Interpersonal Communication: COMM 348

Fall 2014 Blair Thompson, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Phone: 745-5889
M-W: 4:20:5:20 W: 2:00-3:00 Office: Fine Arts 159

My Core beliefs about teaching and learning:
Welcome to Interpersonal Communication: COMM 348, a course you will hopefully enjoy and which helps you become more aware of the ways communication constitutes our relationships and identity, even reality itself. In this course, you will also be introduced to communication theories and learn about key concepts in the field of interpersonal communication. When we can, small groups will be used to help you learn from one another. I realize you have been communicating interpersonally throughout your lives and bring with you implicit theories about how communication functions in your relationships. We will utilize this knowledge and expand it by learning from communication scholars who have devoted their lives to understanding communication and its importance in our relationships.

I believe student feedback should be a continual process rather than something only done at the end of the semester. The more I know about your learning experience in this course, the more I can help you. In order to help me help you, I will ask you to complete in class reflections on your learning in various formats to give me feedback on what has been helpful to your learning during the course as well as what you have struggled with or has confused you.

Office Hours
I will be available before and after class, and by appointment. I invite you to attend office hours for assistance whether it be coming up with ideas, assistance with research, or to help you better understand the concepts and theories in the course. You are also welcome to communicate with me via e-mail.

Required Text:


Course objectives:

Introduces students to the fundamentals of interpersonal communication, including interpersonal skills, theory, and research.

1. Know, understand, and be able to articulate the definition, realm, and scope of
interpersonal communication and relational communication.

2. Explore the history of interpersonal communication.

3. Demonstrate competence and an ability to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of interpersonal strategies used in various interpersonal relationships.

4. Comprehend effective ways to listen and manage conflict.

5. Make connections between what they learn in the course and what they are experiencing in their own relationships.

6. Demonstrate an increased awareness of interpersonal communication theories and how they influence their own and other’s communication behaviors.

7. Be introduced to and practice analyzing interpersonal research.

**Attendance Policy:**

Regular attendance in this class is necessary for students to become knowledgeable in the area of interpersonal communication. Further, excessive absences will affect your participation grade in this class. **Please be on time. Failure to do so will result in loss of participation points; you must be in class within five minutes of the start time.** You are always responsible for all material distributed in your absence. In the event of extraordinary circumstances necessitating your absence, please speak to the instructor IN ADVANCE and be prepared to provide documentation of your excuse.

All presentations, assignments, and exams must be completed on the date assigned. If you are unprepared or do not come to class on an exam day, you will receive a ZERO for that assignment unless an alternate due date has been previously approved or documentation has been provided for extreme circumstances. If a problem arises contact the instructor prior to class. Additionally, you must be in class on the day where assignments are due (journals, papers etc) to receive credit for the assignment (i.e., you cannot turn in a paper electronically, not attend class, and expect to receive credit).

**Participation:**

Class members are expected to contribute to the class by asking questions, participating in discussions and taking part in class activities. Please take an active, interested, and respectful role in the class in order to assist your own learning in addition to your classmates.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty is a very serious matter and will result in automatic failure of this class, and referral to the proper university officials. Academic dishonesty includes: handing in another’s work or part of another’s work as your own, turning in one of your old papers for a current class, turning in the same or similar past or current paper for two different classes, and purchasing or otherwise obtaining research or papers written by another and turning that work in as your own. Using unauthorized notes or study aids or otherwise obtaining another’s answers for an examination also represents a breach of academic integrity.

Plagiarism means intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another person as your own. This includes quoting or paraphrasing from published sources.
without acknowledging/citing the source of your information or presenting quoted material as your own words. Students who are unfamiliar with how to cite sources should purchase a style manual such as APA (American Psychological Association). Claiming lack of knowledge about standards for writing is not an acceptable excuse for committing plagiarism. Come to a faculty member for help if you have questions. Plagiarism will result in failing the course. All major papers will be submitted to Safe Assign for plagiarism detection.

Cell Phone Policy
Due to recent advances in technology, cell phones, ipods, pagers, etc. will not be allowed out during class time. Cell phones shall not be used for any purpose during class time. Any student with a cell phone in hand or on his or her desk during class time will be asked to leave class and will be counted absent for that day. This policy applies during student presentations as well as during lecture and discussion. Any student using a cell phone or other technological device during an exam will receive a zero on that exam and may be subject to other university discipline.

Assignments:
Schedule subject to change based on Instructor’s discretion.

Exams
There will be two exams, a midterm and a final. The exams will assess your understanding of communication concepts and theories, as well as your application and integration abilities. Please bring both a scantron and “blue book” for both exams. (200 points total)

Interpersonal Communication Paper
This assignment will give you the opportunity to exhibit your understanding of key interpersonal theories or concepts, employ analytical, research, and critical thinking skills, and demonstrate their ability to synthesize and apply communication concepts to an interpersonal or relational experience. More specifically, you will select an interpersonal concept or theory from the course and apply it to an interpersonal situation. The paper must be 8-10 pages, include a minimum of 5 academic Communication sources (e.g., books and journal articles; the textbook does not count as a source) properly cited in APA format, and apply the interpersonal concept or theory to an interpersonal situation. The paper will include a detailed summary of the interpersonal concept/theory supported by academic sources. The paper will incorporate outside sources including relevant research findings on the concept/theory. You must include discussion of at least three data-based studies within your paper. Finally, the paper will include an application of the concept/theory to an interpersonal situation. The paper will be graded on content, organization, and writing. Please include an introduction, clearly organized and supported paragraphs in the body of the paper (please use topic sentences), a conclusion, and source citations along with a bibliography.
You will be presenting your paper to the class so that everyone can learn about the theory/concept. Please include information on themes or topics discussed in the articles, strengths and weaknesses of the theory/concept, as well as how the theory/concept contributes to the study of communication. The presentations should be 4-5 minutes. (150 points)

**Weekly Journals**

There will be a series of journal entries (6) that involve commenting on the readings, raising questions, and providing examples. The journals will be approximately 2 pages (double spaced) and should provide comments, challenge and question the ideas presented in the readings, and provide examples or apply the concepts/theories/ideas presented in the weeks’ readings. Try to synthesize what you find important in the readings and/or focus on one primary area of particular interest to you from the readings. I want you to demonstrate your level of understanding of the reading, but I also want to find out what you struggle with in the readings so I can help clarify. The journals are due at the beginning of class and should be typed. Each journal will be with 25 points (150 points).

**Activities/small assignments/participation**

There will be a series of in class activities and small assignments that will be completed individually or in small groups. These assignments/activities will focus on specific communication theories and concepts. (100 points)

**Grading Policy:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper Presentation</td>
<td>50 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td>150 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation/activities</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>200 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>600 pts.</strong></td>
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**GRADING SCALE:**
A  540-600
B  480-539
C  420-479
D  360-419
F  Below 359

Class Schedule

*Week 1:*
August 25
Introduction to interpersonal communication (IPC); History of IPC
Definitions and parameters of IPC.
Foundations/Fundamentals of interpersonal communication and theory  Ch 1

August 27

**No Class- Dr. Thompson at research forum**

*Week 2:*
September 1
**Labor Day – No Class**

September 3
Self-disclosure, Social Exchange Theory, Identity  Ch. 3
Interpersonal Perception  Ch 4

*Week 3:*
September 8
Verbal communication in IPC; Accounts  Ch. 5

**Readings:**


**Journal #1 Due**

**Semester Plan Due (e-mail your plan to Dr. Thompson)**
September 10
Social and Personal Relationships (Friendship) Ch. 8
Intimate Relationships Ch 9

Week 4:

September 15
Theories of Relationship Development (turning points, trajectories)

September 17
Relational Dialectics

Readings Due:


Journal #2 Due

Week 5:

September 22
Communication Privacy Management Theory
“Voluntarily Child-free couples” (Durham article)

September 24
Communication Privacy Management Theory continued


Journal #3 Due

Week 6:

September 29
Go over major paper
October 1

Emotional Communication Ch 12

Week 7:

October 6
Review for Midterm

October 8
Midterm

Week 8:

October 13
Interpersonal conflict Ch 10

October 15
Dark Side of Relationships
Interpersonal Deception Theory Ch 11


Week 9:

October 20 Dark Side of Relationships continued


October 22

Journal #4 Due

Week 10:

October 27

IPC relationships and technology

October 29

Diversity and interpersonal relationships

*Week 11:*

November 3

Online relationships


**Journal #5 Due**

November 5

Love Styles

*Week 12:*

November 10

Relational termination

**Readings Due:**


**Journal #6 due**

November 12

Family relationships

Ch. 9


*Week 13:*

November 17

Movie Analysis (in class)
November 19
Work day on papers

*Week 14:*

November 24
Movie Analysis (in class)

November 26
**No Class – Thanksgiving Break**

Week 15

December 1
Begin presenting Major Projects
**Interpersonal Paper due**

December 3
Finish presenting Major Projects

Review for Final

**Final Exam:** December 8-12

*Schedule subject to change based on Instructor’s discretion*

This is a draft of the syllabus. I want you to come up with a plan that will give you the best opportunity to advance your knowledge of communication. All assignments are negotiable except you must do the research paper. You can also substitute the assignments in the syllabus with alternatives such as writing various types of papers (a literature review, a research proposal, develop your own theory about interpersonal communication etc.). You may also write synthesis papers to replace the tests. You must come up with assignments that equal a total of 600 points (I prefer that you do not change point values on assignments). I will ask you to submit your semester plan by the beginning of the second week of the course.