



SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION
BAC 1204: COMMUNICATION THEORY

Date: 17th March 2025

Time: 16:00_18:00

Instructions

1. This examination consists of **FIVE questions**
2. Answer **Question ONE (COMPULSORY)** and any other **TWO** questions in Section B.

SECTION A

QUESTION ONE (Compulsory)

(30 Marks)

A class of communication students in a public relations course has been given a task to create a campus-wide campaign promoting mental health awareness. The campaign needs to address stigma, provide resources, and encourage open discussions about mental well-being. The class is divided into smaller teams, each responsible for different aspects of the campaign: research, creative content, event planning, and public engagement. One team, tasked with designing the campaign's communication strategy, faces challenges rooted in differing communication styles. The team members include, Anne, an outspoken and charismatic leader who believes in the power of emotional appeal, John, a data-driven strategist who emphasizes the importance of facts and statistics, Norah, a creative thinker who wants to use storytelling and visual content to connect with the audience and James, a pragmatic team member focused on ensuring the campaign's messages are accessible to all demographics. The team members who do not know each other well are required to use interpersonal and media approaches in their mental health awareness.

A) Using a relevant theory explain how the team members can create rapport with each other before embarking on the task ahead. (8 marks)

- B) Use a relevant theory to demonstrate how the team will settle on the relevant media for the targeted audience. (4 marks)
- C) Describe how the group can apply Robert's Craig's rhetorical tradition to come up with a strategy to carry out the campaign. (4 marks)
- D) Apply spiral of silence theory to demonstrate challenges the group may face in the social media aspect of their campaign. (6 marks)
- E) Utilise Elaboration Likelihood Theory concepts to determine persuasion strategies that the team will use to persuade their audience to take mental health seriously. (8 marks)

SECTION B

QUESTION TWO

(15 marks)

- A) Using the cultural studies viewpoint, discuss THREE ways in which media have preserved the current political and economic status quo. (6 marks)
- B) One of the best known ideas propagated by Marshall McLuhan is "the Medium is the message." Using examples, discuss McLuhan's concept in relation to social media usage and its impact on society. (9 marks)

QUESTION THREE

(15 marks)

- A) Referring to any THREE factors used to evaluate a theory, analyse the strengths and weaknesses of a communication theory of your choice. (8 marks)
- B) Human beings do not automatically acquire humanity at birth, they are talked into it. Use a relevant theory to discuss this statement. (7 marks)

QUESTION FOUR

Read the scenario below and answer the questions below:

(15 marks)

Zainab, a renowned environmental activist, has gained a strong reputation for her work in promoting sustainable development and fighting against deforestation. Zainab's grassroots movement, "Green Future," has successfully mobilised communities to plant trees, advocate for environmental policies, and challenge corporations responsible for ecological harm. Her slogan, "Nature Over Profit," resonates widely with rural and urban youth who admire her passion and commitment. However, Zainab's principles have recently been called into question when photos surfaced on Social Media of her attending a private event hosted by EcoGrowth Industries, a multinational company with a controversial track record of exploiting natural resources. The event was a networking gala aimed at fostering collaborations between corporate entities and environmental leaders. Although Zainab states that her attendance was meant to "advocate for change from within," many of her followers feel betrayed, perceiving her presence at the event as an endorsement of EcoGrowth's practices.

- A) Describe how Zainab's attendance at the EcoGrowth event creates cognitive

dissonance among her supporters.

(7 marks)

B) Illustrate how Zainab and her team can use media coverage to shift the focus from the controversy to the positive impact of her grassroots initiatives.

(8 marks)

QUESTION FIVE

(15 marks)

A) Describe the role of theory in research. Use a communication theory of your choice to answer the question. (Use a relevant communication research scenario to answer the question)

(10 marks)

B) Briefly explain the process through which theories are made.

(5 marks)