COMM 1318.001 -- Interpersonal Communication  
Tuesdays  
Class Time: 4:20 – 6:50  
OCNR 145  

Instructor: Cheryl Spaniol  
Office: 334 Bay Hall  
Office Phone: 825-2179  
Office Hours: M 2:00 – 4:00  
W 2:00-4:00  
F 2:00-3:00  
(Also by appointment)  
Email: Cheryl.Spaniol@tamucc.edu  
Please use this email address ONLY if Blackboard is down.  

Recommended Course Textbook: R.A. Adler & R.F. Proctor, II,  
Looking Out/Looking In, 12th edition,  

There will be quiz questions taken directly from the assigned textbook readings that won't necessarily be covered in class.  

Course Description:  This course focuses on theories and exercises in verbal and nonverbal communication with a focus on interpersonal relationships.  

Student Learning Objectives:  
1. Describe the basic theories and principles of interpersonal communication and apply these theories and principles in interpersonal relationships.  
2. Identify the communication strategies used in various types of relationships  
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental dimensions of different cultures as they relate to interpersonal communication.  

Method of Instruction:  
Class Discussions  
Lectures inclusive of PowerPoint Presentations  
In-Class Activities  
Homework Assignments  
Videos for information and analysis  

Assignment Values:  
Journal Entries.................................................................100  
Film Analysis.................................................................100  
On-Line Quizzes..............................................................100  
Class Participation.........................................................100  
Group Presentation.......................................................100  

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE:  
.....................................................................................500  

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Grading Scale:
90-100%  =  A  
80 - 89%  =  B  
70 - 79%  =  C  
60 -69%   =  D  
Below 60%  =  F

Attendance Procedures:
According to the TAMUCC Undergraduate Catalog, “Students are held responsible for attending class.” Students can earn up to 100 points for class participation. Students that attend on a regular basis will be rewarded with grade points for in-class activities. There will not be any opportunities to make up for any lack of class participation. Students are permitted one (1) absence from class. This absence is to be reserved for possible medical needs and/or emergency situations. Additional absences will result in the subtraction of one percentage point (1%) per absence off of the final grade. For example, if a student ends up with a 92%, but misses 4 class periods (3 more than allowed), then the actual grade would be an 89% or a “B” grade (92 - 3 = 89).

Excused absences include: medical excuses from a doctor and excuses given by the university (student must miss class to represent the university).

Policy for Late Assignments: Assignments that are turned in late will be lowered one letter grade per class period.

Academic Etiquette: Universities must maintain standards of academic etiquette in order to create an atmosphere conducive to learning. You are expected to demonstrate courtesy to one another, and the Instructor, both in and out of the classroom. Talking to one's neighbor(s) during class lectures, student speeches or general discussions, as well as chronic lateness, leaving class before it has been dismissed, etc., is inherently disruptive and thus injurious to the rights of others to the opportunity to learn. As such, it is unacceptable in a university classroom. Students who are unable to abide by these rules of academic etiquette and normal civility will be removed from the class.

Note: please be sure to put all cell phones on vibrate and DO NOT answer during class or lab. Check to make sure the vibrate mode does not make noise either.

WebCT: Password protected web site that students use for communication as it relates to this course. In addition, students will gain access to all assignments, quizzes, the grade book and resource materials for the course.
Blackboard: Password protected web site that students use for communication as it relates to this course. In addition, students will gain access to all assignments, quizzes, the grade book and resource materials for the course.

Gaining Access to Blackboard: Go to TAMUCC.edu, click on WebCT, select the radio button that says – Blackboard. IOL: Your “A” Number/Password: initial is your birth date == MMDDYYYY. The only way this would be different is if you have already gone in and changed it. Note: this is the same information you use to access SAIL.

Need Help accessing Blackboard?
By Phone:
361-825-2825 (Local)
1-866-353-2491 (Long Distance)
By E-mail:
islandonline@tamucc.edu
Hours of Operation:
8:00 A.M. to 12:00 A.M. Everyday (U.S. Central)

WARNING TO STUDENTS: Do not EVER shut down a quiz without following ALL prompts! This locks the student out and only the instructor can reset.

Academic Honesty: Students unaware of the university’s statement on academic honesty should review it in the Undergraduate Catalog or Student Handbook. Examples of academic dishonesty and plagiarism are using someone else’s ideas and not giving them credit; making a presentation or turning-in a journal that is not originally yours; handing in assignments that are not originally yours; presenting “facts” or lifting ideas from sources without crediting the source; making-up entries in your journal; cheating on an exam or quiz; or not participating in dyad/triad activities, but taking credit for the product. If you are uncertain as to what actions constitute plagiarism or dishonesty, please ask your professor. Students who violate the code of honesty in this class will receive an “F” on that assignment. Any student receiving more than one “F” for academic dishonesty or plagiarism will fail the course. Note: All violations of academic honesty are reported to the dean and Office of Students Affairs who maintain documentation of such offenses for at least 5 years.

Notice to Students with Disabilities:
Texas A & M University – Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

Academic Advising:
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.
**Grade Appeal Process:**
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm).

For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Journal Entries**

There will be weekly journal entry assignments as a part of this course. These assignments give students specific directions on how to analyze and sometimes apply the interpersonal communication theories and concepts discussed in class and in the textbook. Typically, students will be required to write a one page summary of what they learned and/or how they think the information in the assignment relates to their specific circumstances.

The following is a sample journal entry assignment --

Go to the following link and take the Big Five Personality Test: [http://www.outofservice.com/bigfive](http://www.outofservice.com/bigfive)

Answer the following questions by writing it in a brief summary (50 to 100 words).

1. Do you think the test accurately portrayed you?

Share your results with three people that you trust and/or have a close relationship.

2. How did they respond? Did they feel the personality test accurately described you?

Once completed, upload your summary into the Journal Entry area of WebCT.
Film Analysis Paper:

Students are asked to adhere to the following guidelines when writing the 400 to 600 word paper --

**Brief Overview of the Film:** Briefly describe what the film was about.

**Application:** summarize as many situations as possible that apply to the information discussed in the textbook and in the classroom up to this point (please follow the format below). Any terms may be applied from chapters covered (1 through 5). Key Terms used must be in the list of “key terms” at the end of the chapter(s). There is an example on page 41 in your textbook.

Here is an example of how to apply the information to the chosen film:

**Film:** The Accidental Tourist (of course this information would be outlined at the top under "Brief Overview of the Film)

**Description of Scene:** Macon Leary has just moved in with his new girlfriend Muriel Pritchett and her son. In this scene, Muriel becomes enraged when Macon casually offers to pay for her son's tuition at a private school. She perceptively asks him whether this offer means he is making a commitment to her and the boy. Macon is baffled by Muriel's attack: He views the conversation as focusing on the boy's math ability.

**Application:** This scene is an excellent example of how content and relational messages can occur simultaneously. **Content Messages** include the information being discussed (page 27). **Relational Messages** are often times an attempt to meet one or more of our social needs, most commonly control, affection, or respect (page 27). Macon is focusing on the content level by discussing the son's math skills. Muriel focuses on the relational level by seeking clarification on how committed Macon is to her.
Choose from one of the following movies:
Again, if you have viewed the film one or more times in the past, then it will be easier to analyze and apply the information. Therefore, don't be afraid to choose something that you've seen in the past. Note: other films may be chosen that are not on this list, but prior approval is mandatory.

Little Ms. Sunshine
Notebook
Snakes on a Plane
Anchorman
Breakfast Club
Office Space
Fight Club
Donny Darka
Crash
Dumb and Dumber
Hitch
When Fools Rush In
Dodgeball
A Beautiful Mind
Kramer vs Kramer
An Officer and a Gentleman
On Golden Pond
Rain Man
Terms of Endearment
When a Man Loves a Woman
You've Got Mail
Bridget Jones's Diary
First Wives Club
Grease
Mr. Holland's Opus
Pretty Woman
Stand and Deliver
About Last Night
Tootsie

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Group Presentation

Students will be randomly assigned to groups with about 3 to 4 people. From there, each group will be assigned a specific chapter in the course textbook. Each group will have approximately 2 weeks to meet, discuss and analyze the assigned chapter and what they would like to cover during the group presentation. The group will then develop a 15 to 20 minute presentation that includes definitions, explanations, examples, as well as an overall analysis of each term.

Total Points: 100
50 points: Individual Grade
50 points: Group Grade

At least 2 key terms MUST be taken from the assigned chapter and the additional 3 key terms can be taken from any of the 10 chapters covered throughout the semester. Note: Students should try to pull as many from the assigned chapter as possible.

When covering each Interpersonal Communication term, students should be sure to mention, specifically, where the explanation of that term can be found in the text (chapter is fine… don’t have to tell page, etc).

ANY/ALL TERMS ANALYZED AND APPLIED TO THE FILM MUST BE IN THE LIST OF “KEY TERMS” AT THE END OF THE CHAPTERS!! Also, it’s best to attempt to analyze and apply the more complex terms, as opposed to the more easily understood terms/theories (ie: “cognitive complexity” versus “sender” in Chapter 1, for example).

Choose at least one video clip to go along with the term(s) being analyzed/applied to the film. Obviously, time should be taken into consideration. Students should not choose a clip that is too long for the given time period. If the group decides to show 2 or even 3 clips during the presentation, that is fine; however, the presentation should still be fluid and smooth when attempting to find a new clip. For example, one person could be fast-forwarding while the other person is explaining the clip and term the audience is going to view. In most cases, it won’t be possible to show 5 clips (especially if there is one per term). Therefore, for the clips the group does not have time to show, presenter can simply explain the clips and/or terms and how they apply.
**Individual Grade:** based on contributions toward the organizational process pertaining to the film chosen, terms discussed, as well as the clips chosen to show and/or discuss during the presentation. The grade will not only be determined by the amount of work each student produces, but also on initiative in attempting to get other group members involved in the project. The speech delivery will also be taken into consideration when determining the final points designated toward the “Individual Grade”.

**Group Grade:** The group grade will partially be based on what is actually presented in class. Additionally, the cooperation, ability to work together effectively and/or the effort put forth by the group as a whole (or lack of) will be taken into consideration as well.

Note: everyone in the group will receive the same group grade and everyone will complete a peer evaluation on other group members. Peer evaluations will be taken into consideration when determining individual grades.

Time Limit: 15 to 20 minutes
1 letter grade off for every minute under time.
1 percentage point off for every minute over time.
Students should prepare thoroughly so that time will not be a factor.

Technology: It is always recommended that students try out technology in the classroom a day or two before the presentation to be sure that it works. It is also highly recommended that they arrive early on the day of the presentation to, once again, check technology prior to the presentation. Note: Just because it worked on equipment elsewhere, doesn’t mean it will work on the one in the classroom. Better Safe than Sorry!! If the technology fails, which means that a video clip can not be shown, then there’s no way that anyone in the group could receive an above-average grade because a significant part of the criteria would be missing.
Students should use the following guidelines when developing the presentation --

Delivery:
--Physical Appearance was attractive and suitable
--Language/style of language was suitable and effective for this audience
--Student was articulate and easy to hear
--There were no serious errors in grammar, pronunciation and/or word usage
--Body movements, eye contact and facial expressions added to the overall effectiveness and interest-level of the presentation

INTRODUCTION:

Attention step: relates to subject in some way; creatively and effectively gains the audience’s attention.
--Startled the audience with a statement or statistic
--Aroused the curiosity of the audience
--Asked a thought-provoking rhetorical question
--Began with a humorous or shocking quotation
--Began with a humorous or shocking story or illustration
--Began with some other type of humor (i.e. joke)
--Began with a humorous, obscure, different, unusual or shocking visual

Establish Credibility (in intro):
--On time and appears prepared
--Walks confidently to the front of the classroom
--Makes direct eye contact --Physical appearance appropriate for the occasion

Overview of Film: a BRIEF overview of the chosen film and what it was about.

Preview Main Points: Conversationaly tells the audience the main points to be covered in the presentation. Try to be more creative that just saying “my main points are”

This should simply include the 5 key terms to be covered. Be sure to mention in the order in which you plan to cover.

Transition Statement: Includes a simple, yet effective transition statement that lets the audience know that the speaker is moving to the first main point.
BODY

Video Clip(s): the chosen video clip(s) added clarity, interest and/or proof pertaining to the term(s) being discussed.

--------Main points are clearly stated and developed (5 key terms with analysis and/or explanation)
--------Key terms discussed are accurately explained and applied to the film.

Transition Statements: Be sure to include a short, simple transition between each main point (5 key terms)

--------Speaker clearly and effectively moves from the introduction to the body and from the body to the conclusion (transition statements)
--------The amount of time that the speaker devoted to each main point was fairly equal AND the amount of time that each student spoke was fairly equal.

Transition Statement: Includes a simple, yet effective transition statement that lets the audience know that the speaker is moving to the conclusion.

CONCLUSION: Review: Clearly restated main points with the same key words and phrases used in the preview and main points (simply mention the 5 key terms covered)

Memorable Ending: relates to subject in some way; creatively and effectively concludes presentation.
--Startled the audience with a statement or statistic
--Aroused the curiosity of the audience
--Asked a thought-provoking rhetorical question
--Ended with a humorous or shocking quotation
--Ended with a humorous or shocking story or illustration
--Ended with some other type of humor (i.e. joke)
--Ended with a humorous, obscure, different, unusual or shocking visual
Quizzes

Weekly quizzes are assigned as a part of this course. Quizzes can be accessed through WebCT and the quiz questions are primarily taken from the textbook; therefore, reading the textbook is a vital part of the course. The quizzes are multiple choice, there are 10 questions on each quiz and students are given 15 minutes to take the quiz. Ten quizzes are assigned and they are worth 10 points each (1 point per question) for a total of 100 points.

Tentative Course Calendar

Jan 29

Chapter 1: A FIRST LOOK AT INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Syllabus

Quiz 1 Available

Feb 5

Quiz 1 goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.
Quiz 2 Available

Chapter 2: COMMUNICATION AND IDENTITY: CREATING AND PRESENTING THE SELF
**Feb 12**  
Quiz 2 goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.  
Quiz 3 Available

Chapter 3: PERCEPTION: WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET  
Perception Checking. Empathy and Communication.

**Feb 19**  
Quiz 3 goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.  
Quiz 4 Available

Chapter 4: EMOTIONS: THINKING, FEELING, AND COMMUNICATING  

**Feb 26**  
Quiz 4 goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.  
Quiz 5 Available

Chapter 5: LANGUAGE: BARRIER AND BRIDGE  

**March 5**  
Quiz 5 goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.  
Quiz 6 Available

Film Analysis Paper Due

Chapter 6: NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION: MESSAGES BEYOND WORDS  
March 12 – SPRING BREAK!

March 19
Quiz 6 goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.
Quiz 7 Available

Chapter 7: LISTENING; MORE THAN MEETS THE EAR

March 26
Quiz 7 goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.
Quiz (chapters 8 & 9) Available -- note -- 2 chapters covered on this quiz!

Chapter 8: COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONAL DYNAMICS
- Why We Form Relationships. Relational Development and Maintenance Communicating About Relationships.

April 2
Quiz (chapters 8 & 9) Available -- note -- 2 chapters covered on this quiz!
Chapter 9: INTIMACY AND DISTANCE IN RELATIONAL COMMUNICATION.


April 9
Quiz (chapters 8 & 9) goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.
Quiz 10 Available

Chapter 10: IMPROVING COMMUNICATION CLIMATES.
April 16
Quiz 10 goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.
Quiz 11 is Available

Chapter 11: MANAGING INTERPERSONAL CONFLICTS.

April 23
Quiz 11 goes off-line at 11:00 p.m.
Group Presentations

April 30
Group Presentations

May 7
Last day of class
Group Presentations -- make up if needed