

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Annenberg School for Communication
School of Communication

Syllabus for COMM 599
Global Organizational Communication
Wednesday, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
ANSC 331
Spring 2002

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GLOBAL ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Course Description

At the start of the twenty-first century the world is continuing to undergo, as it has for some time now, radical change processes collectively known as globalization. Globalization affects communication and many other aspects of human life around the world such as culture, consumption, work, politics, and finances. Nowhere is this process more pronounced than in the realm of organizations and communication. In business, as well as for other organizations, globalization means many things, but at a minimum it generally means that organizations seek (a) worldwide markets for their products and services, and (b) optimal worldwide locations for their various facilities. These objectives mean that they must address issues of diversity, distance, time, and culture. The primary means for accomplishing these tasks is communication and computer-based information technology. Global Organizational Communication examines these processes.

Texts

Parker, B. (1998). *Globalization and business practice: Managing across boundaries*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Scholte, J. A. (2000). *Globalization: A critical introduction*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Course Activities

Class time. Our class meetings during the semester will be largely devoted to discussing the readings and to informal lectures. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings for that day. To facilitate discussion we are asking that you post questions and ideas about the readings to the course discussion board. These are due by noon on the Tuesday before each class. We will collate them and bring them to class on Wednesday and use them as part of the basis for class discussion.

Office Hours. Our office hours this semester are Mondays, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m., and by appointment on most any other day. You can also reach us by email and phone. We will also create an email list for the class so that everyone can communicate directly by email.

Current Topics. Much is being written in the academic literature and popular press these days about various aspects of globalization. You are encouraged to bring to class copies of current articles, Internet items, and other materials that focus on the topic of the day. We will set aside a few minutes in each class period for discussing the current topics you bring to class. Everyone will make two current topic presentations during the semester.

We will provide signup sheets so that you can select your two presentation days. Current topic presentations are not graded but are required.

Course Project Papers and Presentations. As a part of the course you will be expected to write two papers and make two presentations to the class, one on each paper. One of the papers will be an individual project, the second, a team effort. The two papers are meant to complement each other, and you will need to coordinate the two in order to fulfill the assignments.

To begin, you will need to form teams of two to four people who are interested in studying a particular global "organizational sector." An organizational sector can be economic, educational, governmental, religious, social, or any other major grouping of worldwide organizations (e.g. nongovernmental organizations, labor unions, etc.) that is of interest to the members of your team.

The first project, The Organizational Analysis, is a careful examination of communication processes in a specific global organization in your team's "organizational sector." Members of each team must select different organizations for their analyses, but all members of your team must research organizations from the same industry or sector. Give consideration to selecting organizations that are not headquartered in your home country.

Here are several issues that you should address in the first part of your research paper:

1. Introduce the firm, its products, services, and markets, and provide a brief history.
2. Provide the most recent economic data on the firm, including revenues, markets/nations served and number of employees worldwide. You might want to put some of this information in an appendix and summarize it in the text. How is the firm structured and organized? [See GBP, pp. 75-76; 138-139; 288-294; 346-357; and 501-509 in the text]
3. What are the organization's mission, vision, purpose, and ideals? This section should describe the firm's purpose for being and how it intends to accomplish this in the global marketplace. You might want to provide a couple of examples to show how the organization works to achieve its vision/mission/purpose. [See GBP, Chapter 3, Part 2)
4. What is the size of your organization's global industry in terms of revenues, numbers of employees, or similar data, and where does your firm rank quantitatively compared to others in the industry? What is the firm's competitive stance? With whom does it compete and what are its major strategies/approaches to competing in the global market? What do you and the firm's leaders see as the future of the firm in this industry? [see Chapters 2 and 8]

In the remainder of the paper, you should address the **first** issue below and at least **three** of the remaining topics. You can integrate the topics or treat them separately. If you choose the latter alternative, be sure to tie the separate topics together.

- 1 What are the communication issues facing the organization? What are its communication practices? What communication technologies does it use to communicate with its various constituencies? How has globalization influenced its communication systems? What problems does it face and what changes would enable it to perform better in a globalized 21st century?
- 2 How is your organization affected by such external influences as problems that cannot be solved, measuring intangibles, valuing diversity, and addressing new issues for which managers and organizations may not be well prepared. [See GBP, pp. 66-70]
- 3 Demonstrate ways by which your firm is responding to or shaping cultural globalization. What are the assumptions organizational members make about the role culture plays in their work? What are the firm's responses and practices when it encounters cultural similarities and differences? What cultural challenges does the firm face? [See GBP, Chapter 4]
- 4 Demonstrate how the firm is responsive to a globalizing economy. For example, what are its practices relating to managing in a global economy, e.g., direct investments, export/import behavior, sourcing patterns, hiring from a global labor pool, etc.? [See GBP, Chapters 5 and 6]
- 5 Demonstrate ways the firm is responsive to a globalizing political environment. This section can include benefits/costs of trade pact participation, organizational responses to rules and regulations of specific countries or worldwide, ways the organization lobbies to alter its environment, etc. [See GBP, Chapter 7]
- 6 Demonstrate the firm's response to technological progress within or outside its industry. This section might include research and development programs, intellectual property protection, technology transfer, or how the firm has adopted other technologies. [See GBP, Chapter 9]
- 7 Demonstrate the firm's responsiveness to globalization of natural resources. What are the firm's major issues with respect to acquiring and using natural resources? Is it involved in sustainable development? Does it use environmental accounting, pollution controls, etc. to protect the environment? [See GBP, Chapter 10]

You will need to search both the library and Internet sources for information in order to be able to complete this project. Since this is a research paper, you are expected to consult a variety of resources and to document them using a standard format, such as the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA, 5th edition). Copies are on reserve in the Communication Resource Center in the Annenberg School. Your paper should include a minimum of 20 references to academic sources in addition to any other sources you might site on the Internet and in the popular press.

A two-page proposal for The Organizational Analysis paper is due on February 6th. Identify the organization that you are going to analyze and resources you have found that will enable you to do the analysis. Indicate which three (or more) topics in items 2-6 above you will cover (e.g., culture, technology, and the environment). Describe what you envision for the completed paper. The paper presentations are due in class on March 6th. Please submit the papers to us electronically as an attached file to an email message before class on March 6th.

The team Global Sectors Project is an extension of the individual papers. Its purpose is to help each person gain greater insight into communication issues and challenges that transcend individual firms and/or are unique to specific global industries. The focus of the project should be on communication processes that are an integral part of the six globalization topics covered in the class: culture, capital, labor, politics, technologies, and natural environments.

The project should begin with an introduction to the industry. Summarize the relevant data that provides a good overview of the industry. It may make sense to include some of what you learned from your study of individual firms in this industry. If you do, be sure to provide some way for readers to understand how the individual firms represent, or do not represent, this industry.

The majority of the project should focus on communication and globalization processes in the industry. What communication issues does this industry face as it addresses globalization in culture, capital, labor, etc. What are its communication practices? What communication technologies does it use to communicate with its various constituencies? How has globalization influenced its communication systems? What problems does it face and what changes would enable it to perform better in a globalized 21st century?

The project should end with a set of conclusions and/or recommendations about communication and globalization in your industry. Address questions like: What does the future hold for this industry? What communication technologies and practices should this industry develop in order to thrive in the 21st century and beyond? What should individual firms in this industry do to promote themselves as well as the industry as a whole?

The project should begin with a team plan, which should be submitted on February 20. The plan should include:

- 1 an overall vision/mission statement for your project,
- 2 an outline of your team's project,
- 3 a description of the process you will use to create your project,
- 4 a statement of the role and contributions of each group member, and
- 5 a description of what you plan to learn.

The project can take any number of forms. You can create a website that provides the information for the project. You can create a media presentation for an outlet like the Annenberg School's Online Journalism Review or for USC's Trojan Vision. You can prepare a consulting report for one of the firms in your industry or for one of the professional associations representing the entire industry. You can write a traditional academic paper. In short, use your collective creativity to make the most interesting and useful project possible.

As your team develops the global sectors project plan, think about how your individual organizational analysis can help you meet your group's goals. Much of what you do in the individual projects has parallels for the group project. The point here is to plan your individual research so that you will be prepared to fulfill requirements for the group project. Throughout both projects use a critical eye to evaluate the materials you use.

Both of your presentations should be as polished and professional as you can make them. These include appropriate presentation aids such as overheads, Powerpoint visuals, linkages to the World Wide Web, and/or handouts. The projects and the project presentations are due in class on May 1.

Evaluation

Organizational Analysis Paper	40%
Global Sectors project	40%
Presentations (10% each)	20%
Total	100%

Academic Integrity

The School of Communication is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, purchasing papers or other assignments, or any other form of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade in the course from the instructor and the School will recommend that the student be dismissed from the Communication major. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Course Outline, Weekly Readings, and Assignments

Date	Topic	Assignment
Jan. 9	Introduction	
Jan. 16	What is Globalization? What is Global about Globalization? The Global Enterprise: Expanding Boundaries	Scholte, Cps.1 & 2 GBP, Cp. 1 & Cp. 2, Part 1
Jan. 23	Globalization in History A Model of Global Environments	Scholte, Cp. 3 GBP, Cp. 2, Part 2
Jan. 30	Organizational Traditions and Challenges	GBP, Cp. 3, Part 1
Feb. 6	What Causes Globalization? Theory and Practice of Global Change	Scholte, Cp. 4 GBP, Cp. 3, Part 2 Organizational Analysis proposals due
Feb.13	Global Culture and Organizations	Scholte, Cp. 7 GBP, Cp. 4, Parts 1, 2
Feb. 20	The Global Economy	Scholte, Cp. 5 GBP, Cp. 5, Part 1 Global Sectors Proposals due
Feb.27	Organizational Processes, Structures, and Competencies	Scholte, Cp. 8 GBP, Cp. 5, Part 2; Cp. 6, Part 2
Mar. 6	Organizational Analysis Project Presentations	Presentations and Papers Due
Mar. 13	Spring Break	Enjoy!
Mar. 20	Political and Legal Environments	Scholte, Cps. 6 & 9 GBP, Cp. 7, Parts 1 & 2
Mar. 27	Global Industries & Labor	Scholte, Cps.10 & 11 GBP, Ch.6, Part 1; Cp. 8, Parts 1 & 2
Apr. 3	Global Technologies, and Network & Virtual Organizations	GBP, Cp. 9, Part 1 DeSanctis & Monge, 1999 Monge & Fulk, 1999
Apr. 10	Knowledge and Intellectual Property	GBP, Cp. 9, Part 2
Apr. 17	Globalization, the Natural Environment, & Sustainable Growth	GBP, Cp. 10, Parts 1 & 2
Apr. 24	The Global Commons	Scholte, Cp. 12
May 1	Global Sectors Project Presentations	Presentation & Papers due

