COMM 5309: SEMINAR IN INTERPERSONAL COMM    Professor:  D. K. Ivy, Ph.D.
Fall, 2013    diana.ivy@tamucc.edu
Section 001:  7:00-9:30pm, Mondays
OCNR 258    Office:  BH 325, 825-5986

Of. Hrs: M 6-7pm; TU 3:30-5:30pm;
W 5-7pm (Also by apptmt.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This graduate seminar will focus on interpersonal communication, defined as face-to-face communication between people who mutually influence one another. A variety of instructional strategies—discussion, lecture, class exercises and activities, individual projects—will be employed in this course to help us accomplish our goals. We will begin with a discussion of terminology and concepts necessary to a fundamental understanding of interpersonal communication; then we will read and critique both scientific research and popular literature in interpersonal communication. As the course progresses, students will conduct a literature review of an interpersonal topic of their choosing. Assignments will be directed toward the final course project—a literature review and research proposal on an interpersonal communication topic.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: At the end of the course, students should be able to:
1. define key terminology in interpersonal communication;
2. identify and explain basic theories, issues, and research trends in interpersonal communication;
3. develop and present an instructional strategy or training exercise based on an interpersonal communication concept;
4. illustrate their abilities to analyze and synthesize research findings on a topic in interpersonal communication and propose future research on the topic;
5. demonstrate their ability to deliver an effective oral presentation, summarizing their final papers.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS: The first expectation I have for students is that you keep up with the reading. Several readings will be assigned for each session; these readings are intense, so it’s important to plan ahead and make sure you’ve read (and understood) the material thoroughly before coming to class. You cannot hope to be successful in this course if you get behind in the reading. A secondary expectation surrounds the seminar approach to this class: In a seminar, students are primarily responsible for generating discussion. If you don’t read, we’ll have no substance for discussions and the course will degenerate into merely an exchange of personal anecdotes/opinions. I expect balanced participation, as well as rigorous, open-minded discussion, stemming from assigned readings. We need everyone’s involvement for the course to be successful. I appreciate all points of view and encourage an open, honest exchange of ideas.

REQUIRED READINGS: Required readings will be placed on reserve in the library as well as on Blackboard, and will constitute the bulk of our reading and discussion material for the semester. (Refer to the required reading list in your course guidebook.) In addition, because of students’ varied backgrounds (i.e., some students have taken an undergraduate interpersonal communication course, others haven’t taken any comm courses), an undergraduate textbook, Interpersonal Communication: Relating to Others (7th ed.) by Beebe, Beebe, and Redmond is required reading, and can be purchased in the campus bookstore. Students are expected to keep current with readings even if the material is not directly covered in class.
CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: Please turn off all laptops, cell phones, watches that beep, etc. before the start of class and keep them off. If you must keep your phone on because you’re on call or have an emergency, turn the sound to vibrate. If you have to answer an emergency call, leave the room quickly and quietly. If you choose to purchase the textbook or view course readings in an electronic format, please clue me that you’ll be using a reader, pad, laptop, or other device in class.

EQUITY STATEMENT: All people, regardless of sex/gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, religion, physical/learning ability, sexual orientation, veteran status, etc., shall have equal opportunity without harassment in this course. Any problems can be discussed confidentially with your instructor.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: TAMUCC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with documented disabilities. If you suspect you have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), contact Services for Students with Disabilities (CCH 116, 825-5816), and schedule a conference with me to discuss necessary accommodations. All discussions will remain confidential and should occur within the first two weeks of class. Please have your accommodation letter from the Disability Services Office with you when you see me.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Because this course places a great deal of emphasis on discussion, it’s imperative that you attend all class sessions. Since the course only meets once a week, it’s even more important to attend so that you stay current and receive pertinent information. If you do miss a class, it’s your responsibility to get the information that was covered from one of your classmates. I suspect that many of you will feel that an attendance policy for a graduate course is inappropriate, but I’ve found that such a policy acts as an incentive. Here’s the policy that will be enforced for this class:
(1) Your first absence is without penalty. Use this absence for illness and emergencies.
(2) Each subsequent absence will lower your final course average by 6 points (equivalent of day class).
(3) You must attend at least 2 hours, 15 minutes of each 2 and a half hour class to be counted present.

MISSED WORK: If you miss class when you’re expected to make a presentation, turn in an assignment, or take a quiz, you will not be allowed to make up that activity. The grade is a ZERO. There are only three exceptions to this policy: (1) you’re admitted to a hospital (not just seen in an ER) and unable to attend class; (2) you’ve experienced a death in your family; or (3) you’re traveling for official university business. In all situations you must provide documentation for the absence. You or someone you know should get in touch with me as soon as the emergency arises. Contacting me before an absence is preferable to after the fact. In extreme situations, you may also contact Student Affairs (825-2612) and request that a memo be sent to your instructors. Anyone traveling for a university-related event must turn in assignments or take quizzes before your travel, not after.

PLAGIARISM POLICY: Please understand that plagiarism is grounds for suspension from the university. Any student caught plagiarizing someone else’s paper, presentation, or speaking notes; lifting information from sources without citing those sources; attempting to turn in or present the same work in multiple classes; or cheating on a quiz may be given an automatic F for the course. If you’re uncertain about the university’s policy on academic misconduct, refer to the Student Handbook or University catalog. If you’re uncertain as to what actions constitute plagiarism in communication courses, ask me.
GRADE APPEAL PROCESS: As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, 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 a course. The burden of proof is on 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 on the University Rules Web site at www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, contact the Office of Student Affairs.

ASSIGNMENTS: Assignments in this course build on one another, meaning that they progress toward a culminating final course project. Brief explanations of each assignment appear below; complete explanations of all assignments and quiz review guides can be found in your course guidebook. Written assignments must be typed and turned in at the beginning of the class session indicated in this syllabus.

No emailed or faxed assignments will be accepted.

Report/Critic Assignment: For most readings, students will serve as reporters and critics who will lead and facilitate class discussion. The reporter’s task is to summarize key ideas in an assigned reading. The critic’s task is to be evaluative, meaning that you explore with the class what you liked and didn’t like, thought to be difficult to understand, or found particularly relevant or irrelevant in an assigned reading. (See guidebook for more info.)

Annotated Bibliography Assignment: This assignment involves locating published research about interpersonal communication and annotating it for possible later use. Select a topic you think you might want to pursue for the final project; then find 3 published articles from academic journals or edited books (2000 to the present) that you think will become part of your lit review for your final paper. Read over each article, extrapolating important ideas and incorporating them into your annotations. Keep annotations short and to the point—3-4 sentences max. (See guidebook for more info.)

Abstracts Assignment: For this abstract assignment, you will locate 3 published articles (which may or may not be the same 3 sources used for the annotated bibliography assignment) from academic journals or edited books (2000 to the present) that you think will become part of your literature review for your final paper. Next you will write original abstracts for each article. Abstracting means summarizing the highlights or most important aspects of an article. (See guidebook for more info.)

Instructional Strategy/Training Exercise: In this assignment, students will share with classmates an instructional strategy (teaching lesson or activity) on interpersonal communication that you have used in the classroom or think would be effective to use were you a teacher OR a training exercise in interpersonal communication—one that you might use while conducting, for example, a workshop for a corporation or organization on appropriate interpersonal communication in the workplace. (See guidebook for more info.)

Final Project: Oral Presentation: Each student will make an informal, 10-minute presentation to the class, summarizing her or his final paper. Be prepared to field questions from your classmates and instructor. (See guidebook for more info.)
Final Project: Paper: The final research paper has two parts: (1) a literature review of research on a topic of your choosing, related to interpersonal communication; and (2) a proposal of research that you believe needs to be conducted on your topic. This paper should be 20-25 pages in length (typed, double-spaced, standard font size and margins), written in APA (6th ed.) style. (See guidebook for more info.)

Quizzes: Two 25-multiple choice question quizzes will be given. Quizzes will be based on required readings; review sheets for quizzes are in your course guidebook.

Grading Scale: Here is my approach to letter grades: a “C” is average; a “D” is below average, and an “F” is way below average (a bomb out). A “B” is above average and an “A” is way above average. As and Bs are rewards for above-average performance, not minimal or average work.

Evaluation: Point values for each assignment and quiz are shown below. Your final grade is based on a percentage of 400 points, minus any deductions for excessive absences. Roughly 90% of 400 points (approx. 360 points) will earn you an A, roughly 80% (approx. 320 points) a B, and so forth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Participation (Reporters/Critics)</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abstracts</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional Strategy/Training Exercise</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz 2</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: Oral Presentation</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>400 points maximum</td>
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Course Schedule: The following tentative schedule details assigned readings, information to be covered during each class session, presentation and quiz dates, due dates for assignments—roughly everything you need to know to stay on top of this course. I use the word “tentative” because this schedule might change; however, students will be informed well in advance of any changes in schedule. Check the schedule before you come to each class so that you will be prepared.

Tentative Class Schedule

Week 1
W 9/9

Syllabus Overview & Student Introductions
Introduction to Interpersonal Communication
Assignment: Chapter Reporter & Critic
Required Reading: Articles 1-3 & Chs. 1 & 2 (Beebe) by W 9/16
Read: Syll, Ann. Bib, & APA (Guidebook pp. 1-6; 17; 25-26) by W 9/16
**Week 2**  
W 9/16  
Discuss Articles 1-3: Interpersonal Comm., Mediated IPC, & Self  
**Assignment: Annotated Bibliography (DUE W 9/30)**  
Required Reading: Articles 4-5 & Chs. 4 & 5 (Beebe) by W 9/23  
Read: Quiz 1 Review (Guidebook pp. 13-14) by W 9/23

**Week 3**  
W 9/23  
Discuss Articles 4-5: Cult. Diversity, Emotion, & Listening/Responding  
Review Annotated Bibliography Assignment  
Quiz 1 Review

**Week 4**  
W 9/30  
**DUE: Annotated Bibliography**  
**Quiz 1**  
Required Reading: Articles 6-7 & Chs. 6 & 7 (Beebe) by W 10/7  
Read: Abstracts Assignment (Guidebook pp. 18-19) by W 10/7

**Week 5**  
W 10/7  
Discuss Articles 6-7: Verbal & Nonverbal Communication  
**Assignment: Abstracts (DUE W 10/21)**  
Required Reading: Articles 8-9 & Chs. 8 & 9 (Beebe) by W 10/14  
Read: Quiz 2 Review (Guidebook pp. 15-16) by W 10/14

**Week 6**  
W 10/14  
Discuss Articles 8-9: Conflict & Relationships  
Review Abstracts Assignment  
Quiz 2 Review  
Read: Instructional Strat/Training Exer. (Guidebk pp. 20-21) by W 10/21

**Week 7**  
W 10/21  
**DUE: Abstracts**  
**Quiz 2**  
**Assignment: Instructional Strategy/Training Exer. (DUE W 11/4)**  
Required Reading: Articles 10-12 & Ch. 10 (Beebe) by W 10/28

**Week 8**  
W 10/28  
Discuss Articles 10-12: Relationship Challenges  
Review Instructional Strategy/Training Exercise Assignment

**Week 9**  
W 11/4  
**DUE: Instructional Strategy/Training Exercise**  
Required Reading: Articles 13-14 & Ch. 11, pp. 311-321 by W 11/11  
Read: Final Pres, Final Paper, & APA (Guidebook pp. 22-26) by W 11/11
Week 10  
W 11/11  
Discuss Articles 13-14: Friendships  
Assignment: Draft/Outline (DUE W 11/25), Final Presentation (DUE W 12/9), & Final Paper (DUE W 12/16)  
Required Reading: Articles 15-16 & Ch. 11, pp. 321-341 by W 11/8

Week 11  
W 11/8  
Discuss Articles 15-16: Romantic Relationships  
Review Draft/Outline, Final Presentation, & Final Paper Assignments  
Required Reading: Articles 17-20 & Ch. 12 (Beebe) by W 11/25

Week 12  
W 11/25  
DUE: Drafts/Outlines  
Discuss Articles 17-20: Family & Workplace Relationships  
Review Draft/Outline, Final Presentation, & Final Paper Assignments

Week 13  
W 12/2  
Individual Appointments to Review Drafts/Outlines of Final Papers

Week 14  
W 12/9  
DUE: Final Presentations

Week 15  
W 12/16  
DUE: Final Papers

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