The Field of Communication in Historical and Contemporary Perspective

Chapter Two
Focus Questions

• In what context did the study and teaching of communication begin?

• What methods do communication scholars use to conduct research?
Focus Questions

• What areas of study and teaching constitute the discipline of communication today?

• What themes unify areas of study within the field of communication?
The History of the Communication Field

- Classical roots
- Liberal education
Classical Roots: Rhetoric & Democratic Life

- Plato
- Aristotle
  - Ethos
  - Pathos
  - Logos

Figure 2.1 The Three Pillars of Persuasion
Liberal Education

- National Association of Teachers of Public Speaking
- John Dewey
- AEJMC
- National Communication Association
Broadening the Field

- Scientific, empirical research is cornerstone
- International Communication Association
Communication, Power, & Empowerment

- Michel Foucault
- Phaedra Pezzullo

- The field of communication is responsive to changing needs
  - individuals
  - society
Conducting Research in Communication

- Quantitative research
  - Independent variables
  - Dependent variables

- Qualitative research
  - Textual analysis
  - Ethnography

- Critical research
  - Triangulation
The Breadth of the Communication Field

- Intrapersonal
- Interpersonal
- Performance Studies
- Group & Team
- Public
- Organizational
- Mass
- Technology
- Intercultural
- Ethics

**Figure 2.2** The Communication Continuum
Unifying Themes in the Communication Field

- Symbolic activities
- Meaning
- Ethics
Summary

• The history of the communication field
• Broadening the field
• Communication, power, & empowerment
• Conducting research in communication
• The breadth of the communication field
• Unifying themes in the communication field