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# COMX 102.01: Interpersonal Skills in the Workplace

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**THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA-MISSOULA  
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY  
DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FALL 2018 COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE:** COMX 102, Interpersonal Communication in the Workplace

**SEMESTER CREDITS:** 1

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**PROFESSOR NAMES:** This is a team taught course which will provide you with a wide range of expertise in the topics covered in this course. Each course session will be taught by a different member of our Communication faculty: Jen Geist-Quigley, Kim Reiser, Allison Sullivan, and Cassandra Hemphill.

**E-MAIL ADDRESSES:** [Kim.Reiser@umontana.edu](mailto:Kim.Reiser@umontana.edu), [Jennifer.Geist@umontana.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Geist@umontana.edu); [Allison.Sullivan@umontana.edu](mailto:Allison.Sullivan@umontana.edu); [Cassandra.Hemphill@umontana.edu](mailto:Cassandra.Hemphill@umontana.edu)

**OFFICE HOURS:** By Appointment

### **COURSE RATIONALE**

Beebe, Beebe and Redmond (2014) 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” (p.2). Beebe et al. explain that “it is through these interactions with others that we develop interpersonal relationships” (p.2). Our communication encounters create our identities. In addition, communication defines our relationships with friends, family, loved ones, and colleagues. Therefore, our understanding of interpersonal communication and the role we play in it will not only contribute to our sense of well-being and success in personal relationships, but to our success in work relationships as well. Furthermore, Beebe et al. (2014) write that communication affects the quality of our physical and emotional health. In fact, 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.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The study of Attitudes in the Workplace exposes students to interpersonal communication in the workplace. This course will introduce students to interpersonal communication theory which can be applied to a workplace environment. Students will learn effective communication strategies to interact with others in a more satisfying way. Learning how to interact in a healthy and productive manner is paramount to success in all aspects of a person’s career, as well as in their personal lives.

### **STUDENT PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES:**

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

1. Understand relational meaning of what we say both verbally and nonverbally,

and the effect this has on professional relationships.

2. Practice skills in listening reflectively, attentively, and more empathetically.
3. Recognize passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive and assertive behaviors and learn how to deal more effectively with them through conflict management skills.
4. Understand how the quality of communication directly affects the quality of relationships and ultimately the quality of life.
5. Identify practical skills geared towards improving communication in the workplace.
6. Apply interpersonal communication skills to technological environments.

**GRADING:**

Quizzes – 50%

Substantive Discussions – 50%

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

**QUIZ MAKEUP POLICY:**

Quiz make-ups will not be allowed. Please plan ahead. You are provided with a week following each class period to complete each quiz in Moodle. In addition, students will be reminded of the time frame for each quiz in class. It is your responsibility to keep track of the course schedule and regular announcements.

If you encounter “technical difficulties” with a quiz, you must notify the appropriate faculty member by email the day of the quiz & retake it within 48 hours of the quiz date.

**DISABILITIES AND SPECIFIC LEARNING NEEDS:**

Please inform us as soon as possible if you have any disabilities or circumstances that may require special consideration. It is your responsibility to inform us, at the onset of this course, of any disability and the ways that you and the DSS have determined are necessary to accommodate your needs. We are happy to work with you in order to achieve your goals for this course. We will expect to receive a letter from DSS documenting your requested accommodations.

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:**

All students must practice academic honesty. Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Specifically, you are not allowed to give or receive assistance on assignments or tests. All your work must be completed independently, unless it is group assigned. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at

<http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Since there are only four class periods that comprise this course, attendance is mandatory to receive a passing grade in the class.

**STUDENT CONDUCT:**

Please conduct yourself in a way that promotes learning for all students in the classroom (i.e. do not use language that might offend others, use laptops for note taking only, avoid disclosing too much personal information, turn off cell phones, absolutely no text messaging, and avoid monopolizing class discussion).

**COURSE GRADES:**

**QUIZZES- 200 TOTAL POINTS**

There will be four quizzes administered in this course. Each instructor will post a quiz in Moodle following her course session. Quizzes will cover the reading that was required prior to that course session as well as the material covered during it. Each quiz will be made available in Moodle immediately following that course session until the end of the day prior to the following class period (e.g. Friday at 11:59 p.m.). Once you open a quiz, you will have two hours to complete it. Be sure to take the quiz at a time that is free from distractions. Each quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice questions (worth 2 points each), 20 true false questions (worth 1 point each) and one short essay question (worth 10 points).

**PARTICIPATION- 300 TOTAL POINTS**

Participation will be assessed out of 75 points a class session. Students will engage in a self-assessment reflecting on their participation prior to and during that class session for 30 of these points. We encourage you to view the self-assessment prior to your first meeting (HINT: logging into Moodle prior to class is part of your participation assessment). You can find the self-assessment under Course Information on our Moodle page. The remaining 45 points will be comprised of completion of group or individual activities in class.

\*COURSE POLICIES ARE APPLIED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE INSTRUCTOR.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

There are two online textbooks we will be utilizing for reading in the course. Your professors will use Moodle to post specific page numbers and/or chapters they are requiring you read prior to attending each class. You can find the links to these texts under the "Course Information" heading in the Moodle shell for this course.

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

**All sessions will be held in Rm 338 in the Missoula College building 1205 E. Broadway.**

**Session 1** (September 8, 8:30-11:50)-Led by Professor Jen Geist-Quigley  
Topics: Communication Models, Self-Disclosure, Perception, and Communicating with Technology

Questions pertaining to this class session can be emailed to  
[jennifer.geist@umontana.edu](mailto:jennifer.geist@umontana.edu)

**Session 2** (September 15, 8:30-11:50)-Led by Kim Reiser  
Topics: Words, Assertiveness, and Relationship Levels of Meaning

Questions pertaining to this class session can be emailed to  
[kim.reiser@umontana.edu](mailto:kim.reiser@umontana.edu)

**Session 3** (September 22, 8:30-11:50)-Led by Allison Sullivan  
Topics: Nonverbals and Listening

Questions pertaining to this class session can be emailed to  
[allison.sullivan@umontana.edu](mailto:allison.sullivan@umontana.edu)

**Session 4** (September 29, 8:30-11:50)-Led by Cassandra Hemphill  
Topics: Feedback, Conflict Management, and Ethics

Questions pertaining to this class session can be emailed to  
[cassandra.hemphill@umontana.edu](mailto:cassandra.hemphill@umontana.edu)