

COMM 20001

Interpersonal Communication

Instructor: Dr. Bruce A. Landis

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Office Hours: TR: 4:30 p.m.-5:45 p.m.,

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and by appointment

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce you to the basic concepts behind interpersonal communication theory and research. We will explore these concepts through course readings, in-class discussion, and popular culture. This course will give you the tools to communicate effectively in interpersonal contexts.

Required Text:

DeVito, J. A. (2001). *The interpersonal communication book*. (9th Ed.). New York: Longman.

Rubin, R. B., & Nevino, R. J. (1988). *The road trip*. Prospect Height, IL: Waveland.

Suggested Text:

Publication manual of the American psychological association (5th Ed.). (2001). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Assignments

Exams: This course will have two Midterms (each worth 20% of the final grade) and one "limited" comprehensive Final exam (worth 30%). Materials for the exams will come both from the textbook and classroom lecture and discussion. The exam questions will be objective in format.

Analytical Papers: This course requires a series of four short papers; these papers will be assigned periodically throughout the term. The papers will be theoretically/conceptually based analyses of your interpersonal communication experiences using the theories and concepts discussed in class. (worth 5% each, 20% collectively)

Each paper will consist of two sections.

- The first section will describe the specific theories/concepts assigned for that particular paper.
- The second section will apply these theories/concepts to real world experience in order to explicate that experience.

Evaluation of the papers will be based on the quality of (a) the description of the theories/concepts, (b) the application of the theories/concepts to real world experience, and on (c) the technical quality of the paper (spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax, typos, etc.).

The papers should be approximately 2-3 pages, typed, double spaced, and follow the American Psychological Association style manual. No outside research is required for these papers, you are expected to bring the knowledge you acquire in class to bear on your real world experiences. If, however, you do additional research for the paper(s), you should, of course, cite all sources of information in a bibliography (again, using APA style). More detailed descriptions of the specific assignment for each paper will be provided as the term progresses.

Road Trip Paper: Each student will write a final paper (worth 10%) analyzing and applying concepts from the book *The Road Trip*. The paper should be approximately 5-6 pages, typed, double spaced, and follow the American Psychological Association style manual. More detailed description of this assignment will be provided as the term progresses.

Attendance

It is the policy of Kent State University that "Regular attendance in class is expected of all students at the university." However, university policy also states "the university recognizes certain activities and events as legitimate reasons for absence from class. These include, for example, illness, death in the immediate family, religious observance, academic field trips, and participation in an approved concert or athletic event, and direct

participation in university disciplinary hearings." In keeping with that expectation, the attendance policy of this class is as follows.

Unexcused Absences: You will be allowed two unexcused absences during the course of the term without penalty. Each unexcused absence beyond this will result in a deduction of 2% from your final course grade.

Students arriving late are responsible for having "absent" marks changed to "late." This must be done **on the day in question!** Two "lates" will be counted as one absence. Early departures from class, if not approved by the instructor, will be counted as "lates." At the discretion of the instructor, excessively late arrivals/early departures may be counted as absences.

Excused Absences: The professor will determine if an absence is excused or unexcused. An absence will be excused only with **written proof** of a circumstance meeting university policy on excused absences (cited above) or, more generally, of a situation over which the student has no effective control (such as a medical, family, or transportation emergency) that prevents attendance on the day in question.

Late Material

Exams missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up and a grade of "0" will be recorded. Exams missed due to an excused absence must be made up within a week of the student's return to school.

Papers submitted late due to an unexcused absence will not be accepted and a grade of "0" will be recorded. Papers submitted late due to an excused absence must be submitted immediately (within 48 hours) upon the student's return to school.

Cheating and Plagiarism

The University Digest of Rules and Regulations defines "cheat" as "intentionally to misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation." The Digest defines "plagiarism" as "to take and present as one's own . . . the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works." Examples of actions that fall within these definitions can be found in the University Digest of Rules and Regulations.

University policy with regard to cheating and plagiarism is applicable to this course. A student who cheats or plagiarizes will, at a minimum, receive a zero for that assignment; a failing grade for the course, probation, suspension, and/or dismissal from the university is also possible. Instructors are required to report to university authorities all such incidents.

Students with Disabilities

In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester or when given an assignment for which an accommodation is required. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) in the Michael Schwartz Student Services Center (672-2972).

Course Registration

It is the policy of Kent State University that students are not permitted to attend classes for which they are not officially enrolled. It is the student's responsibility to ensure proper enrollment in classes. You are advised to review your official class schedule during the first two weeks of the semester to ensure proper enrollment. Should you find an error in your class schedule, you have until Friday of the second week of classes to correct it. If registration errors are not corrected by that date and you do continue to attend and participate in classes for which you are not officially enrolled, you are advised now that you will not receive a grade at the conclusion of the semester.

Student Responsibility

It is the responsibility of every student to read, understand, and follow the course policies and procedures as explained in this syllabus and in any additional materials and/or handouts you receive during the semester. Not being aware of stated course policies is not an acceptable excuse for failing to follow stated course policies.

Don't let your grade suffer through carelessness.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	Subject/Activity	Text Assignments
Jan. 15	Class Overview/Syllabus	
17	Universals of Interpersonal Communication	Unit 1
22	Axioms of Interpersonal Communication	Unit 2
24	Culture in Interpersonal Communication	Unit 3
29	The Self in Interpersonal Communication	Unit 4
31	Apprehension and Assertiveness	Unit 5
Feb. 05	Perception in Interpersonal Communication	Unit 6
07	Listening in Interpersonal Communication	Unit 7
12	Effectiveness in Interpersonal Communication	Unit 8
14	Road Trip Begins	To Be Announced
19	Review/Catch up	
21	Midterm #1	
26	Universals of Verbal and Nonverbal Messages	Unit 9
28	Verbal Messages: Understanding Principles and Pitfalls	Unit 10
Mar. 05	Verbal Messages: Reducing Barriers to Interaction	Unit 11
07	Nonverbal Messages: Body and Sound	Unit 12
12	Nonverbal Messages: Space and Time	Unit 13
14	Messages and Conversation	Unit 14
19	Review/Catch up/Road Trip Continues	To Be Announced
21	Midterm #2	
26	Spring Break	
28	Spring Break	
Apr. 02	Universals of Interpersonal Relationships	Unit 15
04	Relationship Development and Deterioration	Unit 16
09	Relationship Maintenance and Repair	Unit 17
11	Power in Interpersonal Relationships	Unit 18
16	Conflict in Interpersonal Relationships	Unit 19
18	Friends and Lovers	Unit 20
23	Road Trip Concludes	To Be Announced
25	Primary and Family Relationships	Unit 21
30	Interpersonal Communication and Relationships in the Workplace	Unit 22
May 02	Review/Catch up	

Final Exam: 5:45-8:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 7th, 2002