

**SPCM 1500: Perspectives on Interpersonal Communication  
Maymester 2009 (Daily 11:00-1:45)**

Classroom: 203 Caldwell Hall  
Office hours: TWR 9:30-10:30 am and by appt.

Office: 120 Terrell Hall  
Phone: 542-4753

E-mail: [tmharris@uga.edu](mailto:tmharris@uga.edu) (This is my preferred means of communication; thus, if an email is submitted to WebCT, I cannot guarantee a timely response. Please allow 48-hours for a response time. Be advised that I limit my Internet access in the evenings and weekends, so it is best to email me prior to 5p.m)

**Required text:** West, R., & Turner, L.H. (2009). *Understanding interpersonal communication: Making choices in changing times* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). United States: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

**Course description:** “Through lectures and class discussion, students will critically examine theory and research in interpersonal communication. Emphasis is placed both on learning about the communication process and on becoming a more effective participant in it.”

**Please check WebCT DAILY.** I will post announcements, assignments, additional readings, and other pertinent information on WebCT. I will occasionally send you e-mail messages regarding the course. I will circulate a form requesting your preferred email address; however, if that address is inaccessible, I will contact you via WebCT e-mail. If you prefer, you may forward this to your UGA e-mail account (see Message Settings box under course mail on WebCT).

**Course Structure:** This course is based heavily in discussion/lecture forum; thus, it is imperative that each student comes to class each day prepared to engage in discussions about the course assignments and relative readings. It is also imperative that complete reading assignments prior to each class meeting. It is not guaranteed that every concept will be addressed in lecture; therefore, each student is responsible for all material that is addressed in the text, lecture, and supplemental readings. Please note that class time will be spent either in lecture, viewing films or videos, and/or small group activities exploring that day’s communication theory and related concepts.

**NOTE: Be advised that the course syllabus is a general plan for the course. If, however, any deviations are made by Dr. Harris, an announcement will be made to the class in class and/or on WebCT.**

**Course Description:**

This course involves a mixture of tests, in-class activities, and class discussions, all of which are designed to assess a student’s ability to (a) understand and (b) apply his/her knowledge of relational communication as a complex human phenomenon. People often assume that communication is a “common sense” approach to understanding human behavior. However, in reality, it is a very intense study of how individuals exchange information and how this can be achieved with a desired goal in mind. For all assignments, each student is expected to demonstrate an understanding of communication concepts and the ability to apply them to

professional communication settings. Therefore, you are **strongly encouraged** to (1) **read chapters and assigned readings prior to class**, (2) **attend class regularly**, (3) **study for each exam in a timely fashion**, (5) complete all out-of-class assignments and (4) **ask for clarification from Dr. Harris if you do not understand information covered in class**.

### Course Objective:

This class is designed advance students' understanding of and knowledge of interpersonal relationships and aid in the development of their own interpersonal communication skills. This is achieved through exposure to the following

1. Communication concepts, theories, and research on the (in)effective communication behaviors that exist within various interpersonal contexts.
2. Awareness of effective listening and communication skills
3. Develop effective listening and communication skills
4. Develop critical thinking skills regarding observations of communication behaviors
5. Increased awareness of your own communication behaviors
6. Understand how to apply newfound knowledge of interpersonal communication skills to your own personal relationships
7. Develop the ability to identify negative and positive communication behaviors

**Student Companion Website for the textbook:** [http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course\\_products\\_wp.pl?fid=M20b&flag=student&product\\_isbn\\_issn=9780495502463&disciplinenum=48](http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M20b&flag=student&product_isbn_issn=9780495502463&disciplinenum=48).

<b>Exams 3</b>	<b>@ 100 points = 300</b>
<b>Papers 2</b>	<b>@ 100 points = 200</b>
<b>Participation/ activities/ quizzes</b>	<b>25</b>
Research requirement	Complete/Incomplete
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<b>Total = 525 points</b>	

**A note on grades:** In this course, a grade of **A** means uniformly excellent work well beyond that which is required:

**Exams (300 points):** Three examinations will be given throughout the semester; each will be worth 100 points. The exams will consist of a combination of true-false, multiple choice, and/or some essay format items. Exams cover material from lectures, the textbook, outside supplemental readings, student generated discussion questions, and in-class activities. I do not lecture on all of the material in your text so make sure you have done the readings before exams. NOTE: A significant percentage of the testable material can only be obtained by coming to class and engaging in active class participation.

**Class Participation (25 points):** These are credit-no-credit responses to a critical question concerning one of the readings/content for that class period—like a pop quiz. They are not in-depth essays, per se, but rather are merely a check for basic comprehension. Each response is worth five points.

**Two Papers (200 points):** Throughout the semester you will be asked to write two papers. These papers provide the student with an opportunity to demonstrate her/his comprehension of and/or ability to apply theory, in a creative and novel manner, to a particular relationship.

Well-written essays:

- Are clear analytical papers that advance a thesis or central claim
- Have an introduction, body, and conclusion
- Use evidence and descriptive examples to support claims
- Satisfy each of the guidelines specified in the assignment sheet
- Are polished pieces that reflect the student's best thought and written reflection about the communication dynamics under examination
- Have a title, are error free, and are submitted on time, stapled and **with your name written on the back of the last page of the essay.**

NOTE: Complete descriptions of the paper guidelines will be posted on WEBCT.

No Extra Credit will be offered to anyone, so save both of us the time—don't ask about extra credit!!!

### **Recording Your Grades**

All graded assignments will be returned to you, with the exception of the exams. It will be your responsibility to keep in your possession all other assignments until the end of the semester. While grades will be managed on WebCT, it is your responsibility to keep track of them as well. Determining what grades you need to earn on individual assignments to receive a certain grade for the course is a task you can manage by regularly recording your grades and using the scale above.

### **Course Policies**

**Academic Honesty:** “Academic honesty is – defined broadly and simply – the performance of all academic work without cheating, lying, stealing, or receiving assistance from any other person or using any source of information not appropriately authorized or attributed (from the Preamble to “A Culture of Honesty”). All academic work must meet the standards contained in ‘A Culture of Honesty.’ Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.”

Academic honesty is a very important and serious issue for The University, the Department of Speech Communication, and myself. To ensure that you do not fall victim to purposeful or unintentional plagiarism, cheating, etc., I strongly advise that you, as a member of the University of Georgia community, familiarize yourself with the booklet, “A Culture of Honesty: Policies and Procedures on Academic Dishonesty.” This document has a thorough presentation of four types of academic dishonesty including plagiarism, unauthorized assistance, lying/tampering, and theft, as well as the procedures that are in place to adjudicate alleged incidents of academic dishonesty. The policies and procedures described in “A Culture of Honesty” will be strictly followed. Use the link provided below to read “A Culture of Honesty:” <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>

Be aware that all violations of the Academic Honesty policy may result in a grade of F for the course. Any student found in violation will be immediately reported to the appropriate authorities at the University of Georgia.

All work submitted for credit in this class must be original and must NOT be in any way related to another course. Assignments used in part or completely for another course or an extracurricular activity may not be used for any assignments in this class.

### **Attendance**

Attendance is required each day. Show up on time, be prepared to participate every day, and have a positive attitude.

If you are absent from class and there is an in-class assignment, you will not be permitted to make it up. If an assignment is due, it must be turned in at the beginning of class, and *no electronic (email) copies are permitted, no exceptions*. That assignment must be turned in at the beginning of class or it will not be accepted. You are also responsible for all information provided in class, whether it be class discussion, announcements, assignments, or guidelines regarding course assignments. I will not approach you to inform you of what was missed; therefore, you must take the initiative to find out from me. Missed information during class must be obtained from a classmate, not the instructor. I will not be posting complete lecture outlines on WebCT nor will I provide access to my personal lecture notes. If you have questions about the material received from a classmate, schedule a meeting with me during my office hours.

Absences due to university activities (e.g., debate, sports, etc.) must be discussed with me before the relevant class period(s). Arrangements concerning absences are entirely at my discretion.

**Penalty for absences:** You may miss three days of class without penalty. Because this is Maymester, attendance is of the utmost importance, thus you are permitted to only miss one day of class, which is the equivalent of 1 wee during a regular semester. All absences beyond three, either excused or unexcused, will result in a 10 point deduction from the total points earned for the course please note that I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Be aware that you will be docked points accordingly if you leave class for an extended period of time at any point when class is officially in session.

### **Tardiness or leaving early**

A significant amount of information and content is covered during the course of the semester; therefore, I advise that you utilize effective strategies for good class performance. This includes, but is not limited to, arriving to class early or on time, attending the entire class session each day. If you are more than 10 minutes late or if you leave class early, **you will be penalized** as if it were an absence.

### **Late Work**

All assignments are due on the due dates at the beginning of the class period. You may turn in an assignment late or make up a missed exam only if you meet all of these conditions:

1. You contact me prior to the absence, whether by phone or e-mail;
2. You bring documentation on your first day back to class to verify the absence; and
3. Your documentation is official, written on official stationery or letterhead, and signed by

the appropriate authority (e.g., a physician).

Notes from the University Health Center are neither appropriate nor acceptable unless they

If you do not provide or have appropriate documentation and if you do not meet the above conditions, you will not be allowed to make up quizzes, assignments or exams, and you will receive a zero. **All appeals must be made no later than the day after the absence in question. It is your responsibility to provide this documentation and not me; thus, if I do not receive it in a timely manner, penalty points will be assessed accordingly**

**E-mail Correspondence:** Any e-mail correspondence must come from either WebCT or your UGA e-mail account. Do not send e-mail messages to me from Gmail or any other such provider.

It is your responsibility to make sure I have received any correspondence and/or e-mail attachments from you; do not assume that work has been received. If you do not receive an acknowledgment from me, check to make sure I have received your message.

**Written Work:** Type and double-space all of your written work. Proofread your work; errors in spelling and grammar are unacceptable and will adversely affect your grade.

Type all written assignments and hand them in at the beginning of the class period on due dates. Run spelling and grammar checks before submitting your written work. Margins MUST be 1 inch all around, and the font must NOT BE larger than Times New Roman 12 font.

Refrain from using dictionaries, encyclopedias, Wikipedia or other such sources for assignments. You are expected to use credible research sources worthy of university-level work.

**Learning Accommodations:** If you need special accommodations, please talk with me as soon as possible. Please also contact the Office of Disability Services in Clark Howell Hall (542-8719). The Office of Disability Services will contact us regarding any special accommodations (e.g., notetaker, testing accommodations).

**Grievance Procedure:** Please adhere to the following process to file a grievance concerning a graded assignment.

1. Wait 24 hours before speaking with me about a grade unless there was an actual miscalculation of the grade. This gives you time to review the assignment, compare your answer to class notes and the textbook, and to understand the reasons why you earned that particular grade. This also removes the emotional component of the grade experience and focuses solely on facts.
2. Submit your appeal no later than one day within receipt of a grade. Until that time, you are able to submit and address a grievance. Do not wait until the end of the term to discuss a grade, as no grievances will be heard.
3. In keeping with the policy of the Speech Communication Department, all grade appeals must be submitted in typewritten format (no handwritten appeals please). In this typed

argument you must clearly articulate your specific appeal in a clear, coherent manner, provide page numbers and textbook information to support your appeal, and provide a strong rationale for why the correct answer is in fact wrong (not why you are right). It is your responsibility to also keep a copy of the appeal on hand for record keeping purposes.

4. Turn in the appeal during my office hours or at a scheduled appointment time within one week of your receipt of the grade. I will not receive appeals submitted outside of either scenario

**Creating a Classroom Community:** In order to establish and maintain a community that is conducive to the goals and objectives of this course, we must all work together toward that end. Thus, there are certain criteria that are necessary to make this course an enjoyable one for all students and myself.

- a. We will have **mutual respect** for each other as we engage in dialogue about various relational topics. While we will assuredly have differing opinions, we must agree to **peaceably** disagree.
- b. Make **productive** (not distracting or inappropriate) **contributions** to the class discussion through positive participation. Your grade can be adversely affected should you choose to disrupt the learning and teaching experience of this course in any way deemed significant by the professor.
- c. Arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. If you arrive 10+ minutes late to class, that will be considered an official absence.
- d. Read all assignments, pay attention during class, and contribute meaningfully to class discussions and activities.
- e. All cell phones must be turned off upon entering the classroom; do not turn them on again until after you leave the room. Do not talk on the phone or send text messages before, during, or after class while you are in the classroom.
- f. Refrain from reading the newspaper, doing crosswords or Sudokus, or anything else during class that interferes with the learning process.
- g. Your personal laptops in-class may only be used to take notes or to do research if the opportunity presents itself. You may not check e-mail or Facebook messages, play games, or do anything else that detracts you from paying attention to the class.

**Interpersonal Communication Assessment (IPCA) Paper**  
**SPCM 1500 – Maymester 2009**  
**Dr. Tina M. Harris**

**Objective:** To assess your own interpersonal communication toward a goal of improving your interpersonal communication skills.

**Due date: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 at the beginning of class.** The paper is worth 50 points.

**For this assignment, you are to** write a 2-3 page paper, typed and double-spaced, 12 inch standard font, with one inch margins (no larger or smaller). 2-3 pages is the suggested length; you may exceed this limit. You should be able to accomplish the objective of the paper in 5 pages or less.

1. Your paper will focus, in general, on this question: “How would I describe my interpersonal communication competence?”
2. To respond to the question above, answer the following:
  - Do I have the knowledge, skills, and thoughtfulness required to be a competent interpersonal communicator?
  - Analyze your knowledge of interpersonal communication competence at this point in time as well as what you perceive to be your strengths and weaknesses as a communicator.
3. The following questions are provided to help you get started with this paper. They are meant to be questions that guide your assessment; you need not respond to any or all of the questions. They are posed to help guide your thinking for this paper.
  - Are you motivated to be an effective and appropriate interpersonal communicator? In what situations are you more motivated than others?
  - Are you an adaptable interpersonal communicator? Can you move in and out of interpersonal situations with ease and adapt to a diversity of people with whom you communicate?
  - Are you an ethical communicator? Are you both effective and appropriate in your interpersonal communication behaviors?
  - Think about a time when you assumed something about someone else because he/she was a member of a particular culture or co-culture. What did you assume? Given what you now know about culture and intercultural communication, what will you do in a similar situation in the future?
  - How can you increase your competence at self-disclosure as well as listening to

the disclosures of others?

- In what communication situations are you most apprehensive? Why?
  - In what communication situations are you a poor listener? How will you alter your listening behaviors in these situations to become a better listener?
4. Organize your paper by including an introduction, body and conclusion. The last sentence in your introductory paragraph should be your thesis statement. For tips on writing a thesis statement, consult this Web site:

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/thesis.htm>

Also take a look at the UGA Writing Center Web site:

<http://www.english.uga.edu/writingcenter/>

5. The body of the paper should contain paragraph structure.
6. Paragraphs are at least three sentences long. One sentence does not a paragraph make.
7. The conclusion of your paper should wrap up and review, in general, what was stated in the paper. This paragraph should be at least three sentences long. The last sentence should leave the reader with a memorable thought about your interpersonal communication competence. Be creative. Answer the question that guided this paper (see Item #2 above).
8. Use the information that we have discussed in class as well as your textbook to support what you say in the paper.
9. You do not need to have a title page, nor do you need to put the paper in any kind of folder. In fact, I prefer that you do not. Include in the upper right hand corner of your paper: Your name, SPCM 2550H and the time that your class meets, my name, and the due date of the paper.
10. Include a title at the top center of page one. Be creative!
11. Include page numbers.
12. The last thing that you should do is to read and edit your paper, run spelling and grammar checks, and read and edit the paper again.
13. Your paper will be graded on content, organization, and writing. If you fail to proofread or to run spelling and grammar checks, your paper grade will be reduced by 10%. Likewise if you fail to do as I ask in Item #9 above.
14. **Late papers are not accepted. See the syllabus for a reminder of this policy.**
15. **Your paper must be stapled. I will not accept papers that are not stapled**

**Theory to Application Paper Assignment**  
**SPCM 1500 – Maymester 2009**  
**Dr. Harris**

**Objective:** To apply theories and concepts we have discussed in class to an in-class movie.

**Assignment:**

1. Choose five theories or concepts we have discussed in class.
2. Explain each theory or concept.
3. After you explain each theory or concept, apply the theory or concept by giving an example from the experiences of the characters observed in the movie.
4. Include an introduction to the paper. The introduction should include a clear thesis statement in which you delineate each theory or concept that you will discuss.
5. The body of the paper will include your explanations and applications of the theories and/or concepts.
6. The conclusion of the paper should summarize the paper as well as provide a smooth ending to the paper.
7. Type and double-space the paper. Staple the pages. Run spelling and grammar checks and proofread your paper before turning it in. Spelling, grammar and other such errors will adversely affect your grade.
8. The paper is due at the beginning of class on June 1, 2009
9. The paper will likely be 6-10 pages in length.

### DAILY COURSE SYLLABUS

This is a **tentative** schedule. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. Changes will be announced in class repeatedly. Students are responsible for being aware of changes and making necessary adjustments in the schedule and/or due dates.

Date	Topic	Readings and assignments
May 12	Interpersonal Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the course</li> <li>• Your definition of interpersonal communication</li> <li>• Chapter 1</li> </ul>
May 13	Communication, Perception and the Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 2</li> <li>• Review of IPC Communication Assessment Paper</li> </ul>
May 14	Communication, Culture, and Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 3</li> </ul>
	Communication and Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interracial Communication</li> </ul>
May 15	Communicating Verbally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Exam 1</b> (Chapters 1-3; Interracial Communication)</li> <li>• Chapter 4</li> </ul>
May 18	Communicating Nonverbally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 5</li> <li>• In-class Paper Preparation Time</li> </ul>
May 19	Effective Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 6</li> <li>• Rules Violation Activity</li> </ul>
May 20	Communicating in Close Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 10</li> </ul>
May 21	Communication and Emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 7</li> <li>• <b>Paper 1 Due</b></li> </ul>
May 22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Exam 2</b> (Chapters 4-6, 10)</li> <li>• In-class film (TBA)</li> </ul>
May 25	MEMORIAL DAY (NO CLASS)	
May 26	Dialectics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialectics Theory</li> </ul>

May 27	Consultations with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-class Paper Preparation Time (must remain for entire class period)</li> </ul>
May 28	Sharing Personal Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 8</li> </ul>
May 29	Communicating Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 9</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
June 1	Technology and Interpersonal Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 11</li> <li>• <b>Paper 2 is Due</b></li> </ul>
June 2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semester Wrap-Up</li> <li>• <b>Final Exam</b> (Chapters 7-9, 11; Dialectics Theory)</li> </ul>