COMM 5390.W01
Web-based: Fully on-line
Fall 2015
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Department Office: 361-825-2316

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COMM 5390 - SPECIAL TOPICS IN COMMUNICATION: NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Course Description:
(Catalog) This course is an intensive exploration of selected topics in communication study. Topics may include, but are not limited to the following: ethnography, language and social interaction, critical and rhetorical methods, and interviewing. May be repeated when topics vary. (3 credit hours).

(Specific to this course): This course offers an advanced survey of the field of nonverbal communication. Readings will be drawn from the required text as well as the many disciplines that study this subject. Attention will be given to the research, theories, and descriptions captured in the broad study of nonverbal communication. The content, which is multidisciplinary in nature, will be approached from the vantage point of scientific observation. Practical applications will also be discussed.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
The one overarching question which will guide our progress through the semester is: “What does the current body of knowledge tell us about nonverbal communication?” To address this larger question, our readings and class discussions will address four general questions:

1. What is nonverbal communication?
2. What do we know about nonverbal communication?
3. How do we study nonverbal communication?
4. How can we utilize our knowledge of nonverbal communication?

Upon successful completion of this course, you will:

1. Know the seminal studies and notable authors of nonverbal communication (NVC).
2. Know how the study of NVC developed and where it stands as a field of study today.
3. Understand the emerging controversies and current trends in nonverbal communication research.
4. Synthesize and apply the research on the categories and codes of nonverbal communication common to our discipline.
5. Understand the functions that nonverbal communication performs in daily interactions.

MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS (see full description on pages 4 - 5)

1. Weekly Readings & Threaded Discussion/Journal Post [10 x 20 points each] 200 points
2. Case Studies & Short Essay [4 x 25 points each] 100 points
3. Mid-term Exam (online, open-note, timed) 100 points
4. Annotated Bibliography [10 x 5 points each] 50 points
5. Final Presentation (narrated, group work permitted) 80 points
6. Final Course Reflection 20 points
7. Optional Activity (Tellagami app) [20 points extra credit]

Total Points 550 points
GRADING LEGEND (90/80/70/60% Scale)
A=550-495   B=494-440   C=439-385   D=384-330   F=0-329

Required or Recommended Readings

Textbook:

Recommended or Supplemental Reading:
Weekly readings are posted in Blackboard Learn.

Website:
Blackboard Learn @ https://bb9.tamucc.edu/

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Attendance:** Your online presence and participation is expected for every weekly class meeting. I believe that your satisfaction in the course is closely tied to your own active engagement in and contribution to each class; therefore, I expect each of us to bring an inspired, intellectual energy to the course every day.

2. **Assignment Submission:** All assignments are due no later than the dates indicated in the syllabus and the weekly online webpage. Blackboard is designed to close the assignment links at the moment beyond the due date/time. Hence, I do not accept late assignments, but I do retain the authority to determine whether any situation or circumstance warrants adjustment to course schedules or policies.

3. **Extra Credit:** Extra credit is in only one opportunity for a total of 20 points. This will be available in the “Vocalics” learning module.

4. **Reading:** All reading assignments are to be completed in a timely fashion for each week’s learning module. Your development as a critical-thinking scholar requires your thoughtful engagement with the material and your subsequent conversation with others. Therefore, this course is structured as a learning community—you will have an active part in your own academic progress.

   Additionally, it is expected that through the course you will find a nonverbal code which aligns with your research interests. That can only occur if you are actively engaged in both the material and the process of spirited inquiry.

5. **Citing Your Work:** For all written assignments, proper citation of sources is imperative. If you do not own a copy of the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Style Manual (6th edition), I highly recommend you gain access to one. This copy is readily available from countless book retailers. If you have a first printing of this edition, be sure to check the corrections to errors published by the American Psychological Association: http://supp.apa.org/style/pubman-reprint-corrections-for-2e.pdf
Academic Integrity/Plagiarism.
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a grade of 0 on the assignment as well as referral to the Graduate Coordinator for appropriate action.

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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Please note that Friday, November 6, 2015 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Preferred methods of scholarly citation
APA is the expected citation format for this course in this discipline.

Classroom/professional behavior
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Statement of Civility (can be in place of classroom/professional behavior)
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.
Grade Appeals*
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, [http://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’s Office.

Disabilities Accommodations*
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course will continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

*Required by SACS or HB2504

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Weekly Readings & Threaded Journal/Discussion Post: [10 x 20 points each] 200 points
   In Blackboard, each week will contain a learning module with a:
   a. chapter reading assignment
   b. additional reading online (my addition of back story and context)
   c. set of questions
   d. threaded discussion (journal) post prompt

2. Case Studies & Short Essay: [4 x 25 points each] 100 points
   a. Case study readings provide the opportunity to apply and analyze the course content.
   b. Instructions for each essay response will be posted in the weekly learning module.

3. Mid-term Exam (online, open-note, timed) 100 points

4. Annotated Bibliography: [10 x 5 points each] 50 points
   a. A one- or two-paragraph hefty summary of each of the ten studies that you read. If you read more, include only ten.
   b. The format for this formal bibliography will follow APA guidelines for references—you will not hyperlink this copy.
c. Each annotated entry in the bibliography is a critique of the study which includes: 1) a summary of the study – theoretical foundation, method, results, discussion, etc.; 2) an evaluation of the study – its contribution to the body of knowledge; 3) a judgment of the usefulness of the study to your understanding of the topic and your specific paper.

5. Final Presentation (narrated, group work permitted): 100 points

As we near the end of the semester, you should be thinking about how the content in this nonverbal communication course can be applied to your personal and professional lives. Therefore, for your nonverbal communication assignment, you are to select a nonverbal communication topic that you would like to explore further. You may select a topic that falls within one of the chapters in our text or others from outside sources. This final project asks you to create a multimedia presentation on a nonverbal communication topic of your choosing. You are permitted in work with one or two partners (no more than 3 members per group), if you desire.

a. Conduct research on an approved topic. This may include the peer-reviewed literature (such as found on the list below*), additional nonverbal texts, reputable web resources, video interviews with nonverbal experts, original research of your own, etc. Remember that much of the nonverbal research included in the text comes from the 1960s - 70s. Revisiting some of the topics, such as eye contact or touch—with your own research—may yield different results in 2014.

b. Build an informative presentation.

   a. The Content of the presentation must include the usual: Introduction, Body, Conclusion, and effective transition statements with information not previously expanded on in class.
   
   b. Delivery should also include the usual and expected dynamic delivery complete with supportive gestures, enthusiastic vocalics, engaging eye contact, professional appearance, and immediate facial expressions. (Realize that this is a presentation about nonverbs during which you actually USE nonverbals!).

   c. Present a narrated PowerPoint slide show, a YouTube video post, or a WebEx conference. The target time is approximately 10 minutes.

   NOTE: *You should consult the peer-reviewed, professional literature for some of your research. The following are good resources for nonverbal communication.

   - Journal of Nonverbal Behavior
   - Gesture
   - Communication Quarterly
   - Communication Theory
   - Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
   - Journal of Social Psychology

6. Final Course Reflection: 20 points

7. Optional Activity (Tellagami app) [20 points extra credit]

IMPORTANT: All papers must be the result of your original work, performed solely for this class. When you use the words of others, you must cite their source. Students found violating this policy will receive a failing grade on the assignment or in the class.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Beginning</th>
<th>LEARNING MODULE CONTENT</th>
<th>Blackboard Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1: Aug. 26    | Orientation & Introduction  
| MODULE 1      | NVC Basics               | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 1           |
| 2: Aug. 31    | Read Chapter 1:           
| MODULE 2      | Nonverbal Communication: Basic Perspectives  
|               | Annotated Bibliography assignment posted | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 2           |
| 3: Sept. 7    | Read Chapter 2:           
| MODULE 3      | Roots of Nonverbal Behavior | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 3           |
| 4: Sept. 14   | Read Chapter 3           ।  
| MODULE 4      | Ability to Receive and Send Signals | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 4           |
| 5: Sept. 21   | Read Chapter 4 – 5       ।  
| MODULE 5      | Effects of Environment on Human Communication  
|               | Effects of Territory and Personal Space on Human Communication | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Case Study 1             |
| 6: Sept. 28   | Read Chapter 6           ।  
| MODULE 6      | Effects of Physical Characteristics on Human Communication | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 5           |
| 7: Oct. 5     | Read Chapter 7           ।  
| MODULE 7      | Effects of Gesture and Posture on Human Communication | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 6           | Case Study 2 |
| 8: Oct. 12    | Read Chapter 8           ।  
| MODULE 8      | Effects of Touch on Human Communication | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 7           |
| 9: Oct. 19    | Read Chapter 9           ।  
| MODULE 9      | Effects of the Face on Human Communication | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Case Study 3             |
| 10: Oct. 26   | Read Chapter 10          ।  
| MODULE 10     | Effects of Eye Behavior on Human Communication | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 8           |
| 11: Nov. 2    | Midterm Exam (let’s pow-wow about a good time frame for taking the online exam) | TBD |
| MODULE 11     |                          |                        |
| 12: Nov. 9    | Begin working on Final Presentation assignment  
| MODULE 12     | Read Chapter 11          ।  
|               | Effects of Vocal Cues That Accompany Spoken Words  
|               | Optional Extra Credit Assignment available this week | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 9           | (Optional Extra Credit) |
| 13: Nov. 16   | Read Chapter 13          ।  
| MODULE 13     | Nonverbal Messages in Special Contexts  
|               | Deception               | Contextual Reading & Links  
|               |                         | Journal post 10          | Case Study 4 |
| 14: Nov. 23   | Annotated Bibliography Due  
| MODULE 14     | Continue working on Final Presentation assignment | Annotated Bibliography Due  |
| 15: Nov. 30 – Dec. 1  
| MODULE 15     | Last day of classes     ।  
|               | Final Presentation Due  | Final Presentation Due    |
| 16: Dec. 3 – 4  
| Final Exam Period | Final Course Reflection Due | Final Course Reflection Due |

Finally, this syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.