

**COMS 2386 Interpersonal Communication
(Online Course)
Fall 2017**

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Required Text:

Adler, R. B., Rosenfeld, L. B., & Proctor II, R. F. (2014). *Interplay: The process of interpersonal communication*, (13th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Course Description:

Communication with others is an activity we all do with a fair amount of expertise. However, there are many times when communication creates feelings of dissatisfaction, confusion, misunderstanding, hurt, or other unexpected outcomes. Improving the way we manage such situations often requires that we develop a sixth sense, an “uncommon” sense that allows us to see communication in new ways. That is the aim of the course: to better understand interpersonal communication situations, and thus to improve the ways we manage them. We will examine basic concepts, theories, research findings relevant to initiating, developing, maintaining, and terminating relationships (be it romantic relationship, family relationship, friendship, or co-worker relationship) with an eye of the role communication in the process.

Objectives:

1. Develop an awareness of the role communication plays in everyday life.
2. Understand and recognize how communication process works.
3. Understand the role context plays in communication.
4. Increase both verbal and nonverbal communication skills.
5. Increase communication competence by recognizing communication options.

CLASS POLICIES

1. It is **your** responsibility to read this syllabus carefully and keep all the due dates in mind. **No make-ups** are given for any missed assignments/tests. Please find all the due dates on the last page of this syllabus under “Weekly Schedules.”
2. All interactions of this course will be computer-mediated. I will NOT hold any face-to-face or telephone conversations during the course of the semester. Emails will be replied within 24 hours.
3. All written submissions should be carefully proofread to reflect your high level of care and diligence.
4. All the assignments/tests/discussions will be posted on Blackboard **at least a week before their due dates**. Don’t expect to work ahead. I will not make assignments of Chapter One

available one day before class starts and the other assignments periodically after that.

www.shsu.edu/syllabus

ASSIGNMENTS/EVALUATIONS

Short Answer Questions (SAQs, 40% of grade)

For each of the 12 chapters, you will be given six to eight short-answer questions. You can directly find answers from the textbook. However, try NOT to use the exact words from the textbook. Use your own words to summarize or paraphrase. Questions for each chapter will be put on the **Blackboard** under “**ASSIGNMENTS**” for a whole week period. **This assignment is due by Midnight of each specific due date.** Please see the “Weekly Schedules” for specific due dates of each chapter. There is **NO make-up** for missed assignments.

Although this assignment is called “short” answers, **your responses should be comprehensive and accurate.** You are advised to finish reading the chapter before you answer the SAQs. **Do not copy and paste from the textbook.** You have to **use your own words** to summarize what you have learned from the textbook based on your understanding.

Group Discussions (20% of grade)

There are four group discussion activities of class materials throughout this summer session. The topics of each discussion activity will be posted on the **Blackboard** under “**Group Discussions**”. In general, the discussions focus on analyzing and applying concepts or theories that relate to your personal experience. For each discussion, you will receive a maximum 5% of grade.

You will be evaluated **on clarity of writing and the relevance of your examples.** You are expected to respond thoughtfully to other group members in relation to the course content. **You are expected to post at least twice:** One initial response to the topic, and one later reaction to the group discussion. Please see the “Weekly Schedules” for specific due dates of each discussion. There is **NO make-up** for missed discussions. You will be evaluated based on the following rubric.

Rubrics for Group Discussions

Score	Knowledge	Understanding	Writing skills	Application/ Analysis	Peer Responsiveness
5	Comprehensive, in-depth and wide ranging	Outstanding ability to grasp concepts and Relate theory to practice	Excellent mechanics, sentence structure, and organization	Grasps inner relationship of concepts, Excellent use of a wide range of supporting material	Demonstrates an exceptional ability to analyze and synthesize student work, asks meaningful extending questions

4	Up to date and relevant	High level of ability to conceptualize essential ideas and relate theory to practice	Significant mechanics, structure and organization	Demonstrates the ability to analyze and synthesize, independent analysis, good use of a range of supportive material	Demonstrates good ability to analyze other student work, and ask meaningful extending questions.
3	Relevant but not comprehensive	Some ability to conceptualize essential ideas and relate theory to practice	Some grammatical lapses, uses emotional response in lieu of relevant points	Informed commentary with some evidence of genuine analysis; some supportive materials used	Some ability to meaningfully comment on other student work and ask bridging questions
2	Limited superficial knowledge/response	Limited ability to draw out concepts and relate theory to practice	Poor grammar, weak communication	Some observations, some supportive evidence used	Lack of ability to comment on other students work and ask meaningful questions
1	Little relevance/some accuracy	Minimal awareness that external concepts exist	Lack of clarity, poor presentation of thinking	Lacks evidence of critical analysis, poor use of supportive evidence	Demonstrates poor ability to comment on other student work, asks no meaningful questions

Reaction Papers (10% of grade)

You will be asked to read two research articles in the area of interpersonal communication. Both articles will be posted on our class webpage at **Blackboard**. For each article, you are expected to write a two-to-three-page reaction paper. In the paper, you should include:

- 1) Summarize the purpose(s) of the article.
- 2) Use a few sentences to summarize the research questions or hypotheses the author(s) have proposed.
- 3) What method(s) did the author use? Survey? Experiment? Interviewing?
- 4) What are the major findings of the article?
- 5) Do you have any personal experiences that might be related to what was studied in the article? Were any of the findings from the article surprising to you? If you were a researcher on the same topic, what questions would you ask differently? If other words, are there any questions you want to know, but were not asked in the article?
- 6) Any thoughts, feedback, or comments on the topic discussed in the article.

Please proofread your paper for any typos or grammar errors before you submit it online.

Exams (30% of grade):

Three tests are given during this summer session. Each test will consist of 20-30 multiple-choice questions. You may work from notes and your textbook, but you will be limited to 20-25 minutes. You can take each test **only once**.

GRADE SCALE

[Finals Grades Based on Percentages]

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 or lower	E

Always remember that you **EARN** a grade, and that you are not given a grade

Weekly Schedules

Week	Topics	Due Dates (by Midnight of the Specific Day)
1. Aug 23-25	Syllabus	Carefully read your syllabus, and have your book ready Introduce yourself to your group members
2. Aug 28-Sept 1	Chapter 1	SAQs by Sept 2
3. Sept 4-8	Chapter 2	SAQs by Sept 9
4. Sept 11-15	Chapter 3	SAQs and Group Discussion #1 due by Sept 16
5. Sept 18-22	Chapter 4	SAQs due by Sept 23
6. Sept 25-29		<i>Test 1</i> (Chapters 1-4) and Reaction Paper #1 Due by Sept 30
7. Oct 2-6	Chapter 5	SAQs due by Oct 7
8. Oct 9-13	Chapter 6	SAQs and Group Discussion #2 due by Oct 14
9. Oct 16-20	Chapter 7	SAQs due by Oct 21

10. Oct 23-27	Chapter 8	SAQs due by Oct 28
11. Oct 30-Nov 3		Test 2 (Chapters 5-8) and Reaction Paper #2 Due by Nov 4
12. Nov 6-10	Chapter 9	SAQs and Discussion #3 due by Nov 11
13. Nov 13-21 (1)	Chapter 10	SAQs due by Nov 21
14. Nov 13-21(2)	Chapter 11	SAQs and Group Discussion #4 due by Nov 21
15. Nov 27--Dec 1	Chapter 12	SAQs due by Dec 2
16. Dec 4-7		Test 3 (Chapters 9-12) due by Dec 7