

General Description

Introduction

Interpersonal communication is about our connections with other human beings. Our interpersonal communication shapes our understanding of ourselves, others, and everyday life. Our interpersonal communication creates the social worlds in which we reside. We often take this form of communication for granted, assuming that we already know much of it because we engage in it on a daily basis. Yet, through engaged study, we will come to realize that interpersonal communication is complicated, consequential, and crucial.

In this course, we will explore various areas of our lives, including culture, media, public and private practices, and everyday face-to-face social and professional encounters. Within each context, we will discuss what is at stake when we engage with others and learn how our communication should be altered in order to better suit the contextual demands.

As a result of taking this class, you should develop a more sophisticated understanding of what it means to be a “good” communicator and practice the skills necessary to be successful in your interactions with others. I believe that you will find this course to be one of the most important that you will take during your college career as the skills that we will learn, discuss, and practice will help you in all areas of your personal and professional life. It is my hope that you will enjoy critically examining your own communication styles and developing strategies that help you achieve your goals.

Course Objectives

The primary objective of the course is to introduce you to communication skills relevant to creating and sustaining interpersonal relationships. The fundamental assumption of this course is that interpersonal communication skills can be acquired, changed, developed, and improved. The specific objectives of this course include:

- To develop an understanding for communication as a dynamic process that occurs in a variety of contexts to inform our understanding of self and other
- To think critically about identity, difference, language, and culture as constructed through communication
- To reflect on our communicative behaviors and practices, as well as those of others, in everyday practice
- To analyze, apply, and extend conceptual material in thought, writing, and practice
- To increase our competence as interpersonal communicators

Required Materials

See the course description for an up-to-date list of required materials.

Course Organization

The course is divided into six units, each comprised of two lessons that correspond to the chapters in *Interplay*. Each **lesson** will begin with the required reading assignment, a written lecture from me, a journal prompt, and a written assignment. Each **unit** will end with a quiz covering both lessons.

Assignments and Grading

All written assignment responses and answers should be recorded on separate paper and turned in with each unit's submission sheet for grading.

- **Journal Prompts:** You are to keep a journal meant for thinking about how you apply what you learn in this course. Each chapter will have a prompt related to the subject of the chapter. These will be graded for completion; turn them in with the corresponding unit submission sheet.
- **Lesson Activities:** The directions for lesson activities, when applicable, can be found within the unit. These are to be turned in with the corresponding unit submission sheet.
- **Essays:** The instructions for the essays, when applicable, can be found in the unit. These are to be turned in with the corresponding unit submission sheet.
- **Unit Quizzes:** The unit quizzes, which test your comprehension of the unit, are a series of multiple choice and short answer questions.
- **Final Exam:** Your final exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions similar to those you will answer in each unit quiz. You **must** pass the final exam in order to receive credit for the course.

Grading

The grades of individual assignments in each category will be averaged together. Each category is worth the indicated percentage of your final grade.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Percentage
Journal Prompts	15%
Lesson Activities	15%

Essays	30%
Unit Quizzes	15%
Final Exam	25%

Grading Scale

A	93–100
A-	90–92
B+	87–89
B	83–86
B-	80–82
C+	77–79
C	73–76
C-	70–72
D+	67–69
D	60–66
F	Below 60

What does a grade mean?

An “A” means that you did excellent work. You did work that reflects the very best of Carolina’s proud tradition of undergraduate education. If you received an A, your work was clear, insightful, creative, and needed very little (if any) revision. A “B” means that you did very good work. This work reflects a solid engagement with the material and an admirable execution of the concepts of the course. B work is a little less clear, perhaps not very insightful or creative, but certainly competent. Some revision on key themes would move this into the “A” realm. A “C” is average. C work is hurriedly produced, not thought through or rehearsed enough to be above average. Much of the work produced belongs in this category. This work does not fail massively in any significant respect, but it does not distinguish itself in terms of analytical clarity or presentation. There’s no shame in receiving a C, but there is no glory in it, either. A “D” means you are producing work below average, and an “F” means work is missing, incomplete, or poor.

Course Policies

Since this is a self-paced course, you can set your own schedule for completing the course, as long as you complete it within nine months of enrolling. There are no strict deadlines for this class, but make sure to allow for at least one week for me to read, grade, comment upon, and return your assignments after I have received them, not including mailing times, if applicable. I strongly advise you to set yourself a schedule at the beginning of this course and stick to it. Feel

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free to share this schedule with me. It will help me to anticipate when I will receive assignments from you and allow me to set aside time to grade them. This can greatly speed up return times. In addition, sharing your schedule with me can help you to feel more accountable, can encourage you to stick with it, and successfully complete the course.

Consulting (quality) outside sources and discussing the topics of the course with others is permitted. However, it is very important to give credit where credit is due, particularly in your written work – please cite such sources both in the body of your paper and in your works cited section. Failure to do so is a form of academic dishonesty.

Honor Code

As a Self-paced Courses student, you are bound by the Honor Code: It shall be the responsibility of every student to obey and support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University students or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.

Courses like this are only possible if instructors are able to trust that the work submitted is the student's own, so the University Honor Code will be strictly enforced at all times. For more information about the Honor Code, please visit the website <http://honor.unc.edu>.

Course Evaluation

Please be sure to complete a course evaluation form when you finish the course or conclude your enrollment. You can find a course evaluation toward the end of this manual, and you will be given one when you take the final exam.

Course Outline

Unit & Lesson	Topic
Unit 1 (Lessons 1 & 2)	Foundations of Interpersonal Communication: Interpersonal Process and Communication in a Changing World
Unit 2 (Lessons 3 & 4)	Foundations of Interpersonal Communication: Perceiving the Self and Others
Unit 3 (Lessons 5 & 6)	Foundations of Interpersonal Communication: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication
Unit 4 (Lessons 7 & 8)	Foundations of Interpersonal Communication: Listening and Emotions
Unit 5 (Lessons 9 & 10)	Interpersonal Relationship Dynamics and Close Relationships
Unit 6 (Lessons 11 & 12)	Communication Climate and Managing Conflict
Final Examination	