

COMM 2020

Interpersonal Communication

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Required Text:

Floyd, K. (2016). *Interpersonal communication* (3rd edition). New York: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 978-0-07-776825-6

Course Description

Successful interpersonal relationships require effective communication. Even ascertaining what constitutes a successful interpersonal relationship requires effective communication. The overarching goal of this course is to increase your interpersonal communication competence. The course aims to achieve this goal by teaching foundations of interpersonal communication theory, providing examples of theory in everyday relationships, and exploring dimensions of interpersonal communication across a broad array of communication contexts. Lecture, discussion, engagement exercises, activities, and applied research assignments will be used to increase student knowledge and communication skills.

Learning Objectives

- Develop an awareness of the role communication plays in everyday interaction
- Recognize the characteristics of competent communication in dyadic interactions

- Demonstrate skill in selecting and using a variety of communication strategies and responses based on cultural contexts and goals (Social Responsibility)
- Understand the influence of perception and the importance of perception-checking
- Evaluate listening habits and effective listening skills
- Understand the influence of context in communication situations
- Effectively demonstrate communication skills (Communication)
- Demonstrate effective interpersonal conflict management principles
- Apply interpersonal communication theory to real-life situations (Critical Thinking)
- Demonstrate ability to analysis data and draw conclusions (Empirical & Quan. Skills)

Course Policies

Attendance

Faithful attendance is recommended for a good grade in the class, because some lecture material not in the book will appear on exams. I expect students to arrive on time with assigned readings and prepared to discuss the material, pose questions, and be actively involved in in-class activities. *Additionally, if you miss more than three class periods your total grade will automatically be deducted by 5 points for each day missed above three (e.g., if you miss 5 days of class your final grade will be deducted by 10 points).* The three class periods include absences for work, illness, family emergencies etc.

Absences for University Authorized events and activities will not count toward your absence total. If you have an ongoing family emergency or illness that requires you to miss more than three days of class **documentation** will be required to waive the grade deduction noted above. You may only make up missed work for excused absences.

Additionally, a portion of your grade will be based on class attendance, participation within collaborative learning groups, and completion of in-class materials for an engagement journal (see assignments section). If it seems appropriate and/or necessary unannounced quizzes may be given throughout the semester to ensure that everyone is keeping up with the assigned readings. **A student who misses one-third or more class sessions will receive a failing grade.** You are responsible for obtaining notes, in-class activities, and homework from missed classes. It is not the responsibility of the instructor to see that you are caught up.

Assignment Policies

All written assignments must be **typed** and **single-spaced** unless otherwise specified.

Assignments, which do not follow these guidelines, will not be graded. Page length guidelines are based on 12 point Times New Roman Font 1 inch margins expectation (So if you want to use Courier New add a few pages to the requirements). You must use APA format for references for papers and presentations.

You are responsible for turning work in on time. **Late work will not be accepted** without a *documented* “authorized absence” as defined by UNT (there will be no exceptions).

Should you miss an assignment due to an approved excused absence, you must complete the missed assignment and turn it in no later the end of the following week. You may also turn these in early.

Please note: If any assignment is missed due to any reason other than documented death, extreme illness, religious observance, UNT activity (see absence policy above), you will be unable to make up

the work. You MUST plan ahead for all assignments, both major and daily, as each constitute a significant part of your final grade and cannot easily be “redone” due to timing and spatial issues.

Please note: You should keep & store all graded work in case of a grade dispute at the end of the semester.

Grading of Assignments

All presentations and assignments are based upon a point system. Students will receive a thorough description of requirements for all assignments before they are due, as well as a detailed explanation of all assignments and grading procedures. Your work will be assessed in terms of concept comprehension and skill mastery. In regard to the skill mastery assessments, it must be stressed that although objective standards exist that can be used to determine the quality of an oral communication skill, a certain amount of subjectivity is inherent in the determination of the degree to which such standards are met.

It is your responsibility as the student to keep up with points accrued throughout the semester. Final points will be available at the end of the course.

After a graded assignment has been returned to you, you must wait a minimum of 24 hours before contacting your instructor about a possible grade dispute. After a graded assignment has been returned to you, you have a maximum of 1 week to contact your instructor regarding a possible grade dispute.

Excused Absence Policy

Due to the time constraints of this course, late work for module activities, discussions, and major assignments is not accepted. Any student whose work is late is considered *unexcused* with the exception of: personal or family illness requiring physician assistance/hospitalization, UNT school-sponsored activity, religious holy day or death of a family member. Documentation must be provided within 1 calendar week after the assignment. A personal email is appreciated but will not suffice as sufficient documentation for consideration.

Please note: Most work related absences, visits to the dentist, stomachache, car problems, & other general dilemmas do not count as excused absences.

Religious Holidays

In accordance with Section 51.911 of the *Texas Education Code*, UNT will allow a student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day to take an examination or complete a scheduled assignment within a reasonable time. Students are required to file a written request with each professor within the first fifteen days of the semester to qualify for an excused absence.

Blackboard

The Blackboard course site includes: syllabus, announcements, supplemental reading, quizzes, supplemental video lectures, exam reviews, and APA style guidelines. Additionally, grades will be posted online during the course of the semester. Please check Blackboard regularly. **If you cannot sign onto Blackboard, it is your responsibility to contact Blackboard and request help during the first week of the semester.**

YOU ARE EXPECTED TO LOG-IN TO THE COURSE VIA BLACKBOARD AT LEAST TWICE A WEEK THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER.

Technical difficulties with Blackboard Learn are the responsibility of the student. If you encounter technical difficulties during the semester, you need to contact the Blackboard Technical Support Desk:

Email: Helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940.565.2324

Additional support is located on the Blackboard Course Login Page: <https://learn.unt.edu>.

Should you request additional time for an online assignment from your instructor due to technical difficulties, you MUST have a Ticket number from Blackboard as a reference.

Access Policy

We will cooperate fully with the University's Office of Disability Accommodation to provide reasonable accommodation to students who require help. **Students who wish to self-identify should register with the ODA no later than the second week of class.**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at [940.565.4323](tel:940.565.4323).

Extra Credit

Extra credit is rarely available. If an extra credit opportunity arises I will post it via an announcement on blackboard. Any extra credit cannot exceed 5 points total of 360 points offered in the class.

Firearms Policy

The University of North Texas is committed to providing a safe environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors, and to respecting the right of individuals who are licensed to carry a handgun where permitted by law. Individuals who are licensed to carry may do so on campus premises except in locations and at Activities prohibited by law or by this policy. Open carry is NOT permitted. See 04.001 Carrying of Concealed Handguns on Campus policy for more details.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to remove inappropriate comments and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including

university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr

Code of Student Conduct

All persons shall adhere to the Code of Student Conduct regarding academic dishonesty, including acts of cheating and plagiarism. See 18.1.16 Student Standards of Academic Integrity.

“Cheating. The use of unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise, including but not limited to:

1. use of any unauthorized assistance to take exams, tests, quizzes or other assessments;
2. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems or carrying out other assignments;
3. acquisition, without permission, of tests, notes or other academic materials belonging to a faculty or staff member of the University;
4. due submission of a paper or project, or re-submission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor;
5. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage on an academic assignment.

Plagiarism. Use of another’s thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student’s intent, including but not limited to:

1. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation.
2. The knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials.” (Policies of the University of North Texas, 2012, Section 18.1.16, pg. 3-4).

Rules for citing quotes and ideas can be found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edition. **Please note:** *Intentionality is not an issue with regard to plagiarism. Even if a student plagiarizes without intending to do so, it is still considered plagiarism and will result in the appropriate consequences.* Students are urged to review the parameters and provisions of plagiarism to avoid any potential plagiarism issues.

Punishments for cheating or plagiarism range from a grade of ZERO points on the assignment in question to failure of the course. You can find additional information on the University policy regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty at http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf

Policy on Incompletes

An “Incomplete” will be awarded only in cases where 75% of the coursework has been completed AND the grade is warranted by an excuse (e.g., medical, military). Inability to complete coursework in a timely fashion does not constitute an acceptable reason for requesting or receiving an incomplete. To request an incomplete please set up a meeting with the Course Director AND your Instructor prior to the Final Exam period.

Access to Information – Eagle Connect

Students’ access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Blackboard online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about students' records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy.

SPOT Evaluations

The Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Student feedback is important in order that the classroom environment can continue to evolve to meet the needs of students at UNT. Thus, SPOT is an important part of your participation in this class. Students may access the online SPOT via the email link sent to your my.unt email address.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is an agreement between the instructional faculty member teaching a course and the students enrolled in that course. The syllabus establishes the instructional faculty member's expectations, providing students with an overview of course content and explanations of course guidelines, procedures, and requirements. Consistent with UNT Policy 15.2.20, Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibility, instructional faculty have the academic freedom to design the course and present the syllabus as they wish, and instructional faculty have the academic responsibility to include specific items to fulfill state and institutional requirements.

This syllabus is intended to serve as a guideline for COMM 2020: Interpersonal Communication. Both UNT and your professor reserve the right to make modifications in content, schedule, and requirements as necessary to promote the optimal educational experiences within prevailing conditions affecting the course.

Assignments

Engagement (60 points total)

Participation is crucial in this course. Communication is a dynamic, interactive process and thus this course is designed to engage students in discussions and experiential activities on a regular basis. It is the student's responsibility to come to keep up with the content and be ready to engage in dialogue.

Experiential activities are designed to apply course concepts from the course materials. Activities and discussions are graded and your participation alone does not guarantee full credit. Your work must show comprehension of the material and active engagement. A variety of activities such as group activities, reflective informal writing, class discussions, and quizzes will be included. You **CANNOT** make up activities once the due date occurs unless you have a University authorized absence or proof of a medical issue that prevents you from attending class.

The Instructor will be keeping a detailed tracking form for participation. You will be asked to document activities and in-class writing in a journal (blue/green book that will be provided). Engagement journals will be submitted twice during the semester for review and graded holistically.

Interpersonal Analysis Assignments

Assignment #1: Finding Communication Concepts in Musical Lyrics (25 points)

This assignment requires you to identify communication concepts in the context of music by selecting a song that represents concepts from Ch. 4 (Interpersonal Perception). First, select concepts from Ch. 4 (e.g., interpretation, stereotypes, perceptual accuracy, recency effect, egocentrism, attributions, self-serving bias) that are represented in the song lyrics of your choice. Then, define the concepts you have selected. Finally, elaborate on the lyrics' connection to the concept(s), and discuss what interpersonal communication message the song speaks to you, if any. Assignments should be typed, single-spaced, and 1 full page in length. Please include the lyrics you selected in an appendix.

Assignment #2: Nonverbal Communication Analysis Assignment (25 points)

This assignment involves the identification of interpersonal concepts in your personal relationships. Select one relationship you currently interact with (i.e., friend, parent, romantic partner, sibling, co-worker), and identify concepts from Ch. 6 (Nonverbal Communication) that you have noticed in the relationship you select (e.g., "turn-taking signals," "expressing emotions nonverbally," "immediacy behaviors," "kinesics," "haptics," etc. Provide specific examples of times when these concepts occurred in your chosen relationship. Briefly analyze the effects of each behavior on your communication. Also, provide concrete suggestions for how your communication could be improved for similar instances in the future. Assignments should be typed, single-spaced, and 1 full page in length.

Assignment #3: Culture & Gender Analysis (25 points)

For this assignment, you will first select a film, video, or television clip that illustrates concepts from Ch. 2 (Culture & Gender), e.g., "individualistic culture," "collectivistic culture," "monochronic," "polychronic," "uncertainty avoidance," "gender roles," "expressive talk," "instrumental talk," "affectionate communication," and so forth. Then, define the concepts you have selected. Finally, elaborate on the content's connection to the course concept(s) you selected, and discuss how the communicators could have improved their communication during the situation. Assignments should be typed, single-spaced, and 1 full page in length.

Computer-Mediated Interpersonal Communication Analysis

Assignment #4: Mediated Interpersonal Communication Analysis (25 points)

This assignment asks you to apply course concepts to computer-mediated interpersonal communication interactions. Specifically, you will analyze a mediated communication interaction between you and a relational partner of your choice (i.e., friend, family, romantic partner, co-worker). That is, analyze a recent interaction of text messages, emails, Facebook interactions,

SnapChat, Instagram, Skype, or any other form of mediated communication between you and your chosen relational partner. Apply interpersonal communication principles or theory from Chapters 8 (Emotion), 9 (Friendships & Professional Relationships), or 10 (Romantic & Family Relationships) to your analysis, focusing on how these concepts affected or influenced the interaction.

For instance, you might discuss “display rules,” “how technology affects emotions,” “valence of emotions,” “friendships are governed by rules,” “relational maintenance behaviors,” “communication privacy management,” “stages of relationships,” or “dialectical tensions.” Also, discuss specifically how the channel of communication influenced your communication. Assignments should be typed, single-spaced, and 1 full page in length.

Exams

(4 exams, 50 points each, 200 points total)

The four exams each consist of 50 multiple-choice questions. Exams will be administered online using BlackBoard. There will be a period of days (e.g., Thurs- Sunday) for you to take each exam. For each exam, you will be responsible for all material covered in the text and all material covered in the text, online videos, and engagement activities during that unit. Please note, the exams will be timed, so be prepared to take the test when the exam begins (rather than trying to “find” the answers as you go).

Grading scale:

A: (excellent, clearly outstanding)	324-360	(90-100%)
B: (very good, impressive)	288-323	(80-89%)
C: (average college-level)	252-287	(70-79%)
D: (below average college-level)	216-251	(60-69%)
F: (failing)	< 216	(0-59%)

Tracking Your Grade!

Assignment	Point Value	Your Score
Exams	-----	-----
Exam #1	50	
Exam #2	50	
Exam #3	50	
Exam #4	50	
Engagement	-----	-----
Reading Quizzes (only if needed!)	20	
Midterm Journal	20	
Final Journal	20	
Interpersonal Analysis Assignments	-----	-----
Interpersonal Perception Music Lyrics	25	
Nonverbal Communication Analysis	25	
Culture & Gender Analysis	25	
Computer-Mediated Interpersonal Communication Analysis	-----	-----
Mediated Communication Analysis	25	
Total	360	

COMM 2020 Schedule

Please complete the readings assigned in lecture prior to coming to class!

Unit 1: Foundations of Interpersonal Communication Part I	Lecture	Recitation	Due Dates
Module 1: Introduction	Jan. 18th: Syllabus- Course Policies Read: Chapter 1	Jan. 18th & 23rd Ice Breaker – True Colors Activity Interpersonal Competence Assessment	
Module 2: Communication & The Self	Jan. 25th: Read: Chapter 3	Jan. 25th & 30th Communication & The Self Visual Identity Collage	
Module 3: Perception	Feb 1st: Read: Chapter 4	Feb. 1st & 6th Perception Process Stereotypes & Perception Process	Exam #1 will open Thurs Jan. 30th at 6am and close Sunday Feb. 4th at 11:59pm

Unit 2: Foundations of Interpersonal Communication Part II	Lecture	Recitation	Due Dates
Module 4: Language & Persuasion	Feb. 8th: Read: Chapter 5	Feb 8th & 13th: Language & Persuasion Activity History of Your Name	Due: Sunday Feb. 11th at 11:59pm Assignment #1 (Perception Music Assignment)
Module 5: Nonverbal	Feb. 15th: Read: Chapter 6	Feb. 15th: & 20th: Nonverbal Communication Activity Nonverbal Cues & Culture	
Module 6: Listening	Feb. 22nd: Read: Chapter 7	Feb. 22nd & 27th: Listening Process Activity	Exam #2 will open Thurs Feb. 22nd at 6am and close Sunday Feb. 25th at 11:59pm

Unit 3: Communication Dynamics	Lecture	Recitation	Due Dates
Module 7: Culture & Gender	March 1st: Read: Chapter 2	March 1st & 6th: Culture & Gender Activity & Discussion	Due: Sunday March 4th at 11:59pm Assignment #2 (Nonverbal Communication Analysis Assignment)
Module 8: Communicating Emotions	March 8th: Read: Chapter 8 Emotional Expression Activity	March 8th & 13th: Spring Break- No Recitation	
Spring Break- No Class March 12-16th			
Module 9: Conflict	March 22nd: Read: Chapter 11	March 22nd & 27th: Interpersonal Conflict Case Study	
Module 10: Deceptive Communication	March 29th: Chapter 12	March 29th & April 3rd: Deceptive Communication Activity	Exam #3 will open Thurs March 29th at 6am and close Sunday April 1st at 11:59pm

Unit #4: Communication Contexts	Lecture	Recitation	Due Dates
Module 11: Forming and Maintaining Personal Relationships	April 5th: Read: Chapter 9	April 5th & 10th: Personal Relationships	Due: Sunday April 6th at 11:59pm Assignment #3 (Culture & Gender Analysis Assignment)
Module 12: Close Relationships	April 12th: Read: Chapter 10	April 12th & 17th: Friendships Romantic Relationships Family Relationships: Defining Family	
Module 13: Communicating with Technology	April 19th: Reading on Blackboard	April 19th & 24th: Communicating with Technology: Social Media & You	
Module 14: Health Communication	April 26th: Reading on Blackboard (Last Lecture- No class on Reading Day May 3rd)	April 26th & May 1st: Health Communication: Caregiving Case Study	Due: Sunday April 29th at 11:59pm Assignment #4 (Mediated Communication Analysis Assignment)

**Exam #4 will be due during finals week
Opens Sat. May 5th 6am – Closes Tuesday May 8th at 11:59pm**