

**COMMUNICATION STUDIES 2110:
INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION
SYLLABUS**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. John S. Seiter

Office: Old Main 308

Office Hours: W 9:30-11:30 (and by appt.)

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Text: Adler, R. B., & Proctor. (2017). Looking Out Looking In (15th Ed.). Cengage Learning

Class Meets: T/Th 10:30-11:45 in Main 201

WHY AM I IN THIS CLASS?

Remember? For many of you, this class is required. Even so, I hope you are here because, like me, you believe in the importance of this course.

A study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor identified oral communication/listening skills and interpersonal skills as two of the seven "basic workplace" skills." Surveys of employers published in Harvard Business Review, Nation's Business, and other publications consistently identify weak oral communication and human relations skills as major deficiencies of many college graduates. One study found that communication/human relations training is the third most frequently offered training program in American industry. Recent surveys of top level executives indicate that, while technical skills were most valuable upon entering a job, interpersonal skills are the most valuable in later careers.

The College Board concluded that speech is one of the six basic competencies required for success in college. The Carnegie Foundation and the Association of American Colleges have both recently asked colleges to bolster the teaching of speech in college. Research demonstrates that the ability to build relationships with students characterizes successful teachers.

One out of two marriages in the U.S. ends in divorce (the average marriage lasts 7 years), and poor communication is frequently cited as the reason why. Many parents are searching for better ways to communicate with their teenagers. Patients often complain that their doctors' bedside manners are atrocious.

Clearly, communication skills are important to success in both careers and life in general. I don't want to promise too much. The few weeks we are together will not transform your life. We will work on understanding the process of communication that will enable us, over time, to improve our relationships. Good communicators continue to learn and improve communication throughout their lives. I hope you will take responsibility for what you learn and attempt to make the course relevant to you personally. The course is geared to create an awareness of

communication patterns. It is only the first step in becoming a competent communicator. Try to integrate what you learn from the class with your "real life" experiences.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Our general objective in this class is to explore the process of human communication. We will focus on the basic theories and models of communication and investigate the variables involved in the communication process that include: the participants, verbal and nonverbal messages, communication contexts, interpersonal relationships, and conflict. A thorough understanding of these concepts coupled with various classroom exercises will benefit us in developing communication skills that can be applied in everyday situations.

ASSIGNMENTS

The final grade in the course is assigned on the basis of scores on 3 exams, one observational/analytical/application paper, one research report, one group seminar, and participation/attendance.

Exams--The exams will be designed to test your knowledge of the material covered in classroom exercises, lectures, and readings. The two midterm exams will consist of true/false, multiple choice, fill in the blank, essay, and short answer questions. The final exam will be objective and comprehensive. Each will be worth 100 points. *Please bring a blue book to the exams.*

Observational/Analytical paper--this assignment requires that you observe and analyze a communication event. What went wrong or what went well? What could have been done differently? Use class material and additional material when appropriate to support your analysis. We'll discuss more specifics about this paper later. This paper is worth 30 points.

Research Report--The report will be on a subject relevant to the study of communication and the course. It must be 2-3 double spaced pages and typed. Specifics on the paper will be discussed in class at a later date. You will have options regarding the type of paper you will complete. Worth 30 points.

Group Seminar--A 30-35 minute group seminar concerning some communication topic. Specifics will be discussed later. Worth 30 points.

Participation--The participation portion of your grade will be based on attendance, participation in classroom discussions and exercises, and on your group members' evaluations of your performance. Participation, I suspect, is often confused with talking a lot in class. While I do hope you will be prepared to ask and answer questions, provide thoughtful commentary, and engage in meaningful discussions, I hope you'll also realize that participation sometimes means monitoring your own "talking time" in a way that allows and helps others become involved as well. You may miss up to 2 class meetings, for any reason, without penalty. Additional absences will hurt your grade. Worth 10 points.

Total points possible=400.

Grades will be assigned according to the following distribution of total course points: 0-59%=F; 60-62%=D-; 63-66=D; 67-69%=D+; 70-67%=C-; 73-76=C; 77-79%=C+; 80-82%=B-; 83-86=B; 87-89%=B+; 90-92%=A-; 93-100=A.

GENERAL POLICIES

1. Deadlines: all assignments will be announced sufficiently in advance to allow for thorough preparation and timely completion. All assignments must be turned in ON or BEFORE the due dates. Late assignments will be accepted for full credit only where serious, compelling and verifiable cause can be shown--such determination to be made by the instructor. Late assignments will be penalized severely.
2. Make up exams are usually not an option. A make up exam must be arranged before the test date. Be prepared to document your excuse.
3. Attendance and tardiness. I expect students to attend class regularly, on time, and for the entire session. Absences or tardiness do not excuse students from assignments due on the dates of their absences.
4. Writing style: All written assignments should be typed, double-spaced and proof-read for typographical and spelling errors. You should pay proper homage to syntax and grammar. You will be graded on the quality of your writing style as much as on the substance of your ideas since, for me, the meaning and importance of ideas are inseparable from the language through which they are conveyed. A complete reference must be provided whenever you refer to the words, ideas, statistics or other information provided by an author. Failure to do so counts as plagiarism.
5. Academic Integrity Policy: The department is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on exams or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course.
6. Electronic copies of papers will not be accepted.
7. Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435)797-2444 voice, (435)797-0740 TTY, (435)797-2444 VP, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

1/9: Introduction to the course, professor, and students.

1/11, 16, 18: The Nature of Interpersonal Communication. Read chapter 1.

1/23, 25: Self-Concept, Personality. Read Chapter 3 (pp. 61-85)

1/30, 2/1, 6: Perception. Read chapter 4.

2/8: Exam prep

2/13: **Midterm**

2/15: Go over test. Verbal Comm. Read Chapter 6

2/20: No class. Attend Monday classes.

2/22: Verbal Comm continued

2/27, 3/1: Nonverbal Comm. Read Chapter 7

3/5-9: Spring Break

3/13: Nonverbal Comm continued. Read Chapter 7

3/15, 20: Listening. **Observation/Analytical Paper Due on 10/31.** Read Chapter 8

3/22: Exam prep

3/27: **2nd exam**

3/29: Relationships. Read Ch 9 and 10.

4/3: TBA.

4/5: Relationships continued

4/10: Seminars on Social Media and Emotions. Ch 2 and Ch5.

4/12: Seminars on Improving Climates and Conflict. Ch 11 and 12

4/17, 19: Relationships continued

4/24: Wrap up. **Research Reports due.**

5/3: **Final exam** 11:30 am – 1:20 pm.

Final note: In addition to helping you learn a particular subject, this course is designed to facilitate the development of lifelong learning skills. It is my opinion that teaching/learning is a democratic process: Everyone in the class is a teacher and a learner (instructor included). Everyone must take responsibility for his or her own learning. If you are having any difficulty in the class (or just want to come by for a chat), don't hesitate to contact me. My job is to help you with this course. Use me! It is my pleasure to welcome you to the course! I hope you learn a lot and have some fun in the process!

John