

## ***Interpersonal Communication Fall Semester 2006***

### **COMM 2110 SYLLABUS**

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FAC 103

Office: 652-7801  
Office Hours: M-F 2:00-4:00

**Course Description** - This three-credit course is a prerequisite for the Communication and New Media Baccalaureate degree. Emphases include developing interpersonal skills in initiating, developing and maintaining relationships as well as identifying and controlling deterioration in relationships. Special emphasis is on defining the self, identifying perceptual influences and barriers, developing active listening skills, and relational amelioration.

**Required Text:** *The Interpersonal Communication Book*, 11<sup>th</sup> edition, by Joseph A. Devito.

**Additional Reading:** *The Four Agreements* and *The Mastery of Love* by don Ruiz Miguel.

**Required Skills** - This course requires literacy skills beyond the high school level.

**Final Assessment** - Every course in Arts, Letters, and Sciences will include a final exam. Consult the semester schedule for the final exam date and time.

**Cell phones** and pagers drive me crazy. Please turn them off while you're in class.

**Cheating and plagiarism** will not be tolerated. If there is evidence of plagiarism on your part, your work will be rejected and you will fail the assignment. Plagiarize a second time and you will fail the class. If you rip off someone else's work, ideas, thinking in an attempt to complete the activities for this course you will only hurt yourself.

**Assignments** will be word-processed and are due the date indicated on the syllabus. *No assignments will be accepted late.* Deadlines and scheduled activities are indicated in the schedule section of this syllabus. Use it. Work containing typographical and grammatical errors will not be returned without evaluation. Proof your work. Using "Spell Check" is not enough. Use resources such as a dictionary, the DSC Writing Lab and the DSC OWL (Online Writing Lab) and/or someone else that can proofread.

**Assessments** may not be made up. Term assessments are essay/application. All assessments are designed to give me an idea of how you're doing in understanding and applying the principles taught, and how I'm doing in teaching them.

**Disability** - If you are a student with a physical or mental impairment and would like to request accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (652-7516) in Room 201 of the Student Services Center. The Disability Resource Center will determine your eligibility for services based upon complete professional documentation. If you are deemed eligible, the Disability Resource Center will further evaluate the effectiveness of your accommodation requests and will authorize reasonable accommodations that are appropriate for your disability.

**Course Goal: Increase your skill level to interpersonally communicate.**

**Objectives:** *Through regular attendance and active participation you will be able to:*

1. Understand the axioms of interpersonal communication and the principles of the self,
2. Evaluate the interplay between verbal and non-verbal communication,
3. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the perceptual process of communication,
4. Apply active listening and its principles in your communication,
5. Explain the nature of trust and be able to define and build that trust,
6. Distinguish between the risks and advantages involved in increasing self disclosure,
7. Identify dysfunctional conflict styles and apply strategies for resolving conflict,
8. Develop a greater sensitivity and skill in intercultural communication and relationships,
9. Converse with more assertiveness and a higher confidence level,
10. Explain the importance and function of shared meaning,
11. Identify relationship stages and relate them to your own experiences,
12. Maintain relationships and identify symptoms of trouble within,

13. Identify personal barriers to thinking and communication,
14. Execute original base-line research in the interpersonal discipline.

## ***Item Pool and Rubrics***

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The item pool for COMM 2110 Interpersonal Communication consists of one contract, a critical thought paper, and three term assessments. The cumulative point total for all items is 1000 points, which break down into the following:

### **Breakdown of Points**

<b>Personal Contract</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Your Score</b>
Your Agreements	200	_____
<b>Charting Your Relationship</b>		
Critical Thought Paper	200	_____
<b>Term Assessments</b>		
Assessment 1	200	_____
Assessment 2	200	_____
Assessment 3	200	_____
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000 Points</b>	

### **Brief Description of Activities**

*The Personal Contract* is a document you will draft indicating the agreements you've made to help you reach interpersonal competency and personal freedom. Read *The Four Agreements* before completing this activity.

*The critical thought paper* targets and encourages your ability to analyze communication theory, specifically for this class as they relate to your relationships.

*Term Assessments 1* and *2* are formative with an emphasis on application and skill building. *Assessment 3* is summative.

***Record your scores above throughout the semester.*** If you must, on a percentage basis you can determine your letter grade using the following breakdown:

90 – 100% = A range  
80 – 89% = B range  
70 – 79% = C range  
60 – 69% = D range  
Below 59% = F  
Cut off for minus to straight grade = 3.5  
Cut off for plus to straight grade = 6.5

It's my opinion that letter grades and subsequent grade point averages in no way represent an assessment of achievement of this course's objectives and the above activities. Grade inflation and behaviorism over the years have mutated what might once have been considered valid assessment of student achievement.

Unfortunately for you, I'm still required to give you a grade at the end of the semester, a grade that in some way, in one little letter, states your achievement, application, improvement and ability that you have demonstrated during that semester - an impossible evaluation. However, that's what you've come to expect after twelve years of conditioning in our schools.

Since I'm required to give you a letter grade, it's my philosophy that the grade will represent the following criteria:

A – The student *surpasses* the requirements of the rubrics, executes *original* critical thinking in interpersonal communication contexts, demonstrates *achievement* of the objectives evidenced in written and oral communication, asks good questions and engages others, including the instructor.

B – The student *meets* the requirements of the rubrics, executes critical thinking in interpersonal communication contexts, demonstrates *understanding* of the objectives evidenced in written and oral communication, asks good questions and engages others, including the instructor.

C – The student achieves at least 75% points possible of the rubrics, demonstrates identification of the objectives evidenced in written and oral communication, asks good questions and engages others, including the instructor.

D – The student achieved at least 65% points possible of the rubrics and acknowledges the objectives evidenced in written and oral communication.

F – The student's apathy outweighed achievement.

Past students have expressed fears to me that this course could disrupt their current GPA and thwart scholarship opportunities. It's my experience that we are driven by two basic emotions; fear and love. Students who are afraid of their performance in this course will limit themselves and will consequently fear their evaluations. Students who love what they do in this course and discipline and embrace evaluation for their own improvement go beyond the course expectations and have little worry or care about their grade. The outcomes are dramatically different. It's a choice, I promise.

### **What's a Rubric?**

The pages that follow contain the rubrics I use in assessing your achievement. A rubric is a guideline for you to understand the expectations of each activity, explaining steps and criteria you can take and meet to be successful with that particular item. For each project you do in this course (for the obvious exception of the assessments) read the rubric carefully and get any clarification you may need. I am available during office hours or during class to help you reach understanding.

As each activity comes due, turn in the respective rubric along with your paper or outline. Please make certain your name and your section number appear on it.

**Specified Objectives for Activity**

1. Understand the axioms of interpersonal communication and the principles of the self.
3. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the perceptual process of communication.
6. Distinguish between the risks and advantages involved in increasing self-disclosure.

Point Value: 200

**Activity Description**

- Discover your self-concept; how you see yourself, how you think others might perceive you, and how others might actually perceive you. This requires you to take a personal inventory of your strengths, virtues, weaknesses, vices, values, beliefs, opinions and attitudes (items found in your open and hidden panes of the JoHari Window). You will also need to talk with people close to you and ask how they perceive you based on your inventory (Items that you. You'll find out things about yourself; things you already know, things you never wanted to know, and things you're glad you discovered. Document your discussions.
- Read *The Four Agreements* by don Miguel Ruiz.
- Outline agreements you've made throughout your life that you would like to break. In your hidden pane you might uncover agreements that allow you to discount your self worth or perhaps your companion's. In your blind pane you might discover old habits that can interfere with the way you communicate.
- Outline agreements you want to make that can help you reach interpersonal competency and personal freedom. These may be the four agreements found in the book, your own agreements, or a combination of Ruiz's ideas and your own .
- Draft your personal contract indicating your self-discoveries and the agreements you've made. This document should demonstrate your understanding of Ruiz's idea of agreements, the Self Concept, and the JoHari Window.

**Activity Rubric**

The Personal Contract represents self-discoveries based on the learner's own inventory, what the writer believed others' opinions were about their self, and what the writer learned about themselves through the disclosure of others.

(40 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The Personal Contract reflects the learner's understanding of Ruiz's idea of agreements.

(40 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The Personal Contract reflects the learner's understanding of the Self Concept.

(40 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The Personal Contract reflects the learner's understanding of the JoHari Window.

(40 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The Personal Contract reflects the learner's understanding of the risks and rewards of self-disclosure.

(40 points) \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Actual Points** \_\_\_\_\_

**Specified Objectives for Activity**

3. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the perceptual process of communication.
4. Apply active listening and its principles in your communication.
6. Distinguish between the risks and advantages involved in increasing self-disclosure.
10. Identify relationship stages and relate them to your own experiences.
11. Maintain relationships and identify symptoms of trouble within.
12. Identify personal barriers to thinking and communication.
13. Execute original base-line research in the interpersonal discipline.

Point Value: 200

**Activity Description**

- Chart a current or past relationship that you have been involved in. If you're currently involved, invite your significant other to participate to see if your perception of the relationship progress is the same as his or hers.
- As you write about each stage of the relationship be sure to address each element of that stage.
- What was involved in your perceptual contact? How did your companion perceive you?
- Did self-disclosure intensify the relationship in the involvement stage or did it open up the back door?
- Was your listening more direct and active during the contact or the involvement stage than it was during the intimacy stage?
- What happened during the intimacy stage that may have moved the relationship into deterioration?
- Which perceptual or personal barriers became more intense during the deterioration stage?

**Activity Rubric**

The learner justifies their efforts in charting a past or current relationship in which they've been involved.

(30 points) \_\_\_\_\_

Each stage of the relationship is described in detail relating to the relational theory discussed in class. Stages include:

*Contact – perceptual and interactional*  
*Involvement – testing and intensifying*  
*Intimacy – interpersonal and social, love*  
*Deterioration – relational changes*  
*Repair/Dissolution*

*Deduct three points for each missing stage.* (30 points) \_\_\_\_\_

Interpersonal perceptions are discussed on both the part of the learner and the companion.

(10 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The learner describes how self-disclosure worked as an intensifier in the involvement stage and discusses the effects of self-disclosure.

*Effects can include encourage self-disclosure on the companion's part, empathy, rejection, loss, increased knowledge, and the fact that you can't take it back.*

(30 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The learner evaluates the quality of listening involved in the relationship as it progressed through the stages.

(30 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The learner assesses dysfunctional conflict communication and/or causes of relational deterioration that have applied to their own personal relationship.

*Possible conflict communication might include decreased openness, deception, increased criticism, decreased compliments and reinforcement, the silent treatment, and humiliation.*

*Possible relational deterioration factors may include unrealistic beliefs, excessive intimacy claims, third-party relationships, relationship changes, undefined expectations, sex-related problems, and work-related problems.*

*(Theoretically, every relationship goes through the deterioration stage. The above symptoms are the most often occurring in most relationships. The learner may indicate other symptoms, or reasons, perhaps, why they opted for the back door.)*

(30 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The learner identifies and defines perceptual or personal barriers that may have entered the relationship during the deterioration stage.

*Perceptual barriers may include attribution, the implicit personality theory, primacy-recency, the self-fulfilling prophecy, and stereotyping.*

*Personal barriers may include polarization, intensional orientation, fact-inference confusion, allness, static evaluation, indiscrimination, and disconfirmation.*

(40 points) \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Actual Points** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMM 2110 Semester Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Read</b>	<b>Activity Due</b>
<b>Part One: Interpersonal Communication Theory</b>			
Aug 23	<b>Orientation, Syllabus and Introductions</b>		
Aug 25	<b>The Interpersonal Game</b>		
Aug 28	<b>The Interpersonal Game</b>		
Aug 30	<b>Approaches to IC</b>	<b>1</b>	
Sep 01	<b>Axioms of IC</b>		
Sep 04	<b>Labor Day – No Class</b>		
Sep 06	<b>The Self in IC</b>	<b>3</b>	
Sep 08	<b>Self Concept</b>		
Sep 11	<b>Self Disclosure</b>		
Sep 13	<b>Self Esteem</b>		
Sep 15	<b>Call ‘em how we see ‘em</b>	<b>4</b>	
Sep 18	<b>The Perception Process</b>		
Sep 20	<b>Influences on Perception</b>		
Sep 22	<b>Influences on Perception, continued</b>		
Sep 25	<b>Listening</b>	<b>5</b>	
Sep 27	<b>Active Listening</b>		<b>Personal Contract</b>
Sep 29	<b>Intercultural Communication</b>		
Oct 02	<b>Cultural Definitions &amp; Misconceptions</b>	<b>3</b>	
Oct 04	<b>The Humanistic Model</b>		
Oct 06	<b>The Pragmatic Model</b>		
Oct 09	<b>Apprehension and Assertiveness</b>		
Oct 11	<b>ASSESSMENT ORIENTATION</b>	<b>1-5</b>	
Oct 13	<b>Semester Break – No Class</b>		
<b>Part Two: Messages</b>			
Oct 16	<b>Meanings &amp; Messages</b>	<b>6</b>	
Oct 18	<b>Shared Meaning</b>		
Oct 20	<b>Disconfirmation v. Confirmation</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Assessment 1</b>
Oct 23	<b>Barriers to Communication</b>		
Oct 25	<b>Barriers continued</b>		
Oct 27	<b>Non-verbal: Body &amp; Sound</b>	<b>8</b>	
Oct 30	<b>Space &amp; Time</b>		
Nov 01	<b>Making Conversation</b>	<b>9</b>	
Nov 03	<b>The Disclaimer and the Excuse</b>		
Nov 06	<b>ASSESSMENT 2</b>		<b>Assessment 2</b>
<b>Part Three: Interpersonal Relationships</b>			
Nov 08	<b>A Stab in the Back</b>		
Nov 10	<b>The Myths of Conflict</b>	<b>13</b>	
Nov 13	<b>Managing Conflict</b>		
Nov 15	<b>Relationship Stages</b>	<b>10</b>	
Nov 17	<b>Relationship Stages</b>	<b>11</b>	
Nov 20	<b>Why We Come Together</b>	<b>12</b>	
Nov 22	<b>Thanksgiving Break – No Class</b>		

Nov 24	<b>Thanksgiving Break – No Class</b>		
Nov 27	<b>Group Presentation</b>		
Nov 29	<b>Why We Fall Apart</b>		
Dec 01	<b>Group Presentation</b>		
Dec 04	<b>Relational Amelioration</b>		<b>Charting Relationships</b>
Dec 06	<b>Principles of Power</b>	14	
Dec 08	<b>Assessment 3 Review</b>		
<b>Assessment 3 Final Exam Schedule</b>		<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Section 01</b>		<b>Dec 13</b>	<b>7:30 - 9:30</b>
<b>Section 02</b>		<b>Dec 15</b>	<b>10:00 – 12:00</b>
<b>Section 03</b>		<b>Dec 11</b>	<b>9:30 – 11:30</b>

Students often ask what I believe, where my values are rooted. What follows below states my credo better than I could.

Were life a gift, we have an obligation  
 Were love a magic spell, we need a rite;  
 And were all truth for us, one with  
 illusion,

We have a need for someone else's sight.  
 Were there a door to life we could not open,  
 Who kept it closed might ask us for a fee;  
 Were heaven held, as by incorporation,  
 No doubt its stock would not be wholly free.  
 It is our fear that gives away our freedom;  
 It is our doubt that keeps full love away;  
 Our willing ignorance prevents our wisdom;  
 These are the only costs that we must pay.

-Thomas Paine