

Interpersonal Communication (COM 162)

Western Connecticut State University

Section 01: 8:00-9:15am M&W
BR 208**Professor:** Dr. Jessica Eckstein
Office Hours: M&W 10:15-10:45am
(in BR 225) Tues 1:00-5:00pm**Email:** jessicommclass@gmail.com**Website:** <http://www.jessicaeckstein.com/teaching>**Course Description**

A focus on basics of interpersonal communication, development of interaction skills between two or more individuals, and identification of pitfalls. Lectures, discussion, readings, and classroom activities emphasize practice and theory of relational communication to better interpersonal skills. Three SHs in this class (2 classes/wk) = approx. 40 hrs. in class *and* for each hour inside class, about 2 hrs. outside of class (roughly, 80 additional hrs. in the session) working on assignments/studying.

Materials

To the extent feasible (and legal), I want to save you \$. Thus, all assigned materials (e.g., readings, films) are accessible from my website. Lectures are a primary source of new content/info in my courses, so I don't provide full copies of them; you must come to class to get that material. To maximize the content covered (and because I go fast!), I minimize the amount you have to record; available slides are fill-in-the-blank and should be brought to class for corresponding lectures.

What do I expect from you?

- 1) **ATTENTION.** Listen and comprehend. I won't repeat myself – either in class or in my office hours. Feel free to ask for clarity, but not redundancy. As a result, I won't tolerate anyone detracting from classmates' abilities to learn.
- 2) **PREPARATION.** Come to class ready to discuss the day's content.
- 3) **PARTICIPATION.** My classrooms are active learning environments; “organized chaos” will exist. Class succeeds to the extent you participate and engage – and both are expected.
- 4) **ENGAGEMENT.** There is no silencing in this class; all are expected to speak and express ideas freely and respectfully. Everyone's ideas are important to consider, regardless of bias. I will play “devil's advocate” to provoke discussion.
- 5) **RESPECT.** I expect you to respect the safety and overall well-being of individuals in the classroom. All are expected to help create an atmosphere of caring, concern, fun, and energy!

What can you expect from me?

- * For each class, I will be fully prepared & work hard to engage you in a stimulating & interactive manner.
- * I will work to provide assignments, discussions, and in-class activities to challenge your thinking.
- * I will be available to you through email and office hours.
- * I will provide clear and concise instructions on all assignments & promptly return them to you graded.

By remaining in this class after the first day, you are providing passive consent that...

- You acknowledge reading & understanding all syllabus details/policies; they are non-negotiable.
- You accept that material in this course will be *disturbing*, *controversial*, *offensive*, and/or may otherwise *make you very uncomfortable*; that is the nature of this course (& critical thinking).

If you can't agree to these conditions, you will take a different section of this course.

DEADLINES-DUE DATES: All assignments must be turned in ON or BEFORE the due dates. Late assignments will not be accepted. Do everything early, because technological difficulties do NOT excuse missing assignments. All work should be turned in typed, via email, received prior to the class period it's due. I only accept .doc, .docx, or .odt file attachments. Any other format (including email pasting) will not be counted.

PARTICIPATION: This course is designed with various projects to mirror the real world, where showing up and looking interested are mandatory. Missed class means in-class activities can't be made-up. Missing class on days take-home work is assigned means you are responsible for getting the info from a classmate; it's still due when scheduled. My office hours exist to help students understand concepts - not to re-cover material you missed. **Texting, sleeping, reading, doing other-class homework are not acceptable in this class. Doing any of these things (and trust me, I always see you), will result in an *automatic absence* for that day. When using a laptop to take notes, you'll need to email me your full lecture notes you took on it immediately after class.** The student Code of Conduct outlines expected behavior (http://www.wcsu.edu/stuaffairs/PDFDOCS/Student_Code_of_Conduct.pdf). *Any sort of disruption will not be tolerated. If considered to be threatening or otherwise disruptive in the course – at the discretion of the professor – student/s will be asked to leave. Failure to leave when asked by the professor will result in WCSU security being called and may result in automatically failing the course. *There may be extra credit opportunities provided throughout the semester – both in and outside of class. I will present these to you. Don't ask for extra credit; no one gets it when anyone asks. **

ATTENDANCE: Absences do not excuse students from assignments due on the date of their absence. I do realize there are times when you simply cannot be in class so 2 absences, ***(excused or unexcused)*** are allowed without penalty. I do not need *or want* documentation, notes, or phone calls...just use these freebies judiciously, if at all. Be wise – this is where grades are impacted most. Attendance is taken every class period and you will be graded on participation. **If you miss a class, you are responsible for the material we covered that day. Do not ask me to re-cover the class; get the material from a classmate.** This a *very* condensed class that begins on time; walking in consistently late not only affects your knowledge, but other students' as well. If you are *significantly late* (i.e., I have already started lecturing), you will be noted as such. I understand we all have days when we are just running late, so your tardiness will only affect you if it becomes habitual; when you have accumulated **more than 2-3 significantly late days on the attendance roster, you will receive a deduction on your participation points. Habitual tardiness equates to an absence, as does leaving class early. Each absence above your "freebies" results in a deduction of 15 pts. from your overall score.** You're responsible for your own withdrawal by the deadline; to issue you a W, you must personally find/fill out the withdrawal form and get my signature before November (for Fall courses) or April (for Spring courses).

PLAGIARISM: It's your responsibility to not only abstain from cheating (i.e., academic dishonesty of any kind), but also to avoid making it possible for others to cheat. Submission of someone else's work (in literal word or thought) as one's own is plagiarism; *others' info must be said in your work, or it's plagiarizing!* First incident: "0" on assignment. Second offense: course failure, class dismissal, officially reported.

WRITING: *All writing assignments should be typed (Times New Roman, 12 size font) and carefully proofread for errors.* Both quality of writing style and substance of ideas will be graded; meaning and importance of ideas are inseparable from the language through which they are conveyed. A paper with significant typos, grammar errors, poor organization, lack of clarity, or NOT typed will be turned back to the student without a grade. *In other words, if I have a difficult time reading your college-level paper, I can't grade it for a college course.* Take the time to make all assignments acceptable at a **college level.**

We use APA writing style on all assignments; APA citation must be provided whenever you refer to the words, ideas, statistics or other information provided by another author. The Writing Lab (in Haas Library), managed by the English Department, is a place where students can improve all aspects of writing: development, style, organization, grammar and mechanics. <http://www.wcsu.edu/writinglab/>

ACCESSIBILITY: As it's my desire to have all students included, it is a student's responsibility to let me know of any needs to aid course participation. Let me know as soon as possible if special accommodations are needed due to disability. Students with disabilities should contact the coordinator of disability services at (203) 837-8225 or 837-8221 to discuss reasonable accommodations.

Grades are earned, not given!

Simply meeting the requirements of an assignment *may* garner you a C. Also, time spent does not equal time earned. *Excellence* is rewarded, *effort* is not (though it is appreciated ☺).

A = Superior work. Greatly exceeds requirements. Outstanding levels of creativity, skill, initiative, and/or effort. *Elicits the "excellent, really excellent" comment.*

B = Good work/above average. Shows substantial creativity, skills, initiative, and/or effort. Goes beyond the minimal requirements of the assignment. *Elicits the "nicely done" comment and gets me telling other professors that you guys are doing really nice work and I am so proud of you!*

C = Average work. Meets the requirements in every aspect, but does not exceed requirements. I expect this from this assignment. *Elicits the "OK, they did the work" comment.*

D = Deficient. Meets some requirements, but deficient in others. *Elicits the "hmmm, I wonder if they waited till the last minute to do this?" comment.* I needed to drink during/after just to get through reading it. A good thing to do when you get this grade is to meet with me. I really DO want you to pass this class.

F = Poor. Deficient in most or all requirements. *Elicits the "well, they blew this assignment off" or "Do they think I am stupid that they are going to get points for this?" comment from me.* Again – a MUST is to see me!! I really DO want you to pass this class.

TO EARN CREDIT:

(Please keep track of your own grades. You can use the grid provided on the last page of this syllabus. That way, you will always know what you are getting in the course and will never need to ask. ☺)

Participation Activities & Assignments: (640 pts)

This course is interactive in nature and requires class participation. You will be required to *actively* demonstrate effective communication skills. You're expected to participate in class *prepared* from the class materials. In addition to assessing your level of active involvement in the course on a day-to-day basis, other "negative" things (e.g., tardiness, sleeping, texting/phone use, poor attitudes, hostility/rudeness toward me or your classmates, and inappropriate behaviors) will also bring down your overall participation score.

Throughout the class, you'll be asked to do exercises in class to reinforce what we're learning. Outside of class, you'll also be assigned brief works related to topics currently being covered in class. These will provide an opportunity to participate with class concepts without necessarily sharing them with your classmates through evidence and application to your own life. Don't forget – all submissions must be typed & emailed as .doc or equivalent attachments.

Mini-Reviews: (12 @ 30 pts = 360 pts)

There will be 13 mini-reviews. This allows you a better opportunity to do well on them by not having to cover a vast amount of information. Reviews encourage mastery of the concepts in the interpersonal field (both from lectures and your assigned readings). You'll be able to drop 1 mini-review (with the lowest score), for a total of 12 that count toward your grade. Mini-reviews cannot be made up if missed.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

		COVERED	DUE BEFORE CLASS	DOING IN CLASS
Aug 29	M	Intro to Class COM & IPC Overviews		Comm. Gone Wrong Activity
Aug 31	W	Perception of Others Perception of Self	Syllabus Quiz	Mini-Review #1 Self-Monitoring Scale & React.
Sep 5	M	NC – Labor Day	Pre-Scale	
Sep 7	W	Identity		Identity Activity
Sep 12	M	Interpersonal Meaning-Sex/Gender	IPBSRI Scale & Reaction	Mini-Review #2 Gender Hunt Assigned
Sep 14	W _(irb)	Gender Hunt Workday		
Sep 19	M	Communication Gender	Gender Hunt	
Sep 21	W	Interpersonal Cultural Differences		Mini-Review #3 Culture Presentation Assigned
Sep 26	M	Interpersonal Cultural Differences	Culture Presentation	
Sep 28	W	The Listening Process Effective Listening		Mini-Review #4 Language Journal Assigned
Oct 3	M	Ineffective Listening		Listening Activity
Oct 5	W	Verbals Verbal vs. Nonverbal (<i>Deception clips</i>)	“My” Language Journal	Mini-Review #5
Oct 10	M	Nonverbal Basics Uses of Nonverbals	Deception clips Worksheet	Mini-Review #6
Oct 12	W _(irb)	<i>Faces</i>		
Oct 17	M	Emotion Basics Emotion Uses	Faces Worksheet	Mini-Review #7
Oct 19	W	<i>Why Dogs Laugh...</i>		Debate Journal Assigned
Oct 24	M	Animal-Human Debate	Why Dogs Laugh Worksheet Debate Journal	Debate Mini-Review #8
Oct 26	W	Expectancy Violations		Violations Activity
Oct 31	M	Power		Power Analysis Assigned
Nov 2	W	Power Analysis Workday		Advice Paper Assigned
Nov 7	M	Intimacy Basics Love	Power Analysis	Mini-Review #9 Love Scale (Reaction Assigned)
Nov 9	W _(irb)	Advice Paper Workday	Love Reaction	
Nov 14	M	Dialectics Turning Points	Advice Paper Part I	Mini-Review #10 Dialectics & T.P. Activities Conflicts Assigned
Nov 16	W	Conflict Theory & Goals Conflict Styles	Conflict Scale & Reaction	Mini-Review #11 Conflict Activity
Nov 21	M	Criticism		Criticism Activity Abuse Myths Reflection Assigned
Nov 23	W	NC – Thanksgiving		
Nov 28	M	Basic Violence - Concepts	Abuse Myths Reflection	Mini-Review #12
Nov 30	W	Understudied Types/Areas		
Dec 5	M	Final Day & Advice Paper Debriefing	Advice Paper Part II	Mini-Review #13 Final Reflection Assigned
Dec 7	W _(irb)	Final Reflection Workday		
Finals Week Dec 12-16 th		Final Reflection due to me before Monday, December 12th		

RECORD OF MY GRADES:

	Total Possible	My Scores
PARTICIPATION EXERCISES	640	
“Comm. Gone Wrong” Activity	5	
Pre-Scale	20	
Syllabus Quiz	5	
Self-Monitoring Scale & Reaction	20	
Identity Activity	5	
IPBSRI Scale & Reaction	20	
Gender Hunt	50	
Cultural Presentation	50	
Listening Activity	5	
“My” Language Journal	25	
<i>Deception</i> clips Worksheet	20	
<i>Faces</i> Worksheet	20	
<i>Why Dogs Laugh</i> Worksheet	20	
Debate Journal	25	
Debate Activity	10	
Violations Activity	5	
Power Analysis	25	
Love Scales & Reaction	20	
Advice Paper – Part I	25	
Dialectics Activity	5	
Turning Point Activity	5	
Conflict Activity	5	
Conflict Styles Scale & Reaction	20	
Criticism Activity	5	
Abuse Myths Reflection	25	
Final Reflection	40	
Advice Paper – Part II	100	
Overall Participation Quality	60	
MINI-REVIEWS (Drop lowest)	360	
#1 – Interpersonal & Comm. Overviews	30	
#2 – Perceptions & Identities	30	
#3 – Sex & Gender	30	
#4 – Culture	30	
#5 – Listening	30	
#6 – Language & Verbals	30	
#7 – Nonverbals	30	
#8 – Emotions	30	
#9 – Expectancy Violations, Power	30	
#10 – Intimacy, Love	30	
#11 – Dialectics, Turning Points	30	
#12 – Conflict, Criticism	30	
#13 – Violence & Other Understudied Things	30	
Extra Credit (if offered)		

MY TOTAL POINTS = _____/1000

SCALE

90-100%	=	A	=	900-1000
80-89%	=	B	=	800-899
70-79%	=	C	=	700-799
60-69%	=	D	=	600-699
59% or below	=	F	=	599 or less