressions” versus free speech/expression; violence in media. Instructor evaluation of student acquisition of knowledge by objective examinations.</p>	

<input type="checkbox"/>	Articulate and defend positions on ethical issues in a way that is both reasoned and informed by the complexities of those situations.
<p>Guiding prompts: Outline a lesson in which students articulate and defend positions on ethical issues grounded within the context of the core outcome. What would an effective defense look like?</p>	

[Go back to Core Outcome Table \(if you want to review the core outcome information\)](#)

[Go to Integrative Outcome Table \(if you wish for this course to meet both integrative outcomes\)](#)

Commented [BS20]: All Pathways courses are required to meet a minimum of one integrative outcome... with a minimum of two indicators within that outcome.

A course can meet both integrative outcomes. As a reminder, the instructor is responsible for meeting and assessing any outcome and any indicator checked off on this proposal (across all sections).

A course can also receive 'provisional approval' for Pathways by not selecting an integrative outcome now, but rather submitting that in two years. In that case, no integrative outcome is to be selected. Simply write "seeking provisional approval" in the first indicator box.

Commented [MP21]: This indicator was initially selected, but was deleted because of the difficulty of ALL students' involvement in this activity in a large lecture. Initial response for this item: Lecture on the Semantic Perspective with emphasis on the Semantic Triangle and the conventional wisdom that “meanings are in people, not in words” (Ogden & Richards). Discussion of the tensions between dissonant meanings, interpretations of dominant meaning, freedom of expression, and ethical regard for respect, tolerance, and community (e.g., Virginia Tech’s “Principles of Community”). An effective defense might seek to balance the traditional commitment to free speech/expression for individual meanings with a conventional commitment to co-constructed meanings that support the community’s perspective.