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COMX 115S.03C: Introduction to Interpersonal Communication

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**THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
MISSOULA COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED ARTS AND SCIENCES
SPRING SEMESTER, 2016**

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE

COMX 115S, Introduction to Interpersonal Communication

SEMESTER CREDITS

3 semester credits

INSTRUCTOR

Cassie Hemphill, Ph.D.

Phone: None.

Email: cassandra.hemphill@mso.umt.edu

Text: 406-370-8344 Please sign your texts so I know who they're from! If you are going to be late or absent from class, a text is the best way to let me know.

Office: HB 02 (the "Fishbowl"), in the Health and Business (HB) building on the East Missoula College Campus.

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:10-12:00. If this time conflicts with your school/work/personal schedule, email me to find another time that we can meet.

Contact me before class begins if you're going to be absent or late. Contact me if you have questions about an assignment, are going to miss a due date, or have any concerns! I can often make accommodations if I know ahead of time. I will not extend due dates after they have passed.

COURSE RATIONALE

Beebe, Beebe, and Redmond (2014, p. 2) write that

"Communication is at the core of our existence.... Most people spend between 80 and 90 percent of their waking hours communicating with others. [I]t is through these interactions with others that we develop interpersonal relationships."

Our communication encounters create our identities. Communication defines our relationships with friends, family, loved ones, and colleagues. Communication affects the quality of our physical and emotional health. Thus, our understanding of interpersonal communication and

the role we play in it contributes to our sense of well-being and success in personal relationships and to our success in work relationships.

Supervisors recognize the importance of considering the communication skills of prospective employees. In a 2013 Job Outlook report, the National Association of Colleges and Employers lists the ability to communicate with people in and outside the organization as the top skill an employer considers when hiring an employee. Second on their list is the ability to work well in a team structure.

Interpersonal communication is particularly useful as a foundational general education course because it helps students develop skills that promote success in a number of occupational fields.

COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is for students to become aware of their present communication styles and decide what is effective and what can be improved in order to build healthier relationships on an interpersonal level. Students will learn skills to help them manage conflict both in personal relationships and professional relationships. Communication will be viewed from both a verbal and nonverbal perspective. Communicating more clearly and listening more effectively will be addressed as well as the following topics: creating identities through communication, communication and emotion, interpersonal conflict management, creating healthy communication climates, gender communication, and cultural diversity and communication.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Recognize communication patterns from family of origin.
2. Understand relational meaning of what we say both verbally and nonverbally, and the effect this has on relationships personally, professionally and in an educational capacity.
3. Practice skills in listening reflectively, attentively, and more empathetically.
4. Recognize passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive and assertive behaviors and learn how to deal more effectively with them through conflict management skills.
5. Understand how the quality of communication directly affects the quality of relationships and ultimately the quality of life.
6. Identify practical skills geared towards improving communication in the workplace, in personal relationships, and in the family.
7. Understand the role emotions play in communication.

GRADING

- Exams (3) – 45% of grade
- Journal – 35% of grade
- Interpersonal Relationship Paper – 20% of grade

Grading Scale: 100-90 (A), 89-80 (B), 79-70 (C), 69-60 (D), 59 and Below (F)

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance will determine a student's level of success. If you miss a class, you will miss a learning opportunity. Students with three or more absences may lose their privilege for a makeup should an emergency arise.

Test Makeup. If the following conditions are met, you may be given an opportunity to make up a test:

1. You must be in good standing in the class. This means fewer than four absences, no late assignments and passing grades on all completed assignments.
2. You must notify me prior to missing the test that you will be unable to attend that class period, and provide an explanation for your absence. Personal illness, family emergencies and unexpected events are acceptable reasons for rescheduling a test. You may be asked for documentation of verification of your excuse.
3. Within 24 hours of missing the test, you must schedule an appointment with me to make up your test.

Late Assignments. Assignments are due on the date assigned. If you're unable to attend class, bring your assignment to my office or email it to me by midnight on the due date. Assignments turned in the next day or after midnight will be considered late. Late assignments will be graded out of half credit.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Please conduct yourself in a way that promotes learning for all students in the classroom. For example, avoid language that might offend others, use laptops for note-taking only, avoid disclosing too much personal information, turn off cell phones, don't use text messaging during class, and avoid monopolizing class discussion).

STUDENT SERVICES

Disability Student Services. Eligible students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course when requested in a timely way. Please contact the instructor before or after class or during office hours to discuss accommodations. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at <http://www.umt.edu/dss/> or call 406.243.2243 (voice/text).

Please do not feel shy about notifying me of your need for accommodations! I can help you succeed in this class, but only if I know early in the semester.

If you need testing accommodations, contact the Learning Center at least two days (and preferably a week) before the test is scheduled. Bring me the DSS testing form at least two days before the test to ensure I have time to make arrangements.

Learning Center. You are encouraged to use the writing tutors in the Learning Center. Even the best writers benefit from using a writing tutor.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Please conduct yourself in a way that promotes learning for all students in the classroom. Avoid using offensive language. Although it may seem obvious to you, it's necessary to point out that the following disrespectful behaviors are not acceptable in this classroom: talking or using mobile devices while the instructor or another student is speaking, sleeping or putting your head on your desk, wearing ear buds or headphones, sitting during standing activities, packing up before class ends, eating (unless you bring enough for everyone), and not properly disposing of your trash. Please take care of your biological needs before class begins. If you do need to leave the room during class, leave the classroom quietly and return when you are through.

Student Conduct Code. Expected standards of behavior for all students, including academic conduct and general conduct, are described in the Student Conduct Code, which is posted at http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php. You are expected to practice academic honesty at all times. Academic misconduct is defined as all forms of academic dishonesty, including:

- **Plagiarism** (representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as your own).
- **Submitting work previously presented in another course.**

DROP POLICY

The policy for dropping a class is provided in the UM Catalog at <http://www.umt.edu/catalog/acad/acadpolicy/default.html>. Discuss the consequences with your advisor before you bring me a drop slip.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Wood, J. T. (2015). *Interpersonal communication: Everyday encounters* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

You can buy the textbook from the Missoula College bookstore. It also can be purchased as a print, rental, or electronic textbook through the publisher at <http://www.cengagebrain.com/micro/1-1T7RE8P>

A copy of the text is on reserve in the Missoula College library.

A Moodle supplement will be used for this course. Additional materials and assignments will be posted on Moodle.

COURSE OUTLINE

Read the chapters before class so you can participate in the discussions. Specific due dates for your journals and tests will be announced in class at least one week prior to their due date.

Week 1: January 25–January 31

Introduction to the Course

Chapter 1, A First Look at Interpersonal Communication

Week 2: February 1–February 7

Chapter 1 (continued)

Chapter 2, Communication and Personal Identity

Week 3: February 8–February 14

Chapter 2 (continued)

Chapter 3, Perception and Communication

Week 4: February 15–February 21

(No school Monday - President's Day Holiday)

Intro to Research

Chapter 3 (continued)

Journals 1 and 2 (DUE: _____)

Week 5: February 22–February 28

Review for Exam 1

Exam 1 (covers Chapters 1–3) (DATE: _____)

Week 6: February 29–March 6

Chapter 4, The World of Words

Week 7: March 7–March 13

Chapter 4 (continued)

Chapter 5, The World Beyond Words

Week 8: March 14–March 20

Chapter 5 (continued)

Chapter 6, Mindful Listening

JOURNALS 3 and 4 (DUE: _____)

Week 9: March 21–March 27

Chapter 6 (continued)

Review for Exam 2

Exam 2 (Chapters 4–6) (DATE: _____)

Week 10: March 28–April 3

Spring Break – No Class this Week

Week 11: April 4–April 10

Chapter 7, Emotions and Communication

Week 12: April 11–April 17

Chapter 7 (continued)

Chapter 8, Communication Climate

Week 13: April 18–April 24

Journals 5 and 6 (DUE: _____)

Chapter 8 (continued)
Chapter 9, Managing Conflict in Relationships

Week 14: April 25–May 1

Chapter 9 (continued)

Relationship Papers (Due: _____)

Week 15: May 2–May 8

Chapter 10–12 highlights (specific readings will be announced in class)

Wrap Up

Week 16 – Finals: Thursday, May 12, 10:10-12:10

Exam 3 (Chapters 7–9)