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### COMX 102.50S: Interpersonal Skills in the Workplace

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# COMX 102 Interpersonal Communication in the Workplace

## Instructor information

Instructor: Allison Sullivan  
Office: Missoula College 427  
Email: allison.sullivan@umontana.edu  
Office hours: On Zoom by appointment

## Course Rationale:

Beebe, Beebe and Redmond (2014) write that “communication is at the core of our existence.... Most people spend between 80 and 90 percent of their waking hours communicating with others” (p.2). Beebe et al. explain that “it is through these interactions with others 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. Furthermore, Beebe et al. (2014) write that communication affects the quality of our physical and emotional health. In fact, supervisors recognize the importance of considering the communication skills of prospective employees. In a 2018 *Job Outlook* report, the National Association of Colleges and Employers lists the ability to communicate effectively with people in and outside the organization a top skill an employer considers when hiring an employee.

## Course description:

This course will introduce students to interpersonal communication theory which can be applied to a workplace environment. Students will learn effective communication strategies to interact with others in a more satisfying way. Learning how to interact in a healthy and productive manner is paramount to success in all aspects of a person's career, as well as in their personal lives.

## Learning Outcomes:

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

1. Understand relational meaning of what we say both verbally and nonverbally, and the effect this has on professional relationships.
2. Practice skills in listening reflectively, attentively, and more empathetically.
3. Recognize passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive and assertive behaviors and learn how to deal more effectively with them through conflict management skills.
4. Understand how the quality of communication directly affects the quality of relationships and ultimately the quality of life.
5. Identify practical skills geared towards improving communication in the workplace.
6. Apply interpersonal communication skills to technological environments.

## Grading:

Quizzes – 50%

Reading/Discussion forum posts – 50%

GRADING SCALE: 100-90 (A), 89-80 (B), 79-70 (C), 69-60 (D), 59 and Below (F)

## Disabilities and Specific Learning Needs:

Please inform me as soon as possible if you have any disabilities or circumstances that may require special consideration. It is your responsibility to inform me, at the onset of this course, of any disability and the ways that you and the DSS have determined are necessary to accommodate your needs. I am happy to work with you in order to achieve your goals for this course. I will expect to receive a letter from DSS documenting your requested accommodations.

## Academic Misconduct:

All students must practice academic honesty. Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Specifically, you are not allowed to give or receive assistance on assignments or tests. All your work must be completed independently, unless it is group assigned. 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/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

**Student Code:**

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, and avoid monopolizing class discussion).

**Course Grades:****QUIZZES- 200 TOTAL POINTS**

There will be four quizzes administered in this course. Each quiz will be posted on Moodle. Quizzes will cover the reading that was required, as well as the material covered during the learning module. Once you open a quiz, you will have two hours to complete it. Be sure to take the quiz at a time that is free from distractions. Each quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice questions (worth 2 points each), 20 true false questions (worth 1 point each) and one short essay question (worth 10 points).

**READING/PARTICIPATION- 300 TOTAL POINTS**

Participation will be assessed out of 75 points a module. Students will engage in a forum post reflecting on their reading and engagement with material throughout the learning module.

**Required textbooks:**

There are two online textbooks we will be utilizing for reading in the course. There will be specific page numbers and/or chapters required to read for each module. You can find the links to these texts under the "Course Introduction" heading in the Moodle shell for this course.

**Course Calendar:**

This is an eight-week **online** course, which begins January 18th and wraps up March 13th. Each module will span two weeks and cover a new topic area and assignments and content must be completed within that module.

**Module 1 (January 18th - 30th)**

Topics: Communication Models, Self-Disclosure, Perception, and Communicating with Technology

**Module 2 (January 31st - February 13th)**

Topics: Words, Assertiveness, and Relationship Levels of Meaning

**Module 3 (February 14th - February 27th)**

Topics: Nonverbals and Listening

**Module 4 (February 28th - March 13th)**

Topics: Conflict Management and Ethics