

**COMM 470: Listening**  
**Spring 2017**  
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**TEXTBOOK:**

Wolvin, A. D. (Ed.). (2010). *Listening and human communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Boston, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Research indicates that the majority of our communication time is spent in listening; yet not enough educational training is devoted to developing effective listening skills and attitudes. The aim of this course is to equip you to understand listening behavior from various perspectives and to enable you to understand and strengthen your own listening behavior.

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. articulate the process and the role of listening as a communication function,
2. critically conceptualize and evaluate research in listening, and
3. listen more effectively at various levels of the process.

*This course satisfies the following National Communication Association's Learning Outcomes in Communication (LOC):*

- *LOC #2: Employ communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts*
- *LOC #4: Create messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context*
- *LOC #8: Utilize communication to embrace difference*

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**1. Concept examination** (readings and class discussion).

**2. Chapter Principles:** You will be assigned to a communication team to provide a review of one of the 11 chapters in the Clampitt text. The group should prepare to: (a) take the class through an explanation of the key principles in the chapter; (b) illustrate an application of the principles to communication management; and (c) discuss benchmarks for effective communication management.

**3. Research project:** Select an area and research what is known/not known about communication management in that area (e.g. political communication). Take a communication management theory and use your case study to explicate that theoretical perspective. Your research should include a literature review on the communication management theory and on communication in the sector (e.g. the banking industry) represented in your study. Conduct observations and interviews in an actual organization which is representative of the area of study. The paper should include four sections: (a) introduction; (b) literature review establishing the

theoretical framework for your analysis; (c) case study of the organization; and (d) implications, ideally some best practices or benchmarks, for communication management. Utilize APA guidelines. Your paper should be of publishable quality. Additionally, prepare a professional oral briefing (with PowerPoint) of your project to present to the class.

#### **4. Project examination** (case studies).

#### **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:**

##### **Unit I: INTRODUCTION**

Week 1: Introduction to the Course.  
Watson-Barker Pre-Test.

Week 2: Listening As Communication (Read Text, ch. 12 and “Models of the Listening Process”).

##### **Unit II: THE PROCESS OF LISTENING: What Listening Is**

Week 2: Listening: Motivation and Purpose. Reception (Text, chs. 1, 6).

Week 3: Listening: Attention.  
Listening: Perception.

Week 4: Listening: Verbal Meaning.  
Listening: Nonverbal Meaning .

Week 5: Listening: Cognitive Structuring.  
Listening: Response.

Week 6: Listening: Variables (Text, ch. 4)  
Listening Models.

Prepare YOUR model of the listening process. The model should reflect the components of the process and the major variables which affect the process. It should be a creative, original, sophisticated model which illustrates your thorough, conceptual understanding of the listening process. Prepare a short PowerPoint briefing to explain your model to the class and prepare a written explanation--with some citations from the book, class notes, etc.--of the model to submit. The model will be evaluated according to five criteria: (1) Does the model illustrate the complex nature of the listening process? (2) Does the model account for the major components involved in listening? (3) Does the model account for the major variables which affect the listening process? (4) Does the model differ from other models? (5) Is the model presented clearly? The model is your midterm project, designed to pull together your theoretical understanding of the process of listening which has been developed through the text and through class discussions and activities. Note: This is to be a model of the listening process, not of the communication process.

Avoid centering your view of listening on the auditory channel—hearing—alone.)

Week 7: Listening Models.

**Unit III: LISTENING TAXONOMY: What Listeners Do**

Week 7: Developing Listening Competencies.

Week 8: Listening Taxonomy: Discrimination. (Text. Ch. 6).  
Listening Taxonomy: Comprehension (Text, ch. 6).

Week 9: Listening Taxonomy: Therapeutic (Text, ch. 5)  
Listening: Critical

Week 10: Listening: Appreciation (Text, ch. 9)

**Unit IV: LISTENING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Week 10: Listening Roles and Responsibilities. Listening Contexts. (Text, chs. 5,8,9,10.)

Week 11: Listening Portfolio.

Prepare a listening portfolio which includes (1) your goals and objectives for improvement as a listener; (2) a journal of listening experiences which details at least one entry for each of the five levels—discriminative, comprehensive, therapeutic, critical, appreciative--of listening. Describe the experience, discuss how you responded as a listener, and detail what you learned about yourself as a listener from the listening experience; (3) a log—a list by time of your listening experiences for an entire day; (4) a list of all of the listening assessments\* that you have taken throughout the semester—the instrument and your score. Write an overall paragraph interpretation of what this profile tells you about you as a listener; (5) a report of an interview with a professional listener. Interview a professional listener—a counselor, therapist, interviewer, customer service representative, attorney, court reporter, minister, etc., in an informational interview. Set up the interview and prepare a series of questions\*\* that you'd like answered about how this professional does listen. Focus your questions on listening techniques, roles, problems, importance, and what the individual feels is the role of listening in his/her field. Ask what techniques this person has found to be helpful in functioning as a listener. After you have completed the interview, write up a report of the interview which (a) identifies the interviewee and his/her position; (b) briefly describes the interview, including a list of the questions that you asked; (c) summarizes thoroughly the interviewee's observations on listening. You don't have to submit a verbatim transcript of this interview; and (6) a comprehensive essay in which you establish thorough, sophisticated criteria—standards of excellence, benchmarks—for what is a competent listener (cite text and class notes as relevant) and evaluate yourself according to the criteria you set up. Avoid using “just listen” or “simply listen” phrases. Prepare to share the results of your interview with a professional listener with the class.)

**Unit V: LISTENING RESEARCH**

Week 12: Listening Research and Listenability (Text ch. 2, 3).  
Listening Research.

Review research studies on a listening variable that interests you. Write a paper that offers a documented literature review summarizing some of the current research on this variable. At the end of your paper, discuss the implications of the research on our understanding of and future research on listening behavior. Include a bibliography of the research you review. Please use APA style. Prepare a short, informal oral briefing to share your review with the class. Note: The oral report is a requirement of this project.)

Week 13: Listening Research Panels.

Week 14: Listening Research Panels (continued).  
Listening Research Panels (continued. Two copies of your research paper due).

Week 15: Watson-Barker Post-Test. (Note: This test is a course requirement.) Wrap-Up.

\*(LISTENING ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS):

Watson-Barker Pre-Test  
Communicator Style Instrument  
Motivation to Listen Scale  
Learning Channel Preference  
Janusik-Wolvin Listening Inventory  
Brain Dominance Inventory  
Receiver Apprehension Test  
Listener Preference Profile  
Willingness to Listen Scale  
PONS Test  
Jones-Mohr Listening Test  
Long Island Listening Comprehension Test  
Steinbrecher-Wilmington Listening Test  
Active Empathetic Listening Scale  
Listening Observer Feedback Sheet  
Therapeutic Listening Inventory  
Listening Competencies Questionnaire

\*\* (PROFESSIONAL LISTENER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS)

It would be interesting to know:

(Cognitive) How do you know about listening? (intuitive, experience, actual training) How do you prepare to listen? How do you debrief your listening experience? (Affective) How important is listening to what you do? (Behavior) How do you listen? (strategies and techniques)