



COMM 1318: Interpersonal Communication
Fall 2011
KRC 119

Instructor: Dr. Kris Drumheller
Phone: 651-2816
Office: FAC 192
Texts: Eichhorn, K. C., Thomas-Maddox, C., & Wanzer, M. B. (2008). *Interpersonal communication: Building rewarding relationships*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

E-mail: kdrumheller@wtamu.edu
Office Hours: MW10:30-noon; W1-3; by appt.

Course Purpose: This course focuses on the psychological, physical and cultural barriers to interpersonal communication with emphasis on overcoming these barriers in order to improve interpersonal communication.

Students should be able to meet the following **objectives** by the completion of this course:

1. Recognize and understand the transactional model of communication.
2. Apply general communication principles to interpersonal contexts.
3. Apply interpersonal theories for understanding and evaluating a variety of relationships.
4. Demonstrate the ability to effectively interact in dyads.
5. Develop and demonstrate effective active listening skills.
6. Demonstrate ability to present information, in an acceptable presentation format, about interpersonal relationships.
7. Assess cultural and political factors affecting relationships.

Don't knock the weather; nine-tenths of the people couldn't start a conversation if it didn't change once in a while.
-Kin Hubbard

State Mandated Core Competencies Provided by COMM 1318:

- To understand and demonstrate writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing and presentation.
- To understand the importance of specifying audience and purpose and to select appropriate communication choices.
- To understand and appropriately apply modes of expression, i.e., descriptive, expository, narrative, scientific, and self-expressive, in written, visual, and oral communication.
- To participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.
- To understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument.
- To develop the ability to research and write a documented paper and/or give an oral presentation.

Goals for Student Achievement:

Communicate and participate to maximize understanding and class energy.
 Realize the implications of specific communicative acts on relationships.
 Evaluate communication theories for usefulness and development in your own life.
 Acknowledge the power of communication in various relationships and situations.
 Treat your classmates with respect and integrity for a safe learning environment.
 Elect to shape and mold new understanding to **create** your communicative world.

Attendance and Tardies

- **Attendance** in this course is important to developing your skills as a communicator. I expect that you will get sick or have university activities, for which you will not be penalized. If you have no absences in the class, 3 points will be added to your final grade; no more than one absence will add 2 points; no more than two absences will add 3 points. After the 5th absence, your peers will request that you bring breakfast on an agreed upon class date. Additionally, failure to attend at least 75% of the class meetings will result in a failing course grade.
- Projects and assignments may not be made up except in the case of documented illness, family emergency, university sanctioned activities, or as otherwise approved by the instructor. Prior notification where possible enhances your credibility but does not replace required 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).
- **Tardies:** We have little time to cover a great deal of material. Students who are late create unnecessary disruptions. Penalties will be assessed for repeated tardies. As determined by the class, the third tardy will result in the student having to do a song and dance while wearing a class hat (such as a sombrero).
- **Accumulation Addendum:** An accumulation of seven cell phone, attendance, and/or tardy offenses will result in the loss of the iPad for two days or a combination of penalties noted in the syllabus (i.e. song/hat dance, breakfast, doughnuts, etc.)

Grading Philosophy:

You are as responsible for your success as I am. I will help in every way I can but it is your responsibility to contact me with questions, concerns, or for assistance. **You are expected to keep up with the course readings, coming prepared to engage in discussion.** No grades will be given over the phone or e-mail. Contesting of grades should be done at the time the grade is returned and not 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.

Policies for Maintaining Professionalism:

Withdrawal: I will not withdraw you from the class. You must do so on your own. Failure to attend class without withdrawing yourself will result in an F in the course.

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.

Human dignity: will be the norm for all class assignments, discussions and postings. As the instructor of record, I reserve the right to interrupt and discontinue any posting that is offensive or insulting. Such actions will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Remember, respect, responsibility and integrity are key characteristics to any communicator. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will **not** be tolerated. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action or referral to the University's Behavioral Intervention Team. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums (electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.).

Presentation Aids: which may cause harm to others or threaten the environment are strictly prohibited. Seek permission if you are unsure whether your PA is acceptable.

Cell Phones: must be turned off. Not to vibrate, silent or anything else like that unless you have a reason it needs to stay on and you have cleared it with me first. As determined by the class, the first offense is a warning. Further offenses result in the call or text being answered by a peer and doughnuts must be brought by the student to the next class period.

Incompletes: will not be given for any reason unless documentation is provided from Dr. Albrecht's office. If you are unable to complete the coursework on time, you should withdraw from the course or face the possibility of failing the course.

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 (651.5000or 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.

Grading Scale

A=90-100 B=80-89 C=70-79 D=60-69 F=59 and below

Common COMM 1318 Course Content:	Points
Exams - 2	300
2 Group Projects Group Video/Skit (the “Reality” of the Mediated Analysis) Group Survey – Exploring the Dark Side of Communication	300
Analysis Papers Journal Assignment (3 parts, 200 pts) Mediated Analysis (100 pts) – Must Use PowerPoint	300
Participation	100

Detailed assignment sheets will be posted on WtClass after a class discussion of assignments. All written assignments will be uploaded to WtClass.

Assignment Specifics

Strengthening a Relationship: You will decide on someone with whom you would like to strengthen a relationship. To start the project you will write a *Relationship Reflection*. You will then *journal* each week about your efforts to strengthen the relationship. You should have at least 12 substantive entries. Finally, you will write a reflection of the experience and the status of the relationship.

Mediated Analysis: Choose a dyad from any mediated source (film, television, book) and analyze the relationship using one or more of the theories addressed in your book and this course (you can look ahead in the text). You must do a PowerPoint presentation of your analysis and an outline of your presentation. You do not need to write a paper for this assignment.

Mediated Reality (Group Project): Forming a group, select one of the mediated clips from the previous mediated analysis to re-address from a reality perspective. Students can choose to create a skit or film or other creative medium for presenting the “reality” of the dyadic interaction.

Group Survey Project: This project has several parts, with different groups playing different roles. As a class, we will determine the questions to use in a survey of student use of dark communication. These questions will be entered into Qualtrics and prepared for iPad distribution. Each student must then collect at least 10 surveys (you can collect more if you would like). Then, each group will be in charge of a different part of the project.

Group 1: Data Analysis (work on analysis and data charts to pass on to Groups 2 & 3)

Group 2: Data Report (write up the background and implications to pass on to Group 3)

Group 3: Use the report and data charts to prepare a presentation and present to the class.

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 day's reading PRIOR to the class so they will be prepared to participate effectively in class discussion.

Aug.	Subject	Readings
29	Introductions & Overview Journal Assignment Reviewed	Ch. 1
31	Syllabus Negotiations Communication Model	
Sept.	Subject	Readings
5	Labor Day: No Classes	
7	Interpersonal across Contexts – types of family, work, and health relationships Theory: Attraction Theory Concept of Self in Relationships Due: Relationship Reflection	Ch. 1 p. 289-297 p. 313-321 p. 336-342 Ch. 2
12	Concept of Self continued Consequences of family relationships, friendships in organizations, intercultural personal orientation system Theory: Social Penetration Theory & JoHari Window	Ch. 2 p. 306 p. 321-323 p. 277-283
14	Perception & Listening Theory: Attribution Theory Due: Group Survey Questions	Ch. 5
19	Perception in Contexts – creating a family identity, organizational culture & socialization, communication between nondisabled and disabled persons, online identity Theory: Social Identity Theory	p. 303-305 p. 328-329 p. 345-349 p. 364-375 p. 360-380
21	Culture & Intercultural Issues Theory: Uncertainty Reduction Theory	Ch. 10
26	Culture	
28	Verbal Communication Theory: Systems Theory	Ch. 3
Oct.	Subject	Readings
3	Nonverbal Communication Theory: Nonverbal Expectancy Violation Theory	Ch. 4
5	Exam 1 Journal Check	
10	Initiating Relationships	Ch. 6

	Theory: Stages of Relationship Theory: Social Exchange Theory Due: Group Survey Data Collected	
12	Initiating Relationships	
17	Due: Mediated Analysis	
19	Due: Mediated Analysis	
24	Due: Mediated Analysis	
26	Sustaining Relationships Theory: Equity Theory	Ch. 7
31	Dark Side of Communication Due: Group 1: Data Analysis	Ch. 8
Nov.	Subject	Readings
2	Dark Side of Communication– difficult family communication; death & dying	Ch. 8 p. 307-309 p. 351-355
7	Power & Influence Due: Group 2: Data Report	Ch. 8
9	Power & Influence - sexual harassment & bullying	Ch. 8 p. 325-326
14	Due: Group 3 – Data Presentation	
16	NCA - Group Work Day	
21/23	Discussion Board on WTClass – Positive Influence (Thanksgiving 24-27)	
28	Positive Influence – suggestions for success; work-life balance; improving health care	p. 285 p. 331 p. 343-345
30	Terminating Relationships Theory: Social Exchange Theory	Ch. 9
Dec.	Subject	
5	Terminating Relationships Theory: Social Exchange Theory	Ch. 9
7	Exam 2 Due: Relationship Journal & Journal Reflection	
9 or 14	Group Video/Skit Finals Dates (12/14 8 a.m. or 12/9 at 10:15)	