
SPRING 2015 COURSE SYLLABUS

COMS 141, SECTION 001 INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

3 credit hours
MWF 1:00-1:50 pm
Reynolds 114

"Without communication there is no relationship; without respect there is no love; without trust there's no reason to continue." – Poet Nishan Panwar

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor	Dr. Tiffany Wang
Office	Reynolds 207
Office Hours	MW 2:00-3:15 pm, WF 12:00-12:45 pm, TR 10:45 am-1:45 pm, and by appointment
Phone	205-665-6623
E-Mail	twang@montevallo.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Study and practice of effective dyadic communication in family, social, and work environments. Explores such topics as the development of the self-concept, perception, language, nonverbal communication, and conflict management.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will explore such topics as the development of the self-concept, perception, language, nonverbal communication, and conflict management. Students will participate in various graded and ungraded communication exercises designed to increase students' communication competency in family, social, and work environments.

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Define and describe the interpersonal communication process.
2. Explain three prevailing models of human communication.
3. Compare and contrast five ethical systems of communication.
4. Explain the communication "core" of competency and civility.
5. Identify the components in the perception process.
6. Discuss the dimensions of self-concept.
7. Demonstrate skill and sensitivity in using verbal and nonverbal communication.
8. Employ skills for communicating during conflict that afford increased satisfaction in interpersonal interactions.
9. Demonstrate a variety of skills and techniques to enhance and maintain your communication in close relationships.
10. Use skills that help improve communication in families, close friendships, and romantic relationships.

REQUIRED TEXT

West, R., & Turner, L. H. (2016). *IPC*. (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

ADA STATEMENT

The University of Montevallo provides equal opportunity to qualified students. If you have a disability (medical, physical, learning, psychological, etc.) and wish to request disability-related accommodations to complete course requirements, contact Disability Support Services (located in Main Central [Lower Level], rear entrance; 665-6250). Course requirements cannot be waived, but reasonable accommodations may be provided based on disability documentation and course objectives. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

It is the policy of the University of Montevallo to penalize instances of plagiarism and academic dishonesty, defined as any of the following: using the exact words of another person's work/writing without acknowledgment of your source through the use of quotation marks and correct citation/documentation; rephrasing a passage by another writer without giving proper credit; using someone else's facts or ideas without acknowledgment; using a piece of writing for one course that was already used in a previous course (or in courses in which you are simultaneously enrolled) without express permission from both instructors to do so; and presenting fabricated or falsified citations or materials. Please consult with your instructor if you are unsure about how to document sources. At the very least, an assignment on which plagiarism or cheating has occurred will receive no credit, i.e., a "zero," and an Academic Dishonesty Incident Form will be kept on file in the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Students who plagiarize are also subject to failure in the course and/or appearance before the Justice Council.

STUDENT E-MAIL STATEMENT

ForUM e-mail is an official means of communication among students, faculty, and administrators at the University of Montevallo and may be THE official means of communication between you and your instructors. You may receive very important forUM e-mail messages from offices on campus for which some timely response will be required. The official email system for students is identified by userID@forum.montevallo.edu and can be accessed via the forUM link on the University home page, www.montevallo.edu. Please remember that: You are responsible for monitoring and managing your account regularly, even during breaks. You are responsible for all announcements, requests, and/or sensitive information delivered to your forUM e-mail account, including information related to this course. You may electronically forward your forUM e-mail to another e-mail address (e.g., @aol.com, @hotmail.com), but at your own risk. The University is not responsible for the handling of forwarded e-mail. Having e-mail forwarded does not absolve you from the responsibilities associated with communication sent to your official forUM e-mail address. If you have any questions regarding or problems with your forUM e-mail account, you should contact Technology Services (205-665-6520 or toll free at 866-520-2401). The Help Desk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: Regular attendance will help you succeed in this class. Each time you attend class, you have the opportunity to provide valuable insights and contributions to class discussion. **I will pass around a sign-in sheet at the beginning of class to record attendance.** Please make sure that you have signed the sign-in sheet. **Three** unexcused absences will result in the loss of five points from the participation grade and **four or more** unexcused absences will result in a loss of five additional points per absence. Absences related to illness, emergencies, and required UM business may be excused if you provide me with appropriate documentation via email **on the day of return to class.** If possible, please notify me of any excused absences in advance.

Assignment Due Dates: All assignments and exams must be completed by the date and time assigned. Any assignment turned in after this time is **late**. Points will be deducted for late work as follows: 25% will be deducted from your grade per 24 hours late. After four days, the assignment is worth zero points. Please plan ahead and allow yourself adequate time to complete your work, so that you can give yourself the best chance of succeeding in this class. If you do not come to class on an exam day, you will receive a **zero** for that exam unless an alternate due date has been **previously** approved.

24/7 Rule: In the event that you receive a grade that you would like to discuss, please wait 24 hours to raise your concerns. This time is provided for you to review all comments that I made and develop your thinking before we talk. After 24 hours but within seven days of receiving your grade, please make an appointment with me or visit my office hours to discuss your concerns and ways to help improve your work on future assignments. An appeal for any grade assigned in the course must be submitted in writing no later than seven days after receiving your grade. After seven days, all grades are final.

Classroom Civility: This course provides you with the opportunity to be part of a community. The success of COMS 141 depends on the supportiveness, openness, and positivity of the classroom environment. I encourage an open environment where everyone can feel comfortable respectfully expressing ideas, experiences, questions, and concerns. As a member of this community, it is your responsibility to treat your fellow classmates and me with respect. Since they detract from our classroom environment, all cell phones must be placed on silent during class time.

GRADING

You will be tested on your knowledge of the information in the textbook, as well as information discussed in class. You will be given three examinations consisting of questions based on the textbook and class notes. You will also be required to complete several assignments.

A	675-750	B	600-674	C	525-599	D	450-524	F	0-449
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Assignment	Your Points	Possible Points
Exams (3 X 100)		300
Film Analysis Paper/Presentation		200
Film Analysis Reflection/Individual Score		50
Core IPC Competencies Paper/Presentation		200
TOTAL		750

MODIFICATIONS TO SYLLABUS

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus and schedule at any time during the semester. Adequate notice of changes will be given to all students.

FINAL NOTES ON POLICY

I expect that students will attend class, turn in assignments on time, and relate to other class participants in an ethical manner. I expect students to accept responsibility for their own actions. In turn, I promise to conduct the class fairly and honestly. Students with concerns about any aspect of the course are encouraged to speak with me.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS			
Day	Date	In Class (Complete Reading Prior to Class)	What's Due
Wed	Jan 7	Introduction to COMS 141	
Fri	Jan 9	Chapter 1	
Mon	Jan 12	Chapter 1	
Wed	Jan 14	Chapter 2	
Fri	Jan 16	Chapter 2	
Mon	Jan 19	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No Class	
Wed	Jan 21	Chapter 3	
Fri	Jan 23	Chapter 3	
Mon	Jan 26	Exam 1 Review	
Wed	Jan 28	Exam 1 (Chapters 1-3)	
Fri	Jan 30	Chapter 4	
Mon	Feb 2	Chapter 4	
Wed	Feb 4	Chapter 5	
Fri	Feb 6	Chapter 5	
Mon	Feb 9	Chapter 6	
Wed	Feb 11	Chapter 6	
Fri	Feb 13	College Night – No Class	
Mon	Feb 16	Film Analysis Workshop Day	
Wed	Feb 18	Film Analysis Presentations	Film Analysis Paper
Fri	Feb 20	Film Analysis Presentations	
Mon	Feb 23	Film Analysis Presentations	
Wed	Feb 25	Film Analysis Presentations	
Fri	Feb 27	Film Analysis Presentations	
Mon	Mar 2	Chapter 7	Film Analysis Reflection
Wed	Mar 4	Chapter 7	
Fri	Mar 6	Exam 2 Review	
Mon	Mar 9	Exam 2 (Chapters 4-7)	
Wed	Mar 11	Chapter 8	
Fri	Mar 13	Chapter 8	
Mon	Mar 16	Core IPC Competencies Presentations	Core IPC Competencies Paper
Wed	Mar 18	Core IPC Competencies Presentations	
Thu	Mar 19	Course Withdrawal Deadline	
Fri	Mar 20	Core IPC Competencies Presentations	
Mon	Mar 23	Core IPC Competencies Presentations	
Wed	Mar 25	Core IPC Competencies Presentations	
Fri	Mar 27	Core IPC Competencies Presentations	
Mon	Mar 30	Spring Break – No Class	
Wed	Apr 1	Spring Break – No Class	
Fri	Apr 3	Spring Break – No Class	
Mon	Apr 6	Chapter 9	
Wed	Apr 8	Chapter 9	
Fri	Apr 10	Chapter 10	
Mon	Apr 13	Chapter 10	
Wed	Apr 15	CSCA Convention – No Class	
Fri	Apr 17	CSCA Convention – No Class	
Mon	Apr 20	Chapter 11	
Wed	Apr 22	Chapter 11	
Fri	Apr 24	Exam 3 Review	Extra Credit
Tue	Apr 28	Exam 3 (Chapters 8-11) 10:30 am-12:30 pm	

FILM ANALYSIS PROJECT

Paper Due: February 18th

Presentation Dates: February 18th, 20th, 23rd, 25th, and 27th

Reflection Due: March 2nd

Assignment:

Select a film from the list attached. Only one group can select each film. Once I have approved your film choice, it will be announced to the other groups. After your film choice has been selected and approved, view the film together as a group and take careful notes. The purpose of this project is to use this film to illustrate five concepts and processes discussed in class and in the textbook. The group will decide which five concepts and processes to emphasize in the paper and present to the class.

Paper (100 points): Group Grade

Length of Paper:

You should write a 6 page (minimum/maximum) analysis (half page introduction, one page analysis per main point, and half page conclusion).

Paper Structure:

1. Introduction: Be sure to include an attention grabber, thesis statement, preview statement, and transition into your first main point.
2. Body: Be sure to include five main points that tie specific examples from the film to five concepts and processes discussed in class and in the textbook, transitions between each point, and a transition to the conclusion.
3. Conclusion: Be sure to include a signpost, summary of main points, restatement of thesis/main ideas, and concluding remarks that leave us with a memorable ending.

Be sure to fully describe the concepts and processes in the paper and be as specific as possible in your paper when you offer examples from the film to represent these concepts and processes. Assume that you are writing this paper for someone who is not familiar with the film or the concepts and processes, but do not do a detailed plot summary or tell me whether you thought the film was good or not.

References:

You should use the film and your textbook as sources for this paper. Both sources should be cited in text and cited in an APA style References page at the end of your paper.

To cite the film, use the following format in the references page:

Producer, P. P. (Producer), & Director, D. D. (Director). (Date of publication). *Title of motion picture* [Motion picture]. Country of origin: Studio or distributor.

When you're done formatting it, your citation should look something like this:

Godfrey, W., Bowen, M. (Producers), & Boone, J. (Director). (2014). *The fault in our stars* [Motion picture]. United States: 20th Century Fox.

Your film in text citation should look something like this:

(Godfrey, Bowen, & Boone, 2014)

To cite the textbook, use the following citation in the references page:

West, R., & Turner, L. H. (2016). *IPC*. (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Your textbook in text citation should look like this:

(West & Turner, 2016) for paraphrased material/(West & Turner, 2016, p. 1) for quoted material

Presentation (100 points): Group Grade

Length of Presentation:

Your presentation should range from 18-20 minutes.

Presentation Format:

The presentation format is flexible. How you divide the time among group members is up to you. All group members, however, must present some aspect of the group project, and time allotment should be relatively evenly divided among group members. Make sure you highlight each of the five key concepts and processes you discussed in your paper. NOTE: You don't need a film excerpt for every concept or process discussed. Remember: this is a speech presentation. Merely showing film clips does not qualify. There must be considerable analysis of the film tied directly to course material. As a rule of thumb, film clips should be short and take no more than one-third of the group's total time allotment (20 minutes).

FILMS FOR ANALYSIS

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|---|---|
| 1. <i>A River Runs Through It</i> | 27. <i>Nell</i> |
| 2. <i>Almost Famous</i> | 28. <i>P.S. I Love You</i> |
| 3. <i>Avatar</i> | 29. <i>Precious</i> |
| 4. <i>Babette's Feast</i> | 30. <i>Reality Bites</i> |
| 5. <i>Bend It Like Beckham</i> | 31. <i>Rebel Without a Cause</i> |
| 6. <i>Billy Elliot</i> | 32. <i>Remember the Titans</i> |
| 7. <i>Calendar Girls</i> | 33. <i>Shall We Dance</i> |
| 8. <i>Casablanca</i> | 34. <i>Shrek</i> |
| 9. <i>Children of a Lesser God</i> | 35. <i>Stranger than Fiction</i> |
| 10. <i>Cider House Rules</i> | 36. <i>The Band's Visit</i> |
| 11. <i>Devil in a Blue Dress</i> | 37. <i>The Big Chill</i> |
| 12. <i>Drumline</i> | 38. <i>The Fighter</i> |
| 13. <i>Eat Drink Man Woman</i> | 39. <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> |
| 14. <i>Fiddler on the Roof</i> | 40. <i>The Little Mermaid</i> |
| 15. <i>Good Will Hunting</i> | 41. <i>The Mirror has Two Faces</i> |
| 16. <i>Gosford Park</i> | 42. <i>The Remains of the Day</i> |
| 17. <i>Gran Torino</i> | 43. <i>The Visitor</i> |
| 18. <i>Guess Who's Coming to Dinner</i> | 44. <i>Upstairs/Downstairs</i> |
| 19. <i>Her</i> | 45. <i>West Side Story</i> |
| 20. <i>Hoop Dreams</i> | 46. <i>When a Man Loves a Woman</i> |
| 21. <i>Knocked Up</i> | 47. <i>When Harry Met Sally</i> |
| 22. <i>Life is Beautiful</i> | 48. <i>White Man's Burden</i> |
| 23. <i>Little Miss Sunshine</i> | 49. <i>Wreck-It Ralph</i> |
| 24. <i>Lost in Translation</i> | 50. <i>You've Got Mail</i> |
| 25. <i>Mean Girls</i> | 51. Suggest a movie with an IPC emphasis not
on this list, subject to instructor approval. |
| 26. <i>My Big Fat Greek Wedding</i> | |

Reflection (25 points): Individual Grade

Write a short reflection paper (2 pages or less) and develop answers to the following two points:

1. Contributions: Describe the contributions each group member (including you) made to the group.
2. Grades/Rationale for Grades: Identify the grade you believe each group member (including you) deserves out of a possible 25 points and provide a clear rationale for why you believe each group member (including you) deserves that grade.

Individual Grade (25 points): Individual Grade

You will receive a grade out of 25 points that is based on the average of the grades your group members gave you as well as the grade you gave yourself.

CORE IPC COMPETENCIES PROJECT

Paper Due: March 16th

Presentation Dates: March 16th, 18th, 20th, 23rd, 25th, and 27th

Assignment:

The purpose of this project is to highlight the core interpersonal communication (IPC) competencies you will need to engage in effective dyadic communication in your family, social, work, and school environments. You will decide which IPC competencies you will emphasize in the paper and present to the class.

Paper (100 points)

Length of Paper:

You should write a 7 page (minimum/maximum) analysis (half page introduction, 1.5 page analysis per main point, and half page conclusion).

Paper Structure:

1. Introduction: Be sure to include an attention grabber, thesis statement, preview statement, and transition into your first main point.
2. Body: Be sure to include three IPC competencies discussed in class and in the textbook for each of the four environments, transitions between each environment, and a transition to the conclusion.
 - IPC competencies in the family environment (parent, sibling, and extended family relationships)
 - IPC competencies in the social environment (roommate, friendship, and romantic relationships)
 - IPC competencies in the work environment (supervisor, co-worker, and subordinate relationships at your current/dream internship/job)
 - IPC competencies in the school environment (faculty, advisor, staff, and peer relationships)
3. Conclusion: Be sure to include a signpost, summary of main points, restatement of thesis/main ideas, and concluding remarks that leave us with a memorable ending.

Be sure to fully describe the IPC competencies in the paper and be as specific as possible in your paper when you offer examples from your own life to illustrate why these IPC competencies are important for you to be a successful communicator. Assume that you are writing this paper for someone who is not familiar with these IPC competencies.

References:

You should use the textbook as the source for this paper. It should be cited in text and cited in an APA style References page at the end of your paper.

To cite the textbook, use the following citation in the references page:

West, R., & Turner, L. H. (2016). *IPC*. (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Your textbook in text citation should look like this:

(West & Turner, 2016) for paraphrased material/(West & Turner, 2016, p. 1) for quoted material

Presentation (100 points)

Length of Presentation:

Your presentation should range from 8-10 minutes.

Presentation Format:

Make sure you discuss the four environments you discussed in the paper as well as the three IPC competencies you discussed for each environment. Use personal examples to illustrate why these IPC competencies are important for you to be a successful communicator.

Presentation Aids:

Presentation aids are required for this presentation. Examples include audio, video (30 seconds or less), posters, PowerPoint/Prezi presentations, objects, etc. Canvas message me PowerPoint presentations, Prezi presentation links, or video links the day before your scheduled presentation.

EXTRA CREDIT

Due: April 24th

Assignment:

There are two extra credit opportunities in this class worth 5 points each for a total of 10 points added to your point total. To earn 5 points of extra credit you need to read and summarize an article of your choice related to any of the chapters we studied in *Communication Currents*, the online communication e-zine from the National Communication Association. To earn 10 points of extra credit you need to read and summarize two *Communication Currents* articles.

Directions:

1. Go to <http://www.natcom.org/commcurrentssissue.aspx> to view the most recent issue of *Communication Currents*.
2. If you see an article that looks interesting, select an article.
3. To find additional articles, go to <http://www.natcom.org/CommCurrentsArchive.aspx> to view back issues of *Communication Currents*.
4. In a one page summary:
 - a. Include the title and direct link to the article you have selected before your summary.
 - i. Sample title: Supportive Mentoring Communication Helps Students Succeed
 - ii. Sample direct link: <http://www.natcom.org/CommCurrentsArticle.aspx?id=3157>
 - b. Write a short summary of the main points of the article.
 - c. Discuss how the research topic relates to a concept you have studied in COMS 141.
 - d. Present one relevant question you have about the research topic that you believe is not answered in the article.