Interpersonal Communication
COM 170, Fall 2017

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Class Meeting Times: Ferguson # 375
- COM 170.002, MWF 10-10:50a
- COM 170.003, MWF 11-11:50a
- COM 170.005H, MWF 12-12:50p
- COM 170.011, MW 1-2:15p

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 7:45-9:45a, and Fridays, 8:45-9:45a, by appointment

Course Required Text/Materials:
There does not seem to be much difference between the 2nd and 3rd ed of the textbook other than the advanced online system that is supposed to come with newest edition of the textbook. If you choose to purchase the 2nd edition (listed below), you are responsible for staying abreast changes.

Student Learning Outcomes: This course introduces the study of interpersonal communication. Throughout the semester, we’ll explore a variety of concepts, theories, frameworks, and perspectives that apply to human communication and interaction. I’ve designed this course to increase their understanding of interpersonal communication and how to apply course concepts and theories to real-world experiences. By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- Recall and describe communication concepts and theories.
- Apply theoretical concepts to diverse interpersonal situations.
- Distinguish and design competent verbal and nonverbal messages based on the communication context.
- Evaluate effective and appropriate verbal and nonverbal messages in various interpersonal encounters.

This course also meets several objectives for those of you majoring in Communication Studies as well as satisfies a General Education/Core Curriculum Requirement. Below, you’ll find several outcomes accomplished in this course.

Program Learning Outcomes:
Students majoring in Communication Studies…
- Should display comprehension of major communication theories.
- Will apply the major theories in the field to communicate effectively in a variety of settings.
- Will be able to use and demonstrate understanding of appropriate methodology in critical, humanistic, or social scientific paradigms in examining research questions in communication.
- Will be able to recognize the central role of diversity and freedom of expression in a global community.
- Will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the constitutive nature of communication, which includes forces that enable and constrain communication such as technology, ethics, and organizational life.
- Will be able to demonstrate oral and written competence in logical and critical thinking.
Course Requirements

**Student Evaluation.** There is a total of 500 possible points in this class. The due dates for exams and case studies are listed in the Course Timeline. Your final grade in this course is based on your cumulative point total (not percentage) and will be assessed as the following:

\[
A = 450-500, \quad B = 400-449, \quad C = 350-399, \quad D = 300-349, \quad F < 299
\]

**Course Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Your Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam One</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Exam Two</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam Three</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam Four</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Case Studies &amp; Application Activities</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Study 1</td>
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<td>Case Study 2</td>
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<td>Case Study 3</td>
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<td>Case Study 4</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Study 5</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td>500</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Readings.** You are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to coming to class. These are important for learning the communication concepts, theories, and terminology that you will see on exams. Although we will discuss some of the material in greater detail in class, you’re still responsible for material covered in the textbook even if we don’t discuss it in class.

**Case Studies and Application Activities.** There will be five different case studies/application activities that you’ll complete in this course. For each assignment, you will read or watch the case and answer questions using the knowledge you’ve obtained in the class. For instance, for the first case study you’ll watch the PBS special, *A Class Divided*, and answer a series of questions before discussing the case with your classmates. Only those with official documented absences will be allowed to make up these activities. Additionally, throughout the semester, we’ll complete various in-class worksheets and exercises for practice with competent communication. For the final case study, we will watch a movie that depicts interpersonal interactions and you will write a 2-3 paragraph essay that demonstrates your ability to apply critical thinking about interpersonal communication to observed interpersonal interactions. **This essay will be submitted to Live Text as an attachment for university assessment.**

Using the observed interpersonal interactions between the characters in the movie, your essay should accomplish the following: a) introduce the interpersonal interaction and the purpose of the essay, b) identify and define at least two different concepts from the textbook relevant to the interpersonal interaction, c) analyze the interaction based on the concepts making evaluations about the interactions. When introducing the concepts, you’re expected to cite the textbook and other relevant sources. The essay should clearly reach a conclusion regarding the quality of the interpersonal interaction.

**Exams.** There will be four exams worth 100 points each. Exams will include multiple-choice/true-false questions. Not only should you demonstrate ability to retain and comprehend concepts and theories, but you will need to apply the concepts to life-like situations and be able to analyze (in)effective/(in)appropriate communication. You will be allotted the entire class period to complete exams. However, late students will not receive any additional time. If you
arrive after the first exam has been turned in, you will not be allowed to take the exam. **On exam days, you will be asked to turn off ALL technology.** If any technology comes out during the exam, I will pick up your exam and you will automatically receive a zero. Make-up exams are **not** permitted unless otherwise arranged with the professor for extreme, unavoidable circumstances. I reserve the right to adjust the exam when giving a make-up instead of giving the original exam. If you will be away on official university business on an exam day, you will need to arrange to take the exam **BEFORE** the exam date. It is your responsibility to arrange this meeting and you must provide documentation.

**Attendance/Participation.** Attendance and active participation in class discussions and activities are very important for your success in this class. In class, we will complete various worksheets and exercises that pertain to the course content. The purpose of these activities is for you to practice competent communication behavior as well as analyze and reflect on appropriate and effective communication. Formal attendance will be taken over the course of the semester. It is the student’s responsibility to sign in on the days attendance is collected and/or to complete the attendance activity.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Late Assignments.** Assignments are due by the designated date and time on the Course Timeline. Any exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will require **extremely compelling, well-documented reasons.** You must provide documentation for dire circumstances (e.g., accident, hospitalization, family death etc.). If you will be away on official university business when an assignment is due, you must provide appropriate documentation and arrange to complete assignments/tests **BEFORE** departing.

**Grading Policy.** I cannot explicitly measure effort. The final product is all that can be evaluated. Although effort is typically associated with improved results, you should not confuse the two. If you are dissatisfied with a grade on an assignment, you **must wait at least 24 hours** and **no more than 7 days** before discussing the issue with me. At that time, you should focus on what can be done to improve your performance on the next assignment, rather than disputing the grade itself. I spend a great deal of time ensuring that I grade assignments in a fair and consistent manner and any error that does occur will be in your favor. Please feel free to speak with me at any time about ways to improve your performance in the course. I strongly suggest however that this is done early in the semester rather than waiting until the end of the semester.

**If you “need” an A or B, good grade, passing grade, etc in this class...**
I understand that success in this class is important to many of you, and I will make sure you’re given the tools necessary to succeed. **Begging for a grade is unethical** and will not be tolerated! To deter such unethical practices, students will **lose 5 points per request.** Here are some general tips to help you earn your grade in this class.

1. Come to class.
2. Take advantage of participation opportunities that are given.
3. Complete the readings before class – at the very least, know the topic of class that will be covered that day.
4. Ask questions if you have them, either during class, during office hours, or through email. If my office hours are not convenient for you, make an appointment.
5. Follow the rules in this syllabus. Clear up any questions that you have early on.
6. Complete and submit your work on time or early.
7. Utilize on-campus resources that are available to you, including the AARC and the library.
8. Proofread your work before submission.
Technology. It is important that you be familiar with D2L. You can anticipate that any unexpected changes or prompt announcements will be distributed via D2L. Moreover, all of your grades will be posted in D2L. You are encouraged to check D2L on a daily basis for updates and other information. Students who do not check their D2L regularly will still be held accountable for missed information regarding the course.

Texting in class, especially while someone else is talking, is rude and will not be tolerated. You will be asked to leave. If you would like to use a laptop or electronic device (other than a phone) for note taking, you must write a 2-page letter persuading me why you need to use this technology during class time. This letter must be well supported with credible evidence.

Classroom Civility. Civility in the classroom is not only expected, but also required. We may discuss some sensitive issues in this class. Please be mindful that although you have not experienced certain things first hand, it is very possible and highly likely that some of your classmates have. A vast array of opinions, points of view, and experiences will be expressed during class, and we will work together to create an environment where everyone feels safe to express their ideas. While different opinions, experiences, and ideas will be welcomed, incivility and disrespect will not be tolerated.

“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 (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.”

Academic Integrity (A-9.1)
“Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp”
**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**
“Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.”

**Students with Disabilities**
“To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).”
### Interpersonal Communication I: Tentative Daily Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Course Reading/Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week One</strong></td>
<td>8/28-8/30</td>
<td>• Communication Survey and Discussion&lt;br&gt;• Read Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Two</strong></td>
<td>9/4-9/6</td>
<td>• Read Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Three</strong></td>
<td>9/11-9/13</td>
<td>• Read Chapter 3&lt;br&gt;• Case Study 1 (9/13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Four</strong></td>
<td>9/18-9/20</td>
<td>• Exam One (9/18)&lt;br&gt;• Read Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Five</strong></td>
<td>9/25-9/27</td>
<td>• Read Chapter 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Six</strong></td>
<td>10/2-10/4</td>
<td>• Read Chapter 6&lt;br&gt;• Case Study 2 (10/2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Seven</strong></td>
<td>10/9-10/11</td>
<td>• Exam Two (10/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Eight</strong></td>
<td>10/16-10/18</td>
<td>• Read Chapter 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Nine</strong></td>
<td>10/23-10/25</td>
<td>• Read Chapter 8&lt;br&gt;• Case Study 3 (10/25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Ten</strong></td>
<td>10/30-11/1</td>
<td>• Read Chapter 9&lt;br&gt;• Case Study 4 (11/15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Eleven</strong></td>
<td>11/6-11/8</td>
<td>• Exam Three (11/8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Twelve</strong></td>
<td>11/13-11/15</td>
<td>• Read Chapter 10&lt;br&gt;• Case Study 4 (11/15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Thirteen</strong></td>
<td>11/20-11/22</td>
<td>• No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Fourteen</strong></td>
<td>11/27-11/29</td>
<td>• Read Chapter 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Fifteen</strong></td>
<td>12/4-12/6</td>
<td>• Case Study 5 (12/6 uploaded to Live Text &amp; D2L)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exam Four (Ch. 10 & 11 Only)**
- COM 170.002—class meets MWF at 10:00-10:50a—Final on Wednesday, 12/13 @ 10:30a
- COM 170.003—class meets MWF at 11-11:50a—Final on Monday, 12/11 @ 10:30a
- COM 170.005—class meets MWF at 12-12:50p—Final on Wednesday, 12/13 @ 1p
- COM 170.011—class meets MWF at 1-2:15p—Final on Monday, 12/11 @ 1p

***This schedule is subject to change. It is your responsibility to stay abreast any changes made to the schedule throughout the semester.