

**Coms 4386.01 (CRN #82331)**  
**FAMILY COMMUNICATION**

**Dr. Terry M. Thibodeaux**

**Fall 2017**  
**3 credit hours**

**Classroom: Dan Rather Com Bldg 326**  
**TuTh 9:30 – 10:50**

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**Office Hours: MW 2:30-3:30; TR 11:00-12:20; others by appt.**

**Course Description: An intensive examination of interpersonal communication at all levels in the context of families.**

**Required Text: Turner, L.H. & West, R. (2018). Perspectives on family communication. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). NY: McGraw Hill.**

**Course Objectives**

**Students will be capable of:**

**Recognizing the various forms that families currently are manifested,  
Evaluating the communication between family members, and  
Explaining the effects of conflict, power, stress, and violence in families.**

**GENERAL COURSE POLICIES**

1.ATTENDANCE. Attendance is essential for class participation and is checked each class period. No distinction is made between excused and unexcused absences. Each class period is worth points toward the participation grade. As per university policy, each student may be absent three class hours without penalty. For every three hours of absences beyond the third hour absent, the course grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

If a student enters class after the instructor finishes taking roll, that student is considered absent. It is the tardy student's responsibility to notify the instructor of his/her attendance before leaving that class period; otherwise, the absence stands. Two tardies = one absence.

2. GRADING SCALE. All grading is done on a total points basis, with a total possible of 1000 points for the class. Final grades will be determined by total number of points earned, using the following 8% scale: A=920+; B=919-840; C=839-760; D=759-680.

3. PARTICIPATION. Twenty percent (20% or possible 100 pts.) of the final grade comes from class participation--participation in class discussions, attendance, group activities, etc.

4. LATE WORK. Credit for any late work is given at the discretion of the instructor. Any tests or assignments accepted late will incur a standard penalty of 10% per day late. The phone number or e-mail address listed above is to be used to explain extenuating circumstances for any missed or late work.

5. BLACKBOARD COURSE WEB PAGE Students are required to use the Blackboard (Bbd) course homepage for this class. Assignments, due dates, handout information, changes in class schedule, etc., will be posted there as needed. It is highly encouraged that you check the Course homepage regularly. This will save you time, work, and stress.

6. STUDENTS USING ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY IN CLASS. Cell phones, pagers, tablets, computers, and any other electronic devices, may be *used only for purposes of the class (in note-taking, etc.)*. Otherwise, they must be turned off upon entering the classroom, since they pose a distraction to the class. Any student **disrupting the class** by use of any electronic devices (or any other means) may be dismissed from the class resulting in an absence for that period. Repeated offenses may result in the student being dropped from the class.

7. The following four sections can be found at <https://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>  
PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY  
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT  
RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS  
VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM

8. CAMPUS CARRY. Please see the following web site for information about this state law that went into effect August 1, 2016: <http://www.shsu.edu/katsafe/campus-carry/>

### **GRADING POLICIES**

1. EXAMS. There will be four exams worth 150 points (15%) each of the course grade, for a total of 600 points possible for all four tests.
2. FAMILY OF ORIGIN ANALYSIS: Using a theory or concept discussed in the text, for example, roles theory, relational dialectics theory, or family systems theory, describe your own family of origin. How does the theoretical framework you are using serve as a useful lens that helps you to understand your family communication in a way you had not considered before? How does your analysis inform your thoughts about what your ideal family of procreation would be like? Format: APA style, 4-6 pages long. Total points = 200 (20% of course grade)
3. PARTICIPATION: Student participation is imperative in this class. The format for this class is more discussion of content than lecture. Periodic participation grades will be given assessing participation to that point in the semester. Total points = 200 (20% of course grade).
4. The total possible for the semester is 1000 points. So, remember the 8% grading policy listed above.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Aug 24	Introduction to the Course & Discussion of Family of Origin projects
Aug 29/31	Def. & Models; Begin Chapter 1: Definitions <b>Sept 4 Labor Day Holiday</b>
Sep 5/7	Ch 1: Intro: Family Trends, Perspectives, Types
Sep 12/14	Ch 2: Theoretical Frameworks
Sep 19/21	<b>Exam 1 (Def's &amp; Models; Ch's 1, 2)</b> Begin Ch 3: Family Roles/Rules
Sep 26/28	Ch 3: Examining Structure: Rules, Roles and Family Communication
<i><b>Family of Origin Paper due Oct 2</b></i>	
Oct 3/5	Ch 4: Societal Context: TV, Women's & Men's Movements, Gov't Effect on Family
Oct 10/12	Ch 5: Communicating Intimacy in the Family
<i><b>Festivals Acadiens et Creole, Lafayette, Oct. 13-15</b></i>	
Oct 17/19	<b>Exam 2 (Chapters 3-5);</b> Ch 6: Telling Stories; Making Meaning
Oct 24/26	Ch 7: Expressing Conflict Power & Violence
Oct 31/Nov 2	<b>Exam 3 (Chapters 6-7);</b> Ch 8: Communicating Under Stress
Nov 7/9	Ch 9: Managing Challenging Dialogues: Religion, Spirituality, Sexuality
Nov 14/16	Finish Ch 9
Nov 21	Ch 10: Family Communication: Providing Nurturing and Control in a Changing World <b>Nov 22 – 24 Thanksgiving Holidays</b>
Nov 28/30	Finish Ch 10
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>(Ch 8-10) Thursday, December 7, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.</b>