COMS 361 – BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

SPRING SEMESTER, 2020

STUDY GUIDE FOR UNIT 4: Leading by Example (Rhetoric)

Material from the reading by Cheney et al.

1. Know whether or not **rhetoric** means analysing the art of **using symbols** to **persuade** others to change their attitudes, beliefs, values or actions. Know whether or not, during the **Renaissance and Enlightenment** periods, rhetoric **gained status** as its domain of concern was **narrowly circumscribed**. Know whether or not the study of rhetoric **now addresses** the roles that **organizations and institutions** play in the modern world. Know whether or not, in the **mid-twentieth century**, rhetoric's scope was **expanded** and its **broad societal functions rediscovered**. Know whether or not today there are **"rhetorics" of fields as diverse** as **sociology**, **economics** and **physics**. Know whether or not the authors view disciplines, theories and scholarly perspectives **as networks of researchers**. Know whether or not, in the area of **logic and formal argument**, rhetoric **differs** from **pragmatics** in its concern for the actual or potential effects of messages. Know whether or not, while critical discourse analysis **centers on persuasion and identification**, rhetoric orients its work to the **concept of power**, or the **other way around**. Know whether or not rhetoric shares with semiotics a **sensitivity** to the ways that **symbols are interrelated**, though rhetoric is **more structural** in its approach to analysis than is **semiotics**. Know whether or not a **defining concern** of rhetoric is **situations of uncertainty and possibility**. (p. 079-081)

2. Know whether or not organizational rhetoric is **embedded in** or **implied in** interaction that deals with **contingencies, uncertainties and ambiguities**. Know whether or not **credibility** or **ethos cannot be linked** with **authority and rationality**. Know whether or not the **line** between **"internal" and "external"** corporate communications is **not distinct**. Know whether or not **Tompklns** compares **Weber's ideal types of rationality and authority** (charismatic, traditional and legal-rational) with **Aristotle's "artistic proofs" of persuasion**. Know whether or not the authors' **defining concerns** differ from a **classical approach** which positions rhetoric in **tension with logic**, particularly formal models, such as the syllogism. Know whether or not the **contemporary field of rhetoric** differs as to what constitutes the **specific form** or an **appropriate object** for rhetorical analysis. Know whether or not, even though the **boundaries** between the inside and outside of the organizational "box" **are clear**, an **internal audience** of organizational members and an **external audience** of stakeholder groups clearly **does not exist**. Know whether or not **"strategy" is a cornerstone** of traditional rhetorical practice in that persuasion relies on **targeted assessments** of purpose, audience and message. Know whether or not, not only are organizations **often unsuccessful** in their attempts to **persuade**, they may also be **unaware** of the **ultimate effects** of their rhetoric. Know whether or not **McGee** argues that **bounded "texts" are illusions** and that rhetoric consists of discursive "fragments" or scraps of messages that **tightly cohere** and **come together** into a finished product. (p. 081-085)

3. Know whether or not concepts of rhetoric apply **specifically and broadly** to diverse situations and forms of organizational communication. Know whether or not **Bitzer** purports that a speaker responds to a **particular exigence**, which can be remedied through discourse to influence an audience **within given constraints**. Know whether or not anticipating **changes in environmental pressures** offers several advantages. Know whether or not organizations act rhetorically at a **first-order level of strategy** by attempting to **shape**, rather than **simply anticipate**, the rhetorical situations they might face. Know whether or not **organizational rhetors** typically employ several broad strategies (or categories of strategies), often by a **variety** of professions, media and messages. Know whether or not, **to some extent**, organizational **predicaments and challenges** are associated with a **postmodern communication environment**. Know whether or not contributing to the **generally negative portrayals** of the communication environment are depictions of audiences as **apathetic, critical and sometimes cynical**. Know whether or not one primary rhetorical method that organizations use to distinguish themselves is **recycling new messages**. Know whether or not organizations themselves **are audiences** of their own **mission statements** and can become so **infatuated** with the view of the corporation portrayed in them that they believe **it is the organization**. Know whether or not organizations **continuously reaffirm** that the communication environment in which they operate is **turbulent and volatile** and shaped by a **virtual explosion** in the number of messages and images that **shout to be heard** and **taken seriously**. (p. 085-095)

4. Know whether or not an example of **denial** is, "don't mind his flirting and talking about sex at work. He's harmless." Know whether or not an example of **juxtapositioning** is, "guns don't kill people, people kill people." Know whether or not an example of **enhancement** is, "we are in a crisis; that much is certain." Know whether or not an example of

reification is, "we cannot say for certain that smoking causes cancer." Know whether or not the statement, "The problem with energy resources is not over-consumption but under-exploration" is an example of **substitution or diversion**. (p. 096-097)

Material from the reading by Knouse et al.

1. Know whether or not the need to create the **right impression** can serve as a **factor** which motivates unethical behavior. Know whether or not, at the organizational level, **corporate culture** provides individuals with an organizational reality within which morally relevant actions are **discussed, judged, and sanctioned**. Know whether or not the **ethical work climate** is a function of a **single variable**. Know whether or not the most representative of **morals-related individual differences** is the **Machiavellian personality**, which is characterized by **pragmatism**, **persuasiveness**, **manipulation**, and the belief that any **means justify desired ends**. Know whether or not managers may have a tendency to **take advantage** of opportunities to be **unethical** when these situations arise. Know whether or not the **type of corporate culture** can influence how ethical decisions are made. Know whether or not morals-related differences are those which **do not measure** the individual's morality in any way, but **may affect** the way an individual **makes his or her decisions**. Know whether or not **individual characteristics** may not directly affect the employees' decision to behave ethically, but **may moderate** their choices as a concern for how their **actions are perceived**. Know whether or not individual differences or personality traits may also **influence choice of ethical action** taken or may **relate to moral development itself**. Know whether or not **impression management**, or the controlling of images others have of us, has been **identified** as a factor in understanding **the existence of** and **lack of punishment for** unethical behaviors. (p. 369-372)

2. Know whether or not, in **Kohlberg's model**, the **egoism level** pertains to **self-interest** and a **focus on profit**. Know whether or not **organizational antecedents** in the form of organizational culture may **intentionally or unintentionally** influence the selection and retention of employees at **particular stages** of moral decision-making. Know whether or not a **stockbroker** may use an **expectancy framework** to decide whether or not to use **insider information** in stock trades. Know whether or not expectancy theory can be seen as **conceptually different** from **utilitarianism**. Know whether or not an **authoritarian organization** may produce **little motivation** to pursue either ethical or unethical behaviors in individuals. Know whether or not an organization that **emphasizes contingent rewards** (success is directly rewarded by the organization) should produce **lower overall instrumentalities** in its members. Know whether or not the broker **may not be motivated** to use insider trading if he/she perceives that **few organizational rewards** are available to be gained. Know whether or not, in terms of **individual differences**, **locus of control** has been shown to influence **expectancy cognitions**. Know whether or not those who have **external locus of control**, who believe that they can **influence their own behavior**, may perceive a **higher expectancy of success** for a certain ethical (or unethical) behavior. Know whether or not, basically, **expectancy theory**, in part, posits that **motivation** is a function of the **subjective probability** that effort will lead to **successful behavior**. Know whether or not, in essence, individuals are **more likely to present** those images which have a **higher expectancy of success** and which result in the acquisition of **highly desired (valent) outcomes**. Know whether or not, in the **insider trading example**, a broker may be more **strongly motivated** to use insider information if the broker perceives that such use may allow the broker to acquire a larger **number of valued rewards**. Know whether or not **individual differences antecedents** may offer some insight as to how **CMD level may be modified**. Know whether or not one perspective is that **impression management** is an **exchange or reciprocal reward process** between the impression manager and the target audience. Know whether or not individuals **may engage** in negative behavior, such as unethical behavior, if they believe that **powerful individuals** in the organization **value such negative behavior**. (p. 372-374)

3. Know whether or not **managerial controls** provide another way of **improving ethical decision-making behaviors**. Know whether or not **top management** tends to serve as a **critical reference group** for ethical beliefs. Know whether or not the **social audit** can be an effective means of changing organizational culture toward **more ethical responses**, introducing a new **"vocabulary of motives."** Know whether or not there is **very little evidence** that many behaviors can be changed by **behavioral modeling**. Know whether or not the **changes needed** for more effective ethical decision may rest **not so much with the group**, but with a **leader** willing to institute the needed changes. Know whether or not **all organizations** have an **explicit or implicit corporate ethical model** for managers to follow. Know whether or not leadership is particularly effective when there can be a **win-win situation**, when there is **sufficient time**, where a manager has **strong leadership skills**, and where the organizational culture is **conducive to leadership influence**. Know whether or not an **intervention strategy** may be **more ethically questionable** than the initial act itself. Know whether or not **leaders' actions** can provide content for the **organizational stories and legends** that can serve to **enrich** the overall ethical direction of the **corporate culture**. Know whether or not a **corporate ethical model** can provide guidance for **translating managerial beliefs** into **ethical behaviors**. Know whether or not organizational development efforts can aid in the **advancement of better ethical decision-making**. Know whether or not leaders can **improve the contingencies** between ethical behavior

and reward in the **reward structure**. Know whether or not, because the **valence** of all of the **significant outcomes** is considered by the individual in the expectancy approach, a **larger variety** of available organizational rewards should result in a **larger combined positive valence** for the individual. Know whether or not in the area of **ethical decision-making**, behavioral modeling can present **appropriate (and inappropriate)** behaviors for various ethical scenarios. Know whether or not **interventions have limitations**. (p. 374-376)

Material from the reading by Taylor

1. Know whether or not, without **multiple and competing discourses**, humans, as members of society, would not have the **building blocks** for making decisions. Know whether or not **contemporary life** is shaped by **multiple and often competing discourses**, and citizens are **passive receivers of messages**. Know whether or not personal, organizational, political, and social behavior are **all based on images**. Know whether or not the **community** is still **evolving**, and its **end state is not certain**. Know whether or not our knowledge, our individual perceptions, or **what we "believe to be true,"** is called our **"image" of the world**. Know whether or not, drawing on the **Chicago School**, **Kruckeberg and Stark** argued that organizations have a **role to play** in their community and that organizational interests are best served when **community interests are served**. Know whether or not organizations, especially the leaders of organizations, should **help make decisions** that bring **order and control** to uncertainty. Know whether or not **organizations are autonomous**. Know whether or not the **fourth premise** postulates that all people and organizations work to **maximize their self-interest**. Know whether or not **public relations** is the **enactment of organizational rhetoric**, and together they help to create **organizational and social capital**. Know whether or not some organizations have **greater symbolic and capital resources** than others. Know whether or not the public and the political systems that represent the public interest have the **ability (though not always the will)** to exert **significant influence** over organizations. Know whether or not one of **Heath's premises** is **"relationship as asymmetry, or corporatas over communitas."** Know whether or not the **five premises of FFST** are based on an organization's orientation to the community and an organization's recognition of **how it is linked to the community**. Know whether or not **Boyd and Stahley** recently took the communitas–corporatas distinction **further** by identifying the **inherent tensions** of organizational actors seeking to **balance these competing rhetorics**. (p. 436-440)

2. Know whether or not the **value of rhetoric**, whether by businesses and government or activist publics, is that it is **one resource** that helps to **level the playing field** between those organizations **with tangible resources and those without tangible resources**. Know whether or not **Lewis** challenged organizational communication scholars to study topics, including **social capital**, to show how organizations **must contribute to society**. Know whether or not Kennan **and Hazelton** cautioned that the clarity of the concept of social capital is **unified and consistent**. Know whether or not Taylor defined **civil society** as "the process of interactions that lead to **relationships**, **build trust** and **create social capital**." Know whether or not, by the **mid-1980s**, social capital emerged as a **sociological concept** that sought to explain the relationships that **form the foundation** for each society. Know whether or not **organizations and engaged groups** use rhetoric and public relations to **build the social capital** that make communities and society a **better place to live**. Know whether or not **Pearson** suggested that organizations could engage in ethical public relations and relationship building if they have **monologic systems** rather than **dialogic policies**. Know whether or not **dialogue** is the foundation of social capital because it gives organizations the **initial orientation and subsequent internal capacity** through which to **engage and adapt** to the community. Know whether or not the **community of focus** for this case study is the town of **Aqaba in southern Jordan**. Know whether or not many organizations have **structural and communication impediments** that diminish their capacity to participate in creating social capital. (p. 440-443)

3. Know whether or not the people of Aqaba live in an **information-poor environment** where **rumor and personal connections** provide the information for decision making. Know whether or not, since ASEZA essentially plays the role of **municipal government**, it needs to **communicate rhetorically** to its constituents about **key topics**. Know whether or not there are currently **two daily newspapers** and **three Aqaba-focused radio stations** in the zone. Know whether or not Taylor identified media as a **key actor** in **building civil society**. Know whether or not the **lack of local media** constitutes a major problem for ASEZA's **engagement with the public**. Know whether or not, to make a community a better place to live, all **civil society partners** must be willing and able to **advocate for their interests** and then follow through **on their commitments**. Know whether or not public relations **provides the discourse** and the **competing and shared images**, whereas rhetoric provides the **discourse process** through which images are shared, negotiated, contested, and **possibly resolved**. Know whether or not the **outcome** of any communication and **relationship-building activities** is open to **negotiation**. Know whether or not rhetorical discourse **creates the shared images** that lead to understanding and agreement. Know whether or not this **case study** shows the crucial link between having internal **structures and processes in place** to meet the needs of the **external civil society groups**. (p. 447-452)