

Syllabus for COMM 7—Interpersonal Communication

Course Information

Semester & Year: Spring 2022

Course ID & Section #: D3242 (053242)

Instructor's name: Daniel M. Chick (he/him/his)

Course units: 3

Instructor Contact Information

Office location: E Building, Room 4

Office hours: Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday, 1 – 2:30 PM

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Catalog Description

An introductory survey communication course designed to increase interpersonal awareness and effectiveness in person-to-person communication settings. Students will read, discuss, and apply concepts and principles while developing skills dealing with the verbal and nonverbal transactions that occur in relationships.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

1. Apply Communication Studies' theories, principles, and models to interpersonal communication that takes place in various relational, social and/or cultural contexts.
2. Discuss the effect of communication on interpersonal relationships and social and cultural realities.
3. Demonstrate ethical responsibilities in the communication process, such as issues of rhetorical sensitivity, diversity, credibility, and academic integrity.

Your Course Text

Textbook: Jason S. Wrench, Narsissra M. Punyanunt-Carter, and Katherine S. Thweatt, *Interpersonal Communication: A Mindful Approach* (New York, NY: Milne Open Textbooks, 2020).

Additional readings, important content, and/or fun (optional) additions will be provided in your weekly packets.

Teaching Philosophy

My goal for the course is to create a student-centered environment, one which appreciates the nuances of interlocking identities and provides a strong foundation for students to develop into ethical, reasoned citizens who positively influence public discourse through personal and civic engagement. In doing so, I emphasize the need for constructive, reciprocal dialogue that enhances the experiences of everyone in this environment. To accomplish this, I approach each lesson as an opportunity to uncover the nature of students' surroundings and of power structures at play. I demonstrate and, in turn, expect engagement that will allow for students to uncover these influences in themselves. In sum, as a critical rhetorical pedagogue, it is

ultimately my goal to invite students to imagine a better world, vigorously defend it among equals, and then realize it through advocacy.

Course Norms

Good information and clear communication about your needs will help you be successful. This is an environment in which we are all in solidarity with one another. We're going to learn what ethical, informed, and respectful communication looks like and do our best to embody it every day. It is also true that we are human and therefore imperfect. Sometimes we will say something stupid, ignorant, misinformed, or hurtful—even if we don't intend to. Even as the instructor, I also fall in this category.

My promise as the instructor is that I will always treat you with the utmost respect and develop an environment in which you are welcome and in which your identity, history, and culture is respected. At the same time, as a cisgender white man with relative economic security, I acknowledge that I sometimes have areas of ignorance about how the world works. If I fail to live up to the obligation I have laid out here for any reason, please call me out or in to discuss the problem (we'll discuss some strategies on how to do that throughout the semester). I will also routinely request your anonymous feedback throughout the semester to ensure I am living up to this promise.

Similarly, you, the student, will also live up to this standard. Students are expected to remember that they are in the process of becoming more competent and ethical communicators. In doing so, you should abide by the ethical guidelines laid out in the NCA credo for ethical communication found in your unit 1 packet.

Accessibility

College of the Redwoods is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. When needed, you have the right to request reasonable accommodation under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. As [the United States Department of Labor](#) has explained:

- Under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done during the hiring process. These modifications enable an individual with a disability to have an equal opportunity not only to get a job, but successfully perform their job tasks to the same extent as people without disabilities. The ADA requires reasonable accommodations as they relate to three aspects of employment: 1) ensuring equal opportunity in the application process; 2) enabling a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job; and 3) making it possible for an employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.

Accommodations are sometimes referred to as “productivity enhancers”. Reasonable accommodations should not be viewed as “special treatment” and they often benefit all

employees. For example, facility enhancements such as ramps, accessible restrooms, and ergonomic workstations benefit more than just employees with disabilities. Examples of reasonable accommodations include making existing facilities accessible; job restructuring; part-time or modified work schedules; acquiring or modifying equipment; changing tests, training materials, or policies; and providing qualified readers or interpreters. Here are some more examples. Many job accommodations cost very little and often involve minor changes to a work environment, schedule or work-related technologies:

- Physical changes
 - Installing a ramp or modifying a rest room
 - Modifying the layout of a workspace
- Accessible and assistive technologies
 - Ensuring computer software is accessible
 - Providing screen reader software
 - Using videophones to facilitate communications with colleagues who are deaf
- Accessible communications
 - Providing sign language interpreters or closed captioning at meetings and events
 - Making materials available in Braille or large print
- Policy enhancements
 - Modifying a policy to allow a service animal in a business setting
 - Adjusting work schedules so employees with chronic medical conditions can go to medical appointments and complete their work at alternate times or locations

If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability-related services and accommodations, please use your Ask CR form we can coordinate with Disability Services and Programs for Students (DSPS).

Inclusive Language in the Classroom

College of the Redwoods aspires to create a learning environment in which all people feel comfortable in contributing their perspectives to classroom discussions. It therefore encourages instructors and students to use language that is inclusive and respectful.

Disruptive Behavior

Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include, but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee.

Evaluation & Grading Policy

Assignments

Journaling | 100 pts (25 x 4 = 100 overall, 25 pts each)

Journaling should be an introspective view of a week's material. That is, how do you relate to it? How does the material from the current week relate to previous weeks? What stuck out to you the most and the least? What burning questions do you still have? How have you been living up to the concepts and ideals we discussed that week? (For what it's worth, you're not limited to answering these questions. But, I think they're a good start in getting your thought processes going!) You'll have an opportunity every week to turn one in, meaning you'll have 15 opportunities to complete this assignment!

Scenario Analysis Essay | 75 pts (25 x 3 = 75 overall, 25 pts each)

Students will conduct 3 communication scenario analyses that apply skills and behaviors discussed in class or in the text. After each communication experiment, students will write a one-page paper describing the skill, technique, or theory, how they applied it, their experience during its use, and their thoughts about and analysis of the results. A complete description of this assignment will be provided, as well as a grading rubric.

Final Course Reflection Paper | 125 pts (100 pts for final paper, 25 pts for draft)

The purpose of this paper is for students to look back and think deeply about the communication skills they have developed throughout this semester and reflect on the outcomes that result from these new skills. The paper should demonstrate students' competency of the course material and concepts/theories learned throughout the semester. A complete description of this assignment, along with a grading rubric, will be provided.

Exams | 100 pts

There will be two exams for this course. The first will be given after the conclusion of the first unit. The second will be given during the prescribed final exam period. They will assess your understanding of the communication concepts and theories covered throughout this semester. Most notably, they will assess your ability to apply these concepts to hypothetical and real life scenarios. They will be a combination of multiple choice, short essay, and open-response questions. You will ultimately be tasked with *making an argument* for each question. Thus, the exams will be open-book and open-note so you can make a reasoned case **with evidence**.

Point Breakdown

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| Journaling (4) | 100 |
| Scenario Analysis Essays (3) | 75 |
| Final Course Reflection Paper | 100 |
| Final Course Reflection Paper Outline | 25 |
| Exams | 100 |
| Total Points Possible | 400 |

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| A | 375-400 |
| A- | 360-374 |
| B+ | 345-359 |
| B | 330-344 |
| B- | 320-329 |
| C+ | 305-319 |
| C | 280-304 |
| D | 240-279 |
| F | ≤239 |

Cheating, Plagiarism, and Academic Dishonesty

In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee.

What this means for you: Don't plagiarize. According to Oxford University, "Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition."

Oxford University reported that plagiarism can take the form of, but is not limited to:

1. **Verbatim (word for word) quotation without clear acknowledgement**
2. **Cutting and pasting from the Internet without clear acknowledgement**
3. **Paraphrasing without clear acknowledgement**
4. **Collusion**
5. **Inaccurate Citations**
6. **Failure to Acknowledge Assistance**
7. **Use of material written by professional agencies or other persons without clear acknowledgement**
8. **Self-plagiarism (submitting your own work for multiple assignments across courses without prior approval)**

Course Schedules

| Week | Course Concepts | Agenda |
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| Unit 1 | Introducing Interpersonal Communication in a Diverse Society | |
| Week 1 Outgoing (from CR to you): January 18 Incoming (from you to CR): January 21 | Syllabus, Course Introduction This week, we're getting our materials and getting acquainted with the course and your professor. | Our program is sending the first packet on January 18 th . Seeing as how we are only just starting to adjust to our new schedules, we're staying light this week. For now, make sure all your courses and course items are in order. You should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Course Syllabus and Schedule • Read Effective Note Taking Skills • Start Journaling! Think through and write about your questions, concerns, and expectations for the course. Reflect on the social contract you're agreeing to in the syllabus. |
| Week 2 Outgoing: Jan 27 Incoming: Jan 28 | Interpersonal Communication in a Diverse Society, an Overview The ins-and-outs of sharing our experiences with one another in a diverse society with many people like us and unlike us in substantial ways. | Make sure you have all course materials! Keep track of your necessary scholar items as well (pencils, pen fillers, erasers, paper, etc). Also be sure to utilize your burning questions form for any questions or concerns you have with the syllabus and/or course content! Keep an eye out for this week's mail for course updates. I'll be sending more information about your experiment journals (due in week four!). To do this week: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lightly read TB Chapter 1, "Introduction to Human Communication": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read Intro & section 1.5 ○ Skim sections 1.2, 1.3, & 1.4 • Read TB Chapter 2, "Overview of Interpersonal Communication" • <u>Journal opportunity</u>. Mail your chapter notes and journal to the PB Education Department (attn: CR Scholars) by Thursday, January 27th for Week 2's mail pickup that day. • <u>Assign First Scenario Analysis Essay</u> |

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| <p>Week 3</p> <p>Outgoing: Feb 3</p> <p>Incoming: Feb 4</p> | <p>Culture and Environment in Communication</p> <p>Where we come from affects who we become, the behaviors we think are normal, and the communication behaviors we adopt. This week, we'll take a look at how these environmental factors come into play.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 6, "Cultural and Environmental Factors in Interpersonal Communication" • <u>Complete intercultural communication skills inventory & questions, "Improving Intercultural Communication Skills" exercise</u> • <u>Chapter Journal opportunity.</u> • Mail your assignments to the PB Education Department (attn: CR Scholars) by Thursday, February 3rd for Week 3's mail pickup that Friday. |
| <p>Week 4</p> <p>Outgoing: Feb 10</p> <p>Incoming: Feb 11</p> | <p>Power and Oppression in Culture, or, Culture and Environment in Communication Continued</p> <p>Power and oppression seem like pretty heavy terms, but let's be for real: they exist, are omnipresent, and can be observed in the ways we communicate with each other. This week, we'll be establishing a foundational understanding of what these terms mean and how we can observe them in the way we talk with one another.</p> | <p>This week we'll be dealing with some really heavy concepts. Have no fear—you are so ready to tackle them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read about Intersectionality (literature included in Week 1's packet) <p>To do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Journal opportunity</u> • Mail your due items to the PB Education Department (attn: CR Scholars) by Thursday for Week 4's mail pickup that Friday. • <u>First Scenario Analysis Essay Due</u> |
| <p>Week 5</p> <p>Outgoing: Feb 16</p> <p>Incoming: Feb 17</p> | <p>Beginning with the Self</p> <p>This week, we'll be covering important concepts like "intrapersonal" communication. That is, how do you talk to yourself? What does your internal monologue sound like? How does that impact your ability to <i>interpersonally</i> communicate with others?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 3, "Intrapersonal Communication" • Journal opportunity • <u>Assign Second Scenario Analysis</u> |
| <p>Week 6</p> <p>Outgoing: Feb 24</p> | <p>Sharing Meaning Verbally & Nonverbally</p> <p>How we relate to one another using these arbitrary things called symbols (that is, the</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 4, "Verbal Elements of Communication" • Read TB Chapter 5, "Nonverbal Communication" • Journal opportunity |

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| Incoming: Feb 25 | very letters and words used to communicate right now) AND the various gestures and expressions we use. | |
| Week 7 Outgoing: March 3 Incoming: March 4 | Talking and Listening The ins and outs of the art of the conversation. We'll discuss conversation models and develop relevant talking and listening skills. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 7, "Talking and Listening" • Journal opportunity • <u>Second Scenario Analysis Essay Due</u> |
| Week 8 Outgoing: March 10 Incoming: March 11 | Midterm Exam | |

Preview for the Rest of the Semester

(don't worry about this too much right now! Just keep it in your mind as we progress)

| Date/ Week | Course Concepts | Agenda |
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| Unit 2 | Interpersonal Communication in Various Contexts | |
| Week 9 | SPRING BREAK!! | Catch up on various assignments that may have been missed. |
| Week 10 | Building and Maintaining Relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 8, "Building and Maintaining Relationships" • Journal opportunity • <u>Assign Third Scenario Analysis Essay</u> |

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| Week 11 | Conflict and Relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 9, "Conflict in Relationships" • Journal opportunity |
| Week 12 | Friendships, Family, and Marriage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 10, "Friendship Relationships" • Journal Due • <u>Third Scenario Analysis Essay Due</u> |
| Week 13 | Family & Marriage Relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 11, "Family & Marriage Relationships" • Journal opportunity |
| Week 13 | Interpersonal Communication in Mediated Contexts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 12, "Interpersonal Communication in Mediated Contexts" • Journal opportunity • <u>Assign Final Reflection Essay</u> |
| Week 14 | The Intersections of Organizational Communication and Interpersonal Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 13, "Interpersonal Relationships at Work" • Journal opportunity |
| Week 16 | The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TB Chapter 14, "The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication" • Journal opportunity • <u>Final Reflection Paper Due</u> |
| | Final Exam | |