Syllabus

Communication Studies 2110- Interpersonal Communication: Fall 2021

Instructor: Donald Corwin (Please, call me Donnie)

Email: donnie.corwin@usu.edu

Where to Meet: Old Main, Room 117. MWF 12:30 P.M to 1:20 P.M

Office: MWF from 9 A.M-12. P.M (We can set up a zoom meeting or meet downstairs in Old Main). If you’d like to set up a meeting outside of office hours, just let me know.


Course Goals and Overview

Let’s start with an honest question that you’ve likely had in between registration and now: “Why am I taking a class on Interpersonal Communication-- don’t I do that enough already?”

This is a valid question, and the easiest answer I can give is that it is precisely because we interact in interpersonal communication often that learning it is relevant and applicable. Aside from filling an important graduation or major requirement, this course will allow you to interact with everyday questions about why your last argument with a roommate went the way it did, what your body language is telling potential employers in a job interview, what “emotional intelligence” really means when trying to figure out how your friend is really feeling about their new job, and much more. This class will revolve mainly around our textbook from Adler and Proctor, as well as additional speeches and smaller readings that we'll discuss as a class week by week. Being prepared for class each day will not only involve being up to date on readings but being ready to ask and answer questions with classmates and to participate in daily activities that allow us to see interpersonal communication in different perspectives. I firmly believe that a class is only as useful to you as the effort you put into engaging in the questions and conversations within that class. I hope we can help each other become that much more competent in understanding and developing better communication practices.

Specific Objectives
After Completing This Course, You Should Be Able To:

- Understand the truth that it is impossible **not** to communicate in our daily lives.
- Differentiate between what you can and cannot control in interpersonal communication.
- Demonstrate more effective and empathetic emotional intelligence.
- Understand the Difference between hearing, listening, and active listening.
- Demonstrate an ability to adapt to different communication contexts, and understand the communication goals of each situation.
- Approach conflict with confidence rather than caution.

Most Importantly

- Engage more **Intentionally and Conscientiously** in interpersonal communication across different relationships, contexts, and purposes.

Participation

As I mentioned above, I believe that participation in classroom discussion is important in the larger scope of what you'll get out of this class. As such, participation will reflect 15% of your overall grade. This will be graded through two primary means:

**Daily Attendance/Participation**

I will take daily attendance and will also keep track of your participation/contribution in class throughout the semester. You will not be faulted for having an off-day or two, and this will also include contributing within smaller breakout groups (so don’t worry about not getting points if you’re a little on the shy side).

I will measure class participation 3 times during the semester, Sep 30, Oct 30, and Nov 30. Each time, you will have a total of 12 participation points you will have been able to earn during the prior month’s period. Do your best to be active and attentive in class, and please talk to me if this is a struggle for you. I want to be a resource as much as I can.

**Weekly “Either/Or” Papers**

Every Wednesday I will assign a 1- 2-page, double-spaced paper (you can certainly go over it if it feels like you have more to say) about an aspect of that day’s discussion or of a covered topic. I will give you 2-3 options to write on each week, and they’re due on canvas the Monday after they are assigned (except for a few weeks which are marked on the schedule further down). Of the 11 “Either/Or” papers, you must submit at least 9 to get the full 10 percentage points-- after that, I’ll deduct a percent for every paper I do not receive. That means you have 2 that you do not have to write--use them wisely! The purpose of these papers is to make sure you are engaging with the material and are understanding the concepts being covered; so please cite specific examples we covered in class and feel free to ask questions if something doesn’t quite seem clear. I'll never take away points for an honest question of clarification.

**Section Quizzes:**
For every 3-5 book chapters we cover, there will be a 10-15 question quiz worth 15 points. These in-class quizzes will take place the week after we finish the last section chapter, and you will always be given a reminder on the Friday before. There will be 3 section quizzes in total. Our Final, comprehensive exam will be on Friday 12/11. We will meet in our normal class time, and you will have an hour and a half for this exam. Make sure you retain the information from your section quizzes, as half of the questions on the final will be drawn from them.

Film Communication Project

Film is an often-underappreciated form of rhetoric. We may think film has little consequence to us and that these narratives are nothing more than fun distractions from the more consequential aspects of life. More than just an excuse to eat a gallon of butter with popcorn on the side, or to ask that certain someone out on a date, films are crucial in communicating what a society's closely held values, norms, and beliefs are. Gerbner's Theory of Media Cultivation states that media messages that are repeatedly ingested will become real to us over time—meaning that if we are constantly told through film what a healthy family environment, or a relationship, or workplace communication looks like, we will start to believe it to be true. For this assignment, you will be putting Gerbner to the test, in a way. The specific requirements for the assignment are as follows:

In a 4–6-page, double spaced, academic research paper, you will analyze a film of your choosing and the interpersonal communication present within it. More specifically, you will pick two to three key concepts from our course or textbook this semester, (Conflict, the 5 Love Languages, Active and Effective Listening, etc) and discuss the ways in which your selected movie discusses and frames these concepts. Your topic of choice will be due to me by September 17th, the rough draft will be due on October 15th and the paper will be due November 20th, with a short follow up Presentation due on Finals Week. The basic format of this paper will be as follows:

- **Introduction and Thesis (.5 Page)**
  - Give a summarization of your primary argument(s) within the paper, as well as the different sections and parts of your writing.
- **Overview of Film and Key Concepts (1- 1.5 Pages)**
  - Give a concise and clear overview of your selected film. This overview should include key details about its plot, when it was released, and a short argument for why you believe it to be a good subject for analysis.
  - Also include an overview of the 2-3 Key topics you will be using as discussion material along with your selected film.
    - Here's where your research comes in (please include 4 Total sources of research on your topic. 2 of them must be Academic (from an academic Journal, A Dissertation, etc.) 1 of your other sources can
be the textbook for our class—so you would just need to find an article from a newspaper, reputable blog, etc. for the final source.

- Define the concepts. For this, I do not want you to simply include the quoted definition from the textbook. You can include that, if you’d like, but you will also need to add a short sentence or two explaining the concept as you understand it.
- Include implications and research findings about these topics as they relate to your primary argument(s)

- Analysis (2-4 Pages)
  - Providing examples from the film, discuss the way its characters, setting, and overall plot relate to the (2-3) communication concepts you included.
  - It is important to be specific when making arguments—something like “Shrek probably values Acts of Service as a love language.”, won’t cut it—make a clear claim and provide evidence for it.
  - Try to connect your individual points back to your main argument—this makes for a more cohesive paper.

- Reflection and Summary (1-2 Pages)
  - Relate the topics back to yourself: How does the way interpersonal communication is displayed or discussed in this film differ from or agree with your own ideas and experiences?
  - Has this analysis made you feel differently about this movie? (you can be honest, here.)
  - Return to your original argument, summarizing the main points of your analysis, and restate your thesis in a way that incorporates the new information you’ve presented.

- Works Cited (1 Page)
  - APA format—refer to our campus library resources for information on citations and formatting.

I’m giving you a bit of creative room here, which I understand is both a challenge and a benefit: there may be so much within a film that it could be hard to narrow it down to one topic. Considering this, here are some examples of topics. (You can use these same movies, but I’d like to see you make your own arguments.)

You could use the rom-com Hitch to discuss Listening and Close Personal relationships. What does our main character get right about his “dating advice?” How does it differ from or co-exist with your research? Do the characters in the film practice effective listening? Make an argument.

You could address Identity and Nonverbal Communication in The Secret Life of Walter Mitty. How does the way in which Walter communicates in speech, daydream, and facial expression tell us about how he feels about himself and his current station in life? Does it change over time? Does it depend on who he’s talking to?

This assignment is worth 15% of your overall grade and should be taken seriously. I have also drafted it with the idea that you’ll have a little fun. Don’t be afraid
to focus on an aspect of the film that you think is weird or unique or silly-- if you can make a strong argument and structure, it well, I'll accept it. Feel free to shoot me an email or schedule a meeting to go over any questions.

On Paper Length: I say 4-6 as a basic guiding principle. 4 pages is the minimum, but it can be as long as you feel is needed. The key is that you use the appropriate amount of space for your purposes and your argument. Please reach out if you find yourself struggling to reach the page limit or if, conversely, you feel the paper is getting too big for you to control. I have been reduced to a ball of stress by both extremes as a student- so I want to be a resource for you here.

Absences
Although class meetings are important, I understand that life happens, and it happens to all of us in sudden and unequal ways. As such, you will each be granted 2 unexplained absences (non-test or presentation days) without it affecting your participation grade. After that, absences that are not cleared with me and/or are not due to a medical or emergency situation will result in a 4-point deduction of your overall participation points. On days when you can miss without penalty, you are still responsible for obtaining notes and other information from fellow classmates. Consequently, if you need to miss class for an academic, medical, or another important/pre planned reason, please let me know at least a week in advance and I will work with you to make sure any quiz or assignment that falls on that day can be made up.

Late Work
You will be given a 2-day grace period on 1 assignment of your choosing (except the in-class presentation and final) You must notify me the day before that assignment is due that you would like to use that extension. Apart from that single grace period, any late work turned in will receive a 10 percent deduction in score every day that it is late (A paper worthy of a 90/100 originally could only be worth 80/100 after one day)

Grade Disputes
I will always try to provide thorough feedback when I grade your assignments, and I will certainly make it a point to explain my rubric and expectations for each assignment when I announce a due date. Even still, it would be foolish of me to assume that I am incapable of making mistakes or being subject to error. Given this, I leave my door open to anyone who has a question about grading or didn’t feel the grade they received reflected the effort. I would also add that while grades have a very small chance of being changed after I post them to canvas, I also welcome meetings that focus on improvement or on achieving better understanding of a concept. I very much want you all to succeed. I would also like to add that I have never once in my life succeeded at being an intimidating person--I don’t expect that to start now and would like you all to feel comfortable coming to me with any questions or concerns.
Schedule

**Week 1: Introduction To Interpersonal Communication 8/30-9/3**

**Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter 1 (By Monday)**

Monday: Welcome! Overview of Syllabus and Class goals.

       Wednesday--:
       The What, How and Why Of Interpersonal Communication

Friday: Group Communication Activity

-- Covid 19 and Isolation viewed from a Scholarly Perspective

**Week 2: Communication and Social Media 9/6-9/10**

Read: Chapter Two of Adler/Proctor

**Week 3: Communication and Identity 9/13- 9/17**

Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Three

**Friday: Film Idea Approved by Friday 9/17**

**Week 4: Interpersonal Communication and Perception 9/20-9/24**

Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Four

**Monday 9/20**—First Section Quiz Due

**Week 5: Emotions 9/27–10/1**

Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Five

**Week 6: Language 10/4-10/8**

Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Six

**Week 7: Nonverbal Communication: Messages Beyond Words 10/11-10/15**

Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Seven

Film Paper Rough Draft-- Due Friday 10/15

**Week 8: Listening 10/18-10/22**

No Either/Or Due this week-- Enjoy Fall Break!

Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Eight
Monday 10/18: Section 2 Quiz Due

Week 9: Communication and Relational Dynamics 10/25-10/29
Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Nine

Week 10: Close Relationships 11/1-11-5
Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Ten

Week 11: Improving Communication Climate 11/8-11/12
Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Eleven
Monday 11/8: Section 3 Quiz Due

Week 12: Conflict 11/15-11/19
Read: Adler and Proctor Chapter Twelve
Monday: No Class (I will be watching the Minnesota Vikings disappoint me in person for once-- use this time to finish out the details on your paper.. Or to go eat a muffin. Do what makes you happy)

Friday 11/19: Final Draft of Film Paper Due

Week 13: (No Either/Or: Happy Thanksgiving!) 11/22-26
Conflict (cont.) and Overview of Presentations
Friday: Section 3 Quiz Due

Week 14: Presentations 11/29-12/3
Film Project Presentations
Friday 12/3 Final Exam Review

Week 15: 12/7-12/11
Film Project Presentations
Friday 12/11: Final-- In class at Normal Meeting Time

Grades
Grade Breakdown:
Participation (Attendance, Either/Or Papers)-15%
Section Quizzes: 25%
Film Communication Paper-35%
Final: 25%

Grade Scheme:
A  100.0%-93.0%
A- <93.0%-90.0%
B+ <90.0%-87.0%
B  <87.0%-83.0%
B- <83.0%-80.0%
C+ <80.0%-77.0%
C  <77.0%- 73.0%
C- <73.0%-70.0%
D+ <70.0%- 67.0%
D  < 67.0%- 60.0%
F  <59.0%- 0%

University Policies & Procedures

Library Services

All USU students attending classes in Logan, at our Regional Campuses, or online can access all databases, e-journals, and e-books regardless of location. Additionally, the library will mail printed books to students, at no charge to them. Students can also borrow books from any Utah academic library. Take advantage of all library services and learn more at libguides.usu.edu/rc.

(Links to an external site.)

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.)
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 during the fall 2020 semester. 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 dismissal 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.

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.

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.

Academic Dishonesty
The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined by 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](#)

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](#) 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](#)

[Links to an external site.](#)
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).

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.

Students with Disabilities
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) (Links to an external site.) 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.

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 (Links to an external site.)
- , (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu, TSC 220
- Student Legal Services: https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services (Links to an external site.)
- , (435) 797-2912, TSC 326,
- Access and Diversity: http://accesscenter.usu.edu (Links to an external site.)
- , (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu; TSC 315
• Multicultural Programs: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture)
• (Links to an external site.)
• , (435) 797-1728, TSC 315
• LGBTQA Programs: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa)
• (Links to an external site.)
• , (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145
• Provost’s Office Diversity Resources: [https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity](https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity)
• (Links to an external site.)
• , (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)

(Links to an external site.)

**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://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode)

(Links to an external site.)

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

• [Student Conduct](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture)
• (Links to an external site.)

• [Student Code](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture)
• (Links to an external site.)

• [Academic Integrity](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture)
• (Links to an external site.)

• [USU Selected Academic Policies and Procedures](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture)
• (Links to an external site.)

• [USU Academic Policies and Procedures](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture)
• (Links to an external site.)

• [Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility Policy](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture)
• (Links to an external site.)

**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.

**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)](http://example.com/caps)

(Links to an external site.)

Students are also encouraged to download the [“SafeUT App”](http://example.com/safeut) 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.