

Tentative Course Descriptions: Spring 2014

Spirituality, Health, & Communication

Dr. Jillian Tullis

Course Description:

In this course, we will explore how people communicate about spirituality and health, and interrogate the ways in which spirituality influences conceptions of health and health care choices. We will attempt to make sense of the role spirituality plays in health by examining communication across the life span, focusing on such topics as childbirth, mental health, disability, addiction, and aging as well as a variety of illnesses. Culture and spirituality are closely related and as such, the course will cover a range of cultures and spiritual ideas, including faith traditions and their rituals.

Course Learning Objectives:

- *Define* spirituality and spiritual communication.
- *Explore* health and illness as personal, institutional, cultural and spiritual constructions created, maintained, and transformed in communication.
- *Understand* your role within the institutional practices and social relationships found in various health contexts and the influence spirituality plays in your personal health and healthcare choices.
- *Practice* your critical reading, writing, and thinking skills by examining a variety of health communication research that uses a variety of methods including ethnography, interviewing, rhetoric, and critical theory.

COMM 5141: Organizational Communication

Dr. Cliff Scott

In short, this course has four primary goals:

- To heighten awareness of the importance of communication to the function and experience of organizing;
- To make you think, write, and speak about your professional goals;
- To enhance your ability to critically evaluate lay theories of effective organizing;
- To help develop an understanding of organizational communication that will enable you to more effectively diagnose and manage various challenges in the workplace.

Topics in Communication Studies: Introduction to Cultural Studies

Dr. Jonathan Crane

Course Objective

This course is intended as an introduction to the advanced study of popular culture. The course aims to lay out a perspective for thinking critically about popular culture and the culture industries across the globe as well as providing a capsule history of the evolution of cultural studies. The course is also intended to offer a broad survey of the critical methods available to those with an abiding interest in cultural texts and practices.

The central argument of the course is that fundamental shifts in the production, dissemination and consumption of popular culture are connected to basic changes in our culture(s) and ways of thinking and being. For most of us, our identities as men and women, as straight or gay, Black, Latino/a, White, and Asian, are made available in and through popular culture artifacts. This course aims to provide a foundation for understanding how we are constructed in and through popular culture.