

**COM 286 Interpersonal Communication  
(Online Course)  
Fall 2012**

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**Required Text:**

Adler, R. B., Rosenfeld, L. B., & Proctor II, R. F. (2012). *Interplay: The process of interpersonal communication*, (12<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

**Course Description:**

Communication with others is an activity we all do with a fair amount of expertise. However, there are many times when communication creates feelings of dissatisfaction, confusion, misunderstanding, hurt, or other unexpected outcomes. Improving the way we manage such situations often requires that we develop a sixth sense, an “uncommon” sense that allows us to see communication in new ways. That is the aim of the course: to better understand interpersonal communication situations, and thus to improve the ways we manage them. We will examine basic concepts, theories, research findings relevant to initiating, developing, maintaining, and terminating relationships (be it romantic relationship, family relationship, friendship, or co-worker relationship) with an eye of the role communication in the process.

**Objectives:**

1. Develop an awareness of the role communication plays in everyday life.
2. Understand and recognize how communication process works.
3. Understand the role context plays in communication.
4. Increase both verbal and nonverbal communication skills.
5. Increase communication competence by recognizing communication options.

**CLASS POLICIES**

1. It is **your** responsibility to read this syllabus carefully and keep all the due dates in mind. **No make-ups** are given for any missed assignments/tests. Please find all the due dates on the last page of this syllabus under “Weekly Schedules.”
2. All interactions of this course will be computer-mediated. I will NOT hold any face-to-face or telephone conversations during the course of the semester.
3. All written submissions should be carefully proofread to reflect your high level of care and diligence.
4. All the assignments/tests/discussions will be posted on **BLACKBOARDS** one week before their due dates. Don’t expect to work ahead. I will not make assignments of Chapter One available until sometime on Sunday before class starts and the other assignments

periodically after that.

## ASSIGNMENTS/EVALUATIONS

### Short Answer Questions (SAQs, 40% of grade)

For each of the 12 chapters, you will be given six to eight short-answer questions. You can directly find answers from the textbook. However, try **NOT to use the exact words** from the textbook. Use your own words to summarize or paraphrase. Questions for each chapter will be put on the **BLACKBOARDS** for a whole week period. **This assignment is due by Midnight each Friday.** Please see the “Weekly Schedules” for specific due dates of each chapter. There is **NO make-up** for missed assignments.

Although this assignment is called “short” answers, **your responses should be comprehensive and accurate.** You are advised to finish reading the chapter before you answer the SAQs. Do not copy and paste from the textbook. You have to use your own words to summarize what you have learned from the textbook based on your understanding.

### Group Discussions (20% of grade)

There are four group discussion activities of class materials throughout the semester during **Weeks 4, 7, 13, and 15.** The topics of each discussion activity will be posted on the **BLACKBOARDS** under “**Group Discussions**” for a whole week period. In general, the discussions focus on analyzing and applying concepts or theories that relate to your personal experience. For each discussion, you will receive a maximum 5% of grade.

The class will be divided into four groups:

Group **One**: Last Names A to D

Group **Two**: Last Names E to H

Group **Three**: Last Names I to P

Group **Four**: Last Names R to Z

You will be evaluated **on clarity of writing and the relevance of your examples.** You are expected to respond thoughtfully to other group members in relation to the course content. In order to receive full credit, **you are expected to post twice:** One initial response to the topic, and one later reaction to the group discussion. Please see the “Weekly Schedules” for specific due dates of each discussion. There is **NO make-up** for missed discussions.

### Reaction Papers (10% of grade)

You will be asked to read two research articles in the area of interpersonal communication. Both articles will be posted on our class webpage at **BLACKBOARDS.** For each article, you are expected to write a two-to-three-page (double space, font size 12) reaction paper. In the paper, you should include:

- 1) Summarize the purpose(s) of the article.
- 2) Use a few sentences to summarize the research questions or hypotheses the author(s) have

proposed.

- 3) What method(s) did the author use? Survey? Experiment? Interviewing?
- 4) What are the major findings of the article?
- 5) Do you have any personal experiences that might be related to what was studied in the article? Were any of the findings from the article surprising to you? If you are a researcher on the same topic, what questions would you ask differently? If other words, are there any questions you want to know, but were not asked in the article?
- 6) Any thoughts, feedback, or comments on the topic discussed in the article.

Please proofread your paper for any typos or grammar errors before you submit it online.

### **Exams (30% of grade):**

Three tests are given during Weeks 6, 11, and 16. Each test will consist of 20-30 multiple-choice questions. You may work from notes and your textbook, but you will be limited to 20-25 minutes. You can take each test **only once**.

### **GRADE SCALE**

[Finals Grades Based on Percentages]

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 or lower	E

Always remember that you **EARN** a grade, and that you are not given a grade.

**Weekly Schedules**

Week	Topics	Due Dates (by <b>Midnight</b> of the Specific Day)
1. Aug 29-31	Syllabus	Carefully read your syllabus, and have your book ready
2. Sept 3-7	Chapter 1	SAQs due by <b>Sept 7</b>
3. Sept 10-14	Chapter 2	SAQs by <b>Sept 14</b>
4. Sept 17-21	Chapter 3	SAQs and <b>Group Discussion #1</b> due by <b>Sept 21</b>
5. Sept 24-28	Chapter 4	SAQs due by <b>Sept 28</b>
6. Oct 1-5		<i>Test 1</i> (Chapters 1-4) and <b>Reaction Paper #1 Due by Oct 5</b>
7. Oct 8-12	Chapter 5	SAQs <b>due by Oct 12</b>
8. Oct 15-19	Chapter 6	SAQs and <b>Group Discussion #2</b> due by <b>Oct 19</b>
9. Oct 22-26	Chapter 7	<b>SAQs due by Oct 26</b>
10. Oct 29-Nov 2	Chapter 8	SAQs due by Nov 2
11. Nov 5-9		Test 2 (Chapters 5-8) and <b>Reaction Paper #2 Due by Nov 9</b>
12. Nov 12-16	Chapter 9	SAQs and <b>Discussion #3</b> due by Nov 16
13. Nov 19-23	Chapter 10	SAQs due by <b>Nov 23</b>
14. Nov 26-29	Chapter 11	SAQs due by <b>Nov 29</b>
15. Dec 3-7	Chapter 12	SAQs and <b>Group Discussion #4 due by Dec 7</b>
16. Dec 10-13		Test 3 (Chapters 9-12) due by <b>Dec 13</b>