

COM 220: Interpersonal Communication

FALL2009 MEDIATED

Contact Information:

Dr. Sue Easton

E-mail Address: seaston@rollins.edu

Home office: (407) 328-1549 (please call before noon if possible)

Virtual Office Hours: I will check the Bb site daily to see if you have any questions. I am also available to meet in person by appointment and will be on campus on Thursdays each week.

Note: If questions are general or related to class assignments, please use the “**ASK THE PROFESSOR**” thread on the discussion board so that others will see your question and my response. I will check this daily and typically respond within 24 hours of your question.

Technical Problems With Blackboard: 407-628-6363

Mandatory Face to Face Class meetings: 8/25; 9/8; 9/15; 10/10; 10/20; 11/3 (note: 9/8 is a change from 9/1). All other meetings will be virtual within the class meeting time of 6:45-9:15PM.

Textbook Required:

- Wood, Julia, Interpersonal Communication: Everyday Encounters. I use the 3rd edition which you can find online at reduced cost. Note: you can use any edition of this text, but will be responsible for matching pages if necessary. All exams will cover common areas.

Additional Readings: *Ouch!* By Leslie Aguliar. I have purchased copies of this booklet and will make them available to the class.

Technology: Download SYKPE from skype.com and send me your user name – mine is sueeaston. We will discuss the options of microphone/audio and video in class.

Course

Description: This course explores one-on-one communication with significant others in personal and career situations. Students will develop strategies for adjusting communication patterns to improve interpersonal relationships that enhance their effectiveness within the complex stages of human relationships.

Units of

Instruction:

- The process, principles and nature of interpersonal communication
- Communication and self-concept
- The impact of perception on interpersonal relationships
- Using emotions to express feelings and to influence others
- Building bridges with language and words

- Communicating in a virtual world
- Relational dynamics
- Listening to improve interpersonal skills
- Strategies for managing interpersonal conflict

Course

Objectives: Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Describe several strategies for adjusting communication patterns to improve interpersonal relationships
2. List and describe common causes of miscommunication in interpersonal communication.
3. Explain several theories and describe how they reveal insight to interpersonal communications.
4. Describe the stages of intimate relationships
5. Demonstrate the use of non-verbal communication to influence others
6. Identify the behaviors of good listeners
7. Explain several choices for managing conflict in interpersonal relationships
8. Describe positive and negative behaviors that demonstrate influence by the use of emotions
9. List examples that demonstrate the use of language to build both bridges and to create barriers
10. Apply theoretical constructs to assess and improve interpersonal communication both socially and in work settings

Method of

Instruction: Students will work independently and in online groups to read, reflect and apply materials presented through the textbook and online activities. Competency will be demonstrated through thoughtful reaction papers, comprehensive portfolio study, online quizzes, exams and virtual conversations.

Role of

Instructor

& Student: The instructor is a class facilitator, resource, and guide whose responsibilities include designing activities and assessments that supplement the course textbook and encourage social learning through virtual group activities. The course design will lead the student to interact with the materials, the instructor, and other students. The instructor will provide feedback and reflection to guide the student to deeper understanding of interpersonal communication.

The student is solely responsible for his or her learning that occurs in this environment. The degree of comprehension and application will be directly related to the level of dedication the student chooses to access. As such, greater responsibility is placed on the student to clarify his or her learning objectives and provide feedback to the instructor to ensure that those objectives are known. Additionally, the student is expected to assist other class members in their learning by full participation in all online discussions.

Grading:

- **Weekly Online Activities: 20%**
- **Two Reaction Papers 20%**
- **Exams 40% (15; 15; 10)**
- **Final Portfolio: 20%**

Due Dates: Deadlines are announced in advance and are final. Do not expect to make up work, as a substitute for work that was required but never turned in. **All weekly activities and are due by Tuesday at noon on the date they are due.** Assignments that are collected in class will be due at the start of class so please arrive on time. After class, grades will receive a 20% deduction and are not acceptable after one week. Tip: If you think you will be late to class for any reason, send your assignment to me by email before class starts. See due dates listed at end of this document.

Weekly Online Activities:

Each week you will be submitting assignments for online activities in the Group Discussion and/or the class Discussion Board. In most cases, you will be expected to interact with the other students by posting additional comments. In many cases, group activities and discussion board threads require the student to log on and respond several times throughout the week. Your promptness and completeness as well as your critical thinking in these cases will be reflected in your final grade.

Grading Criteria for Online Group Discussion Questions.

0-5 pts.	6-7	8-9	10
Poorly written or late with no clear connection to the subject or readings	Limited response that only touches the surface of the answer. Repeats previous comments with vague input such as “me too” or “I agree” Does not build the usefulness of the discussion nor the sense of community within the group. Postings are minimal or late, and do not show a comprehension of material.	Completes the assignment as required by responding with a useful answer or comment in a timely manner such that others can gain additional insight. Supports the online sense of community by reinforcing others and creating a welcoming place for discussion. Responses are posted on time to allow feedback and discussion.	Completes assignment by posting insightful ideas that are fully developed and demonstrate a genuine understanding of the topic. Comments often extend the discussion and offer unique opportunities to apply the material. Timeliness of posting allows a full conversation to emerge and encourage a strong intellectual online community.

Reaction

Paper: These papers will be between 4-5 pages in length and are a reflection of your thoughts and opinions related to the activities and reading assignments. These are intended to be critical thinking exercises that capture your reflections regarding what you are currently learning and experiencing. You may find it helpful to keep a private journal of your thoughts as a way to recall relevant information and ideas. All Reaction Papers are to be submitted as electronic attachments in the course drop box. Grades will be assigned based on the writing criteria attached.

You will be selecting two papers to write out of a choice of three focused on different aspects of interpersonal communication.

Class

Attendance: The course has required specified meeting dates to address materials and discussions that are best delivered face to face and to coordinate online chats. Attendance is expected and will be recorded to provide insight regarding individual effort. During these meetings, the instructor will clarify specific points and facilitate learning through small group discussions and activities. These 6 required classes will meet 6:45-9:15. Note: **Anyone who misses two or more of the required meetings will automatically fail this class.** Virtual classes will always be conducted on Tuesdays during the 6:45 – 9:15 time frame and will announced in advance.

Portfolios

Select a significant person who has been in your life for more than 1 year, such as a close relative or friend. Using this 1:1 relationship as a research perspective, you will build a portfolio that contains article summaries, activities, and reflective papers that will enhance your understanding of the communication dynamics within that specific relationship. As you read the textbook, or respond to various activities, use this relationship to create a lens that enhances your understanding of theoretical concepts. The final section of the portfolio is due on 11/3. The portfolio is organized into the following sections:

- Section 1: Introduction – 10 points
This is a 2-3 page introduction that includes a description of the individual you will use for your portfolio project. Explain why you selected this individual and what you would like to learn regarding communication within this relationship. Provide an objective analysis of your current communication style and discuss what you would like to improve on this semester. You may find it helpful to do a few individual assignments to see how you identify certain areas in which you could gain new insights. **This is due by 9/8 in the drop box.**
- Section 2: Two Articles on your relationship– 20 points
Select two articles (one scholarly and one mainstream that is at least 2 full pages in length) that will enlighten you regarding the relationship you've selected for your portfolio. For example, if you've selected your sister, find two articles on communication between siblings. **Your portfolio needs to contain the complete**

copy of each article you selected AND they each need to be highlighted and annotated to show your reaction to what you are reading in order to receive full credit. Then write a (2-3 page) summary describing what you learned from each article and how you can use the information to enhance your relationship. There will be a separate summary for each article. Your grade on this section will include the quality of your notes within the article, and the quality of your application of learning articulated in the summary. Note: There is a list of scholarly journals from which you can select your article. If you are not sure if your article is scholarly – ask me before you submit it. Mainstream articles are found in any magazine that you might buy in the grocery store such as Time, Newsweek, Fortune, People, Oprah, etc. You may also use an article found on the web, but it must be at least 3 pages in length. **This is due by 10/10 at the start of class.**

- Section 3: Individual activities – 30 points

Throughout the semester, you will be assigned several activities/ questionnaires that require your self-assessment or personal reflection. This section should contain the results of those surveys/activities, and often a one page summary. These will be graded based on the completeness and thoughtfulness of those assignments. For example, if there are 10 activities, and if you have all 10 completed as required, you will score a 30, if you have 9 completed as required you will score an 18, and so on.

These will be collected three times this semester as follows:

9/15: Select two of these activities for grading and bring to class. These will be graded and returned to give you feedback.

10/10: Select four additional activities and bring to class.

11/3: The remaining 4 will be due with the final portfolio

- Section 4: TV or Film Comparative Analysis – 20 points

Select a movie or TV program that exemplifies the relationship you are studying. In 4-5 pages, describe how the relationships in the media are similar to yours. For example, tell about a problem that the characters were involved in that reminds you of your relationship. How did they solve their problem? Is this different or similar to the way you would resolve your problems with your portfolio subject? The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate terms and concepts that you've been studying throughout the semester and show you understand these by using an applied perspective. Note: this is not a movie review, but is a device to create a comparison between real life and a media example demonstrating your knowledge and use of interpersonal communication terms and concepts.

- Section 5: Written Summary – 20 points

Summarize what you have learned this semester as it related to the behaviors involved in your relationship. This should be a comprehensive review of the theory, models, and experiences you've worked on all semester. Draw a comparison to the paper you turned in for Section 1, review your online activities and papers, and capture what you have learned based on your original goals. What do you still need to learn to be an even better interpersonal communicator? The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate terms and concepts that you've been studying

throughout the semester and show you understand these by using an applied perspective. This paper should be reflective and provide examples to illustrate your conclusions and demonstrate your knowledge of interpersonal communication (3-4 pages). You may wish to show comparisons in how you completed earlier assessments to indicate any changes in your critical thinking or understanding of the subject.

Academic Honesty

THE ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

Membership in the student body of Rollins College carries with it an obligation, and requires a commitment, to act with honor in all things. Because academic integrity is fundamental to the pursuit of knowledge and truth and is the heart of the academic life of Rollins College, it is the responsibility of all members of the College community to practice it and to report apparent violations.

The following pledge is a binding commitment by the students of Rollins College:

The development of the virtues of Honor and Integrity are integral to a Rollins College education and to membership in the Rollins College community. Therefore, I, a student of Rollins College, pledge to show my commitment to these virtues by abstaining from any lying, cheating, or plagiarism in my academic endeavors and by behaving responsibly, respectfully and honorably in my social life and in my relationships with others.

This pledge is reinforced every time a student submits work for academic credit as his/her own. Students shall add to all papers, quizzes, tests, lab reports, etc., the following handwritten abbreviated pledge followed by their signature:

“On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance on this work.”

Material submitted electronically should contain the pledge; submission implies signing the pledge.

Go to the following link to be sure you understand what plagiarism is:

http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/plagiarism_test.html

Grading Criteria for Written Assignments

An “A” paper addresses the assignment carefully and thoughtfully, and then goes beyond it to say something original. It demonstrates critical thinking and deep reflection that is clearly outstanding. It is grammatically and structurally strong and shows a writer who has taken time to construct a solid piece of writing with an obvious interest in learning something about themselves through sincere analysis.

A “B” paper addresses the assignment and shows a good approach to the topic. This paper is above average from the typical paper because it demonstrates complete understanding of the purpose of the assignment, or a complete understanding of the topic. The paper adheres to good writing principles both grammatically and structurally, and the reader is able to clearly understand what the author intends to convey.

A “C” paper addresses the assignment but does not go beyond it in any significant way. It is the represents the minimum amount of effort that still completes the work. It may lack a clear structure and critical thinking. There may be some grammatical and structural problems with the writing style.

A “D” paper may somewhat address the assignment but seems to miss its essential point or go off on a tangent that never connects back to the thesis. The paper lacks clear structure, critical thinking, and an organized format. It is difficult for the reader to understand the writer’s key points or position on the topic.

An “F” paper does not address the assignment. It reveals a lack of understanding or poor planning causing the author to throw together something at the last minute in hopes that the instructor will not notice.

ADA statement

Rollins College is committed to equal access and does not discriminate unlawfully against persons with disabilities in its policies, procedures, programs or employment processes. The College recognizes its obligations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to provide an environment that does not discriminate against persons with disabilities.

If you are a person with a disability on this campus and anticipate needing any type of academic accommodations in order to participate in your classes, please make timely arrangements by disclosing this disability in writing to the Disability Services Office at (box 2613) - Thomas P. Johnson Student Resource Center, 1000 Holt Ave., Winter Park, FL, 37289. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 407-646-2354 or email: gridgateway@rollins.edu

Dr. Easton’s Class Pledge and Teaching Philosophy

In order to foster a challenging intellectual experience in this course, I have joined a number of other Rollins faculty members in a commitment to the following principles:

I. Believing that my high expectations are an indication of my respect for you and for your capacity to work at a level of excellence, I will follow these classroom policies. I will consistently use a grading criteria for written assignments and communicate this each semester in my syllabus.

II. Recognizing that the work done in class is only a small part of your acquisition of an education, I will design relevant and challenging assignments for this course. Please plan to spend an average of two hours outside of class for every hour in class in ways that will enrich your experience. I encourage you to be thoughtful in your selection of projects to maximize and personalize these learning objectives.

III. Your attendance and participation in class not only increases your learning, but it also creates a richer learning community. I will faithfully enforce the attendance policy stated in my class syllabus.

IV. Recognizing that college graduates must be able to communicate clearly and effectively, I will not assign A's or B's to papers marred by an accumulation of the grammatical errors, which are so serious that they are usually seen as the markers of an uneducated writer.

V. In fairness to all students in the class and with the knowledge that, in the world beyond college, workers are expected to meet deadlines even in the absence of ideal circumstances. I will faithfully enforce the policy concerning late work stated in this syllabus.

VI. I will assign evaluated work throughout the term; I will treat your work seriously and will respond to it as the serious endeavor of a serious student. You can expect a timely response from me on all graded work assignments.

VII. Knowing that ultimately your education is what you make it, I will encourage you to come to class prepared; I will encourage you to initiate conversations, ask questions, and comment on the readings and other assignments; I will encourage you to engage your classmates in lively intellectual exchanges.

VIII. Because I want to be a part of your intellectual growth and because I enjoy the play of ideas, I will be available to you during my office hours and at other scheduled times, and I encourage you to use those times, not just for discussions of grades and assignments, but also of the ideas generated by the class.