COM 590: CONSTITUTING ECONOMIC COMMUNICATION

Proposed Independent Study for Fall

COURSE RATIONALE:
This course is an overview of how rational expectations theory and its tenets pervade communication and interdisciplinary theory, research, and practice. Rational expectation theory is an economic theory applied to inflation, interest rates, the behavior of exchange rates, etc. It assumes rationality in public expectations of (for example) the future of inflation rates, interest rates, rental rates, and income, thereby allowing public behavior to influence these rates (Shiller, 1978). However, this theory would benefit from communication and interdisciplinary theory. As a result, this course would provide the student with an introduction to the intersection of economics, organizational behavior, and management to better understand how economics/management are communicatively constructed and identify potential areas in which economic theory and economic behavior would benefit from a communicative approach.

No other seminars in the department directly address how the economics and management literature can interact with communication theory. Thus, an independent study in this area seems appropriate, and would greatly add to the student’s plan of study’s major and minor areas.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to: explain key theories and concepts related to Rational Expectations Theory and management; identify key scholarship that approaches economics communicatively; and critically assess management and economic literature to identify areas or theories that would benefit from communication scholarship. Furthermore, the student will have identified potential future research interests and have a paper ready to send to a conference or for publication.

This 590 will fit in the major area (Organizational Communication) of the student’s Plan of Study. This independent study will expose the student to a wide variety of literature within the field of economics and management (through a communicative lens), of which the student has expressed interest in and had difficulty finding a course in which to further explore this topic.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

(1) Weekly meetings will occur every Friday to discuss readings, review progress, and discuss next steps.

(2) For each week, the student will also turn in a reflection of the week’s readings, which will include what the student thinks is the most important idea from the week’s readings and make connections to different required readings, identify potential gaps in the literature, and any potential research ideas. This will account for 20% of the student’s final grade.
The student will develop a research proposal (due by the 4th week of the semester) and develop a survey instrument and submit to IRB. This will account for 20% of the student’s final grade.

The student will complete a final research paper in the form of a critical essay (which may be a case study) due by the final week of the semester. The subject must strongly connect in some way to the course topics and readings. The final paper should be conference length (15-20 pages, plus references), and the instructor will approve the topic in advance. The paper will use APA documentation. As part of this assignment, the student will identify a potential outlet for the work, such as a conference, a book chapter, or an academic journal. This will account for 60% of the student’s final grade.

COURSE CALENDAR (tentative):

Week 1: August 29
Introduction
Primary Readings:

Secondary Readings:

Week 2: September 5
Introduction, cont.
Primary Readings:

Week 3: September 12
Gender and politics, cont.
Primary Readings:
discovery, learning, and engagement. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press.

Secondary Readings:

**Week 4: September 19**

**Rationality and Communication**

Primary Readings:

Secondary Readings:

Read Ch. 18 pp. 1053-1128.


**Paper proposal (1-2 pages) due**

**Week 5: September 26**

**Rationality and Communication, cont.**

Primary Readings:

Chps. 1-4

Secondary Readings:


**Attend Lecture: Abby Stewart, University of Michigan 9:30-11 a.m.**

**Week 6:** October 3

*Primary Readings:*


*Chps. 5-8*

*Secondary Readings:*


**Week 7:** October 10

*Primary Readings:*


*Chps. 9-12*

*Secondary Readings:*


**Week 8:** October 17  
**Human Resource Management**  
**Primary Readings:**  
*Read Ch. 1, 2, 4, 5, 8*  

**Secondary Readings:**  

**Week 9:** October 24  
**Rational Expectations Theory**  
**Primary Reading:**  

**Secondary Reading:**  

**Week 10:** October 31  
**Rational Expectations Theory, cont.**  
**Primary Reading:**
**Read Ch. 3, 4**


**Secondary Reading:**


**Week 11:** November 7

**Finance and Communication**

**Primary Reading:**


**Secondary Reading:**


**Read Ch. 1-4.**

**Week 12:** November 14

**Finance and Communication, cont.**

**Primary Reading:**


Read Ch. 1-4

Secondary Reading:

Week 13: November 21
The construction of capital
Primary Readings:

Read Ch. 1-4

Secondary Readings:

Week 14: November 28 (Thanksgiving Break)
No meeting

Week 15: December 5
The construction of capital
Primary Readings:

Read Ch. 5-16 and conclusion

Secondary Readings:

Read Ch. 1, 2

Week 16: December 12
Final Paper Due