

COMM 1318—Fall 2013
Honors Interpersonal Communication
T/Th 1:30-2:45
Classroom Center 336
(3 credit hours)

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Sarah Vartabedian
OFFICE HOURS: MW 11:00am-1:00pm; T/Th 3:00-4:00pm
OFFICE LOCATION: FAC 193
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REQUIRED TEXT:

Adler, B., Rosenfeld L., & Proctor R. (2013) *Interplay: the process of interpersonal communication*. (12th edition) New York, NY: Oxford University Press

COURSE PURPOSE:

Effective interpersonal communication is vital for personal and professional fulfillment and growth. Through this course you will develop a deeper understanding of the complex communicative barriers that we symbol (mis)using animals face every day. Whether interpersonal communication is conducted in a romantic, social, or business setting, there are psychological, physical, cultural, and even mediated barriers that shape our interactions. Students who complete this course should not only improve their oral communication skills, but they should also develop an awareness of what is needed for success in varied interpersonal contexts. Additionally, we will discuss conflict management strategies, diversity and intercultural awareness, gender norms, and power as they pertain to our lives and daily interactions.

Core Competencies Provided by COMM 1318:

Upon completing this course, students should:

- ✓ Demonstrate effective writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing and presentations.
- ✓ Identify appropriate communication choices in various contexts.
- ✓ Appropriately apply modes of expression such as descriptive, narrative, scientific, and self-expressive in their written, visual, and oral communication.
- ✓ Demonstrate effective critical and reflective listening skills in group settings.
- ✓ Demonstrate critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument.
- ✓ Create a research paper or oral presentation with the appropriate documentation.

Program Goals for 1318:

Communication Studies, Undergraduate Program

1. Competence with leadership skills by modeling leadership through individual communication and group learning experiences.
2. Ability to deliver effective presentations by producing well researched, and organized material both orally and visually.

3. **Understanding of effective relational management strategies by illustrating such behaviors as active listening, empathy, assertiveness, self-disclosure, conversation management, and conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships.**
 4. Ability to write effectively by producing research papers that are grammatically and mechanically correct and involve the application of critical thinking.
 5. Ability to identify cultural influences by selecting appropriate communication strategies and practices for the communication context.
 6. **Competence with group communication by integrating problem solving processes, feedback, and group roles into group interaction and participation.**
 7. Understanding of communication theory by evaluating theories in a variety of contexts, recognizing the ethical responsibilities inherent in each context
 8. Understanding of professional and civic responsibilities by synthesizing the communication principles learned in the classroom in effective service learning projects and/or communication internships.
- ✓ Introduce effective relational management strategies by illustrating such behaviors as active listening, empathy, assertiveness, self-disclosure, conversation management, and conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships.
 - ✓ Introduce competencies within group communication by integrating problem solving processes, feedback, and group roles into group interaction and participation.

CLASS POLICIES:

Please carefully read the following class policies:

Attendance, Tardiness, Etiquette, and Late Work

- **Attendance** in this course is important to developing your skills as a communicator and having meaningful class interactions. I know unexpected life events will come up which is why you are allowed 3 absences without penalty. Every additional absence deducts 4 points from your overall grade. Additionally, failure to attend at least 75% of the class meetings will result in a failing course grade.
- **Tardiness:** Students who are late disrupt class and disrespect their classmates' time. You get ONE free tardy, but any additional tardy is subject to a penalty established by the class.
- **Cell Phones:** must be turned off. Seriously! If it rings or you are looking at it during class, your classmates will establish your punishment.
- **Late projects and assignments** will not be accepted unless you have made prior arrangements with me and provided documentation.
- Any late assignments accepted will be at the discretion of the instructor and will result in a loss of 10 points per day it is late (not class period).

Grading Philosophy:

My goal is to give you the expectations and tools for success, but YOU are responsible for earning your grade. You all start at Q and go from there. You are expected to have already completed/read what is listed on the syllabus for that day and to come to class prepared for discussion. No grades will be curved or discussed via e-mail. Contesting of grades should be done in writing at least 24 hours after receiving the grade but no later than a week. I cannot revisit prior grades at the end of the semester. Please be aware that contesting of grades requires a full re-grading of your assignment, not just a portion of it, and has the same chance of going up as it does down.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Academic Integrity

All work must be completed individually unless otherwise stated. Commission of any of the following acts shall constitute scholastic dishonesty: acquiring or providing information for any assigned work or examination from any unauthorized source; informing any person or persons of the contents of any examination prior to the time the exam is given in any subsequent sections of the course or as a makeup; plagiarism; submission of a paper or project that is substantially the same for two courses unless expressly authorized by the instructor to do so. For more information, see the Student Code of Life at <http://wtamu.edu/webres/File/Student>

Acceptable Student Behavior

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (*Code of Student Life*). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action or referral to the University's Behavioral Intervention Team. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Please note that firearms and alcoholic beverages are not allowed in university classrooms.

ADA statement: West Texas A&M University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) and to contact faculty members in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations. Contact Information: Student Success Center, CC 106; www.wtamu.edu/disability; phone 806-651-2335.

Evacuation Statement

If you receive notice to evacuate the building, please evacuate promptly but in an orderly manner. Evacuation routes are posted in various locations indicating all exits, outside assemble area, location of fire extinguishers, fire alarm pull stations and emergency telephone numbers (651.5000 or 911). In the event an evacuation is necessary: evacuate immediately do not use elevators; take all personal belongings with you; report to outside assembly area and wait for further information; students needing assistance in the evacuation process should bring this to the attention of the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

Scholastic Dishonesty Statement: Plagiarism is considered **serious academic misconduct**. All speeches and papers presented should be the work of the student enrolled in the course. Proper documentation should be made of materials cited from all sources. Instructors determining that a student has plagiarized a speech or paper (and I will check) will be assigned a failing grade for that assignment and may elect to pursue disciplinary proceedings against the student. It is the responsibility of students and instructors to help maintain scholastic integrity at the University by refusing to participate in or tolerate scholastic dishonesty. Commission of any of the following acts shall constitute scholastic dishonesty. This listing is not exclusive of any other acts that may reasonably be said to constitute scholastic dishonesty: acquiring or providing information for any

assigned work or examination from any unauthorized source; informing any person or persons of the contents of any examination prior to the time the examination is given in subsequent sections of the course or as a makeup; plagiarism; submission of a paper or project that is substantially the same for two courses unless expressly authorized by the instructor to do so. (CODE OF STUDENT LIFE, Rules and Procedures for Students, West Texas A&M University). Please refer to WTAMU's Student Code of Life. (This document is listed under "University Reports"). <http://www.wtamu.edu/about/university-reports.aspx>
Withdrawal Policy: No administrative withdrawals will be initiated by the instructor. If you stop attending class, but do not officially withdraw from the class, your name appears on the ending roll sheet. Grades will be assigned based on the work completed. The final day to withdraw from class with a guaranteed grade of "X" is **Oct. 31th. Incomplete grade contracts may only be issued with the approval of Dr. Trudy Hanson, Basic Course Supervisor (phone: 651-2800, Office FA 194).**

Dates to Note:

- Aug. 29—Last day to add classes
- Sept. 2—Labor Day Holiday
- Sept. 11—Last day to drop with refund
- Oct. 8 -18—Midterms
- Oct. 31—Last day to drop or withdraw with an X
- Nov. 21-25—NCA Conference
- Nov. 27-29 -Thanksgiving holidays, Classes dismiss at noon on Wednesday
- Dec. 4—Last class day
- Dec. 5—DEAD DAY—no classes
- Dec. 6-12—Final Exams
- Dec. 13—WTAMU Graduation at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Grading Scale (700 points possible)

A=627-700 B=557-626 C=487-556 D=417-486 F=416 and below

COMM 1318 Course Assignments and Evaluation

2 Exams	200
Dark Side of Communication Paper (Proposal (25) + Paper (125))	150
Film Analysis	150
Theory Group Presentation (75 each x 2 presentations)	150
Discussion Board (5 entries x 10 points each)	50

Description of Assignments:

Film Analysis: Choose a film and analyze one or more of the relationships represented in the film. Any film is fine as long as you can explain the interpersonal dynamic. You may analyze verbal and non-verbal behaviors, gender differences, self-disclosure, identity management, perception, etc. There have also been plenty of different theories mentioned in our text such as nonverbal expectancy violation theory, social comparison theory, and attribution theory. You will need at least 4 additional sources on the concept/theory required (your text is a resource but not one of your sources). These sources can be information on the concept or on the film itself and may be website, database, or text sources. Create a formal outline that includes the following: Inform us about the concept and/or theory used for your analysis, and then inform us about your analysis. Use elements from the film to illustrate the concept and/or theory – describe scenes from the movie to facilitate the presentation. Sources should be noted throughout the outline and listed in a bibliography (APA style). Your grade will depend on your outline format, the description/analysis of the relationship you chose along with grammar, spelling, and punctuation. (150pts)

Dark Side of Communication Paper: Your paper and draft will demonstrate your ability to research and apply interpersonal theories to real life contexts and conflicts. Your proposal will be 2-3 pages and your final paper will be 5-8 pages and include at least 4 additional sources (beyond the book, which is a resource NOT a source in this case.) More details will be posted on WTClass.

Discussion Board: You will be required to lead one discussion post during the semester and respond to 4 different posts throughout the semester.

Group Presentations (2x): In groups of 2-3, you will lead two class discussions on various interpersonal theories. You will sign up for your topic on the second day of class. You will be expected to give a mini-lecture and lead class discussion (approx. 20-30 minutes). More details will be posted on WTClass.

Course Schedule

The instructor reserves the right to make amendments to the following schedule as necessary. There may be additional assignments given throughout the semester that are not listed in this syllabus. Students are expected to have read the required readings each week so that they will be prepared to participate effectively in class discussion.

Aug.	Subject	Readings
27	Introductions & Overview of Syllabus	
29	Interpersonal Communication; assign theory presentations	Ch. 1
Sept.	Subject	Readings
3	Language Due: Dark Side proposal	Ch. 5
5	Communication and the Self	Ch. 3

10	Perceiving Others	Ch. 4
12	Nonverbal Communication	Ch. 6 Discussion Post
17	Theory: Attraction Theory Theory: Nonverbal Expectancy Violation	
19	Listening	Ch. 7
24	Theory: Social Penetration & Johari's Window Theory: Uncertainty Reduction Theory	
26	Critical Consumption of Media Day	Discussion Post
Oct.	Subject	Readings
1	Theory: Attribution Theory Theory: Social Comparison Theory	
3	Review for Exam 1/Catch up on any Theories	
8	Exam 1	
10	No Class	Discussion Post -- Social Networking
15	Interpersonal Communication in a Changing World: Culture and Social Networking	Ch 2
17	Initiating Relationships	Ch. 9
22	Initiating/Maintaining Relationships Theory: Stages of Relationship	
24	Terminating Relationships Theory: Equity Theory	Discussion Post
29	Climate and Dark Side of Communication Theory: Cycle of Abuse (Social Cycle Theory)	Ch. 10
31	Dark Side of Communication	
Nov.	Subject	Readings
5	Conflict	Ch. 11
7	Power & Influence Due: Dark Side Analysis	
12	Power & Influence - sexual harassment & bullying	Discussion Post
14	Emotions Theory: Social Exchange Theory	Ch. 8
19	Intimacy: Friends, Family, and Friends with Benefits	Ch. 12

21	NCA	
26	Due: Film Analysis Class discussion	
28	Thanksgiving Holiday	
Dec.	Subject	
3	Final Exam	