Emotions in Organizations: 
Communication, control & commodification of feelings at work

COM 691 – Fall 2008 – Mondays 3:15-5:55 p.m. – SLN 72823

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Course Description
This graduate seminar explores the different ways emotion is socially and discursively constructed through communication and interaction, and how emotional performances, emotional control, abuse/bullying, compassion, emotional intelligence, stress and burnout are manifest in everyday organizational life. Emotion norms are perpetuated and naturalized through employee talk and organizational structures. Furthermore, employees engage in emotional activity through micro-practices including emotional labor, social support, compassion and empathy. And, of course, employees cope with affective events (constructed by discourse) through face to face and mediated interaction, story telling, venting, joking and advice giving.

Topics will include theoretical considerations as well as case study analyses. Through class discussions, readings and assignments, students will learn the value of understanding how emotion issues—both organizational norms about them and employees’ ways of dealing with them—are central to the study of organizational communication.

This class is a graduate seminar, and as such, students will spend significant time reading and analyzing advanced texts, generating discussion based upon these texts, providing peer feedback and bringing in their own ideas from outside, original, research. As an instructor I will alternately act as background provider, listener, moderator, devil’s advocate, questioner and sounding board for student reflections and research.

Course Resources

- Password-protected readings on Blackboard (see schedule below for citations). These are copyright protected and can be downloaded once per student for educational use.
- Within the first few weeks of the semester, students should send an email to Neal Ashkanasy requesting to become a member of “Emonet”—the primary listserv community of emotion and organizing scholars. See: http://www.uq.edu.au/emonet/.

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1 This course and syllabus was designed by Sarah J. Tracy in Fall 2008. Others are free to duplicate or reuse portions of this syllabus with a simple notation of source and an email fyi to Sarah.Tracy@asu.edu.
Class requirements (out of 500 pts total):

1. Semester Research Paper Project & Presentation (up to 225 pts). The culminating course project is a 20-to-25-page paper (APA style) on an issue related to emotion and communication in organizations. Students are encouraged to make use of the readings in this class. Format possibilities include original research studies (either qualitative or quantitative in nature), comprehensive critical literature reviews (e.g., check out examples in Communication Yearbook), advanced case analyses, or theory-based papers that include in-depth training modules.

If there is another type of project that you would like to complete—or if you would like to work with another—please feel free to approach me. If you work in a pair, you can begin doing so with the first draft (bbF). Co-authored projects will receive the same grade and should be slightly more expansive in terms of scope/length (e.g., 25-30 pages).

During the final exam period, you’ll be asked to give a 10 minute oral presentation of your final paper (25 of the listed points). This is an opportunity to practice a conference-quality presentation, complete with visual aids if appropriate.

2. Research Paper Building Blocks (up to 120 pts). The research project is segmented into seven “building block” assignments that lead toward your final paper. Building blocks A, B, C, D, E & G are worth 15 points each, with BB F (the first draft) worth 30 points. Please type these assignments, post them to blackboard before class, bring one paper copy to turn in and be prepared to share ideas. Details of each assignment appear below, examples appear on blackboard and further details may be discussed in class.

We will adopt a workshop format in which students will provide constructive feedback on these to each other. Please review and provide constructive feedback within a week to the student who turned in their project immediately after yours (an emailed paragraph to author cc’ed to Dr. Tracy). This peer feedback process shows the range of projects being tackled and provides the opportunity for a breadth of feedback.

   A. Three potential topics: Humans often “satisfice,” going with the first workable decision we stumble upon, rather than the “best” possible decision. In the effort to determine a “better” semester project, describe three potential project ideas. For each, come up with an overall research question or research problem that your project will tackle. For inspiration, consider syllabus readings, organizational dilemmas you’ve faced, unanswered questions in the literature, hot topics, or issues that confuse and/or energize you. Briefly discuss the rationale or significance of each.

   B. Abstract: Usually people write the abstract after they are finished with a paper. In this class, you’ll be asked to write one before you begin. Examine models of course reading abstracts, and write something at 400-500 words. Writing this first provides a road map. Your abstract will change over the semester—this is a place to start.

   C. Conceptual “cocktail party”: Consider your paper’s audience—the handful of scholars you most want to dialogue with about your project. Choose 3-4 scholars who you would choose to be reading/responding to/critiquing your research. Collect at least two articles from each scholar, and provide an overview with the citation and a brief explanation as to why you’ve chosen this person to be part of your conceptual cocktail party. Ultimately, in your final paper, you should be citing these scholars in the first few paragraphs. You might also shoot them an email letting them know how you are making use of/appreciating their research.
D. Annotated Bibliography: Share with the class the types of citations and articles you’re making use of for your semester project (have fifteen or more—citations from this class are acceptable and encouraged). This bibliography should make use of, yet build upon your conceptual cocktail party. Provide the citation in APA style and in several sentences describe several points that make it useful for your project.

E. Article format models: Find three or four published articles that, format-wise, “do” the same thing that you want to do in your own paper. For example, if you are conducting a focus-group study in which you meld two theoretical points of view, find other articles that do the same (the model need not be on the same topic). Consider publication venues appropriate for your own work in the future. Cite the source in APA style, and for each of “model”, create an outline of what is done in the article (e.g., “rationalizes the use of theory abc as a new way of making sense of xyz behavior”) and the amount of space (number of pages or paragraph) used to do it in. These will assist you in determining the organizational framework of your own paper. Use the article “headers” as a rough guide of how detailed the outline should be.

F. First Draft: Write the first full draft of the semester paper.

G. First Draft Peer Feedback: Provide structured feedback and suggestions to two of your colleagues’ papers. Use “track changes” on Microsoft Word as well as provide a one-two page overview/summary of your comments. Use this as an opportunity to practice skills in reviewing scholarly papers (something you will do in the future as you review conference papers and journal articles).

3. Dynamic Discussion-Leading (up to 80 pts). Each student will lead discussion for a subset of the assigned readings. Doing so provides an opportunity to practice concept-integration skills and presentation abilities. Dates for discussion leading will be chosen within the first two weeks of class.

Discussion leaders will be graded upon thoughtfulness and timeliness of discussion questions; thoroughness, readability and format of outlines; clear effort at improving a Wikipedia site; liveliness and organization of discussion leading; and command of topic.

Discussion leading includes the following activities:

a. Touch base a week in advance to discuss the time range of discussion-leading;

b. Prepare 3-5 discussion questions for us to think about and respond to electronically via blackboard and verbally in class. Please feel free to solicit questions from class members. Post these to blackboard at least five days in advance so that other students can consider these issues as they read the articles.

c. Develop typed outlines (~2 single-spaced pages per article is usually appropriate). Post these on blackboard by midnight the night before class (if, for some reason, the midnight deadline passes without your posting them, please bring paper copies for all students). The outlines should include:
   - Your name and date
   - The full citation of the article (APA style)
   - A full-sentence outline of the article
   - An evaluative paragraph that notes one or two strengths of the piece, weaknesses/limitations, how the piece connects to other course readings and what it suggests in terms of appropriate or fruitful future research.
d. Refer to 3-4 of the readings listed in additional resources for that day (e.g., their topic and how they fit with the larger theme of the day).

e. Update/enhance a Wikipedia webpage on some issue related to the week’s theme (add at least three or four new sentences/citations). Details and assistance will be provided by the 792 course assistant.

f. In class, provide a brief overview of the readings, (to get us warmed up), cover any key terms or theories (turning to the instructor for more information if desired), present / integrate the main concepts in an interactive, lively manner—making use of discussion questions, activities and application to course projects.

g. Bring one paper copy of discussion questions, outlines, Wikipedia update and any other relevant material to class to be turned in.

5. Unswerving Attendance and Intellectually Passionate Participation (up to 75 pts). Students should come to class prepared with noted responses to discussion questions and show an informed understanding of the readings through enthusiastic verbal participation. Students can also participate by posting electronic responses on discussion board, asking simple factual questions, pointing out methodological assumptions, critiquing the research, noting a point of admiration, clarifying a concept that will help everyone, applying the study to your research project or to some other personal experience, etc. I will evaluate students’ participation by making notations regarding the following:

- Informed reflection of required readings consistently throughout the semester
- Careful and respectful listening to others and dialoguing with alternate views
- Mindful reflection of “floor-time”, and efforts to integrate others’ contributions
- Evident class preparation (finished assignments, course readings, texts)
- Attendance and professionalism (arriving on-time, avoiding early departures, paying attention, avoiding side conversations and cell phone interference)
- Bringing value and contribution to our learning community

If you must miss a single class, you can make up the attendance points by creating an outline of an unassigned reading (please propose before completing).

Course Policies

Assignments, Due Dates & Incompletes: Assignments, unless listed otherwise, are due at the beginning of class. A late written assignment will be penalized up to 10% for each day it is late. Due to time constraints, discussion-leading will only receive credit when completed on the day scheduled. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. No assignments (except for final paper) will be accepted after Wednesday, December 10th. Incompletes are available to students who: 1) have finished more than half the coursework, 2) experience serious illness or personal emergency, and 3) negotiate the incomplete before December 10th. It is in students’ best interest to let me know if they are having difficulty keeping up in the class.

Unique Academic Needs: Students with academic needs that require special assignment considerations can be accommodated. Students should document their needs with the University’s Disability Resources Center and see me within the first two weeks of class to discuss options.

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty: Although several graduate papers may overlap in conceptual focus, students’ 691 research projects should be original work devised for this class. If students plan on using material prepared for a different course, please consult with me regarding appropriateness. ASU’s academic integrity and plagiarism policies are applicable to this course. Please see http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic_integrity.htm.

Students are responsible for knowing APA style for citing outside sources.
**Grading:** Letter grades are figured as to the following guidelines (out of 500 pts).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outstanding – above expectations</th>
<th>Good – above average</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Un satisfactory</th>
<th>Failing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 465 – 484 pts</td>
<td>B 415 – 434 pts</td>
<td>C 350 – 384 pts</td>
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<td>below 349 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- 450 – 464 pts</td>
<td>B- 400 – 414 pts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>XE - academic dishonesty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weekly Schedule—Subject to change via an announcement in class or discussion board**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class-Day</th>
<th>Topic / Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1-8/25    | **EMOTIONS IN ORGANIZATIONS OVERVIEW**

| 1-8/25 | **NO CLASS – LABOR DAY HOLIDAY**
The following resources (which constitute different research formats I’ve experimented with while studying emotion and organizing) are provided for background and a brainstorming springboard.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>MODELS, PARADIGMS &amp; METHODS OF EMOTION AND ORGANIZATION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DUE</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3-9/15</td>
<td>EMOTIONAL LABOR – THE SEMINAL WORK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Section</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Due: bb C – Conceptual Cocktail Party |
Additional Resources  
Due: bb D – Annotated Bibliography (continued on next page) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7-10/13</th>
<th><strong>Additional Resources</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Due: bb D – Annotated Bibliography**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8-10/20</th>
<th><strong>HUMOR &amp; CYNICISM IN ORGANIZATIONS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Additional Resources**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9-10/27</th>
<th><strong>COMPASSION &amp; POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP – GUEST, DEBORAH WAY</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Way, D. – Excerpts from dissertation / prospectus (will be distributed in October)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Due: bb E – Article Format Models** (continued on next page)
### Additional Resources


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### Due: bb E – Article Format Models

#### CARE, GENDER, EMOTION AND THE WORK-FAMILY INTERFACE


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### Additional Resources


Tracy, S. J. (in press). Care as a common good. For inclusion in the special issue: “Redefining the Professor(iate): Valuing Commitments to Care and Career in Academe for Women’s Studies in Communication.” *Women and Language.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11-11/7</th>
<th><strong>EMOTION, CULTURE &amp; TRANSNATIONALIZATION</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> <em>bb F - First Draft</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13-11/17</td>
<td>ANGER, COURAGE AND CRISIS EMOTIONS IN ORGANIZATIONS</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due: bb G - Peer Feedback—Due by midnight 11/25</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| 11/24 | NO CLASS - NCA HAVE A GREAT THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY! |
| (Remember peer feedback due tomorrow by midnight) |

| 14-12/1 | EMOTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE |
| **Additional Resources** |
WELCOME TO THE EMOTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION FAMILY!

The following are additional studies by people in the communication discipline—aka prime suspects for potential readers, responders or reviewers. Read four articles that are especially relevant to your topic or format of study and be generally aware of the others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tracy, S. J., &amp; Tracy, K.</td>
<td>Emotion labor at 911: A case study and theoretical critique</td>
<td><em>Journal of Applied Communication Research</em></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>390-411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuler, S. &amp; Sypher, B. D.</td>
<td>Seeking emotional labor: When managing the heart enhances the work experience</td>
<td><em>Management Communication Quarterly</em></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan &amp; Krone</td>
<td>Bending the rules of “professional” display: Emotional improvisation in caregiver performances</td>
<td><em>Journal of Applied Communication Research</em></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>317-340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutgen-Sandvik, P.</td>
<td>The communicative cycle of employee emotional abuse: Generation and regeneration of workplace mistreatment</td>
<td><em>Management Communication Quarterly</em></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>471-501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott, C. &amp; Myers, K. K.</td>
<td>The socialization of emotion: Learning emotion management at the fire station</td>
<td><em>Journal of Applied Communication Research</em></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>67-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, K., and Koesten, J.</td>
<td>Financial feeling: An investigation of emotion and communication in the workplace</td>
<td><em>Journal of Applied Communication Research</em></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheney, G., Lair, &amp; Planalp, S.</td>
<td>Meaningful work and personal/social well being: Organizational communication engages the meanings of work</td>
<td><em>Communication Yearbook</em></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>(pp. tba)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Due: Final Semester Paper – Have in SJT's mailbox by 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 12*

STUDENT FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>12/15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ALPHABETICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY


Harlos & Pinder (Fineman text #14). Emotion and injustice in the workplace.


Tracy, S. J. (in press). Care as a common good. For inclusion in the special issue: “Redefining the Professor(iate): Valuing Commitments to Care and Career in Academe for Women’s Studies in Communication.” *Women and Language.*


