



EXTENDED CAMPUS

COLLEGE *of* PROFESSIONAL
and CONTINUING STUDIES

COMM 6970-105: Seminar: Communication and Humor

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to current theories and research pertaining to how humor functions in human communication. We'll examine what is humorous, how humor has played a role in evolution, and how it affects various aspects of human interaction. Furthermore, the class will focus on both analyzing humor as goal-directed communicant and producing humor.

In examining some basic theoretical approaches to the positive and negative aspects of humorous communication, we will study the application of humor to issues of attraction, conflict resolution, organizational culture, education, group identity, politics, and persuasion. Because this seminar functions as an introduction to an extensive literature, the discussions and readings associated with each of the many theoretical and practical issues will necessarily be abbreviated. However, the expectation is that students will read beyond the texts, especially with regard to issues related to areas of special interest to each student.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: January 22 - 28, 2018

Location: Washington, D.C. Liaison Office - 2189 Crystal Plaza Arcade, Arlington, VA, 22202.

Hours: Monday - Friday 6:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m.; Saturday 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sunday 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: December 24, 2017

Site Director:

Email: apwashington@ou.edu. Phone: 703-418-4800.

Professor Contact Information:

Course Professor: John A. Banas, Ph.D.

Mailing Address: Department of Communication
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK 73019

Telephone Number: (405) 325-1568

Cell Phone Number: (512) 585-5104

E-mail Address: jbanas@ou.edu

Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:

Student materials are available at the OU Follett Bookstore located at 1185 Asp Avenue; Norman, OK, and can be ordered online, by phone, by email, or by fax. Ordering online at <http://www.bkstr.com/oklahomastore/home> is strongly recommended – students can track the status of their order within 48 hours. If an order has not been shipped within three days, students can contact the

Follett textbook manager by phone (405) 325-3511, (800) 522-0772 (toll-free) or email 0831mgr@fheg.follett.com. Phone orders (ask for the textbook manager and identify yourself as an Advanced Programs student) can be placed 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday; 10 a.m. to 4p.m. on Saturday (CST). Summer hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (CST). Fax orders can be placed 24 hours a day at (405) 325-7770. Text prices are available online.

1. Martin, R. A. (2006). *The psychology of humor: An integrative approach*. Oxford: Elsevier Academic Press. ISBN 9780123725646.
2. Materials posted on the OU Canvas learning management system: Access Canvas at <https://canvas.ou.edu>, enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material. If you require assistance with Canvas, please click on the Help icon. You can search the Canvas guides, chat with Canvas support, or contact OU IT.

Note: Follett is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through Follett.

Course Objectives:

The primary purpose of this course is to enable students to understand the fundamentals of how humor functions in human communication. Application of theoretical ideas regarding humor to issues in human interaction is emphasized.

Course Outline:

For the most part, this class will be conducted as a seminar with the expectation that all members will participate actively in class discussion. Participants are therefore expected to come to each class having thoroughly prepared for that class session. The following is a guide and may be modified as the seminar progresses (**Note:** alternative topics and readings may become available and may be emailed to you prior to the first day of class, we may thus modify the schedule and topics to be included in the course discussions).

Date	Content	Readings
Day 1	Natural History of Laughter Basic Issues about Humor Social Construction of Humor	Provine, Ch. 2, 5
Day 2	Theories of Humor	Martin, Ch. 2, 3,
Day 3	Humor and Interpersonal Communication	Bippus: Ziv
Day 4	Humor and Identity: Race, Gender, Culture	Gilbert; Fey Barnes et al.; Miczo & Welter
Day 5	Humor and Influence/ Politics Humor and Politics	Martin, Ch. 5; Nabi Hart & Hartelius; Hariman; Bennett
Day 6	Humor and Organizations; Leadership Humor and Education; Humor and Health	Martin, Ch. 11, 8 Banas et al
Day 7	Performance of Humor	N/A

Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

Readings:

Students should have read the bulk of the readings before the course begins and should be prepared to discuss the assigned readings each class session. This course will be conducted at a graduate level, the

course professor will act more as a facilitator than a lecturer. This means participants are responsible for providing considered, informed, and active contributions to the discussion.

Written Assignment:

The following written assignment will be due on the first day of class and may be utilized for class discussion on that day. Students should write a double-spaced, typewritten paper of 7-10 page of text (in APA format with separate title page, abstract page, and reference section). Each student should come to class prepared to act as a guest lecturer (see below), ready to discuss his or her paper in a 20-30 minute oral presentation. A handout on APA format is available by email at the student’s convenience (email me any time and I’ll be happy to send it to you).

Each student will select one humor artifact to analyze (e.g., episode of a television show, funny song, stand-up comedy performance, satirical newspaper article from *The Onion*, a magazine article, or an internet video). The artifact should be something you personally find humorous. Students will utilize the theories of humor discussed in the Martin book (psychoanalytic, incongruity, superiority, arousal, and reversal) to describe the humor in their artifact. Each theory should be addressed, and an explanation of how the theory does or does not apply to the artifact should be provided. Finally, students should discuss how the theories fail to address humorous aspects of the artifact. That is, what is it about the artifact that you find funny that cannot be addressed by the various theories?

Reflections:

Each day, beginning with the second day of class, you will prepare a brief reflection, speculation, comment, or question concerning an aspect of the currently assigned reading (see below). You may take one or more concepts from the assigned reading and relate them to an incident you have either experienced or observed in your own life. Your reflections must be typed, double-spaced, and no more than one page in length. Reflections must be turned in (attached) via email **one hour prior to the beginning of the relevant class.**

Post-Seminar Assignment:

After the scheduled class time, students will write a term paper based on issues relevant to some aspect of humor and communication. The paper should:

- a) raise a question bearing on a issue of humor and communication;
- b) summarize current literature relevant to the issue;
- c) feature and relate a theory or paradigmatic model applicable to the issue; and
- d) form a conclusion.

The paper must follow APA format, have a separate title page, include a 100-word abstract, have 13-15 pages of text, and include a complete reference section. Students will first submit a short proposal introducing the topic they wish to address and some potential sources beyond the list supplied (see sample proposal attached). Once the proposal has been accepted, students may begin work on the paper. All work must be original and be properly prepared and referenced in APA format.

This project can be modified to meet the needs of the individual participant, and should be mailed to the professor within three weeks of the completion of the seminar. **Due date: February 18, 2018**

Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.

Assignment	Due Date	Percent of Grade
Written Assignment	First Class Session	25%
Reflections	1 Hour Before Each Subsequent Class	25%
Class Discussions	During Class Sessions	25%
Post-Seminar Paper	February 18, 2018	25%

Notice: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.

POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution's policy regarding "I" (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any "I" (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on "financial aid probation." If the "I" grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student's Financial Aid may be suspended making the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student's academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. Academic misconduct includes: cheating and using unauthorized materials on examinations and other assignments; improper collaboration, submitting the same assignment for different classes (self-plagiarism); fabrication, forgery, alteration of documents, lying, etc...in order to obtain an academic advantage; assisting others in academic misconduct; attempting to commit academic misconduct; destruction of property, hacking, etc...; intimidation and interference with integrity process; and plagiarism. All students should review the Student's Guide to Academic Integrity at http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. All students should review policies regarding student conduct at <http://studentconduct.ou.edu/>

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Adjustment for Pregnancy/Childbirth-Related Issues

Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss. Generally, modifications will be made where medically necessary and similar in scope to accommodations based on temporary disability. Please see <http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo/faqs/pregnancy-faqs.html>.

Title IX Resources

For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, or intimate partner violence, the University offers a variety of resources, including advocates on-call 24/7, counseling services, mutual no-contact orders, scheduling adjustments, and disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator. Please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office at smo@ou.edu or (405) 325-2215 (8-5), or the Sexual Assault Response Team at (405) 615 -0013 (24/7) to report an incident. To learn more about Title IX, please visit the Institutional Equity Office's website at <http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo.html>

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: <http://www.goou.ou.edu/>

INSTRUCTOR VITA

John A. Banas, Ph.D.

Education

- Ph. D. 2005, University of Texas at Austin, Department of Communication Studies
- M.A. 2001, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Department of Speech
- B.A. 1998, Michigan State University, Major: Communication

Current Positions

Associate Professor, Department of Communication, University of Oklahoma

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

- COMM 6970: Communication and Humor
- COMM 5553: Strategic Communication Campaigns
- COMM 5013: Introduction to Graduate Studies

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

My major areas of teaching focus on interpersonal communication and social influence. I teach a variety of classes, ranging from Communication and Humor to Social Influence Theory. My research program examines communication and social influence. In particular, I take an empirical approach to studying message design, message processing, and influence. My research focuses on theoretical issues rather than any one specific context. Recently, my social influence work has been focused on inoculation theory and resistance to persuasion. In addition to inoculation, I also have an ongoing research interest in the influence of humorous communication.

Representative Publications and Presentations

Articles in Refereed Journals

- Banas, J. A., & Miller, G. (2013). Inducing resistance to conspiracy theory propaganda: Testing inoculation and meta-inoculation strategies. *Human Communication Research*, 40, 1-24.
- Dunbar, N. E., Banas, J. A., Rodriguez, D., Liu, S. -J., & Abra, G. (2012). Humor use in power-differentiated interactions. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 25, 469-489.
- Banas, J. A., Turner, M. M., & Shulman, H. (2012). A test of competing hypotheses of the effects of mood on persuasion. *Communication Quarterly*, 60, 143-164 (lead article).
- Banas, J. A., & Turner, M. M. (2011). Exploring the “that’s-not-all” effect: A test of theoretical explanations. *Southern Communication Journal*, 76, 305-322.
- Banas, J. A., Dunbar, N., Rodriguez, D., & Liu, S.-J. (2011). A review of humor in educational settings: Four decades of research. *Communication Education*, 60, 115-144.
- Banas, J. A., & Rains, S. A. (2010). A meta-analysis of research on inoculation theory. *Communication Monographs*, 77, 281-311 (lead article).
- Wright, K., Rains, S. A., & Banas, J. A. (2010). When closeness is not best: Examining weak tie network support and stress. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 15, 606-624.
- Turner, M. M., Banas, J. A., Rains, S., Jang, S. A., Moore, J., & Morrison, D. (2010). The effects of altercasting and counter-attitudinal behavior on compliance: A lost letter technique investigation. *Communication Reports*, 23, 1-13.
- Wright, K., Banas, J. A., Bessarabova, E., & Bernard, D. (2010). Healthcare worker burnout: An initial analysis of a structural equation model. *Health Communication*, 25, 1-8 (lead article).
- Pfau, M., Banas, J. A., Semmler, S. M., Deatrck, L., Lane, L., Mason, A., Nisbett, G., Craig, E., & Underhill, J. (2010). Role and impact of involvement and enhanced threat in resistance. *Communication Quarterly*, 58, 1-18 (lead article).

- Pfau, M., Semmler, S. M., Deatrck, L., Lane, L., Mason, A., Nisbett, G., Craig, E., Cornelius, J. & Banas, J. A. (2009). Nuances about the role and impact of affect and enhanced threat in inoculation. *Communication Monographs*, 76, 73-98.
- Aune, R. K., Levine, T. R., Park, H. S., Asada, K. J., & Banas, J. A. (2005). Tests of a theory of communicative responsibility. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 24, 358-381.

Invited Articles

- Banas, J. A. (2011). Should teachers be funny? *Communication Currents*, 6.

Manuscripts under Review in Refereed Journals

- Banas, J. A., & Bessarabova, E. The influence of counterarguing on the inoculation process.
- Banas, J. A., Russell, J., Robertson, K., Adame, B., Watkins, K., & Scott, K. Inducing resistance to conspiracy theory media: Testing the effects of inoculation and priming.
- Banas, J. A., Kelley, K., Robertson, K., Bernard, D., & Averbeck, J. Affective inoculation: Testing two approaches on targeted and untargeted attitudes.
- Banas, J. A., & Turner, M. M. Toward a theory of elaborative resistance production.
- Richards, A., & Banas, J. A. Inoculating against reactance.

Manuscripts in Progress

- Banas, J. A., Bessarabova, E., & Underhill, J. Examining umbrella protection in inoculation as a function of initial attitude position.
- Banas, J. A., & Watson, J. Humorous inoculation and temporal effects.
- Banas, J. A., & Turner, M. M. Initial tests of the theory of elaborative resistance production: Three experiments.
- Bessarabova, E., & Banas, J. A. Inoculation and associative networks: A GALILEO analysis.

Refereed Conference Papers

- Banas, J. A., & Miller, G. (November, 2011). *Inducing resistance to conspiracy theory propaganda: Testing inoculation and meta-inoculation strategies*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Richards, A., & Banas, J. A. (November, 2011). *Inoculating against reactance*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Banas, J. A., Dunbar, N., Rodriguez, D., & Liu, S.-J. (April, 2011). *A Review of Humor in educational settings: Four decades of research*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Central States Communication Association, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- Wright, K., Banas, J. A., Moore, S., & Bernard, D. (November, 2010). *A communication competence approach to healthcare worker conflict, job stress, job burnout and job satisfaction*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, San Francisco, California.
- Banas, J. A., & Bessarabova, E. (November, 2009). *The influence of counterarguing on the inoculation process*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Chicago, Illinois.
- Wright, K., Rains, S. A., & Banas, J. A. (November, 2009). *When closeness is not best: Examining weak tie network support and stress*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Chicago, Illinois.
- Wright, K., Bernard, D., & Banas, J. A. (May, 2009). *Healthcare worker burnout: An initial analysis of a structural equation model*. Presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Chicago, Illinois.
- Banas, J. A., & Rains, S. A. (November, 2008). *A meta-analysis of research on inoculation theory*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Chicago, Illinois.
- Pfau, M., Semmler, S. M., Deatrck, L., Lane, L., Mason, A., Nisbett, G., Craig, E., Cornelius, J. & Banas, J. A. (November, 2008). *Role and impact of involvement and enhanced threat in resistance*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Chicago, Illinois.

- Pfau, M., Semmler, S. M., Deatrck, L., Lane, L., Mason, A., Nisbett, G., Craig, E., Cornelius, J. & Banas, J. A. (May, 2008). *Nuances about the role and impact of affect and enhanced threat in inoculation*. Presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association Conference, Montreal, Quebec.
- Banas, J. A., & Turner, M. M. (February, 2007). *Toward a theory of elaborative resistance production*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association Conference, Chicago, Illinois.
- Banas, J. A., & Foster, L. (February, 2007) *Reconsidering The Daily Show effect*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association Conference, Chicago, Illinois.
- Turner, M. M., Banas, J. A., Rains, S., Moore, J., & Jang, S. A. (February, 2005). *Testing the effects of altercasting, source status, and target liking on compliance using the lost letter technique*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association Conference, Boston, Massachusetts.
- Turner, M. M., Rains, S., Moore, J., Jang, S. A., & Banas, J. A. (February, 2004). *Facing up to the one you harmed: The effect of guilt, association, and positive self-feeling on compliance*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association Conference, Chicago, Illinois.
- Rimal, R. N., Morrison, D., Jang, S. A., Rains, S., Moore, J., and Banas, J. A. (February, 2004). *What do you want first, the good news or the bad news? Effects of positive and negative feedback sequencing in interpersonal interactions*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association Conference, Chicago, Illinois.

Representative Honors and Awards Received

- 2010 University of Oklahoma Junior Faculty Summer Fellowship
- 2010 College of Arts and Sciences Matching Travel Grant
- 2010 Vice President for Research International Travel Grant
- 2008 College of Arts and Sciences Matching Travel Grant
- 2008 University of Oklahoma Junior Faculty Summer Fellowship
- 2004-2005 University of Texas at Austin Tuition Fellowship
- 2002 University of Texas at Austin Health Communication Fellowship

Major Professional Affiliations

- Member, National Communication Association
- Member, International Communication Association