

## COMM 410: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION THEORY

Spring 2012

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### **Course Description**

This course stresses how communication is linked to your self-presentation, relational, and instrumental goals. You will be engaged in the latest theory and research on the topic of interpersonal communication as it relates to these goals.

### **Course Goals**

I have three course objectives: (1) that you learn various ways in which communication works to help you achieve your various personal goals; (2) that you identify and examine a particular research topic, which may include a theory, a domain of behavior, or both; and (3) that you learn how to apply the concepts and principles to everyday interactions.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

In the “Student Academic Integrity Policy” manual, ASU defines “Plagiarism” [as] using another's words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another's work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately.” You can find this definition at the following site:

[http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic\\_integrity.htm#definitions](http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic_integrity.htm#definitions)

Academic dishonesty, including inappropriate collaboration, will not be tolerated. There are severe sanctions for cheating, plagiarizing, and any other form of dishonesty. PLEASE CONTACT ME IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY.

### **Requirements**

1. *Examinations* (Combined, worth 45% of final grade [450 points]). These will be online, true/false and multiple choice examinations. Each test will be timed for one hour, and items

will be randomly selected from a pool of items. Three exams will be given: Introduction; Mid-term; and Final. You will receive a study guide in advance of each test. Make-up essay exams will be given for excused absences.

2. *Team Paper* (20% of final grade [200 points]). As part of a team, you will explore a topic regarding **interpersonal communication** using academic research articles (see attached guidelines). The paper (15 pages total, including front and back matter) will present a synthesis of the contemporary literature in a stylistically clear and clean way. You will also present your paper with a cover letter—signed by all members—that specifies who did what. Also, you will participate in a group presentation of your research, which shall be delivered to the class on April 24. NOTE: Four team meetings are scheduled during class over the term, though you will most likely meet outside of class as well.
3. *Personal Analyses* (20% of final grade [200 points]). You will also write two 2-3 page analyses of some facet of interpersonal communication that you have observed personally (see guidelines).
4. *Participation* (15% of final grade [150 points]). Your participation is critical to your education. This means you need to attend class, read the chapters, and join in the class discussions. You can count on 15 point deduction for each missed class. Participation cannot be made-up. *Also note: This course contains sensitive material.*

### **Text**

Canary, D. J., & Cody, M. J., & Manusov, V. (2008). *Interpersonal communication: A goals-based approach (4th edition)*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press.

### **Course Schedule**

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Assignment</i>
I-10	Welcome to the Class Defining Interpersonal Communication	Ch. 1
I-17	Listening Teams meet	Ch. 4
I-24	Cognitive Aspects of IPC	Ch. 5

1-31	Verbal Messages Nonverbal Messages	Ch. 2 Ch. 3
<b>2-7</b>	<b>Introduction Exam (Chapters 1-5)</b>	
2-14	Presenting the Self Defending the self	Ch. 6 Ch. 8
2-28	Disclosing the Self Escalating relationships <b>Personal Analysis #1 Due</b> Teams Meet	Ch. 7 Ch. 9
3-6	Maintaining relationships De-escalating relationships	Ch. 10 Ch. 11
<b>3-13</b>	<b>Mid-term Exam (Chapters 6-11)</b>	
3-20	Spring Break	
3-27	Seeking compliance Teams Meet	Ch. 12
4-3	Managing conflict <b>Personal Analysis #2 Due</b>	Ch. 13
4-10	Individual differences Family and life-span issues	Ch. 14 Ch. 15
4-17	Competence in Interpersonal Communication Teams Meet	Ch. 16
4-24	<b>Team Papers Presented in Class and through Safe Assignment</b>	
<b>5-1</b>	<b>Final Exam (Chapters 12-16)</b>	

### **Comm 410: Personal Analysis Guidelines**

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THE PURPOSE of this assignment is to apply scholarly findings regarding interpersonal communication to everyday life. This page constitutes guidelines that you should follow.

1. Select an interpersonal context for your analysis. This means dyadic communication, though some situations also entail larger groups (e.g., roommates, friends with cliques, etc.).
2. Look for examples of interpersonal communication concepts or principles that have been highlighted in the textbook. For example, you could talk about the specific relationship maintenance behaviors that you and a friend use over the course of two weeks' time. Or you could look at specific instances of a person's self-presentation mode (e.g., how a person tries to be likeable). Or you could illustrate the communicative behaviors that a person uses to terminate a relationship. (*Please do not begin or end a relationship to meet the requirements for this paper!*)
3. Organize your paper according to the following format.
  - a. Provide the background to help me understand the situation that you investigated (one paragraph).
  - b. Articulate the specific concept or principle of interpersonal communication covered in the textbook. Please refer to this material by page number.
  - c. Offer a summary of the types of behavior you noticed.
  - d. Provide examples that illustrate the summary you make in "c" above.
  - e. Offer a conclusion about the implications of this communication behavior (e.g., the effects of not reciprocating self-disclosure, the effectiveness of particular maintenance strategies, etc.).
4. Limit your paper to 2-4 pages, double-spaced and typed.
5. Make sure your paper is stylistically clean and grammatically correct. I would suggest that you follow a style manual (APA preferred).
6. Paper shall be marked 1/3 grade for each day (24 hrs) late.
7. See me if you have any questions.

## **Comm 410: Team Research Paper Guidelines**

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THE PURPOSE of the research paper is to have you explore a particular facet of interpersonal communication. This page offers the guidelines for the paper.

1. Most critically, the paper should be a scholarly review of some facet of **interpersonal communication**. It should stress interaction between two people. It should not stress group or large group contexts (e.g., mass media, public speaking). And it should highlight communication behavior (i.e., not focus primarily on the study of attraction, perception, etc.).

2. You need to offer a "state-of-the-art" review of a particular **domain** of behavior or **theory** concerned with interpersonal communication. Domains of behavior include such types as self-disclosure, accounts, conflict, interpersonal compliance-gaining, relationship escalation, and so forth. Theories include those offered in the text, such as equity theory, attribution theory, Fitzpatrick's couple types, Berger's model of planning, *et cetera*. *Stick to ONE domain or theory.*

3. Use the following organization:

a. Rationale: Introduction to the Problem (1-2 pages)

- (1) Describe the behavior or theory
- (2) Describe why it merits examination
- (3) Present the specific research problem you will address in your paper
- (4) Report how you went about answering your research problem.

b. Findings (8-10 pages)

- (1) Preview your review.
- (2) Present your findings, one at a time. *Separate these according to major headings.*
- (3) Each finding should *synthesize the literature*. Do NOT present a series of "little book reports," where you review one article then another, etc. Instead, combine the knowledge according to what other researchers have found.
- (4) Summarize your findings at the end of the section.

c. Conclusions (2-4 pages)

- (1). First, review the purpose and method of your study (part a above).
- (2). Second, provide a review of the most important findings (from part b above).
- (3). Third, take each finding and INTERPRET it in one to three paragraphs (for each major finding). That is, explain WHY each finding occurs. Use

existing theory, if possible, to explain your findings.

(4). Fourth, indicate in a couple of paragraphs the limitations of the literature.

What are the major deficits that need to be overcome, in your opinion?

(5). Offer *specific* areas for future research and indicate why these are important.

4. Use a style manual (I prefer APA). I WILL deduct for grammatical errors.
5. On April 24, deliver a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation that includes:
  - a. Attention getting introduction
  - b. Rationale for examining the topic
  - c. Major findings
  - d. Interpretation of the major findings
  - e. Limitations and Future directions

NOTE: Late papers will be docked 1/3 of a grade for each late day. None accepted after 4/31/2012, 11:59 PM.