COMM 1318.B01 -- Interpersonal Communication
Every other Tuesday beginning on 1-28-2014
This is a blended class, which means that it is taught half online and half face to face
Class Time: 4:20 – 6:50
BH 126

Instructor of Record: Cheryl Spaniol
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Office Phone: 825-2179
Office Hours: M 2:00 – 4:00 T 2:00 – 4:00 W 2:00 – 3:00 (Also by appointment)
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Please use this email address ONLY if Blackboard is down


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
3 Film Analysis Papers .................................................... 300
On-Line Exams ............................................................... 500
Group Presentation ......................................................... 100
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE:
...................................................................................... 1000
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.” The in-class discussions, activities and analysis will be vital the student’s overall success in the course. 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.

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, exams, the grade book and resource materials for the course.
Gaining Access to Blackboard…
Learning to use Blackboard will be vital to your success in this course. Within your Blackboard shell you will find:

- Syllabus
- Course Calendar
- Assignments
- Exams
- Journal Entry Area
- BB Messages
- Email
- Grade Book
- Announcements

Blackboard is our primary mode of communication outside of the classroom setting. Please only use our outside email address if Blackboard is down.

All exams will be taken in Blackboard

Grades will be posted at the end of the semester to check your records against our records.

Go to: [https://bb9.tamucc.edu/](https://bb9.tamucc.edu/)

You will see…

Username:
Password:

Username is first initial and last name (plus # for some people)
Password is whatever you established
*Same as computer labs and wireless access, which is different from Islander Email

IT Help Desk (361)825-2825.
[http://distance-education.tamucc.edu/student_resources.html](http://distance-education.tamucc.edu/student_resources.html)

**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:**
Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.
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

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 Blackboard.

To receive the highest grade possible on the following two assignments, be sure to make sound decisions in regard to the chosen films (Film Analysis Papers) AND clips for group presentation. Example: do not attempt to analyze and apply terms to someone inebriated because the ability to apply terms to our lives is based on the belief that we are of sound mind. If you are not sure about your chosen film and/or clips, please discuss your idea(s) with me.
**Film Analysis Paper:**
Students are asked to adhere to the following guidelines when writing three 1 to 2 page, double-spaced, type-written papers –

**Film:** The Accidental Tourist

**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). 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.

**Application MUST include the following:**

- **Term** in which student is seeking to get credit (underlined like the examples above).
- **Exact definition** of the term from the textbook (like the example above).
- **Page number in the text** (like the example above).
- **Analysis/application of the term to the film** (like the example above). Note: details of the analysis will be important to your overall grade. If you are, for example, analyzing the term emotive language, a direct quotation from the movie should be cited versus just saying that emotive language was used.
**Group Presentation**  
**Note:** Unlike the Film Analysis Papers, clips do not have to come from the same film. Clips can also be taken from television shows.

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, for the highest grade.

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).

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. 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 (50 points):

- Ability to work well within the group utilizing the skills learned in class.
- Contributions to the group. Note: everyone will fill out a peer evaluation at the end of the term/semester. Each team member will evaluate his/her peers AND write down his/her contributions to the group.
- **Important:** If a student ‘complains’ about a group member, the instructor will look for evidence that the person ‘complaining’ has used the clear message format and/or the perception checking learned in class. Evidence will also be needed that Jack Gibb’s supportive language was used (not defensive) in an attempt to resolve the conflict. Finally, evidence of lower level abstractions will be needed as well. Paper trail! Paper trail! Paper trail! Anything that could be controversial should be put into an email (NOT TEXT!). Of course, if the student ‘complaining’ has not used the skills learned in class, it could actually hurt his own individual grade. Evidence of student attempting to resolve the conflict (paper trail) should be turned in with the peer evaluation. Only the student evaluating AND the instructor will see peer evals and any relevant emails, etc.
- Performance during the group presentation and/or individual contributions to the speech.

Group Grade (50 points):

- Group is cohesive (win win attitude!), but avoids groupthink
- Has constructive conflict using skills learned in the classroom (not destructive… name calling, demeaning/harsh comments, etc.)
- **Note:** Instructor will not solve problems for the group members; however, it is HIGHLY recommended that the Instructor be contacted for professional recommendations when a conflict does occur. Please be aware of professional communication. It is not recommended that students ‘complain’ to the Instructor, but—instead— seek assistance on the best way to resolve the conflict.

Things that could impact the individual AND group grade:

- **Meetings:** Each group should meet at least once a week (more for summer classes/short term classes). Times, places, days should be decided as a group. Note: Groups striving for the above average (B grade) and/or the superior grade (A grade) will meet at least twice a week (more for summer/short term classes).
- **Agenda/Minutes:** Groups striving for above average or superior grades will turn in type-written agendas AND minutes (including attendance) for each meeting. See sample in BB
- **Note:** obviously, missing meetings, arriving late to meetings and leaving early will significantly hurt a student’s individual grade. If a student has to miss a scheduled meeting, he/she should provide documentation to his/her Instructor in order for the individual grade not to be lowered.

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

States the assigned chapter and the title.

Preview Main Points: Conversationally 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

Exams

Weekly exams are assigned as a part of this course. Exams can be accessed through Blackboard and the exam questions are taken from the textbook; therefore, reading the textbook is a vital part of the course. The exams are multiple choice and true/false. Ten exams are assigned and they are worth 50 points each (25 questions worth 2 points per question).

Tentative Course Calendar

Jan 28 – F2F
Introductions/Orientation
Syllabus/Blackboard

Exams 1 & 2 Chapt 1 & Chapt 2 Available
Journals 1 & 2 Chapt 1 & Chapt 2 Available

Chapter 1: A FIRST LOOK AT INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Chapter 2: COMMUNICATION AND IDENTITY: CREATING AND PRESENTING THE SELF
Feb 4 -- Online
Exams 1 & 2 go off-line at midnight!
Journals 1 & 2 go offline at midnight

Exams 3 & 4 Chapt 3 & Chapt 4 go online
Journals 3 & 4 Chapt 3 & Chapt 4 go online

Chapter 3: PERCEPTION: WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET

Chapter 4: EMOTIONS: THINKING, FEELING, AND COMMUNICATING

Feb 11 -- F2F

Chapters 1 & 2 covered in class

Feb 18 -- Online
Exams 3 & 4 go offline at midnight
Journals 3 & 4 go offline at midnight
Exams 5 & 6 Chapt 5 & Chapt 6 go online
Journals 5 & 6 Chapt 5 & 6 go online

Chapter 5: LANGUAGE: BARRIER AND BRIDGE

Chapter 6: NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION: MESSAGES BEYOND WORDS

Feb 25 -- F2F
Film Analysis Paper #1 due at midnight – Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4

Chapters 3 & 4 covered in class
March 4 – Online
Exams 5 & 6 go offline at midnight
Journals 5 & 6 go offline at midnight

Exams 7 & 8 Chapt 7 & Chapters 8 & 9 go online
Journals 7 & Chapt 7 & Chapters 8 & 9 go online

Chapter 7: LISTENING: MORE THAN MEETS THE EAR

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

Chapter 9: INTIMACY AND DISTANCE IN RELATIONAL COMMUNICATION.

March 10 – 14 Spring Break!

March 18 – F2F
Chapter 5 & 6 covered in class

March 25 – Online
Exams 7 & 8 (chapters 8 & 9) go off-line at midnight!
Journals 7 & 8 (chapters 8 & 9) go offline at midnight!

Exams 9 & 10 (chapters 10 & 11) go online
Journals 9 & 10 (chapters 10 & 11) go online

Chapter 10: IMPROVING COMMUNICATION CLIMATES.

Chapter 11: MANAGING INTERPERSONAL CONFLICTS.
April 1 – F2F
Film Analysis Paper #2 due at midnight – Chapters 5, 6, & 7

Chapters 7, 8 & 9 covered in class
Group Assignments

April 8 -- Online
Exams 9 & 10 (chapters 10 & 11) go offline at midnight
Journals 9 & 10 (chapters 10 & 11) go offline at midnight

April 15 – F2F
Chapters 10 & 11 covered in class
Work in Groups

April 20—F2F
Group Presentations

April 29— Online
Film Analysis Paper #3 due at midnight – Chapters 8, 9, 10 & 11

Final Exam 8 – 14 -- F2F
Group Presentations during final exam period