

Professor: Holly Payne, Ph.D.
Office: 154 Ivan Wilson Fine Arts Center
Phone: 745-6206
E-Mail: Holly.Payne@wku.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday 9:00-11:00; 2:15-3:15
Thursday 10:00-11:00; 2:15-3:15
And by Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Many individuals believe that "communication" is a basic human ability only requiring a little common sense. Unfortunately, this attitude tends to result in such difficulties as misunderstandings, conflict, avoidance, and stereotyping. COMM 148 – Interpersonal Communication is designed to increase your understanding and implementation of effective interpersonal communication behaviors and skills. We will examine basic concepts, theories, and research findings relevant to initiating, developing, modifying, maintaining, and terminating relationships with an eye to the role of communication in the process. We will pay particular attention to verbal and nonverbal components across interpersonal contexts. Additionally, this course requires you to participate in written and verbal activities designed to develop and improve interpersonal skills and will actually improve the quality of your life if you keep an open mind and participate actively! Lecture, discussion, in and out-of-class observations, and "applied" field research assignments will be used to increase your knowledge and behavioral competence in interpersonal communication.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Adler, R.B., Rosenfeld, L.B., & Proctor, R.F., II (2006). *Interplay: The process of interpersonal communication. (10th Edition)*. New York: Oxford University Press (ISBN: 0-19-530992-8 for internet shopping).
- Four Scantron forms (aqua blue, form no. 882-E)

OBJECTIVES

COMM 148--Interpersonal communication introduces you to complex interaction of social and psychological forces operating in human communication. This course is designed with a dual approach consisting of both theory and application that allows you opportunities to critically evaluate the intricacies of interpersonal relationships and the communication issues surrounding human interaction in various contexts. At the conclusion of the course it is expected that you will demonstrate knowledge and skills in several core areas. Specifically, you should demonstrate an increased understanding of:

1. The options and alternatives for action in a wide variety of interpersonal situations.
2. Individual preferences and an increased appreciation for the differences of others.
3. The dialectical tensions that arise as students use communication to satisfy conflicting personal needs.
4. How the process of perception affects communication behavior.
5. The ethical dimensions of interpersonal communication.
6. The importance of nonverbal communication in successful interpersonal interactions.
7. Defensive and supportive communication climates.
8. Competence and an ability to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of interpersonal strategies used in various interpersonal relationships.
9. Why and how relationships develop and the role communication plays in determining the nature and quality of interpersonal relationships.
10. Conflict in interpersonal communication and the application of conflict management principles.
11. Competencies related to communication with individuals from other cultures and co-cultures.

CLASSROOM CIVILITY

There are certain basic standards of classroom civility that should be adhered to, particularly in a communication course. Civility does not eliminate appropriate humor, enjoyment, or other features of a comfortable and pleasant classroom community. Classroom civility does, however, include the following:

1. Displaying **respect** for all members of the classroom community, both your instructor and fellow students.
2. **Attentiveness** to and **participation** in lectures, group activities, workshops, and other classroom exercises.
3. Avoidance of **unnecessary disruptions** during class such as *private conversations, reading newspapers, doing work for other classes, text-messaging, or ringing cell phones.*
4. Avoidance of **racist, sexist, homophobic**, or other **negative** language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom community.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

If you have a special need that may require an accommodation or assistance, please inform me as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second class meeting.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Class attendance and participation are important in accomplishing the goals of this course. Readings, class discussions, group workshops, and in-class activities increase both your understanding of interpersonal communication theory and the development of your interpersonal communication skills. In order to receive credit for attendance you must attend for the **entire** class period. **Failure to do so will result in an absence for the given class session.**

Please arrive to class on time. Tardiness is unprofessional and is not fair to me or to your classmates. Consequently, if you are consistently late or leave early you **can expect to have 10 points deducted from your final grade for EACH tardy or early departure.** Moreover, do not expect me to cover any missed material. If you are a few minutes late for a class, it is YOUR responsibility to make sure I have not marked you absent for that day. This must be done on the day you are late; otherwise, it holds as an unexcused absence.

Essentially, you will be allowed **three unexcused** absences. You cannot make up work missed for unexcused absences—you simply receive a zero. **For each subsequent absence, 15 points will be deducted from your final grade.** You are given these free absences for special situations for which you have to miss class but would not otherwise receive an official excuse. **If you have absences in excess of one-fifth of the class contact hours, you need to withdraw from the class or you will be assigned a failing grade for the course.**

An excused absence includes 1. A documented illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student's immediate family. 2. The death of a member of the student's immediate family. 3. Trips for members of student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for University classes, and trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events. 4. Major Religious holidays.

For any officially excused absence, **you are responsible for presenting official written documentation** for the absence. For university-sponsored absences, this notification is to be given to me **prior to** the absence; for other excused absences, this documentation must be presented at the next class meeting. If you do miss class, please see a classmate regarding class discussions and assignments. You are responsible for arranging to make up missed individual work. **Missed group work and missed in-class exercises cannot be made up.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course combines lectures, class discussion of assigned textbook readings, group work, audio/video presentations emphasizing certain communication concepts and skills, oral presentations by students, exams, and classroom activities which all contribute to your overall understanding of interpersonal communication.

PARTICIPATION

Since this is an oral communication skills course, I want to provide you with many opportunities to develop these skills. Aside from general class participation, such opportunities may include performance and/or evaluation of role-playing activities, in-class presentations, briefing sessions, and dyadic communication case studies.

READINGS

Your reading assignments are included in the course schedule. In addition to the textbook, you may, from time to time, be required to read other material that will be handed out in class, put on reserve, or posted on Blackboard. If you do not do the reading, do not expect to benefit substantially from the course. **Class sessions are used to supplement rather than to review the reading material assigned. Assigned chapters should be read before class** so that you will be able to make a contribution to the class discussions and activities and perform well on the exams.

WRITTEN WORK

This class also involves a number of written assignments where you communicate your understanding of the principles and concepts of interpersonal communication. In all written work you are expected to use correct spelling and appropriate grammar. Throughout the course you will expand your personal vocabulary through the study of terms related to the course. Your written work will be evaluated on both content and mechanics. Good writing should be reasonably free of mistakes and without composition errors, which are called gross errors (sentence fragments, run-on sentences, subject-verb disagreement, misspelled words, and typographical errors which result in such errors). All of your work **must be typed** (using no more than 12 point type with margins not exceeding 1 inch) and double-spaced—unless otherwise indicated. Please use APA 5th edition for citing and documenting outside sources.

If you have serious problems with writing (and many people do), I advise you go to the Writing Center.

The Department of English provides this service for students, so take advantage of it! Tutors are available in 124 Cherry Hall. Call to make an appointment at 745-5719.

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

APPLICATION JOURNALS

You will be given **two** application journal assignments this semester that provide opportunities for you to relate course material to your own experiences. You will be expected to describe specific interpersonal patterns of communication in different types of relationships while integrating your knowledge of the course concepts. These journal responses will be reviewed only by your instructor and will be held in strict confidence. The journal entries will be graded on **completeness, clarity, introspection and conceptual foundations**. Journal questions will be provided in class on the dates noted on your course schedule. Your journals should be a minimum of 2 pages.

AUDIO ESSAY

In addition to your application journals, you will create, perform, and record a 3-minute (500 word) audio essay addressing an interpersonal communication topic given out in class. Each group will be assigned one topic, but you will complete the assignment individually. Your group will post the audio files to Blackboard and we'll listen to them in class on the day we cover this topic. The best essay from each group will receive 2 bonus points on the final exam. The overall best essay for the semester will receive 5 additional bonus points on the final exam. Use audio to tell a story, create some commentary, or offer insight into the topic. Help the audience reflect on what they are hearing. Be creative! To get an idea of what an audio essay sounds like, go to www.npr.org and find the series "This I Believe." This is a collection of audio essays from across the country addressing individual's core beliefs. You might also listen to NPR's "Story Corps," an "American storytelling project." NPR gives the following recommendations for writing an audio essay: tell a story, be brief, be positive, and be personal. Unlike the "This I Believe" and "Story Corps" series you are not stating core beliefs or merely telling a story, but giving us commentary on an interpersonal topic through the use of stories, quotes, and analysis. This assignment will be graded based

on your completeness, introspection, clarity, and conceptual foundation. Be sure to turn in a typed copy of the essay.

INTERPERSONAL ASSESSMENTS and IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

One of the most interesting components of this course is the incorporation of interpersonal assessments that allow you to determine “baseline” scores for several interpersonal behaviors. You will assess your individual conflict management style, propensity to self-disclose, temperament, communication apprehension, and much more. For each assessment you are required to write a brief paragraph summarizing the results and offer your analysis of the assessment’s accuracy in describing your interpersonal communication. In addition to the assessments we will complete multiple in-class activities, which may result in a written product you will turn in for points.

GROUP LESSON PLAN -- COMMUNICATION SKILL BUILDER

In order to give you practical experience in developing your interpersonal communication competencies, you will design and manage a group workshop on a specific communication skill. Grading criteria include: **research** (scholarship, outside sources, citing of sources, recent sources within the last 5 years, use of academic sources), **application/integration** (demonstration of concepts, focus on interpersonal channel, skills and usefulness, interactive activity with the class, relevant video clips, connection to the text, research and our lives, use of popular press articles, debrief of each application), **innovation** (thinking outside the box, multimedia usage, minimum textbook reliance, use of creativity, taking risks), **presentation** (delivery, organization, clarity, balance, formal introductions, conclusions, timeliness, good transitions, on-time presentation, sense of purpose and sticking to it, question and answer period with class), **written work** (bibliography, quality of handouts, agenda, synopsis, use of APA style, etc).

EXAMS

You will take 3 regular exams on the first three units and 1 comprehensive final exam covering course readings and lecture material. The first three exams will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, and/or short answer questions. The comprehensive final exam will take place during the regularly scheduled exam period. Please bring a scantron form for all exams. The final exam will consist of multiple choice and possibly short essay. Some of the questions will ask you to apply course concepts to interpret behavior from a film that you will view in class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I expect that all of the individual assignments you complete for COMM 148 (and in all of your other courses) are always your own work. However, many students are not sure exactly what “your own work” means, so, please read again the information on plagiarism and cheating from your student handbook. Aside from copying work, plagiarism includes incorrectly citing sources or presenting someone’s information as your own, without crediting the source. To avoid this, you should carefully make notes to keep track of where your information came from. In written form, you must use quotation marks when referring to another’s work. In a speech where you are paraphrasing, you can say “According to.....(give name).....”. It does not take much effort to make sure you follow the rules for using another’s thoughts.

Penalty for Academic Dishonesty

Western Kentucky University and the Department of Communication are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on an exam, or purchasing papers, speeches, or other assignments will immediately receive a failing grade on the assignment and in the course, and will be reported for disciplinary action. Falsified medical excuses and presenting another student’s work as your own fall within the guidelines of this academic integrity policy.

DETERMINATION OF FINAL GRADE

The final grade will be determined by adding the total points earned for each of the graded assignments and referring to the grading scale. The final grade is based on number of points accumulated—NOT PERCENTAGES.

POINT DISTRIBUTION

Application Journals (2)	50 pts
Audio Essay (1)	25 pts
Interpersonal Assessments (10)	25 pts
Team Lesson Plan	50 pts
Unit Exams (3)	75 pts
Final Exam	50 pts

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE **250 pts**

GRADING SCALE

- A = 250-225
- B = 224-200
- C = 199-175
- D = 174-150
- F = 149 and below

COMM 148--Tentative Daily Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
1/22	Tuesday	Introduction to the Course/Overview
1/25	Thursday	The Interpersonal Communication Process Communication Defined Communication and the Self
		Chapter 1 Chapter 3
1/30	Tuesday	Identity and Impression Management
2/1	Thursday	Perceiving Others
		Chapter 3 Chapter 4
2/6	Tuesday	Accurate Perception Audio Essay Due for Group 1
2/8	Thursday	Exam I (Chapters 1, 3, 4)
		Chapter 4
2/13	Tuesday	Language
2/15	Thursday	Language Audio Essay Due for Group 2
		Chapter 5
2/20	Tuesday	Team Lesson 1: The Language of Responsibility – Using “I” Statements
2/22	Thursday	Nonverbal Communication
		Chapter 6
2/27	Tuesday	Audio Essay Due for Group 3 Team Lesson 2: Cultural Differences in Nonverbal Communication
3/1	Thursday	Listening
		Chapter 7
3/6	Tuesday	Types of Listening Responses
3/8	Thursday	Exam II (Chapters 5, 6, 7)
3/13	Tuesday	Understanding our Emotions
3/15	Thursday	Guidelines for Expressing Emotion Audio Essay Due for Group 4
		Chapter 8
3/20	Tuesday	Team Lesson 3: The Rational-Emotive Approach to Managing Difficult Emotions
3/22	Thursday	Interpersonal Relationships
		Chapter 9
3/27	Tuesday	Interpersonal Relationships Journal 1 Due: Thursday, November 2
3/29	Thursday	Intimacy and Distance in Relationships
		Chapter 10
4/3	Tuesday	Relationships Continued
4/5	Thursday	Communication Climates Audio Essay Due for Group 5
		Chapter 11
4/10	Tuesday	Team Lesson 4: Building Supportive Climates Using “The Clear Message Format”
4/12	Thursday	Exam III (Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11)
4/17	Tuesday	Conflict in Interpersonal Relationships
4/19	Thursday	Team Lesson 5: Dealing with Conflict
		Chapter 12
4/24	Tuesday	Understanding Family Patterns
4/26	Thursday	Family Communication Continued Journal 2 Due Tuesday, December 5 (Family Comm)
	Tuesday	Activity—View Film for Final Exam
		Appendix 1

5/1

5/3 Thursday Complete Discussion Guide for Final Exam

148-001 **(11:10 class)** Monday, May 7 at 8:00 a.m.

Final Exam **148-002** **(12:45 class)** Thursday, May 10 at 10:30 a.m.

Topics for the Audio Essays

Chapter 4: Perception

Read about the Common Tendencies in Perception (pp. 99-103) and describe a time when your perception was distorted by one of these mistakes or when you were on the receiving end of a common tendency. What were the outcomes?

Chapter 5: Language

Some authors believe that differences between male and female communication are so great that they can be characterized as "men are from Mars, women are from Venus." Other researchers believe the differences aren't nearly so significant or dramatic. Which approach seems more accurate to you? Describe experiences from your life so support your point of view.

Chapter 6: Nonverbal Communication

Explore your territoriality by listing the spaces you feel you "own," such as your parking space, parts of the place you live, and seats in a particular classroom. Describe how you feel when your territory is invaded and identify things you do to "mark" it.

Chapter 8: Emotions

Remember what you learned or were told as a young person about how you were to express emotions such as love, anger, grief, loneliness, guilt, anxiety, jealousy, or envy. Discuss how your family expressed emotion, what you learned as a result, and how it impacts your emotional expression today.

Chapter 11: Communication Climate

Have you ever found yourself working in a toxic climate, or in a relationship that could be characterized as toxic? Describe the relationship and context identifying elements of disagreeing and disconfirming messages. In retrospect what could have improved the climate?