

Interpersonal Communication

Instructor: Terri Main

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Strictly Speaking Forum:

<http://forums.delphi.com/m/main.asp?sigdir=RCSpeech>

Textbook: *The Interpersonal Communication Book* by Devito

speech

This Course Could Change Your Life

That's a pretty bold statement, but almost every semester I hear someone tell me that taking this course has improved their marriage, helped them communicate better with their children, improved their business relations on the job, and in general simply helped them live a happier more fulfilled life. Why? Because this course is about relationships and especially about the glue that holds relationships together -- Communication. Improve your interpersonal communication, you improve your relationships. Improve your relationships and you improve your life. That's why this course, taken seriously can do more than simply fulfill a general education requirement. It can change your life.

What You Will Learn

In this course you will learn:

1. How messages are transmitted from one person to another, how those messages can be distorted and how to reduce that distortion.
2. How to understand other people and empathize with them in spite of differences in culture, gender, occupation, or education.
3. How to deal with difficult people (and how not to be a difficult person)

drop date

4. How to improve relationships with your family, your friends, your business associates and with those you love.
5. Psychological principles for understanding your own communication with yourself and how that affects your communication with other.
6. How to develop a sense of ethics concerning your communication.

Assignments and Grading

Attendance -100
Book Review - 100 points
Oral Report on your Book Review - 100 points
Quizzes - 100 points
Midterm - 100 points
Final - 100 points
Group Project - 100 points
Term Paper - 200 points
Oral Report on your Term Paper -100 points

Total Points Possible 1000

A=900 - 1000
B=800 - 899
C=700 - 799
D=600 - 699
F= Under 600

Assignments must be completed on the dates assigned. Late assignments with a point value of 100 will receive a deduction of 5 points. Late assignments with a point value of 200 will receive a deduction of 10 points. Quizzes may not be made up.

Extra Credit

Okay, for all you obsessive-compulsive types, I do allow you to earn up to 50 points of extra credit in this course. (Although, I wonder why I make this offer, the ones who really need the extra credit rarely do it, and the ones that don't need it overload my box with it.)

You can earn extra credit in a variety of ways:

1. **Bluelight Specials.** Some days I'll announce a surprise extra credit assignment only to those who are in class on that day. It pays to come to class regularly
2. Watch and critique John Bradshaw and Lorretta LaRoache videos in the library. (10 points each)
3. Write responses to the special speaker(s) who address the class. (10 points each)
4. Make a collage related to interpersonal communication. (10 points each. Limit of two)
5. Write an extra credit book review. (25 points)
6. Conduct a survey and compile the results (25-50 points)
7. Think up something on your own.

Attendance:

You have 100 points just for attending class. So, if you just fill a seat every day that's the same as getting an "A" on a speech. Not bad, eh. I'll also give you 3 free days to miss without penalty. After that you will lose 2 points for each day missed.

Also for the attendance to count, you must be in your seat (paying attention) no later than ten minutes after the start of class. If you leave more than 15 minutes before the end of class you will lose the attendance points for that day.

Now I am not unreasonable, I do understand that there are reasons why one might miss class. So here are some acceptable and unacceptable reasons.

Valid Excuses:

1. Death in the family. (And remember I can count. I'll allow two grandmothers, after that I get suspicious)
2. Personal illness. (And if it's contagious, just call, don't come to class to tell me in person.)
3. Auto accidents, car troubles, etc. (But please if you have an accident a week, you might consider walking to school.)
4. Family emergencies. (If you have more than three children, let me know so I can determine the full extent of the epidemic)
5. Giving Birth. (No comment necessary)

Invalid Excuses:

1. Too tired. (Aren't we all)
2. Had to clean my house. (I don't have time to clean mine, why should you clean yours)
3. Wanted to leave early for Thanksgiving. (Why? Afraid they'd run out of food.)
4. Came back late from Spring Break (I see you found the food was plentiful)
5. Had to study for an *important* class. (And this isn't)
6. Anything that implies you were having more fun than the rest of us.

Internet Stuff

In this class we will be using the power of the Internet to enhance the learning experience. To do this you will need to become familiar with using the computer. If you are not familiar with how to access material on the Internet, don't worry. We will be holding an Internet seminar before the end of the month to get you up and running.

One thing you will need to do, if you do not have personal Internet access and that is to set up a Web-Based E-mail account. Using one of the computers on campus log on to <http://www.hotmail.com> . Following the instructions on the screen you can set up an e-mail account you can access from any Internet accessible computer. Please do this in the next two weeks and inform me of your Internet address so I can add you to the mailing list.

There are several Internet resources created especially for this class.

Mailing List. Those familiar with listservs know how these work. For the rest of you here's the idea. A mailing list is sort of a 90's version of the party line. You can send an e-mail to the list simply by typing in one address. Everyone on the list can read it and respond either directly to you or by replying to the list. Your e-mail is posted almost immediately. So, for instance, if you are researching a topic for a speech or term paper and are having trouble finding enough information, you could post a request to the list and if someone on the list has information they can post a reply. I will also be using the list to post assignments, answer questions, clarify instructions and to post extra credit opportunities.

By Friday please subscribe to this list by using any Internet ready computer and logging on to this web site <http://www.onelist.com/subscribe/spechtwo> Fill out the form you find on that page by following the screen instructions. Please register with your actual name and not a "handle" or screen name. However, you can use whatever "handle" you want on your e-mail account.

The Speech Home Page. This is still under construction, but it already has a bunch of useful information. I will be posting the syllabi for my classes by next week. You can learn how to get an A on a speech, do a web search, access a variety of research sources, beta test chapters from a new interactive

Public Speaking text, or learn how to write an effective term paper. The URL is <http://members.tripod.com/~speechone>

The Strictly Speaking Forum. This is an on-line community for my classes. There are separate sections for each class for announcements, requests for help, griping, kibitzing, making contacts or socializing. There will also be posted on the Interpersonal Boards weekly discussion questions related to topics to be covered in class. This helps us keep the conversation going inside and outside of class. I will post "forum only" extra credit opportunities and you will be able to gain extra credit just by taking part in certain forum discussions. In the forum you can also create a private chat room to discuss whatever. We may even have some extra-credit chat events. The URL is <http://forums.delphi.com/m/main.asp?sigdir=RCSpeech>

Please register in this forum by Friday. I will post a notice which you must reply to by Wednesday August 25 to insure that you have completed this registration process.

Classroom Agreements

In this class we often discuss issues which are personal and can be emotionally charged. Because of this we must all exercise sensitivity in classroom discussions. The following agreements are intended to ensure a safe and supportive environment for discussion.

1. Listen when someone else is talking. This means that you don't talk to someone else, nor do you read a textbook, write a letter or do homework for another class.
2. Be respectful in your responses to each other. This means that whether you agree or disagree with that person, you avoid demeaning that person through ridicule, personal attacks, labeling or sarcasm.
3. Feel free to share as much or as little of your personal life as you wish. Feel free to say, "I don't feel comfortable sharing about that." if questioning becomes too personal for your level of comfort. Conversely, back off if someone says they are uncomfortable discussing a certain topic.
4. What's said in class, stays in class. Respect the confidentiality of other students. If they want to tell something they have said in class to someone else, that's their business and not yours.
5. Abide by the golden rule - "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." It's an old proverb, but it is worth remembering.

The Book Review

Many of you are familiar with book reports where basically you summarize the general subject of the book. A book review is different. In a book review you do more than summarize the book you give a critique of the book. What did you agree with and why? What did you disagree with and why? Think about it as a formal way of telling someone who hasn't read the book why they should or should not read it.

The bulk of the book review should be focused on critique and not summary. No more than one-third of the review should try to summarize the book. The most common mistake students make in reviewing a book is that they summarize too much. Give only enough summary for me to know the basic theme of the book and the author's general approach to the subject matter. This doesn't need to take more than 3-4 paragraphs.

This book is to be a *nonfiction* book dealing with the subject areas of interpersonal communication, interpersonal relationships, marriage and family or business communication on an interpersonal level. No novels, short story collections, devotional books, or biographies.

Your book review should be submitted to me on a floppy disk saved in either MS-Word or ASCII (Plain Text) format. You can also e-mail them to me. (My preferred method to receive these is via e-mail)

Term Paper

The term paper is a major project. It is to be an 8-10 page (2000-2500 word) research paper on a topic related to interpersonal communication, interpersonal relationships, marriage and family, or business communication on an interpersonal basis.

This paper is a research paper. That means you must do research. You have a minimum of 5 sources of information in order to receive a "C". You need to have 6 sources for a "B." You need 7 sources or more for an "A." Of course, having this number of sources does not guarantee a certain grade. However, you cannot be considered for the grade without them. This means sources which are cited in the paper and not simply listed in the bibliography.

Your paper needs to conform to either MLA or APA style.

Contract for Speech 2

I have read and understood this syllabus, the materials related to attendance and assignments and I agree to abide by the above stated rules for classroom conduct. I understand that violation of these rules may result in various grade penalties as determined by the instructor and outlined in this document. I also understand that I may at any time make an appointment with the instructor during regularly scheduled office hours to discuss my progress in the class and receive any help necessary for my success in the class. The instructor shall explain all assignments and requirements for this course thoroughly. We will work together for my eventual success in this course.

Signature _____ *SSN* _____

Print Name _____

E-mail Address _____