

SPC2300: Introduction to Interpersonal Communication

Spring 2024 (Gen-Ed S)

I. General Information

Class Meetings

- Tuesday, Per. 5-6 (11:45am-1:40pm)
- Thursday, Per. 6 (12:50-1:40pm)
- Location: Rolfs Hall 211

Instructor

- Dr. Lisa Joniak Athearn (Dr. A)
- 412 Rolfs Hall
- Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30-4:00pm & Wednesday 12:00-1:30pm (& by appointment)
- joniakathearn@ufl.edu (direct email is the fastest way to reach me)

Course Description

Whether making small talk with a classmate, discussing Gator sports with your friends, communicating with family, or asking someone out on a date, you engage in interpersonal communication on a daily basis. Your ability to communicate with different people in different contexts, be it within the same culture, cross- culturally, or inter-culturally, will increase your ability to achieve goals (e.g., getting a raise at work or securing a donation for a program). In this course, you will learn what interpersonal communication is, how to analyze its different aspects, and how to improve your own interpersonal communication skills. We will cover such topics as communication and self-concept, perception, language, culture, nonverbal communication, conflict management, and listening.

General Education Credit, Objectives & Student Learning Outcomes

This course is a **Social and Behavioral Sciences (S)** subject area course in the UF General Education Program. Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or

quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions. These general education objectives will be accomplished through:

1. Acquiring and applying knowledge that demonstrates effective intrapersonal (self) and interpersonal (relational pair or small group) communication in various contexts.
2. Demonstrating sensitivity to gender and intercultural differences in communication.
3. Analyzing how people use verbal and nonverbal cues to achieve their own interpersonal goals.

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication, and critical thinking:

Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline. Students will acquire a basic knowledge of theories of interpersonal communication across various contexts and social groups.

Achievement of this learning outcome will be assessed through three exams covering each of the chapters in the textbook, an intercultural communication paper, and a group project that illustrates depth in one of the topic areas we cover during the semester.

Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in small-group discussions and class exercises during the semester, along with analysis of various interpersonal scenarios. At the end of the semester, students will present their in-depth analysis of one topic area we have covered in class as part of an interactive group presentation. Achievement of this learning outcome will be assessed through student discussions during class time, as well as during group presentations on a specific topic at the end of the semester. Participation grades will reflect how well a student communicates during these tasks.

Critical Thinking: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems. Students will prepare and complete several in-class and homework assignments, where they apply the terminology and techniques learned in class to new communicative situations. For example, students will analyze how the concept of “listening” is transformed by social media. Achievement of this learning outcome will be assessed by a graded homework assignment asking students to demonstrate evidence on how the components of listening are or are not achieved in social media contexts. Furthermore, assessment of awareness of non-verbal communication skills will be assessed by an activity where students create and reflect on breaching non-verbal communication norms around campus.

Required Textbook:

Adler, R., Rosenfeld, L., Towne, N. and Proctor, R. (2020). Interplay: The Process of Interpersonal Communication. New York: Oxford University Press (15th Edition).

Students are responsible for all assigned readings as well as any supplemental materials provided by the instructor.

II. Graded Work

Description of Graded Work

Various Assignments (150 points total): Throughout the semester you will turn in several assignments. There are descriptions and rubrics for each assignment posted in our course Canvas site.

1. **Mediated Listening Homework** (50 points):
2. **Nonverbal Communication Homework** (50 points)
3. **What's in a Name Homework** (20 points)
4. **Intercultural Paper** (50 points)

Group Project (100 points):

Exams (3 x 100 points = 300 total points): There will be three exams throughout the semester. Exam #1 will be on 2/1, Exam #2 will be on 3/7, and Exam #3 will be on 4/23. Exams will be in-class, paper/pencil and approximately 50 questions each. No aids of any kind will be allowed for the exams. Once you begin the exam you may not leave the classroom until you turn in your exam (no bathroom breaks once you've started the exam). Questions will be multiple-choice, true/false and some short essays. Each exam will test your understanding of the material covered. Questions can come from any of the course materials (readings, videos, lecture slides) and classroom activities and discussions. If you require accommodations for testing, please send documentation from the DRC at least two weeks prior to the first exam.

Participation & Attendance (100 points): This class emphasizes the ability to integrate class materials into class discussion and assignments. It is imperative that you stay up to date on the assigned readings and ask questions in class discussions. Being present in body is not considered a substitute for being here in mind. Consistent and competent participation in class is essential to maintaining an acceptable grade in this course. Three truanancies (being more than five minutes late or leaving more than five before the end of class) will count as one absence. Please see additional information regarding attendance and participation in the course policy section of this syllabus.

Evaluation of Grades:

| Assignment | Total Points |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Assignments | 150 |
| Group Project | 100 |
| Exams (3 x 100) | 300 |
| Attendance & Participation | 100 |
| Total Points | 650 |

LETTER GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

A/- = Excellent. In addition to excellent quality and performance, work that earns an "A" exceeds minimum requirements and expectations.

B+/- = Very good! A grade of “B” indicates successful completion of all assignment requirements with little room for improvement. Please note that all minimum requirements must be satisfactorily completed to earn a grade of “B” or better. Writing skills and overall performance are above average.

C+/- = Good! It indicates work in good standing. All minimum requirements are met, although some might need improvement. Writing skills are average to excellent.

D+/- = Passing, but below average. The assignment’s minimum requirements are not met and/or quality of work is less than average.

E = Not passing. Minimum requirements are not met and quality of work is poor, or work displays plagiarism

UF grading policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

General Education Grading Policy: A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

| | | | | |
|----|-----------|--|----|----------|
| A | 94 – 100% | | C | 74 – 76% |
| A- | 90 – 93% | | C- | 70 – 73% |
| B+ | 87 – 89% | | D+ | 67 – 69% |
| B | 84 – 86% | | D | 64 – 66% |
| B- | 80 – 83% | | D- | 60 – 63% |
| C+ | 77 – 79% | | E | <60 |

III. Course Policies & Assignment Guidelines

Attendance & Participation: Your attendance and participation in class is significant to your success in the class. Attendance will be taken daily. Students are responsible for signing the attendance sheet. If you come to class unprepared, you may be asked to leave and counted as absent for that class period. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Note: In the rare case of class being canceled, you will likely be given an assignment to do instead. In order to receive credit for your attendance/participation grade for that day, you must submit that assignment by midnight on Canvas on the day it is due. Always check your email and Canvas before class for updates.

Absences: A student is allowed to miss **three hours** of class material without incurring a penalty. There are no ‘excused’ and ‘unexcused’ days. You can use your 3 hours for any reason, but after

that, penalties start to accrue. Tuesday classes meet for two hours, so if you miss a Tuesday class, you missed two hours. If all of your absences are due to **documented** emergencies and exceed two, you should communicate with me in a timely manner.

For each hour missed beyond the 3 allowed hours, a total of 20 points will be deducted (i.e. 4 hours absent= - 20pts; 5 hours absent= -40pts). If the penalty exceeds the 100 participation points, the 20 points per absence will then come off the total grade out of 600 in the class.

If a student misses more than 6 'unexcused' hours during a semester, they will fail the entire course. The Dial Center exempts from this policy only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor prior to the date that will be missed.

Tardiness: If students are not present at the start of class, this disrupts the entire class, and students will be considered late. If a student leaves class early, this will also be considered as tardy. Three instances of tardiness count as one absence. If a student is only in attendance for under 40 of the 50 minutes of class, the student will be counted as absent and not just tardy.

Grading Policies: You are permitted to submit 1 late assignment during the semester without penalty (to be turned in no later than 24 hours after the due date in order to receive credit). Except for this one-time allowance, no assignments or make-up exams will not be accepted (*even for partial credit*) without a University-approved absence. Any assignment that does not include your full name will receive an automatic 2-point penalty. There are no re-do assignments allowed once it has been graded. Please bring any grading concerns you have to me within one week of the assignment being graded.

Student Conduct: The Dial Center for Written and Oral Communication strives for a classroom climate that is comfortable for all. Students are expected to behave according to the UF student code of conduct in their classes. This means treating their instructors and fellow classmates with respect. To ensure a positive learning environment, students should not: make complaints publicly (in front of other students); attack the instructor verbally, physically, or in written form; or express reactions in the classroom that would bring harm to other students. Failure to meet the UF code of conduct can impact a student's class participation grade or result in referral to the UF judicial office. Class atmosphere can be made or broken by the approach that students take to the challenges of the course. Students that support others, show good humor in the face of obstacles, show dedication in the face of setbacks, and show grace when others are not doing as well will help to create a positive communication climate.

In a communication class, it is especially important for each of us to:

- Display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and

students;

- Pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities;
- Avoid racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom;
- Avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, reading the newspaper, surfing the internet, doing work for other classes, making/receiving cell phone calls, text messaging, etc.).

Class Recordings: Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Accommodations: Please inform me if I can do anything to make sure physical circumstances don't get in the way of your work. UF's official statement on ADA issues includes: " Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester." I'd appreciate your paperwork the first week of class. Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help>

U Matter, We Care: Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Honor Code: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’ Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult the instructor for this class.” For more information, refer to UF’s Student Conduct & Honor Code, <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code/>

Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Communication Studies Minor: The Dial Center offers a minor in Communication Studies (CMS). Our CMS minor is consistently one of the largest minors within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Employers increasingly want to see oral communication skills, and students find the minor pairs well with any major or even fulfills their requirement for an outside concentration. The total minor is just 18 credit hours. Your Interpersonal Communication course counts as one of the core courses for the minor. You can find more information at https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/colleges-schools/UGLAS/CMS_UMN/.

Additional Guidance: Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

IV. Annotated Weekly Schedule

Weekly Schedule

Subject to change as noted in class or on Canvas. You are responsible for keeping up with all announcements and updates on Canvas.*Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due on Canvas before midnight.

| Week # & Dates | Topics Covered | Assignments (in Bold) & In-Class Tasks |
|--|--|---|
| Week 1 Tuesday (1/9) Thursday (1/11) | Introduction to Course & Syllabus 1.1 Why Study Communication? 1.2 The Nature of Interpersonal Communication | Buy Textbook, Read Ch. 1 Take Syllabus Quiz 1.1 Small Talk 1.2 What is Interpersonal Communication |
| Week 2 Tuesday (1/16) Thursday (1/18) | 8.1 The Nature & Challenge of Listening 8.2 Components of Listening 8.3 Types of Listening Responses | Read Ch. 8 8.1 Factual Listening 8.2 Listening Challenge Listening HW Due (1/19) |
| Week 3 Tuesday (1/23) Thursday (1/25) | 2.1 Mediate Communication: Pros & Cons 2.2 Mediated vs. Masspersonal Communication 4.1 Self-Concept 4.2 Presenting the Self | Read Ch. 2 Read Ch. 4 4.2 Accentuate the Positive Optional Extra credit (Exam 1) Questions Due (1/26) |
| Week 4 Tuesday (1/30) Thursday (2/1) | 4.3 Disclosing the Self Review for Exam 1 Exam 1 (Ch. 1, 2, 4, 8 & all in class material/activities) | Review for Exam 1 Take Exam 1 in class (paper & pencil) |
| Week 5 Tuesday (2/6) Thursday (2/8) | 5.1 The Perception Process 5.2 Influences & Cultural Tendencies on Perception 5.3 Synchronizing Our Perceptions | Read Ch. 5 5.1 What do you notice? 5.2 He's not snarling |

| Week # & Dates | Topics Covered | Assignments & Tasks Due |
|---|--|---|
| Week 6 Tuesday (2/13) Thursday (2/15) | 10.1 Why we form relationships 10.2 Relationship Models 10.3 Communicating about relationships | Read Ch. 10 |
| Week 7 Tuesday (2/20) Thursday (2/22) | 6.1 The nature of language 6.2 Naming, identity & power 6.3 Precision, vagueness & responsibility 6.4 Gender, language & social media | Read Ch. 6 Group Project Discussion & Sign Up |
| Week 8 Tuesday (2/27) Thursday (2/29) | 7.1 What is Nonverbal Communication? 7.2 Functions of Nonverbal Communication 7.3 Types of Nonverbal Communication | Read Ch. 7 7.1 Space Invaders What's In A Name HW Due (2/30) Optional Extra Credit (Exam 2) Questions Due (3/1) |
| Week 9 Tuesday (3/5) Thursday (3/7) | Group Project Work & Review for Exam 2 Exam 2 (Ch. 5-7 & 10) | Group Project Topic Selection Review for Exam 2 Take Exam 2 in class (paper & pencil) |
| Week 10 | Spring Break-No Class | |
| Week 11 Tuesday (3/19) Thursday (3/21) | 3.1 Culture & Communication 3.2 Cultural values, norms & Co-culture Communication 3.3 Codes & Culture | Read Ch. 3 |
| Week 12 Tuesday (3/26) Thursday (3/28) | 11.1 Communication in friendship 11.2 Communication in families 11.3 Communication in romantic relationships | Read Ch. 11 11.2 Boundaries Nonverbal HW Due (3/29) |

| Week # & Dates | Topics Covered | Assignments & Tasks Due |
|---|--|---|
| Week 13 Tuesday (4/2) Thursday (4/4) | 12.1 Conflict styles 12.2 Conflict in relational system 12.3 The Four Horsemen & Style variables Group Project Work | Read Ch. 12 Complete 12.1 Conflict Style Survey 12.1 Perceptions of conflict Group Concept Sheet Draft Due (in class) |
| Week 14 Tuesday (4/9) Thursday (4/11) | 13.1 Communication Climate Group Project Work Day | Read Ch. 13 IC Paper Due (4/12) |
| Week 15 Tuesday (4/16) Thursday (4/18) | Group Project Work Day Final Group Project Work Day & Review for Exam 3 | Review for Exam 3 Optional Extra Credit (Exam 3) Questions Due (4/19) |
| Week 16 Tuesday (4/23) | Exam 3 (Ch. 3, 11-13) | Take Exam 3 in class (paper & pencil) |

There is no exam during Final Exam week. Your last exam is Exam #3.