

SPCM 1090: Interpersonal Communication
Fall 2015
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TEXTBOOK:

Required:

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

Access to:

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This course is designed to help you become aware of the processes and theories of interpersonal communication within and about relationships that impact our personal and professional lives. Through self-analysis, case studies, practical application, and critique of cultural practices, you will examine the influence of communicative behaviors on personal relationships, groups, and society. Concepts include perception, ethics, emotion, conflict, cultural awareness, power, technology, language, nonverbal communication, social media, and listening.

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify and explain theories and concepts of interpersonal communication
2. Apply concepts, research, and ethical decisions to personal relationships
3. Demonstrate interpersonal skills in areas such as listening, ethics, verbal and nonverbal communication, among others within personal and professional relationships
4. Evaluate positive and negative effects of communication behaviors and their impact on relationships and societal groups
5. Critique communication behaviors (e.g., diversity, power, ethics) within interpersonal relationships in various contexts of our society (e.g., new relationships, family, mediated, cultural relationships...) and articulate such analyses orally and in writing
6. Conduct self-reflection and assessment of your own communication behaviors in relationships
7. Recommend strategies for improving communication within relationships

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Three Examinations: (40%) You will have three examinations throughout the semester. Examinations will be a mixture of multiple choice, matching, true/false, identification, application and short answer. The material will come from the text/readings discussed in class. Examination one is worth 10%, examinations two and three are each worth 15%.

2. IPC Application Papers: (45%) You will examine concepts from class through research and experience. All papers will be typed.

Application Research Paper: (25%)

You will type a 9-10 page double-spaced paper to demonstrate your knowledge of an interpersonal communication behavior or issue (e.g., listening, conflict, power, cultural identity). As an overview, you will synthesize research; reflect upon ethical, personal and societal implications of this topic; and provide communication strategies for improving this behavior in our personal and professional lives.

The paper will include three main steps:

- a. Introduction/Literature Review (5-6 pages): Upon approval, you will complete an introduction and literature review that synthesizes the current research about your chosen topic. Your literature review will include a minimum of 6 scholarly sources.
- b. Application (2-3 pages): After you understand this particular communication behavior from your research, you will apply the research to relational behaviors you see taking place around you. How is this behavior enacted in relationships? What are the positive and negative effects of this behavior on relationships? What are the more global implications of this behavior on societal groups (i.e., at-risk groups, marginalized groups, those with less voice in society, elders, etc.) given the effects of this behavior? How does research help you understand relationships? In other words, examine how this behavior is communicated to others and how others are affected by this communication. This application may relate to a personal relationship, or perhaps an observed relationship you are trying to more fully understand.
- c. Strategies/Conclusion (1-2 pages): Provide some practical strategies for improving this communication within relationships. How will you monitor your own behavior? What advice would you give yourself or others to strengthen relationships? Why is it important to know this concept? How will you be the voice for others? End your paper with a concluding paragraph reviewing the main areas of the paper and provide some final “golden nuggets” of what you overall learned about researching this interpersonal communication behavior.

Relational Reflections: (10 each%)

You will reflect upon your own personal relationships and communication skills from the text with two written reflections (no outside research with these unless you choose to bring in additional materials). Each reflection will be a one-two page single-spaced (approximately 600 words) paper that demonstrates understanding of a specific text concept/or skill and how it is enacted in a particular relationship in which you are involved. For each paper, you will choose a different relationship and a different interpersonal communication concept (these must also be different from your research paper). For example, you may examine cultural communication with a new friend, conflict with a parent, listening skills with a romantic partner, power issues with a co-worker, etc. In each paper, you need to use three terms from the text (with page numbers) to help describe your relationship.

As a brief overview, your paper should start with identifying the relationship at hand and why you chose that relationship and the concepts. Next, reflect upon how and why these concepts are playing out in this particular relationship. How did you demonstrate these communication skills? How does it affect the relationship? How does this concept help to understand the relationship or the communication within the relationship? End with a brief conclusion. How did this analysis help you understand this relationship? What may help to improve this relationship (regardless of whether it is positive or negative)? What did you learn about yourself or the relationship through this process? How will you use this information in your future interpersonal relationships?

3. Chapter Activities/Application/Preparation: (15%) To demonstrate your understanding of course material, weekly activities and assignments will be applied to chapter concepts throughout the semester.

These activities may be in the form of out-of class activities (e.g., article worksheets, self-assessments, application activities, generated responses, case studies, topic approvals, etc.), and in-class activities (e.g., individual and group application exercises, discussion of chapter activities, chapter assessments). Missed in-class activities cannot be made up. Weekly activities are worth 10%.

Paired/Group Concept Presentation: (5%)

One of these application assignments will be a two- or three-person presentation at the end of the semester, highlighting a concept your group believes is a “golden IPC nugget” that will be important for us in our future relationships and professional lives. This will consist of choosing a concept, demonstrating it via some application or example, and engaging us in discussion with questions. It should not duplicate what the chapters have said about the concept; provide us with new information, a few reminders, and practical application of the concept giving us something to think about. These will be approximately 10-12 minutes in length.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

Date	Topic/Material Covered/Chapters (reading assignments to be read for this day)	Specific Related Assignments (turned in, prepared for, in-class activities)
Week 1	Introduction to Course, Syllabus, & Expectations Begin Chapter 1 - Introduction to Interpersonal Communication	IP self-assessment Paired interviews and introductions
Week 2	Chapter 1 con't Ethics of Relational Communication (part of chapter 1 and outside readings)	Ethical code/Civility activity Keys to working in groups/small talk activity
Week 3	Chapter 2 - Communication, Culture, and Identity	Campus cultural dig (group activity)
Week 4	Chapter 3 - Communication, Perception and the Self Review for exam	Case study due
Week 5	Exam 1: Chapters 1-2-3 Chapter 4 - Communicating Verbally	Exam 1: Chapters 1-2-3 Verbal lurking activity due
Week 6	Chapter 5 - Communicating Nonverbally	Relational Reflection #1 Due (use chapters 1-5) Last week for topic approvals for application research paper
Week 7	Chapter 6 - Listening and Responding Effectively	Case study due
Week 8	Chapter 7 - Communicating and Emotion Review for exam	Emotional cone activity
Week 9	Exam 2: Chapters 4-5-6-7 Chapter 9 - Communicating Conflict	Exam 2: Chapters 4-5-6-7 Conflict analysis due
Week 10	Chapter 8 - Sharing Personal Information Chapter 10 - Communicating in Close Relationships	Video/Movie analysis due

Week 11	Chapters 8 & 9 con't	Relational Reflection #2 Due (use chapters 6-11)
Week 12	Chapter 11 - Communicating in Context: Families, Friends, and Romantic Partners	
Week 13	<i>Group Concept Presentations</i> Workshop for research papers	<i>Group Concept Presentations</i>
Week 14	<i>Group Concept Presentations</i>	<i>Group Concept Presentations</i> IPC Application Research Paper Due
Week 15	Final assessment of IPC Course wrap up Review for exam	Discussion of "golden nuggets" from research papers
Finals Week	Exam 3: Chapters 8-9-10-11	Exam 3: Chapters 8-9-10-11