

CMST 2110 Interpersonal Communication

Spring 2016

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Course Website: Canvas

Office: Old Main 002G

Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30-10; Friday 9:30-11:30; flexible by appointment hours.

Course Text: Adler, R. B. & Proctor, R. F. II. (2014). *Looking Out Looking In* (14th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

GENERAL PURPOSE

This course is designed to explore the fundamental process that can develop, maintain, or damage relationships. Although communication is as commonplace as the air you breathe it often goes just as unnoticed. It is often not until we are gasping for breath underwater or struggling to find our way through a relationship or life situation that we suddenly recognize the life giving importance of what is easily overlooked. This course will carefully examine communication and work to bring awareness to the unconscious patterns of interaction that we engage in on a daily basis. This course will provide you with an opportunity to increase your understanding of the human communication process and to directly apply it to your daily life. It is designed to build your interpersonal competencies and provide new ways to think about communication that will allow you to make conscious choices about how to interact with the world around you.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1- Increase your communication competence in a variety of contexts.
- 2- Increase your fundamental knowledge and skills of the concepts and theories that inform the communication discipline.

COURSE MECHANICS

During the course of the semester assignments may be modified, added or removed as requirements dependent upon the flow of our conversations and your interests as a class. For updated descriptions and guidelines for all assignment refer to canvas regularly.

- **Perception-check Paper** 100pts.

This assignment will give you an opportunity to demonstrate the skill of perception-checking. After we have discussed this concept in class you will write a paper with the purpose of demonstrating your ability to use perception checking. The paper will consist of 5 sections. In section 1 you will describe the process of perception checking. Section 2 will explain relevant information regarding the context and relationship in which the perception check is performed. Section 3 will illustrate how you applied the perception check in the interaction including direct dialogue whenever possible especially when describing the perception check and response of the other party. Section 4 will be an analysis and evaluation of how the perception check went. Some of the possible ways this can be accomplished is through comparing the outcomes to past interactions, evaluate what went well, what could have been improved, and reflect on how the process impacted the parties involved. In the final section you will create a

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plan to do another perception check including what improvements you can make. You will then perform a second perception check and repeat sections 2-4.

- **Listening Paper 100pts.**

Similar to the perception checking paper this paper will provide you an opportunity to develop and demonstrate the skill of effective listening. This paper will have 5 sections. In the first section you will reflect upon and summarize your most common poor listening habits. In the second section you will explain what effective listening habits you will be practicing to counteract your most common ineffective listening behaviors. For section 3 you will construct and implement a plan to apply your effective listening habits. Section 4 will explain and demonstrate how you applied your plan. Include important verbal and non-verbal communication that occurred in as much detail as necessary to accurately reflect how you used this skill. Section 5 will reflect, analyze and evaluate how your application went. I suggest considering what you learned from the experience, how it affected the relationship, what went well, what was difficult, and what you might do differently in the future.

- **Reflective Journaling**

Throughout the duration of the course you will be asked to apply communication principles to your group and interpersonal interactions. Each week you will be asked to submit reflective journal entries via canvas about how you are applying course content. For example: after discussing conflict management in class you might choose to practice collaborative conflict resolution skills in a current conflict you have with a group member from another class. You would then apply those skills and discuss the outcomes in your journaling assignment. Journal assignments will be submitted online and kept confidential.

- **Exams 400pts**

There will be four exams during the course of the class. Exams will focus on understanding the course material and will include a variety of questions including multiple choice, essay, fill in the blank, matching and essay. Each exam will be worth 100pts. Exams must be taken on the day scheduled.

- **Attendance and Participation 50pts.**

This course will be conducted in a seminar/discussion type format. As such it is essential that you actively and regularly participate in class discussion and activities. Keep in mind that participation is NOT synonymous with talking. Attendance and participation points will be awarded for active, engaged involvement in class discussion, activities, timely submission of assignments, and so forth.

Grading Scale

<u>Percentages</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90% - 100%	A range
80% - 89%	B range
70% - 79%	C range
60% - 69%	D range
59% or less	F

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UNIVERSITY POLICIES SECTION

The Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with ADA-documented impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. Accommodations are coordinated through DRC in Room 101 of the University Inn, 7-2444 voice, 7-0740 TTY, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact DRC as early as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice.

Academic Misconduct

In accordance with university policy (as articulated in the Student Code, see: <http://www.usu.edu/studentservices/pdf/StudentCode.pdf#page=4>), academic misconduct—including cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism of written or spoken work—is not tolerated in this course. Do not present or turn in work for this class that you have turned in for other classes. You do not have my permission to submit work from this class to fulfill requirements in other classes. Plagiarism is submitting/presenting someone else's work as your own as well as quoting others without giving credit. Any quotation or paraphrasing of sources must be cited in text as well as orally during your speeches. Plagiarism can result in an F for the assignment, an F for the course, and other disciplinary measures. If at any time you are unsure whether your actions constitute academic misconduct, please see the instructor in order to clarify the matter.

COURSE STANDARDS

Course Assignments:

Assignments are due before end of day. Late work *if* accepted will incur a penalty. All class assignments will be submitted through canvas. You may enter your assignment directly into the text box or upload a file. It is necessary that you use a format (.doc, .pdf) that allows for the use of the comment function through canvas. Keep personal copies of all work submitted.

Course Communication:

I expect you to show *respect* for one another regardless of opinion, value, cultural, and other group differences. You should give one another equal opportunity to express opinions, experiences, and ideas. As students, all of you should be *supportive* of a cooperative learning environment within the class. As the instructor I strive to create and foster a space of *safety* for experiencing, practicing, expressing, questioning, experimenting, and all the other forms that learning can take. Creating this space is the *responsibility* of everyone involved in the teaching and learning process.

Course Preparation:

I expect you to read assigned material prior to class. You should be prepared to discuss and answer questions related to the material in the text and readings. You should also be prepared to ask questions about issues of interest or for clarification of concepts during

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class. I will be prepared to be responsive to your questions and whatever direction the class discussion dictates. Our discussions will be much more meaningful and productive when you have completed the readings prior to class. Please make every effort to do so.

Course Writing:

I expect you to produce organized, structured, and formatted assignments that demonstrate an awareness and understanding of relevant theories, concepts, readings, facts, and so forth.

Grading Written Assignments:

I grade written assignments according to the following general guidelines in addition to the specific individual requirements of each assignment.

To receive a "C": The assignment must be complete, thoughtful, and meet the requirements of the assignment in every regard.

To receive a "B": The assignment must be complete, readable, thoughtful, meet all requirements, and do so in an exceptional way.

To receive an "A": The assignment must go beyond the requirements of the assignment in some way. It needs to take the next logical step, or provide a new, creative way of seeing the material. "A" assignments demonstrate more *thoughtful* work and *meaningful application of course material* than those receiving lower grades. The length of the assignment is unimportant compared to the quality of the content.