

**I. COURSE INFORMATION:**

Division: Humanities  
Department: Speech  
Course ID: SPEECH 111  
Course Title: Interpersonal Communication  
Units: 3 Hours  
Lecture: 3 Hours  
Prerequisite: None

**Catalog and Schedule Descriptions:**

Examines the dynamics of the communication process within the context of interpersonal relationships (those with friends, families, romantic partners, and co-workers.) Influences of self-concept, perception, listening, verbal and non-verbal communication, and emotional expression are explored. Principles of relationship development, communication climate, self-disclosure, and conflict management are also discussed. Rhetorical principles are also practiced and faculty supervised/evaluated in a variety of ways.

**II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One.**

**III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:**

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to do the following:

- A. Read and discuss theory and research on interpersonal communication
- B. Evaluate the effectiveness of their own communication skills
- C. Apply effective communication skills in specific situations
- D. Recognize the influence of personal variables (self-concept, perception, emotions) on their communication behavior
- E. Compare and contrast effective vs. ineffective conflict management principles
- F. Compare and contrast supportive vs. defensive communication climates and styles
- G. Recognize the influence of culture and gender on their interpersonal communication patterns
- H. Develop and deliver effective oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate rhetorical principles.

**IV. CONTENT:**

- A. Overview of interpersonal communication principles
  1. Why we communicate
  2. Models of communication
  3. Communication principles
  4. Communication myths
  5. Interpersonal vs. impersonal communication
- B. Cultural influences on communication
  1. Cultural values and norms
  2. Differences in verbal and non-verbal code usage
- C. Perception
  1. The perception process
  2. Influences on perception
  3. Perception checking
- D. Self-concept
  1. Self-concept development
  2. Presentation of the self through communication
  3. Changing your self-concept
- E. Language
  1. The nature of language
  2. The impact of language
  3. Cultural and gender differences in language use
  4. Abstract vs. concrete language

- 5. Effective language use
- F. Non-verbal communication
  - 1. Characteristics of non-verbal communication
  - 2. Differences between verbal and non-verbal communication
  - 3. Functions of non-verbal communication
  - 4. Types of non-verbal communication
- G. Listening
  - 1. Active vs. passive listening
  - 2. Reasons for listening
  - 3. Components of listening
  - 4. Improving listening skills
- H. Emotions
  - 1. Emotions defined
  - 2. Types of emotions
  - 3. Influences on emotional expression
  - 4. Counterfeit emotional expression
  - 5. Managing emotions
- I. Relationship development
  - 1. Why we form relationships
  - 2. Types of relationships (friendships, families, romantic)
  - 3. Communication and relational dynamics
  - 4. Communicating about relationships
  - 5. Compliance gaining in interpersonal relationships
  - 6. Making relationships work
- J. Intimacy and distance in relationships
  - 1. Influences on intimacy and distance
  - 2. Self-disclosure in relationships
  - 3. Alternatives to self-disclosure
  - 4. Optimal levels of self-disclosure
- K. Communication climate
  - 1. Communication climate defined
  - 2. How communication climates develop
  - 3. Creating positive climates
  - 4. Transforming negative climates
- L. Managing conflict
  - 1. Conflict defined
  - 2. Function and dysfunctional conflicts
  - 3. Conflict management styles
  - 4. Conflict in relational systems
  - 5. Cultural and gender influences on conflict styles
  - 6. Effective conflict resolution
- M. Organizing and delivering effective oral presentations
  - 1. Organizing the body of the speech
  - 2. Beginning and ending the speech
  - 3. Delivery

**V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

The course is designed under the lecture/discussion format. The instructional methods to be used may include:

- Lecture
- Class and/or small group discussion
- Critical evaluation of texts, newspapers, journal articles, and other printed research
- Critical evaluation of films, videotapes, audiotapes, or other media forms
- Classroom demonstrations
- Field trips
- Guest speakers

## VI. TYPICAL OUT-OF-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Reading Assignment. Reading assignments are required and may include (but are not limited to) the following: Read the chapter on non-verbal communication in your text.
- B. Writing Assignment. Writing assignments are required and may include (but are not limited to) the following:
1. Personal Journals—Sample journal entry: After practicing the perception-checking skill in class, try it in a situation outside of class. Prepare a journal entry following these guidelines
    - a. Describe the situation in which you tried the skill.
    - b. Explain how you used the skill (be sure to demonstrate your understanding of the skill)
    - c. Evaluate the success of the skill in this situation and as a communication technique overall
  2. Book Reviews: Select a book from the approved list found in your packet (e.g., "Making Relationships Work" by Barbara De Angelis). After reading the book, prepare a report which addresses the following:
    - a. Write an overview of the book
    - b. Describe the problem addressed in the book
    - c. Describe the recommended methods of addressing the problem as explained in the book
    - d. Relate the reading to your own life. Give specific examples of how you can make this material work for you.
- C. Critical Thinking Assignment. Critical thinking assignments are required and may include (but are not limited to) the following:
1. Group discussion: After reading the "Rosemary Parable," do the following:
    - a. Individually--without discussion--rank order the characters' in the order of those of whom you approve the most (1) and those of whom you approve the least (5).
    - b. After each group member has completed his or her rank order, develop a ranking for the group. No voting is allowed, and groups must come to a consensus.
    - c. Be prepared to report your group rankings to the class.
  2. Video/Film Reviews
    - a. Select a video from the approved list found in your packet. Read the chapters in the text pertaining to the questions asked for that particular movie. After watching the video and reading the chapters, answer the questions asked in a 2-3 page typed response. Do not simply summarize the movie. Explain how you see the information discussed in your textbook enacted in the movie. Be specific in answering the questions and include examples to support your answers. Sample video and questions: "Soul Food" 1) How does the communication climate change from supportive to defensive? 2) Compare and contrast the relational stages in the three marriages.
    - b. After watching the Real World segment in class, identify the conflict management styles you saw exhibited. What mistakes do the participants make in attempting to resolve the conflict? What should they have done to manage their conflict effectively?
- D. Oral presentations
1. Self-Portrait Wheel: The purpose of this assignment is for you to express the five stages of your life (childhood, education, adulthood/family, adulthood/career, future) through non-verbal media.

- a. Your project is to be no smaller than 8" in diameter, no larger than 18" x 24". Its shape can be circular, rectangular, or square.
  - b. You will make a five-minute presentation in which you verbally explain your project to the class. The presentation will explain the meaning of the illustrations or collage.
2. Current Event Report: The purpose of this assignment is for you to recognize how the communication theories discussed in class apply all around us. This project also provides us with an opportunity to apply rhetorical principles discussed in class.
- a. This assignment will require you to select a current event article (e.g., from a newspaper or magazine this year) and analyze the communication within the story.
  - b. This assignment will include two parts.
    - i. Detailed outline will need to be submitted to instructor
    - ii. Deliver an oral presentation to the class explaining your findings.
- E. Oral Communication Skill Practices
1. Oral communication skill practice sessions will take place. These skill practices allow you to practice developing specific communication skills in a non-threatening environment.
    - a. You will be put in triads during class. Each person will play a different role at a time.
      - i. One person will practice the assigned skill (example: assertion, perception checking, listening, etc.)
      - ii. The second person will observe the person practicing the skill and provide them with feedback at the end.
      - iii. The third person is role playing with the student practicing the skill.
    - b. Sample scenarios are shared with the students.
      - i. In order to receive full credit for skill practices you must participate in the skill practice and attempt to master the skill being presented.

#### VII. EVALUATION:

A student's grade will be based on multiple measures of performance and will reflect the objectives explained above. A final grade of "C" or better should indicate that the student has the ability to successfully apply the principles and techniques taught in this course. These evaluation methods may include, but are not limited to, the following:

50% Faculty-evaluated oral presentations

25% Comprehensive examinations (cumulative finals or certifications)

20% Projects/Written papers or reports

5% Peer and Self evaluations

#### VIII. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- A. Adler, Ronald B., Rosenfeld, Lawrence B., Towne, Neil, and Proctor II, Russell F. Interplay: The process of interpersonal communication (9<sup>th</sup> edition). Madison, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- B. Wood, Julia. Interpersonal communication: Everyday encounters (4<sup>th</sup> edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning Inc., 2004.
- C. Adler, Ronald T., and Towne, Neil. Looking out looking in (10<sup>th</sup> edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning Inc., 2003.

**IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:**

Some instructors may require reading packets (obtained in campus bookstore). In addition, some instructors may require their students to rent videos or purchase popular books for analysis.