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

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Your Points</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3 X 100)</td>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Analysis Paper/Presentation</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Analysis Reflection/Individual Score</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core IPC Competencies Paper/Presentation</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>750</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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

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

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:

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

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

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:

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/commcurrentsissue.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.