

Communication 3624
Communication in Personal Relationships

Spring 2016

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**Communication in Relationships as
Mutual Sense-Making, Mutual Care, and Mutual Dialogue**

Welcome! This course develops a framework for exploring the processes involved in focused social interaction and communication (both online and face to face) in the context of interpersonal relationships. The principal concern is on understanding the operation of interpersonal messages and interpersonal communication processes and competencies in adults. Knowledge of interpersonal communication processes is associated with personal growth, health and wellness, as well as community civility and development. Hence, a primary objective is to enable students to become better analysts and producers of interpersonal messages in relationships at home, at work and in the community.

Course Texts

Guerrero, L., Andersen, P.A., & Afifi, W.A. (2013). *Close encounters: Communication in relationships, 4th edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Selected chapter reading, from J. Stewart (2013). *U & Me: Communicating in moments that matter*. Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Publication posted on Carmen.

Course Activities

Examinations. All students are asked to take two examinations over the content of the course. These examinations will consist of multiple choice and short essay items. The examinations will each count 20% toward the final grade in the course.

Research, application, analyses. Each student will be asked to complete 2 *short individual papers* (20%) and several *in-class group analyses with class participation* (15%) throughout the course. These assignments are designed to facilitate the mastery of course concepts and sharpen skill in analyzing and engaging in effective interpersonal interactions. Complete specifications for each assignment will be given in written form.

Activity Leader: You and 1-2 other students will be in charge of developing an activity for one day's lecture (worth 7%). The activity must a) be relevant to the readings/topic of lecture, b) include all students in the class, and c) take 5-10 minutes of class time. The individuals in charge of the activity must meet with the instructor at least one class period before their scheduled activity day to go over the activity and request copies if needed.

"Best Practices for Communication in Relationships": Small group project. Each student is asked to participate in a small group project that will research some aspect of interpersonal communication (worth 18%). Details of this group assignment will be distributed in Week #2 and groups formed in Week #3; time will be allocated in class sessions for groups to meet.

To help you master the reading and class discussion material:

1. Study guide questions for each reading that will be available on our Carmen course website.
2. There will be plenty of in-class application and discussion exercises for you to develop your skill at analyzing and producing interpersonal messages.
3. Power-point outlines of lectures will be available on Carmen.

GRADING:

Your grade in this course is a function of the following:

		Assignment Weights	
Exam #1	20%	A	93% – 100%
Exam #2	20%	A–	90% – 92%
Short Analyses	20%	B+	87% – 89%
		B	83% – 86%
Group Project	18%	B–	80% – 82%
Activity Leader	7%	C+	77% – 79%
Participation, in-class analyses, attendance	15%	C	73% – 76%
		C–	70% – 72%
		D+	67% – 69%
		D	60% – 66%
		E	Less than 60%

Course Policies

Participation. Students are responsible for attending class and participating in class discussion. Students with excessive absences (>5) will be evaluated under the class participation portion of the grade.

Scholarly integrity. Students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge with honor and credibility. Plagiarism of any kind on examinations or written assignments

will not be tolerated. If you are caught plagiarizing you will be prosecuted through appropriate University channels.

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request. Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking available assistance in a timely manner.

Students with flu like symptoms are asked not to attend class: securing health/medical notification will help to manage attendance and participation expectations.

Selected Interpersonal Communication Competencies Developed in Class Sessions

1. Self-expression & Self-disclosure
2. Attending & Listening
3. Developing Trust
4. General relational communication skills
5. Interpersonal Rituals & Cultural communication competence

Functions of Interpersonal Communication

6. Initiating relationships
7. Informing/expressing ideas clearly
8. Uncertainty management
9. Face-work & identity enactment
10. Self-presentation/image management
11. Asking questions
12. Providing social support
13. Influence & Argument
14. Discussion & dialogue; intercultural dialogue
15. Managing interpersonal conflict

TENATIVE SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Lecture	Topic and Reading
T	1/12	1	Course Introduction/Studying Interpersonal Communication
I. Relationships as Mutual Sense-Making			
Th	1/14	2	Conceptualizing Relational Communication Ch. 1
T	1/19	3	Communicating Identity: The Social Self Ch. 2 (pp. 25-38)
Th	1/21	4	Communicating Identity Ch. 2 (pp. 38-52)
T	1/26	5	Interpersonal Attraction Ch. 3 (pp. 53-74); St.
Th	1/28	6	Interpersonal Attraction/Managing Uncertainty Ch.3-4 (pp. 74-92)
T	2/2	7	Managing Uncertainty Ch. 4 (pp. 92-104)
II. Relationships as Mutual Care			
Th	2/4	8	Relationship Stages Ch. 5 (pp. 105-119)
T	2/9	9	Turning Points and Dialectics Ch. 5 (pp. 119-130)
Th	2/11	10	Self-Disclosure and Privacy Ch. 6 (pp. 131-144)
T	2/16	11	Secrets/Review Ch. 6 (pp. 145-157)
Th	2/18		Examination #1
T	2/23	12	Closeness: Affection, Immediacy Ch. 7 (pp. 159-174)
Th	2/25	13	Social Support Ch. 7 (pp. 174-185)
T	3/1	14	Love and Attachment Ch. 8
III. Relationships as Mutual Dialogue			
Th	3/3	15	Maintaining Relationships Ch. 8, 10 (pp. 242-254)
T	3/8	16	Maintaining Relationships Ch. 10 (pp. 255-269)
Th	3/10	17	Managing Conflict: Styles Ch. 11 (pp. 270-280)
T	3/15		Spring Break
Th	3/17		Spring Break
T	3/22	18	Managing Conflict Ch. 11 (pp. 280-295)
Th	3/24	19	Influence: Power Ch. 12
T	3/29	20	Influence: Persuasion Posted reading
Th	3/31	21	Hurtful Messages, Deception, Jealousy Ch. 13 (pp. 324-344)
T	4/5	22	Transgressions, Repair Ch. 13 14 (pp. 344-366)
Th	4/7	23	Forgiveness/Review Ch. 14 (pp. 367-377)
T	4/12		Presentations
Th	4/14		Presentations
T	4/19		Presentations
Th	4/21		Presentations
W	4/27		2 pm. Examination #2