

Communication 7820: Foundations of Interpersonal Communication Spring 2017

Instructor: Jesse Fox, Ph.D.

Office hours: T 12-2 and by appointment

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Class Information: T/R 3:55-5:15, Derby 3116

Course Description: This course delves into the major theories, concepts, and guiding research in the area of interpersonal communication. Although our primary focus is within the field of communication, the course also draws on literature from psychology, sociology, family studies, and other relevant disciplines to provide a comprehensive overview of research on interpersonal communication and relationships.

Course Objectives:

1. To provide an overview of key concepts and theories in interpersonal communication
2. To strengthen analytical and critical skills in assessing theory and research
3. To understand the historical context of interpersonal communication research

Required Texts:

*Knapp, M. L., & Daly, J. A. (Eds.) (2011). *The SAGE handbook of interpersonal communication* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

**The APA Style Manual* (6th ed.)

*Other readings will be posted to Canvas.

Assignments

Class presentation and materials. (15%) You will choose a day that you will serve as the lead for the day's discussion (approximately 45 minutes of class). In addition to conducting a discussion through the generation of appropriate and interesting questions, you will create a packet that will effectively synthesize the selected readings and provide readings and exercises about the material. The purpose of this packet is to provide everyone with a starter kit if they were to research or teach this topic.

You will upload your packet to Carmen to be shared with everyone **by 5 PM on the day before you present**. Do not procrastinate or cut it close. If Carmen says 5:01, your packet will be considered late and you will earn zero points for the majority of the assignment. Please also bring copies of any materials to class needed to facilitate your discussion.

This packet will consist of:

- a 1 p. summary/outline of each designated reading for future reference, with critiques and at least 3 discussion questions. Please consult with me to identify the

- designated readings, as they may not correspond with the required readings.
- an in-class exercise (which we will do if you like)
 - an out-of-class assignment (which we will not complete) on the topic that would be useful for undergraduates learning this material—be creative!
 - visual representations or graphics
 - relevant multimedia (e.g., links, video clips)
 - additional articles (at least 5) on your topic for further reading that do not overlap with the syllabus—include a brief summary of each (3-5 sentences)

Midterm exam. (20%) This exam will be an in-class, closed-book, short essay exam. Although we are in an era of having information at our fingertips, you should have the ability to clearly, accurately, and spontaneously answer questions without having to consult other sources. **Date: Thursday, February 16.**

Reading assessment. (15%) At four points in the semester, you will be given an in-class reading assessment. You will be given a designated question based on the day's readings and a designated amount of time (approximately 15 minutes) to write a response. Your lowest score will be dropped. **Dates: That would defeat the purpose.**

Participation. (15%) You are expected to participate in class. Mere attendance is not participation. Being able to participate in meaningful academic discourse by asking questions, challenging assumptions, and defending your perspective are necessary skills as an academic. Throughout each class I will be tracking your performance, and this information will be used to determine your participation grade.

Final paper. (35%) Your final paper will be centered around a deep, deep dig on an interpersonal theory or model that has been well established in the literature. This will involve reading the original works on the theory, subsequent modifications, others' critiques, and modern interpretations. You will receive a separate assignment with details and due dates for various stages of the process. **Final paper due: Monday, May 1 @ 5 PM.**

* All written assignments must be turned **both** via hard copy at the beginning of class and via Canvas. All written assignments should be submitted as a Microsoft Word document (i.e., .doc or .docx).

*Please note that your final grade is final. Do not ask me to reconsider your grade when the semester is over; applying subjective standards after the fact invalidates the standards applied to the class and is unfair to every student. It is your responsibility to keep up with readings and lecture, track your performance, and make timely adjustments well before the end of the semester.

Attendance: You are expected to attend every class. For every missed class over one, there will be a 5% grade reduction. Chronic lateness may also incur a grade penalty. If you have a conflict or issue that you anticipate will affect your attendance or timeliness (I myself will be jogging over from my other class that immediately precedes our class), please meet with me to discuss.

Academic Integrity: I take academic dishonesty very seriously. All students are subject to the student code of conduct (see http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp), including the student code of academic integrity. Violations of the code will result in severe penalties in this course (including a zero on the assignment) and all violations will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. For this course, *academic dishonesty* includes (but is not limited to):

- Use of someone else’s ideas or expression (e.g., writing) without proper acknowledgment of the source. Proper acknowledgment (e.g., citation, quotation, footnote) should make clear both the **extent** and **nature** of the use. If you have used someone’s exact words, you should use “quotation marks” as well as a (citation). If a large portion of your writing uses another person’s ideas, argument structure, or narrative form then you should make clear where the “borrowing” begins and ends. Note that *paraphrasing someone*, *summarizing their arguments*, or *using their ideas* are all plagiarism if the source is not acknowledged. Plagiarism is more than just using someone else’s exact words. There is no outside source that it is acceptable to use without citing.
- Collaborating with other students on any assignment, homework, class project, etc., without the clear consent of the instructor is also academic dishonesty. If work is not assigned as a group project, you must do it entirely on your own. **Check with your instructor if in doubt.**
- In most instances, taking your own work from one course and submitting it in a different course is also considered academic dishonesty. It is simply not appropriate to claim that work was done for one class when in fact it was written for a different class. Similarly, cutting and pasting extensively from previous papers you have written can be viewed as self-plagiarism. This is a common problem with graduate students. **If you are “borrowing” your own work, be sure to discuss this with me to ensure that you are not self-plagiarizing.**
- Exchanging information with another individual during a test, quiz, or examination is clearly academic dishonesty, as is the use of any materials not permitted for the exam.

It is your responsibility to be aware of the rules of academic dishonesty—ignorance is not a defense. ***When in doubt, consult your instructor before doing anything about which you are uncertain.*** You should also read through the “Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity” available at <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/ten-suggestions.html>.

Disruptions: Disruptions and distractions (including talking during lecture; text messaging or other phone use; or nonclass computer activity), threatening behavior, and negative participation (e.g., use of inappropriate language or derogatory speech) will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in such behavior may be asked to leave class, suffer grade penalties, and be reported to the Dean of Students and/or University Police. Cell phones are considered a disruption. **Turn your cell phone and other devices off completely and put them away before the start of class.** Any student who is observed consulting or using their device or whose device rings, beeps, or audibly vibrates during class will suffer grade penalties (1% of the overall class grade for the first offense, 5% for the second offense, etc.) and may be asked to leave class.

Device Policy: Computers will be used for in-class activities only. Laptops, tablets, phones, smartwatches, wearables, and other mobile device use is otherwise prohibited. If you require a computer for notetaking due to a disability, please see the disability portion below and make an appointment with me to discuss arrangements.

Email Policy: Email should be used for quick administrative questions and emergency contact **only** unless otherwise discussed in advance. Email is simply not an efficient way to communicate about most of the issues that come up in class. Updates to the course schedule or readings will be announced in class; it is your responsibility to stay apprised of these changes.

Inclement Weather: Unless the University is closed, you should assume class will be held. If I do not show up 30 minutes after the start of class, consider the class canceled. If conditions prevent me from making it to campus on time I will do my best to inform everyone via Canvas.

Disability Accommodations: If you anticipate the need for accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, please contact the Office for Disability Services, Baker Hall, Room 098, or phone (614) 292-3307. Students with documented disabilities making requests must meet with me privately within the first three weeks of class to discuss reasonable accommodations.

Diversity Statement: The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Title IX Statement: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories. If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, subject to domestic or dating violence, or stalked or otherwise threatened, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu. Information about confidential counseling through the Counseling and Consultation Service can be found at <http://www.ccs.osu.edu/> or (614) 292-5766.

My Expectations: Being a graduate student is not an easy job; if it were, it would be a terrible preparation for a career in academia. Graduate school is your opportunity to learn and develop as a scholar. Moreover, if you are earning a degree in Communication (not a degree in this very narrow aspect of the field that you study) it is your responsibility to have a well-rounded education in the discipline more broadly. Thus, I expect this class to be a priority for you. I expect you to come to class fully prepared and ready to engage every single day. I expect you to be motivated and willing to learn, critique, and dispute the material, and to grow as a scholar.

Another part of graduate school is learning the meta-lesson of how to succeed in academia. I expect your performance in class to reflect the professionalism befitting of an academic. A

considerable part of this is learning how to make a good impression on others who will always be evaluating you (senior academics, mentors, editors, other scholars); demonstrating that you are a responsible, capable, and diligent scholar; listening to, respecting, and helping others; and meeting (better yet, exceeding) expectations that others have for your performance. For this course, this means keeping up with and meeting deadlines for all readings and assignments; participating in class discussion in a meaningful way *every* meeting; and submitting professional, complete, insightful, and polished work.

What You Can Expect: I love teaching. I love working with graduate students. I am here to help you learn and prepare for your future as best I can. As an academic, I consider myself forever a student: I don't know all the things, but I am willing to learn. And, I expect to learn something from each of you. I love when students question and confront the material; one of the best parts of teaching graduate classes is to have my thinking or perspective challenged.

I don't just teach interpersonal comm; I endorse it. I am happy to meet with you to talk about class or academia or life or, especially, food. I loathe communicating through email (and emails seem to get eaten with some frequency), so please never hesitate to send follow up emails or ask me in person if I have not attended to something.

Other Resources

International Association for Relationship Research (IARR) – This is the primary conference for interpersonal scholarship and it has a fantastic interdisciplinary blend of people from communication, social psychology, sociology, family studies, and other disciplines. Quite frankly, their website (www.iarr.org) is more useful and navigable than NCA's or ICA's. There are resources for new scholars (e.g., reviewing, presenting, publishing, time management, applying for jobs) as well as teaching resources (including syllabi and assignments).

Journals – IARR publishes two journals, *Personal Relationships* (PR) and *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships* (JSPR). Skimming their tables of contents is a great way to get an idea of the scope of the field. Although interpersonal research is published across all of the general communication journals, *Communication Monographs* (NCA flagship) is probably the most consistent. *Communication Studies*, *Communication Quarterly*, and *Western Journal of Communication* are also common outlets for interpersonal scholarship.

Strunk & White's *The Elements of Style* – If you are uncertain of what constitutes good writing, this classic book is straightforward and invaluable. Even if you think you're a good writer, you'll be horrified to learn about grammatical offenses you're committing. Find it at a used bookstore or on Amazon for less than \$5. It's well worth the investment.

Science of Relationships (www.scienceofrelationships.com) – This is a more mass-market type website run by academics. Although it is biased towards social psychology research on relationships, it is an incredibly valuable website. There are great examples here of how to write up research for a mass market audience and links to interpersonal scholars' blogs. Plus, they have some fun infographics.