Interpersonal Communication Syllabus

CMST 2110 – MWF 1:30 to 2:20 PM on Zoom

Zoom Link: https://usu-edu.zoom.us/j/85083122041?pwd=cGZsUzhqMDBkRVhxQ2lWYzBuTUF4UT09

Meeting ID: 850 8312 2041

Passcode: cmst2110

We all engage in interpersonal communication every day—in our work relationships, friendships, family relationships, and romantic relationships. We all have probably experienced moments where we have had really good communication with others, and moments that we wished the communication would have gone a little (or a lot) better. This class is going to help you navigate interpersonal communication with others and help you improve the communication you engage in every day.

It is often said that the quality of your communication reflects the quality of your life. Here is to a semester of improving the quality of our communication so that we can, in turn, improve the quality of our lives. I’m excited to learn with you—because I also have room to grow in my interpersonal communication.

Contact Information

Instructor

Diana Costanzo: diana.costanzo@usu.edu

Office Hours

Email me to set up a meeting via Zoom or on-campus. I am happy to meet with you!

Catalog Course Description

Interpersonal Communication (CMST 2010): Examination of the theories, methods, and competencies relevant to studying, establishing, and maintaining interpersonal relationships in family, intercultural, professional, and other contexts. Classroom experiences with topics such
as perception, language, nonverbal behavior, conflict resolution, and listening will be covered.

**Textbook & Reading Materials**

**Required Textbook**

Auto Access eBook: Looking Out, Looking In eBook, 15e by Adler

This course requires all-inclusive digital materials that are provided to you at a lower price than traditional printed materials. These materials are paid for through an “Auto Access Digital Materials” charge placed on your student account when you registered for the course. To access the materials, visit the Canvas course site. For more details, including dates, deadlines, and opt-out info, visit your student Auto Access Portal: [https://portal.verba.io/usu/login](https://portal.verba.io/usu/login)

**Recommended Textbook**

People Skills by Robert Bolton (1979). This book is not required for this class. It is just one of the most helpful books that I have read, and I think it is good to have on your bookshelf for reference once this class is over. I also have provided a list of other books I recommend in Canvas that might be helpful to you.

**Other Materials**

All other readings, videos, or other such items will be provided on Canvas.

**7 Things You Will Leave This Course With**

By the end of this course, you will:

- Understand important concepts and theoretical ideas related to interpersonal communication.
- Be able to adapt your communication style to other people and different contexts.
- Recognize your own emotions and how they impact your life and communication.
- Improve your listening skills.
- Be able to discern other’s emotions and body language.
- Understand your own conflict management patterns and learn how to solve conflict in more productive ways.
- Be able to develop stronger relationships with those that are important to you.
- Recognize cultural differences and how they impact interpersonal communication.
**Expectations**

**Here are my expectations of you, as a student:**

- Come to class ready to learn and grow.
- Keep your camera on during class, participate in class, and attend class on-time.
- Attend all presentation days.
- Turn your work in on-time.
- Be prepared to discuss the content and engage in activities during class. **This class will include a lot of discussions—it will not be a lecture course.**
- Respect the opinions and stories of others. Hurtful or hateful comments are not allowed.
- Keep what is shared in the classroom with this class (i.e., do not tell people’s personal stories that they share outside the classroom).

**Here is what you can expect from me, as a teacher:**

- I take this course and your learning seriously. I want you to learn, and I will do whatever I can to help you in that process.
- I am always happy to meet with you before/after class or as part of office hours.
- I am open to feedback. I am also a chill person. Please do not be afraid to address any concerns or problems that you have with me.
- If you have a conflict or problem that you would like some ideas on how to address through communication, let me know. I would be happy to talk to you about it.
- I will respond to your emails within 48 hours (except on weekends).
- If there was a glitch with technology where Zoom will not let you in the class or Canvas will let you upload an assignment, you will not be penalized for it (however, I might ask you for proof).
- I am looking for your growth, not perfection.

**Zoom Stuff**

**Zoom Expectations in Class:**

- **Keep your camera on during class.** This will make our learning process go more smoothly and be more engaging. (Note: if your laptop does not have a camera, email me, and let me know. Otherwise, everyone is expected to keep their camera on).
- **Arrive on time to class and stay through the whole class period** -- I can see when you join and when you leave the Zoom meetings.
- Stay in the same area while in class (do not be driving, working out, etc. during class).
- Keep distractions in your background down to a minimum.
- Do not screenshot/film the class and show other people or share it on social media without their consent. This could cause serious repercussions, as sharing names or personal information of other students is against university policy. If you need class to be recorded, please let me know and we will work it out.

**Zoom Problems**

- **If Zoom kicks you out or will not let you into class**, you will not be penalized. Email me as soon as this happens with a screenshot including the Zoom error message or showing your internet got disconnected. I may not get the email until after class if I am focused on teaching, but I will not penalize you if you email me when this happens.

- **If Zoom kicks me out or won’t let me into class, here’s what to do:**
  1. If I do not come to class within the first 10 minutes, you are free to leave and go about your day. Expect an email or video-recorded lecture from me.
  2. If I get kicked out during class, wait 10 minutes for me to come back or email you. If I do not come back within 10 minutes, you are free to go about your day.

**Course Policies**

**Participation and Attendance**

- **Attendance in this class is required, as well as being an active participant in class.**
  o There are both attendance points and participation points in this class. Attendance points show that you came to the whole class period. Participation points are for how engaged you are in learning and in our discussions and breakout rooms.
  o If you arrive on-time to class and stay through the whole class period, you will be marked at “present” in the Roll-Call Attendance feature in Canvas. This will count as your attendance points. Your participation points are separate, and they will be for how engaged you were during class.
  o If your camera is off during class, you are more than 2 minutes late, you leave class early, or are causing significant distractions, you will be marked as “late” to class. This will automatically deduct attendance points. If these things happen repeatedly, it could also deduct from your participation points.

- **You are allowed to miss three class periods.**
  o Once you miss more than 3 class periods, you will be marked as “absent” in the Roll-Call Attendance feature in Canvas. You will not get attendance points for the day that you miss.
  o If you need to miss class for an emergency of some kind, let me know and we will work it out.
- If you miss more than 25% of the class (10 class periods or more), you will automatically fail the class.
- **Attendance during Presentation Days is required.** If you miss a presentation day, you will be deducted 25 points off of your final grade.

### 24/7 Grade Question Rule

If you receive a grade that you do not like or have a problem with, you are more than welcome to talk to me about it. However, you must wait 24 hours to contact me about this grade after you received it. You have seven days after that to talk to me about the grade. After the seven days are over, the grade is final.

### Late Work

You have the option in this class to turn your assignments in late up to **three days** if it will help your learning. However, you will lose 10% per day that an assignment is late. Assignments will close on Canvas once they are no longer allowed to be turned in late. If there is an outside circumstance affecting your ability to turn something in on time, let me know before the deadline and we will work it out. Note that your final reflection has to be turned in on time.

### Grade Scheme

The following grading standards will be used in this class:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Letter Grade</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100% to 94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>&lt; 94.0% to 90.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>&lt; 90.0% to 87.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>&lt; 87.0% to 84.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>&lt; 84.0% to 80.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>&lt; 80.0% to 77.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>&lt; 77.0% to 74.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Class Points

Class Assignments – 350 points

Annotated Bibliography Project – 250 points

Quizzes - 200 points

Participation & Attendance – 200 points

Total: 1,000 points

### Assignments

**Annotated Bibliography Project (250 points)**

For this assignment, you will choose a situation in your life related to interpersonal communication that you would like to improve. You will find 4-5 scholarly, peer-reviewed articles related to the topic you choose. Then, you will write a summary of each article and discuss how your new knowledge helps you improve this situation or relationship. You will also give a short presentation (about 5-6 minutes) about what you discovered. I require this assignment to help you get comfortable doing academic research and taking notes, a skill that will be helpful as you go about your college career. Secondly, I require a presentation because learning how to speak in front of people, synthesize information, and make the topic interesting to your audience are all skills you will need in the workplace and in future academic life. Thirdly, I hope this assignment will help you grow as a communicator and apply the content to your life. More details are provided on Canvas.
**Quizzes (200 points)**

There are 11 chapter reading quizzes for this course, and you drop the one with the lowest score. These quizzes are to check your understanding of the readings. (10 quizzes worth 20 points each = 200 points).

**Assignments (350 points)**

There are a few different kinds of assignments in this class:

- **Class assignments**: For this portion of your grade, you will do an activity and write an essay. These assignments are meant to help you think about course content and apply the content to your life. There are 6 of these assignments, and you get two “freebies”—so you only need to do 4 of them. There will be unique details and instructions for each class assignment provided on Canvas. (4 assignments worth 50 points = 200 points).

- **Other assignments**: Other assignments include the syllabus agreement, pre- and post-class assessments, and the SONA Assignment. These are required by the university. (Total value of the 4 assignments = 45 points).

- **Final Reflection**: At the end of the class, you will write about how you have grown over the semester. You will choose 3-5 concepts from the course that were particularly impactful or important to you. You will write a 3-5 page reflection about why they were important, examples of these concepts in your own life, and your plan to continue to implement these ideas into your life after this course. More details are provided on Canvas (1 final reflection = 100 points).

**Attendance (100 points) & Participation (100 points)**

Coming to class is very important for learning about interpersonal communication. You will receive attendance points for coming to class on time and staying through the whole course period with your camera on. You will be given participation points for being actively involved and engaged in class. See the course policy on participation for more information.

**University Policies**

**Classroom Civility**

Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning
process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read Student Code Article V Section V-3 (Links to an external site.) for more information.

Non-Attendance Policy

Students May Be Dropped For Nonattendance

If a student does not attend a class during the first week of the term or by the second class meeting, whichever comes first, the instructor may submit a request to have the student dropped from the course. (This does not remove responsibility from the student to drop courses which he or she does not plan to attend.) This option is typically used for classes that are full and the instructor is trying to make a seat available for another student, but may be considered for other courses. Requests must be made during the first 20 percent of the course and will be considered on an individual student basis. Students who are dropped from courses will be notified by the Registrar's Office through their preferred e-mail account (see 2018-2019 General Catalog (Links to an external site.)).

Academic Dishonesty

The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined the University’s Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

Cheating: using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity. Unauthorized assistance includes:

- Working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done “individually;”
- Depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
- Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
- Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
- Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;
- Submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or engaging in any form of research fraud.

Falsification: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
**Plagiarism**: representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

For additional information go to: [ARTICLE VI. University Regulations Regarding Academic Integrity](#)

**Academic Integrity – "The Honor System"**

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

**COVID-19 Classroom Protocols**

In order to continue to provide a high standard of instruction at USU, and to limit the spread of COVID-19 during the pandemic, students are asked to follow certain classroom protocols. These protocols are in place not only for your safety but also the safety of the rest of the campus community. You will be asked to clean your desk area at the start of each class, sit in designated seats, wear face coverings, and follow dismission instructions. There may be individual medical circumstances that prevent some students from using face coverings. These circumstances will be rare, but if they do exist, we ask that everyone be respectful. It is imperative that we each do our part so that on-campus instruction can continue.

**Disability Statement**

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the [Disability Resource Center (DRC)](#) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-2444, drc@usu.edu). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.
Students who are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 or who contract COVID-19 may also be eligible for accommodations.

**Emergency Procedures**

In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of the fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs. See [Student Affairs - Emergency Procedures](https://example.com/external-site) for more information.

**Mental Health**

Mental health is critically important for the success of USU students. As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Utah State University provides free services for students to assist them with addressing these and other concerns. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at [Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)](https://example.com/external-site).

Students are also encouraged to download the "[SafeUT App](https://example.com/external-site)" to their smartphones. The SafeUT application is a 24/7 statewide crisis text and tip service that provides real-time crisis intervention to students through texting and a confidential tip program that can help anyone with emotional crises, bullying, relationship problems, mental health, or suicide-related issues.

**Online Course Fee**

$15 per credit course fee is applied to all online courses to sustain current digital technologies and support services required for engaging and effective online learning.

**Sexual Harassment/Title IX**

Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and [USU Policy 339](https://example.com/external-site) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting.
The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU’s Office of Equity for available options and resources or clarification. The university has established a complaint procedure to handle all types of discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment (USU Policy 305), and has designated the Office of Equity Director/Title IX Coordinator as the official responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.

**Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy**

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term ‘extenuating’ circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor. See Adding and Dropping Classes for more information.

**Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities**

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. Faculty Code Policy #403 further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

Students who are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 or who contract COVID-19 may also be eligible for accommodations.

**Diversity Statement**

Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. If you feel uncomfortable in a classroom due to offensive language or actions by an instructor or student(s) regarding ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, contact:

Division of Student Affairs: https://studentaffairs.usu.edu, (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu, TSC 220

Student Legal Services: https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services, (435) 797-2912, TSC 326,
Access and Diversity: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu](http://accesscenter.usu.edu) (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu; TSC 315

Multicultural Programs: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture), (435) 797-1728, TSC 315

LGBTQA Programs: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa), (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145

Provost’s Office Diversity Resources: [https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity](https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity), (435) 797-8176

You can learn about your student rights by visiting:
The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University: [https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode](https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode)

**Grievance Process**

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: [Article VII](https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity).

**Full details for USU Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:**

- [Student Conduct](http://accesscenter.usu.edu)
- [Student Code](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture)
- [Academic Integrity](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa)
- [USU Academic Policies and Procedures](https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity)
- [Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility Policy](https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity)