
COM 110: Elements of Interpersonal Communication

Instructor:

E-mail:

Office:

Office Hrs:

WELCOME TO COM 110!

This course is designed to teach you fundamental concepts related to interpersonal communication across a variety of interactions, such as those with friends, coworkers, family members, and romantic partners. Being an effective communicator helps people develop and maintain healthy relationships. Effective communicators are also perceived as more credible and competent in the workplace. Thus, being a skilled communicator is valuable in one's personal and professional life. This course focuses on learning concepts, processes, and challenges involved in interpersonal communication, as well as learning skills that will make you a better communicator. Therefore, class time will involve lectures that contain knowledge stemming from research on interpersonal communication, as well as activities that allow you to transform that knowledge into skill.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are (1) to introduce you to the essential concepts necessary to understand and examine interpersonal communication events, (2) to help you evaluate your own interpersonal communication skills, and (3) to provide you with opportunities to develop and demonstrate competency in interpersonal communication.

REQUIRED READING

Floyd, K. (2011). *Interpersonal communication: The whole story* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

3 Exams @ 100 points each -----	300 pts
3 Artifacts @ 33 points each -----	100 pts
In-class Activities-----	70 pts.
Participation/Attendance-----	30 pts.

Total Points Possible= 500 pts

GRADING SCALE

495-500	A+	434-448	B+	385-398	C+
460-494	A	410-433	B	350-384	C
449-459	A-	399-409	B-	300-349	D

COURSE POLICIES

Course policies are set so that the rules are clear and fair to everyone. Please read these policies carefully so that you know the expectations I have.

Attendance

You are expected to attend class regularly and to be part of our learning community. Therefore, attendance will be taken each day. **You are allowed 1 unexcused absence.** If you have more than one unexcused absence, points will be deducted from your participation/attendance score at a rate of 5 points for every additional day absent. (So if you have 5 unexcused absences, your participation/attendance grade will be reduced by 20 points.) There are other consequences for missing class. First, students tend to do much better when they attend class regularly. The information provided in lecture will help you better understand concepts that will appear on the exam. Also, some exam information is in lecture but not the text book. Second, if you miss a class activity you cannot receive points for that assignment (see missed activities below). Third, it is your sole responsibility to find out what you missed (including announcements) and to obtain notes from a fellow student if you miss class. I do not have notes to give students.

Missed Activities

There are seven in-class activities throughout the semester. You earn 10 points toward your participation grade by coming to class, engaging in the activity, and turning in the necessary paperwork connected to the activity. You are allowed to make up one (and only one) of the activities by turning in a short “Scholarship Summary” paper. You will need to find a recent article (published in 2002 or later) from one of the following journals: *Communication Monographs*, *Human Communication Research*, *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *Personal Relationships*, or the *Western Journal of Communication*. In 2-2½

pages, summarize the method the author(s) used (i.e., how they got their data—questionnaire, experiment, etc.), the main findings from the study, and the applications those findings have to everyday life. *You can substitute a Scholarship Summary for one activity. If you miss more than one activity, you will not have an opportunity to make up the missed points unless there are extenuating circumstances (as described under “excused absences” below).*

Excused Absences

Absences are excused at my discretion and only under certain circumstances, such as having a doctor’s note showing you have been ill or being away at a university-sanctioned event, such as competing for an ASU team. Work-related absences and personal absences (i.e., attending a family event) are not excused, so plan accordingly. These types of absences will count toward your two “free” absences. Make-up exams are only given when there are extenuating circumstances and when you can provide documentation of those circumstances. For example, if you are ill, you must have documentation to support that you were unable to take the exam at the given time. If possible, you must notify me prior to the exam to secure permission for taking a make-up exam at a later date. If you are involved in a university-sanctioned activity, such as being part of an athletic team or the speech team, you must provide me with a copy of your schedule at the beginning of the course. Similarly, if you need to miss class because of a religious holiday, you should notify me by the end of the first week of class regarding the date(s) you will be absent. At that time, we can arrange a day and time for you to make up the exam. If you need special accommodations, see me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements.

Late Assignments

All assignments are due by 11:59pm on the day designated. Assignments turned in after the due date will receive a 10-point deduction for every DAY (not every class day) they are late. *Please note that computer problems are not a valid excuse for turning in an assignment late.*

Format Requirements for Papers

Both papers must be typed in 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one inch margins. This policy is necessary to ensure fairness. The papers for this class are fairly short. If one student uses a much larger type and wider margins than another student, the latter student will obviously be able to fit more material in the paper (and probably do better). Please keep in mind that correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar are expected. **Papers will be submitted via safeassignment on Blackboard by 11:59pm on the due date.**

Participation and Confidentiality

This course is more interesting and beneficial when students participate in discussion. Active participation also helps students develop and refine their communication skills. To be prepared to participate effectively, you should read chapters prior to the day we talk about them in class. You will receive up to 30 points for class participation, which involves participating in class by attending, being prepared, and contributing to class discussion in a positive, constructive manner. Students should also feel that our classroom is a safe environment for discussing sensitive or personal issues that are related to the concept we are studying in class. Therefore, please keep all personal information shared in this class to yourself; such information should not be used to gossip or in any way harm a fellow classmate.

Consideration

Please be considerate to your fellow classmates and me by observing the following guidelines for classroom conduct. First, when entering the classroom, please be sure that any cell phones or electronic devices you are carrying are turned off. Second, refrain from engaging in distracting activities such as carrying on a private conversation with a neighbor, passing notes, reading the newspaper, or working on something for another class (i.e., cramming for next period's final). Such behaviors are noticed both by me and other students and make it difficult for everyone to concentrate in class. **LAPTOPS ARE FOR NOTE TAKING ONLY.**

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is required of all Arizona State University Students. Please see the School policy on this subject at

<http://humancommunication.clas.asu.edu/undergraduate/major-information>

For clarity sake- you must cite from the source if it was not your original idea. Additionally, if you have turned the work in for another class (even if you wrote it) it is considered self-plagiarism and also violates the University policy. Please submit your own, original work for a grade. Plagiarism will result in a failing assignment, failing grade in the course, an XE for the course, or expulsion from the University.

Participation/Activity Grade

You can earn up to 100 points for participation. *Seventy of these points are earned through participation in in-class activities. The other 30 points are earned by attending a class, participating in class discussion, and listening attentively rather than disrupting the class.* In order to receive full points for the activities, you must come prepared to participate. This sometimes requires bringing in or preparing items from home. You are also required to turn in the paperwork related to the activity by the end of the class period. Below is a list of what you need to do before class to prepare for each activity. *If you do not bring in the required items for a given activity, you will only receive half credit for participating.*

#1: Find Someone Who Activity: You don't need to prepare anything; just show up

#2: Brown Bag Activity: You will need to gather three things from your home that you feel describe you well. These three things can be anything you want to share with your peers but they should say something about you, so choose things representative of important aspects of you and your personality. Also, no pictures of yourself (pictures of others are okay, or cover your own face), and no identifying items (i.e. they have your name or initials on them). They must also fit into a plain, large brown grocery bag. Put your name on the bottom of the bag.

#3: Advertising Activity: Cut out and bring in two advertisements from a popular magazine aimed at teens or young adults. Choose one that you think is an especially good advertisement, and another that you think is especially bad. (Please do not bring in advertisements from "adult" magazines such as *Playboy*, *Playgirl*, or *Penthouse*).

#4: Listening: You don't need to bring anything; just show up

#5: Conflict Analysis Activity: You don't need to bring anything; just show up

#6: Deception Detection Activity: You don't need to bring anything; just show up

#7: Dear Com 110 Letter Activity: On or before 12/2 you will need to turn in a paragraph letter describing a communication problem that you or someone you know is facing. The paragraph can be written like a "Dear Abby" letter, except that it should be addressed to "Dear Com 110." In the letter, describe the problem that you or the person you know is facing and pose specific questions that you would like the class to answer. To keep your letter anonymous, please ***do not put your name anywhere on it.*** I will bring a box with a slit on top of it on 12/4. You will fold your ***typed*** letter and place it in the box and then write your name on a list so that I know you turned it in. I will not, however, know who turned in which letter. For the day of the in-class activity, I will choose several letters for the class to answer. In groups of 4-5, you will work together to address the issues raised in the letter. (If you happen to be in a group that receives your letter, this is okay but don't let anyone know that the letter is yours.) Each group will write out recommendations and present their "answer" to the class.

Example Letter:

Dear Com 110.

I am engaged to my high school sweetheart. I love her dearly and I know she loves me, but we have always seemed at odds when it comes to showing affection. My fiancée is more caring and considerate than anyone I have ever known, but she is also fiercely independent and has trouble showing affection. Although I am also fairly independent, there are times when I would prefer to

be more connected to her. For example, she often wants to be alone or with her friends when I'd like to spend quality time with just her. Instead of giving her space, I sometimes try to make her feel guilty for wanting to spend time apart. This tactic, however, seems to backfire, leading her to spend even less time with me. I have never been overly possessive, but when she pulls away from me I feel compelled to close the gap between us. How can I accomplish this without driving her away? Is it wrong for me to want to be more connected? Is this an issue that could prevent us from having a happy marriage?

Signed, *Kept At Arms Length*

Exams

Exams are your opportunity to show that you have mastered the concepts covered in the text and class lecture. To test this knowledge, exams will consist of multiple choice questions and true/false questions, along with three short essays. Each exam covers a separate section of the course. The final exam is *not* comprehensive.

Guidelines for Papers

Artifact Format: (3 @ 33pts each)

The purpose of the artifact assignment is to apply concepts from the text and class discussions to your daily life. More specifically, the concepts can be applied to conversations between you and your partner, television shows, movies, magazine ads, newspaper articles, comics, song lyrics, or anything else that may come to mind. The standard format is as follows:

Section One: Explain the concept (from your text). You must define your concept using quote book directly (be sure to use quotation marks and proper APA citation). You will want to define the concept and elaborate on any key terms. In this section, you want to talk **ONLY** about the concept without mentioning the event/ad/song lyrics/etc. You must

Section Two: Discuss the event/ad/etc. in very specific detail without mentioning the course concept. Tell me a story – explain what happened, how it happened, and why you thought it happened. Remember that I was not present during your conversation, and there's a good chance I didn't see your movie clip, etc., which means that you need to be very detailed and vivid in your description (include who, what, where, when, how). Attach a copy of your article/ad/lyrics/etc. whenever possible, and cite sources when applicable.

Section Three: Now combine the two. Apply the concept to the event/ad/etc. to show connections between the text and your daily life. Go into depth explaining exactly **HOW** and **WHY** your event/ad/etc. is an example of your course concept. This section should demonstrate that you have a thorough and accurate understanding of the communication concept being discussed. Rule of thumb: apply the concept as much as possible.

If you have questions or concerns about these assignments or any other issues related to the course, please feel free to come to my office hours or set up an appointment to talk with me.

I hope you enjoy the course!