

SPCM1500: Interpersonal Communication

Summer 2009 Short 1st Session

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Course Objectives

Interpersonal communication has been described as a “message transaction” between two or more people working toward common understanding. While this type of communication is common and even necessary in our everyday lives, the processes involved in this mutual exchange raise many issues, common principles, and assumptions that this class will work to explore. By the end of the course, you should have a greater understanding of how interpersonal communication works, what affects the success or failure of these “message transactions”, and what role this communication plays in interpersonal relationships.

Textbook

West, R. & Turner, L. H. (2008). *Understanding interpersonal communication: Making choices in changing times*. (2nd Edition) Belmont, CA: Thompson/Wadsworth.

Grading

Participation (100 pts):

Because this is a shortened session, this class will rely heavily on class discussion and participation. Often you will be asked to engage in group work or class activities that require a comprehensive understanding of the readings assigned. It is your responsibility to come to each class prepared to engage with the material from your readings and you will be graded accordingly.

Occasionally I will give a pop quiz on the assigned readings to gauge the class' understanding of the material and to take attendance. There will be no make-up quizzes offered, although you are allowed to drop your lowest grade.

You will also be asked to turn in journals once a week, for a total of (3). These will be purely pass/fail and should include a response/reaction/critique to an interaction you experience outside of the classroom. The best journals will apply concepts from the weeks' readings or class discussion to your own life experiences. The journals should be 1-2 pages, (12) pt. font, double-spaced with (1) inch margins. Each journal is due by the beginning of each Friday class period. Electronic submissions will not be accepted. Feel free to hand in your journals at any time during the week. I will, on occasion, share particularly relevant journals with the class. Although I won't disclose your name, please keep this in mind when choosing material you'd like to write about for your journals.

Attendance:

There are a total of 19 class sessions that you'll be expected to attend. You are given one excused absence, whether you have documentation or not. **This is the only absence you will be allowed to take without penalty against your final grade.** Its suggested that you use this absence for any illnesses, car troubles, etc. that may prevent you from being able to attend. Each additional absence will count (5) points off of your final grade.

Exams (100 pts each):

A total of (3) tests will be given during this course. They will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions and will be non-cumulative. **Attendance for each exam day is mandatory.** Exam dates will not be changed.

Class Policies:

1. Academic Honesty—All work completed in a manner that is consistent with the *Code of Student Conduct* and the publication *A Culture of Honesty*. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be pursued to the fullest extent allowed by University policies and procedures.

2. Respectful Environment—It is imperative for the success of the course to maintain a environment that promotes respect for the well-being of your classmates. Abusive, confrontational, and/or derogatory remarks directed at others will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Should at anytime you feel uncomfortable, for **any** reason, with the classroom discussions or another student, please feel free to contact me to discuss the situation. All such communications will be kept completely confidential.

3. Email Policy—Please do not rely on email to ask me questions about missed classes, clarifications, grading, etc. I generally check my email between 8am-5pm, Monday through Friday. Please keep this in mind if your emails are time sensitive in nature. Feel free, however, to utilize the WebCT discussion board or your classmates for questions about the class. Often times, your questions will be shared by others who would benefit from these questions being raised during class time.

4. Research Requirement—Students enrolled in SPCM 1010, SPCM 1100, and SPCM 1500 have a departmental research participation requirement. The requirement can typically be met in any of three ways: (a) participation in a research project conducted by the Department of Speech Communication, (b) a summary and analysis of a communication research article, or (c) attendance at and an analysis of a Department of Speech Communication research colloquium. Opportunities for options (a) and (c) may be limited during the summer term. Failure to complete the research requirement will result in the receipt of an Incomplete (I) until the requirement is met. You will need to complete a separate project or analysis for each class in which you are enrolled where the requirement is in place.