Department of Communication
Spring 2023 Graduate Course Descriptions

COM 7325 Computational Communication Research

Dr. Jianing Li

This course is an introduction to computational communication research. This course aims to help you: (1) gain familiarity with major computational methods currently available to communication researchers, (2) develop a conceptual understanding of and make critical assessment of how computational methods help describe, explain, and predict communication phenomena, (3) learn how computational approaches could triangulate with other research methods to advance theory, and (4) gain practical experience in incorporating computational methods in your own research. This course does not require prior experience in programming and welcomes both students with humanistic backgrounds and students with social scientific backgrounds.

SPC 6934 Communication and Resistance

Dr. Mahuya Pal

This course examines communicative meanings of resistance from a number of critical theoretical traditions. It offers an understanding of colonial modes of extraction in the neoliberal economy through displacement and dispossession of underprivileged communities, accompanied by unbridled growth of transnational corporations. To deconstruct power relations at a macro and micro level, we will closely examine how discursive and material practices of resistance are enacted in the face of structural violence offering entry points for decolonial politics. Our goal is to engage in critical debates about the role of communication in the realms of participation, democracy, civil society, and social and environmental justice.

SPC 6934 Autoethnography

Dr. Keith Berry

This course entails exploring and practicing autoethnography, a systematic and experimental approach to the study of culture which draws on people's lived experience as evidence. Our readings will discuss the history of autoethnography as an ethnographic method, the different ways of "doing"

autoethnography, and the challenges and opportunities related to autoethnographic inquiry. Students will work throughout the semester on writing their own autoethnography. The course is designed for students in all research areas. No previous experience with autoethnography is required.

SPC 6934 Critical Cultural Studies

Dr. Rachel Dubrofsky

The course offers an opportunity to explore key concerns in Critical/Cultural studies (CCS), such as power, oppression, identity, and everyday culture. We examine how knowledge is produced—including how we, as scholars, produce knowledge. Material centers the study of media and culture, engaging questions of privilege, resistance, and disenfranchisement. Readings focus on critical studies of race, gender and media, privileging an intersectional perspective that follows in the tradition of critical race and feminist scholarship. The aim of coursework is practical: develop projects that grapple with theoretical frameworks and methods suitable for CCS scholarship. Course activities involve research, writing, revision and peer review, and developing questions that challenge and problematize critical issues.

SPC 6934 Language, Mind, and Social Interaction

Dr. Mariaelena Bartesaghi

> First of all do [not] worry about whether [participants are] "thinking." Just try to come to terms with how it is that the thing comes off. Because you'll find that they can do these things with remarkable immediacy such that they couldn't have thought that fast…Look to see how it is that persons go about producing what they do produce.
>
> Sacks, *Lectures on Conversation*, 1992, p. 11

What might sociologists Harvey Sacks' observation mean for communication? And what *should* we worry is going on *in* communication if we are not to worry about participants' "thinking"? How are we to interpret what communication means, signifies or represents? And what of our concerns with intention, cognition, psychological workings, and mind? This seminar invites an investigation of these questions by exploring the connection between language and mind, in biological, cultural, and psychological contexts. We will then move to interrogate the very nature of categories such as biology, culture, and psychology as everyday pragmatic accomplishments, and explore language, mind, and social interaction as essentially visible dynamics of routine practical action. What you take away is of course up to you; I hope we will raise interesting questions, and, like Sacks, assuage some old worries about communication in novel ways. Whatever your area of interest in communication and how it , is, this course will press you to pay close attention to how our assumptions constitute possibilities for being in the world.

ORI 6456 Performance Theory

Dr. Chris McRae

In this course, we will survey performance theories, methods, and histories within the communication discipline. In particular we will consider the ways contemporary performance studies scholars and artists use performance as a metaphor, a method of inquiry, and subject of analysis in the study of human communication. In this survey of scholarship, we will explore theories, enduring questions, and methods of inquiry that broadly shape and inform performance studies. The overarching goal of this course is to introduce and consider the ways performance studies functions as a generative, creative, and critical mode of inquiry in communication studies.