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# COMX 115S.01C: Introduction to Interpersonal Communications

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**COURSE:** COMX 115S Section 1, Interpersonal Communication

**TIME / LOCATION:** Tuesday & Thursday, 5:00 PM – 6:20 PM, MC 232

**SEMESTER CREDITS:** 3

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**INSTRUCTOR NAME:** Jen Geist-Quigley, M.A.

**E-MAIL / PHONE / OFFICE:** [jennifer.geist@umontana.edu](mailto:jennifer.geist@umontana.edu) / (406) 243-4341 / Skaggs 340

Unfortunately, I do not have an office location on site and am unable to hold office hours. I will be available to meet with students before or after class or by appointment only.

### **COURSE RATIONALE:**

Beebe, Beebe and Redmond (2017) write, “human communication is at the core of our existence...most people spend between 80 and 90 percent of their waking hours communicating with others...[and] it is through these interactions with others, both on and offline, that we develop interpersonal relationships” (p. 2). Our communication encounters create our identities. In addition, communication defines our relationships with friends, family, loved ones, and colleagues. Therefore, our understanding of interpersonal communication and the role we play in it will not only contribute to our sense of well-being and success in personal relationships, but to our success in work relationships as well.

Supervisors also recognize the importance of considering the communication skills of prospective employees. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (2013), interpersonal skills and the use of “appropriate verbal, nonverbal and written communication to effectively interact with colleagues and those served” is a requisite core professional competency for job seekers. Interpersonal Communication is particularly useful at the associate’s level as it is a type of communication that can be applied to many occupational fields.

### **COURSE PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this course is for students to become aware of their present communication styles and decide what is effective and what can be improved in order to build healthier relationships on an interpersonal level. Students will learn skills to help them manage conflict both in personal relationships and professional relationships. Communication will be viewed from both a verbal and nonverbal perspective. Communicating more clearly and listening more effectively will be addressed as well as the following topics: creating identities through communication, communication and emotion, interpersonal conflict management, creating healthy communication climates, gender communication, and cultural diversity and communication.

### **STUDENT PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Recognize communication patterns from family of origin.
2. Understand relational meaning of what we say both verbally and nonverbally, and the effect this has on relationships personally, professionally and in an educational capacity.
3. Practice skills in listening reflectively, attentively, and more empathetically.
4. Recognize passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive and assertive behaviors and learn how to deal more effectively with them through conflict management skills.

5. Understand how the quality of communication directly affects the quality of relationships and ultimately the quality of life.
6. Identify practical skills geared towards improving communication in the workplace, in personal relationships, and in the family.
7. Understand the role emotions play in communication.

### **GRADING:**

Assignment instructions and rubrics will be distributed prior to their announced due date.

- Celebrations of Knowledge\* (3): 30% of grade (50 points each/150 total)
- Quizzes (12): 12% of grade (5 points each/60 total)
- In-Class Activities (12): 12% of grade (5 points each/60 total)
- Attendance & Participation: 6% of grade (30 points)
- Interpersonal Relationship Paper: 20% of grade (100 points)
- Cumulative Celebration of Knowledge or Final Exam\*: 20% of grade (100 points)

*\*see Missed Exam Policy for more information*

### **GRADING SCALE:**

You will receive a straight letter grade based on the number of points you earn throughout the semester. I will not be assigning + or – (s).

A: 500-450, B: 449-400, C: 399 – 350, D: 349 - 300, F: 299 and below

### **ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:**

Regular and active participation is an essential, unmistakably important aspect of communication courses. How else can we learn about communication unless we communicate? Contributing to class discussion is a must for this class.

Furthermore, it is my belief that the classroom should be treated like any other professional setting. Just as you are compensated for hard work at your job, hard work and attendance at class will determine a student's level of success in the classroom. If you miss a class, you will miss a learning opportunity. Students with more than two absences may lose their privilege to makeup assignments should an emergency arise.

### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS:**

Deadlines in the business world tend to be hard and fast. However, employers and coworkers tend to be forgiving of a person's absence for an important meeting or engagement **if** that person has proven to be dependable in the past. As such, my policy follows this principle.

1. If you anticipate a need to turn in work late, you must request an extension and discuss this with me at *least 24 hours in advance* of the assignment's due date.
2. Late work will only be accepted within one class period from its original due date. Work turned in more than one class period late will NOT be graded.
3. I will NOT accept multiple late assignments (i.e., I will only accept one late assignment at a time.)
4. Late work will only be accepted if submitted in a hard copy; electronic submissions/work submitted by email will NOT be graded.
5. I do NOT allow extensions or make-ups on any in-class activities, quizzes or Primer Pop Responses. As such, this policy applies to the Interpersonal Relationship Paper only.
6. I reserve the right to amend this policy at any time.

### **MISSED EXAM(S) POLICY:**

Make up tests are NOT allowed under any circumstances. A missed test will result in a grade of zero for that exam. However, in the event that you must miss an exam, the weight of the exam(s) that you miss will be automatically transferred to the final. You are encouraged to attend all evaluations as scheduled. By the end of the semester, all exams will make up 50% of your grade. If you do better on the final than the first exam, or you miss the first exam, then the weight of the first exam is transferred to the final. This same principle applies to all three exams during the regular semester.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT:**

Please conduct yourself in a way that promotes learning for all students in the classroom (i.e. do not use language that might offend others, avoid disclosing too much personal information, turn off cell phones, absolutely no text messaging, and avoid monopolizing class discussion).

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:**

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at [http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student\\_conduct.php](http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php).

### **DISABILITY STUDENT SERVICES:**

Eligible students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course when requested in a **timely** way. Please speak with me after class or in my office. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator. For students planning to request testing accommodations, be sure to bring the DSS testing form to me **in advance of the two-day deadline for scheduling in the Learning Center**.

### **DROP POLICY:**

“Beginning the thirty-first day of the semester through the last day of instruction before scheduled final exams, **documented justification is required for dropping courses by petition**. Some examples of documented circumstances that may merit approval are: registration errors, accident or illness, family emergency, change in work schedule, no assessment of performance in class until after the deadline, or other circumstances beyond the student’s control” (UM Catalog). Failing is not an acceptable reason to drop the course.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS:**

Wood, J. T. (2015). *Interpersonal communication: Everyday encounters* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

We will utilize an online Moodle page to post all quizzes, in-class activities, assignments and additional readings for this course; internet access is required.

All in-class activities must be submitted on the documents available for printing on the course Moodle page. Please print all in-class activities prior to the class session in which it will be used.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

*Course schedule and other policies are subject to change at the instructor's discretion*

Week	Date	Tuesday	Date	Thursday
1	8/28	Course Introductions Part I	8/30	Course Introductions Part II
2	9/4	Introduction to Interpersonal Communication Read Chapter 1, Quiz Ch. 1 online	9/6	Developmental Approach to IPC Additional Reading #1
3	9/11	Communication and Personal Identity Read Chapter 2, Quiz Ch. 2 online	9/13	Facework Additional Reading #2
4	9/18	Perception and Communication Read Chapter 3, Quiz Ch. 3 online	9/20	Emotions and Communication Read Chapter 7, Quiz Ch. 7 online
5	9/25	Interpersonal Influence Additional Reading #3	9/27	Celebration of Knowledge 1
6	10/2	Verbal Communication Read Chapter 4, Quiz Ch. 4 online	10/4	Pragmatics Additional Reading #4
7	10/9	Nonverbal Communication Read Chapter 5, Quiz Ch. 4 online	10/11	Deception Additional Reading #5
8	10/16	Communicating through Listening Read Chapter 6, Quiz Ch. 6 online	10/18	Conflict Communication Read Chapter 9, Quiz Ch. 9 online
9	10/23	Negotiated Forgiveness Additional Reading #6	10/25	Celebration of Knowledge 2
10	10/30	Communication Climates Read Chapter 8, Quiz Chapter 8 online	11/1	Uncertainty Reduction Theory Additional Reading #7
11	11/6	NO CLASS - Election Day, Go Vote!	11/8	NO CLASS – Online Assignment TBD
12	11/13	Communication in Friendships Read Chapter 10, Quiz Ch. 10 online	11/15	Relational Aggression Additional Reading #8
13	11/20	Communication in Romantic Relationships Read Chapter 11, Quiz Ch. 11 online	11/22	NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Day
14	11/27	Relationship Satisfaction & Stability Additional Reading #9	11/29	Communication in Families Read Chapter 12, Quiz Ch. 12 online
15	12/4	Celebration of Knowledge 3	12/6	Final CK Review Relationship Paper Due Extra Credit Opportunity
16	12/11	FINAL Celebration of Knowledge at 5:30 PM		