

**UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA**  
**Department of Mass Communication**

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Dr. Tonia East Phanor \_\_\_\_\_

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Office Hours: **MW** 10:00am-11:00am and 12:30 -1:30pm; **M**: 3-4pm (Douglasville); **TR** 10:30am-1:30pm (online) or by appt

## **COMM 3340: Advanced Interpersonal Communication**

Fall 2019 MW 2:00pm-3:15pm

Douglasville Campus

**\*The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.**

**Prerequisite:** (COMM 1110)

**Course Description:** This theory-driven course will analyze verbal and nonverbal communication in person-to-person relationships, paying special attention to the stages of relationship development and dissolution, conflict management strategies, identity development, and the role of power and perception. Emphasis on understanding and applying social scientific theories of communication.

**Course Text Provided:** Devito, Joseph. The Interpersonal Communication Textbook. 13<sup>th</sup> ed.

\*Other readings will be required periodically, as noted on the course schedule.

**Course Goals:** The goal of this course is to help students understand communication as the force behind the initiation, development, maintenance, and deterioration of interpersonal relationships.

### **Topical Outline of Course:**

- 1) Foundations of Interpersonal Communication

- 2) Culture and Interpersonal Communication
- 3) Perception of Self and Others in Communication
- 4) Communicating and Managing Identities
- 5) Listening
- 6) Uncertainty Management and Expectancy Violations
- 7) Initiating and Developing Relationships
- 8) Verbal and Nonverbal Communication
- 9) Relational Communication Theories
- 10) Communicating Sexually
- 11) Maintaining Relationships
- 12) Interpersonal Power and Conflict

### **Course Policies**

1. Student Conduct and Expectations of Students:

It is expected that students will be considerate of the instructor and fellow classmates and act in a professional manner. Once class begins, students should stop talking, working on other class assignments, etc. Cell **phones should be turned off** and no student should be talking or “texting” on cell phones during class. Furthermore, **laptops or other electronic devices may only be used in relation to this course.**

Students are responsible for knowing all information contained in the course syllabus and announced during class. Not knowing is not an excuse for late work, missed assignments, etc. This means re-reading the syllabus frequently, checking your UGA and ELC e-mail, and asking other students in the class about any missed information.

Learning Accommodations: Any students who need special accommodations for learning or who have particular needs are invited to share these concerns or requests with me as soon as possible. If students have special needs due to a physical or psychological disability, they may request accommodation in the Office of Accessibility by calling 678-839-6428 or visit [www.westga.edu/accessibility](http://www.westga.edu/accessibility). Students will be asked to authenticate their disability with appropriate documentation. In order to receive accommodation in this course, they must provide an approved, signed Accommodation Request Form. All information related to a request for, and provision of disability services will remain confidential and should be done as early as possible. Exceptions cannot be given after the assignment.

2. Emergencies: If an emergency arises and you know that you will not be able to get to class on an exam day please let me know ahead of time by sending me an email or leaving a message with the department secretary.
3. Attendance: The attendance policy for this course is as follows: Each student is expected to come to class ready to participate. This is a hybrid course and we will not meet every

week. We will primarily meet on Wednesdays unless an online assignment is provided. I strongly advise you to attend all classes.

4. Exams: Two exams (a midterm and a final) are scheduled on the syllabus. Although these exams are not strictly cumulative, information covered early in the semester will be essential for success on the second exam. Students are expected to take the exams on the dates assigned.

- (a) **Make up exams are allowed** for full credit for excused absences with proper documentation. Students may make up their exam when they are absent due to a university sanctioned activity where prior notice has been provided, an emergency which has been documented through their advisor or Student Affairs, or an illness which has been verified in writing from your private physician or the Student Health Center. In the case of illness, you must get a note from either your private physician or from the Student Health Center signed by a clinician (**not a Health Center Nurse**) that says something to the effect: “In my opinion, this student should not be in classes today and/or tomorrow (specify the particular date[s] involved).” Typically, a private physician or clinician will write a note for an illness for one or two days. However, if your illness lingers, you will need to recheck with the private physician or clinician and request an additional note to document your absence. The note does not have to indicate the specifics of your illness, but that the physician or clinician does not think you are well enough to attend class.
- (b) **Make up exams are not allowed** without proper documentation. Make-up exams are not allowed for any type of unexcused absences, including missing class to study for a test, oversleeping, not being ready to take the exam, or having to work at an outside job. You will receive a ZERO for that exam.

5. Academic Honesty:

As a University of West Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet these standards. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

7. Grievance Procedure: Occasionally, students are unsatisfied with some dimension of the course. If you have a concern at any time during the course, please come speak with me directly either during office hours, by appointment, or via email.

I enforce a “24 hour rule” when it comes to grade appeals. There is a 24 hour rule in effect for all papers and tests: you may not contact me regarding the grade you earned until *at least* 24 hours after the assignment is returned. **If you would like to speak with me regarding a grade earned, you must contact me within a week of the assignment**

**being returned to you. After a week has passed I will not be willing to discuss past assignments.**

If you want to appeal a grade, the department policy is that you must make the grade appeal **in writing** to me. It is my policy that I will not discuss grade appeals via email. Prepare and submit a typed argument indicating what your specific appeal is, what grade you believe you deserved, and a justification for that grade.

8. Final grade: Your final grade is final. Applying subjective standards after the fact in order to bolster your grade is unfair to your classmates, and therefore will not occur. Grades will only be changed in the event of a clerical error.
9. Contacting the Instructor: The best way to get in touch with me is through e-mail. You must allow a 2 business days for me to respond.

## Assignments

### 1) Exams – 200 points (2 at 100 points each)

### 2) Discussion Questions - 100 points (10 at 10 points each)

I will post a discussion question on the class CourseDent that will be related to the readings/topic for a given week, or it will be of a current news story related to the class. You are expected (at a minimum) to respond to the question and to engage in a discussion with your peers. You are required to post a response no later than the Friday of the relevant week. The quality of your contributions for that week will be graded on a +10 (stellar) to 0 (no contribution) basis.

### 3) Research Paper and Presentation – 100 points

This course provides an introduction to interpersonal communication research and theories, so in attainment of that goal you will work with a small group of classmates to analyze, summarize, and explain an assigned journal article. The articles selected for your research presentations use a specific interpersonal communication theory studied in class. Your job is to enlighten and inform your classmates about the theory by describing how it was used in a communication study. Each presentation will: 1.) identify the theorist, 2.) define and explain the theory, 3.) provide examples of the theory in action, and 4.) summarize the journal article assigned. You should provide a one - 4 page article abstract and prepare and deliver a well-organized presentation.

### 3) Film Analysis Paper - 100 points

You will complete a substantive 4-5 page film analysis paper, worth a maximum of 100 points. This paper will involve identifying and applying communication concepts and theories to the relationships in the film. Specifically, you will apply theories and concepts learned in the course to situations revealed in the movie. This paper requires in depth analysis (not superficial analysis) of communication theory and concepts. You can also add an analysis of how communication could have been improved and what might have occurred if certain behavior demonstrated in the film had continued or stopped. Do not feel a need to go in depth on the plot of the movie, but make reference to situations in the film to guide your discussion of interpersonal theory. Use quotes as needed to demonstrate key points. Your job is not to provide a movie review or critique of the film, but rather, you should think analytically about how the topics we have covered in class this semester describe, predict, or explain the situations in the movie. You are required to identify three major interpersonal themes or principles present in the film (i.e., self-disclosure, relationship maintenance) and describe how different theories and concepts apply.

## Assessment

The final grade will be determined by the sum of the points in the following areas:

Activities		Points
Exams	Exam #1 (100)	200
	Exam #2 (100)	

CourseDen Discussions	10 at 10 points each	100
Film Analysis Paper	1 at 100 points	100
Research Paper	1 at 100 points each	100
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>

There will be **NO** curve in this course. Your final letter grade will reflect this distribution:

<b>Final grade</b>	<b>Points (%)</b>	<b>Final grade</b>	<b>Points (%)</b>
A	465 (93%) - 500	C+	385 (77%) – 399
A-	450 (90%) - 464	C	365 (73%) – 384
B+	435 (87%) - 449	C-	350 (70%) – 364
B	415 (83%) - 434	D	300 (60%) – 349
B-	400 (80%) - 414	F	000 ( 0%) – 299

## Tentative Schedule

This schedule is tentative and may change due to the needs of the class. Students should be prepared to discuss assigned readings in class on the assigned day. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date.

Week	Days	Topics	Readings & Assignments
1	8/14	Course Introduction	Syllabus
	8/19	Defining Relational Communication	Ch. 1 <i>8/18* Drop Deadline</i>
	8/19	Defining Relational Communication	Miller & Steinberg <i>8/19* Add Deadline</i>
2	8/21	Foundations of Interpersonal Communication	Ch. 1
3	8/28	Culture and Interpersonal Communication	Ch. 3 Houser et al. (2008)
4	9/02	<b>NO CLASS - Labor Day Holiday</b>	
	9/04	Listening	Ch. 4
5	9/11	Verbal Communication	Ch. 5
6	9/18	Nonverbal Messages	Ch. 6
7	9/25	Emotional Messages	Ch. 7
8	10/02	Conversational Messages	Ch. 8
9	10/9	Interpersonal Relationship Stages	Ch. 9
		<b>Midterm</b>	

<b>10</b>	10/16	Relationship Theories	Ch. 9
<b>11</b>	10/23	Relationship Theories	Ch. 9
<b>12</b>	10/30	Relationship Types	Ch. 10
<b>13</b>	11/06	Conflict  Film Analysis	Ch. 11
<b>14</b>	11/13	Conflict Management	Ch. 11
<b>15</b>	11/20	<b>Film Presentations</b>	Film Analysis Paper Due  Ch. 12
<b>16</b>	11/25-29	<b>NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Holiday!</b>	
<b>17</b>	12/04	Interpersonal Power and Influence	Ch. 12
<b>Final Exam</b>	12/04*	Final Exam	



## **Mass Communications Program Learning Outcomes**

ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies: As a unit seeking accreditation from the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), the Department of Mass Communications is committed to preparing students with the requisite knowledge and skills to be successful in the media and communications industries after graduation. The Department has adopted as its degree program learning outcomes ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies that all graduates of an ACEJMC accredited program should be aware of and able to demonstrate as scholars and professionals in the discipline. These include the six (6) values and six (6) competencies listed below. For the detailed list of the ACEJMC professional values and competencies, see the [UWG Undergraduate Catalog](#) or [ACEJMC - Standard 2. Curriculum and Instruction](#).

## **6 x 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS**

**Six Values...**

1. Freedom of Speech & Press
2. History
3. Diversity
4. Global Impact
5. Theory
6. Ethics

**Six Competencies...**

1. Think Critically & Creatively
2. Research & Evaluate
3. Write Effectively
4. Self-Evaluate
5. Apply Numbers & Stats
6. Apply Technology