

**CCI 605: Philosophical and Theoretical Foundations of
Communication and Information
Fall, 2015**

INSTRUCTOR: Michelle Violanti, Ph.D.

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OFFICE HOURS: T 11:00 to 1:00 and By Appointment

Catalog Description (3 hours): An overview of the philosophical presuppositions and theoretical frameworks that have informed the fields in communication and information.

Goals & Objectives

The purpose of this course is to accomplish the following:

- Define, understand, and articulate the concepts associated with theory, constructs, models, and paradigms including ontology, axiology, and epistemology
- Introduce the works of major philosophical thinkers who have informed our fields
- Provide background on the process of building, testing and refuting theory
- Examine the various approaches to completing an effective literature review (stand alone or as the rationale for a larger research project)
- Discuss empirical and hermeneutic approaches to developing research problems, questions, and hypotheses
- Introduce what it means to communicate in a scholarly manner

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand the assumptions associated with the various paradigmatic perspectives
- Understand how paradigms inform research questions
- Understand how the philosophers covered in class have informed all the fields represented in the college
- Recognize and develop research studies based on the assumptions associated with various paradigms
- Demonstrate an understanding of the process to build, test, and refute theory

REQUIRED TEXTS

Comte, A. (2009). *A general view of positivism*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. (ISBN: 978-1-163-43654-7; Retail Price: \$41.00)

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. New York, NY: Vintage Books. (ISBN: 2900679752553; Retail Price: \$16.95)

Goffman, I. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. New York, NY: Anchor Books. (ISBN: 978-0-385-09402-3; Retail Price: \$15.95)

Harding, S. (1991). *Whose science, whose knowledge: Thinking from women's lives*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. (ISBN: 978-0801497469; Retail Price: \$22.95)

James, W. (1975). *Pragmatism and the meaning of truth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (ISBN: 978-0-674-69737-9; Retail Price: \$29.50)

- Kuhn, T. (1996). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (ISBN: 0-226-45808-3; Retail Price: \$13.00)
- Machi, L., & McEvoy, B. (2012). *The literature review: Six steps to success* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin. (ISBN: 978-1452240886; Retail Price: \$31.95)
- Marcuse, H. (1964). *One-dimensional man: Studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press. (ISBN: 978-0-415-28977-1; Retail Price: \$22.95)
- Mead, G. H. (1934/1956/1967). *Mind, self, and society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (ISBN: 0-226-51668-7; Retail Price: \$27.50)
- Popper, K. (2002). *The logic of scientific discovery*. Oxon, UK: Routledge. (ISBN: 978-0-415-27844-7; Retail Price: \$21.95)
- Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). (2010). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. (ISBN: 978-1-4338-0562-2; \$36.95)

Recommended Texts:

- Comte, A. (1988). *Introduction to positive philosophy*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing.
- Fink, A. (2010). *Conducting research literature reviews: From the internet to paper* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Jesson, J. K., Matheson, L., & Lacey, F. M. (2011). *Doing your literature review: Traditional and systematic techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Swales J. M., & Feak, C. (2012). *Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills* (3rd ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

CCI Diversity Statement: CCI recognizes and values diversity. Exposing students to diverse people, ideas and cultures increases opportunities for intellectual inquiry, encourages critical thinking, and enhances communication and information competence. When all viewpoints are heard, thoughtfully considered, and respectfully responded to, everyone benefits. Diversity and fairness unite us with the wider professional and global community.

Disability Accommodation Statement: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact with one of your instructors privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at 865-974-6087 in 2227 Dunford Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

POLICIES

- This course adheres to the university's Academic Standards of Conduct and Honor Statement, as presented in the student handbook *Hilltopics*.
- Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and participate in class discussion.

- In general, students are not allowed to make up missed work without advance notice. Plans should be made to turn assignments in early if you are traveling to a conference. Exceptions will be rare and at the discretion of the instructor.
- Syllabus is subject to change as instructor deems appropriate and necessary.
- Please turn off all handheld devices, including mobile phones, pagers, PDAs, etc. during class. Mobile devices can be used for course-related reasons only. Other uses (email, IM, Facebook, general browsing) are incredibly disrespectful.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Critical reading of the assigned materials and participation in discussions.
- Individual literature review on a topic of interest to you. The purpose of this paper is for you to create an introduction, rationale, and literature synthesis for a set of research questions/hypotheses you may examine in the future. It should serve as the foundation for your methods paper this semester.
- Presentations: During the course of the semester, you will lead a class discussion. Your presentations should be informative and also provide the class with references and summaries they may use to help prepare for comps. These presentations should be approximately 30 minutes in length and may use any combination of lecture and interactive techniques.
- Reaction Papers: For each assigned book, write a two (2) to three (3) page reaction to the material presented focusing primarily on your critique of the material and how you might go about using the content for research in your chosen area. These should **not** be summaries, but rather focus on what resonated most strongly with you from reading the book.
- Analysis of Published Research: Choose two years of a journal where you aspire to publish your own research. For each article in the issue, compile a table with the complete citations for each article, the research perspective utilized, any theories presented, and the method used. Write a paper (two to three paragraphs) summarizing your table and stating any conclusions with evidence you drew about the journal.
- Research Philosophy: In this one- to two-page paper, you will lay out your personal perspective on collecting and analyzing data. It will be an evolving, living document that you will update and tweak as your approach to research develops. This document tells us who you are as a researcher today.

GRADE: Grading is done on a traditional, graduate-level A through F scale with A representing superior performance, B representing satisfactory performance, and C representing less than satisfactory performance. The final grade is comprised of your performance on Reaction Papers (20%), Journal Analysis (10%), Research Philosophy (10%), Presentations (30%), and Literature Review (30%).

COURSE SCHEDULE (flexible)

Date	Topic	Reading
August 19 th	Introduction	
August 26 th	Scholarly Writing	APA Manual, Machi/McEvoy
September 2 nd	Scientific Revolutions	Kuhn
September 9 th	Paradigms	Blackboard Reading
September 16 th	Functional Perspectives	Popper
September 23 th	Functional Perspectives	Comte
September 30 th		Journal Analysis Due
October 7 th	Interpretive Perspectives	Mead
October 14 th	Interpretive Perspectives	James
October 21 st	Interpretive Perspectives	Goffman
October 28 th	Critical Perspectives	Marcuse Literature Review Draft Due
November 4 th	Feminist Perspectives	Harding
November 11 th	Critical/Feminist Perspectives	Foucault
November 18 th	NCA	Work on Literature Reviews
November 25 th	Happy Thanksgiving	Literature Reviews Due
December 7 th	Final Exam Period (8:00-10:00)	Research Philosophy Due