

Communication 2110: Interpersonal and Small Group Communication

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1:30 to 2:20 MWF in Elizabeth Hall 407
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Office Hours: Mon/Weds 12:30-1:30 p.m. Tues/Thurs: 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. and by appointment

Catalog Description

Explores the dynamics of verbal and nonverbal communication in personal relationships and small groups. The emphasis is on practical application of course content to enhance interpersonal relationships and to achieve competence as group members.

Course Description

Interpersonal and small group communication will be discussed in basic theory and practice. Awareness of personal communication skills will be critically examined through a variety of discussions and exercises. Individuals will be better prepared to participate and enhance involvement of interpersonal and small group encounters while increasing effective communication and productivity within the spoken word. The association of critical thinking, attention, persuasion, and leadership toward more effective decision-making and problem solving within work place and social groups/teams will be discussed and explored. While no prescriptive directions for improving your interpersonal relationships and group experiences will be presented, the course is intended to provide the opportunity to develop and enhance skills which may allow improved relationships at work and/or among personal lives (families and friends).

Becoming a well-educated person requires growing, evolving, enriching and refining oneself as a human being and contributing to a better world. Becoming well-educated involves learning to interact with the world around us as well as preparing for a career. Students satisfying the Humanities General Education requirement through COMM 2110 will gain skills, abilities, and/or increase understanding in three areas:

Area #1: Students will address critical thinking, cognitive learning, and problem solving skills (both individually and in groups).

Area #2: Students will improve or develop their knowledge and understanding of key themes and principles, key terminology, and the history, underlying theory and applicable ethical standards in the Communication discipline.

Area #3: Students will improve their ability to recognize and appreciate diverse thought and traditions (and their effects); and forge relationships with other disciplines and breadth areas (e.g., Sociology and Psychology).

Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Specific learning objectives of this course include an understanding of:

1. Develop poise and confidence in work place, home, and social situations.
2. Develop knowledge and practical understanding of communication processes, principles, and models within human interaction.
3. Apply improved listening skills.
4. Develop knowledge and practical understanding of small group discussions.
5. Develop knowledge and practical understanding of power and its use to influence individuals and group members.
6. Apply course information and skills to personal experiences in your career setting and to seek continued self-improvement.
7. Help the student develop a responsible attitude toward communication, and a fuller appreciation of the art of effective verbal facility.
8. Experience and develop group problem-solving communication skills that include attention acquisition and persuasion.
9. Develop an awareness and practical use of leadership behaviors and critical thinking skills through problem posing questions.

Course Format and Requirements: This course will combine a lecture and discussion style format. There will be some lecture and guided classroom discussions of the readings, and students will be expected to answer questions about the readings (i.e. the “Socratic method”). As seen below, the degree to which students provide in-class contributions will play a significant role in grade determination. **Therefore, each member of the class is expected to have read the assigned material for that day *prior* to class time** (what is listed below in the schedule for a particular day should be read prior to class that day). To encourage reading there will be a series of four exams spread throughout the semester. The exam questions are all multiple choice but may have more than one correct answer.

Grading Policies: The overall grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Attendance/Participation	10%
Exams	20%
Written Projects	30%
<u>Group Activities</u>	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%

94-100 = A	74-76= C
90-93 = A-	70-73= C-
87-89 = B+	67-69 = D+
84-86 = B	64-66 = D
80-83 = B-	60-63 = D -
77-79 = C+	00-59 = E

Course Content:

A. Attendance and Participation = 100 points (10%)

Part of being a group member is showing up and taking an active role in your learning. We will be covering a great deal of material in a short period of time, thus the expectation is that you be present and be active in class discussion and activities. Participation also means coming prepared with the exercises assigned completed and ready to discuss. One point will be given for each day student are in class. The remaining 60 points of this grade will be determined by the completion of assignments stated in the syllabus.

B. Examinations = 200 points (20%)

There will be four exams requiring the application of communication models, theories and principles of interpersonal and small group communication (true/false; multiple choice; etc.) Multiple correct responses are standard policy within all exams. Exams will consist of two parts. First, each group will work together on a collaborative exam, and will take the exam together. Immediately following each collaborative exam, individual accountability will be determined by a second, shorter individual accountability quiz; given to reach group member completing the quiz separately without group interaction. The individual accountability quiz will be objective and will cover exactly the same material as the collaborative exam. Your personal grade for these four exams will be determined as follows:

- If your individual score is higher than your groups score, you will receive the higher individual score for your exam grade. (Example: Your group earns a 42 on the group exam, but you earn a 45 on the individual exam. Your grade = 45).
- If your individual score is within five (5) points of your group's score, you will receive the higher group score for your exam grade. (Example: Your group earns a 42 on the group exam, but you earn a 39 on the individual exam. Your grade = 42.)
- If your individual score is more than five (5) points lower than your group's score, you will receive an average of the two scores for your exam grade. (Example: Your group earns a 42 on the group exam, but you earn a 36 on the individual exam. Your grade = 39 $[42+36=78/2=39]$).

Note: Any group member not present for the collaborative exam, or arriving more than five minutes after the collaborative exam has begun will take the individual exam separately from the group, receiving whatever score is earned (often significantly lower than the collaborative score for the same exam).

B. Three Written Projects...300 points (30%)

Each student must provide a written report on a topic provided by the instructor. The topic will be related to a pertinent issue stemming from class discussions.

Each written project is to be four-five (no less than three and three-quarter) typewritten pages and is due at a designated time during the semester (see schedule). The written projects shall be double spaced, and on one side only of 8.5 x 11 inch white paper. Maintain one-inch margins left, right, top, and bottom. A title page is unnecessary. Do not use large print (nothing larger than the print size used for this syllabus). Do not place written work in a folder or binder. Label all papers by single spacing on four lines in the upper left hand corner of the first page the following information: Student's name, instructor's name, class and section number, and assignment number. Staple once in the upper left hand corner of all multiple papers you submit.

C. Group Activities...400 points (40%)

Early in the semester the class shall divide into permanent teams for the purpose of participating in three specific group activities 1) in class group discussions; 2) a spontaneous group discussion; and 3) group service project.

These groups will provide students the opportunity to apply what they learn from readings and class discussion. At the same time, the group experience will become the site for learning about challenges associated with the “autonomy—connectedness” tension of group life. A major portion of **individual** grades will be determined by how well the **group** performs on group examinations and projects. **Personal success in this course is dependent on the performance of teammates, as well as individual endeavor.**

In-Class Group Discussions (50 points): A series of small group discussions will be completed in class, but unannounced. One particular discussion will be scored. The group will be docked 25 points per group member failing to attend; and completing the required work within the group discussion/activity.

Outside of Class Group Discussion (50 points): Group members must be prepared to 1) accept a concept/ problem and/or issue presented by the instructor; 2) maintain a discussion for a minimum 30 minutes (maximum 40 minutes) regarding that concept/problem and/or issue; and 3) exercise personal skills of improvisation, knowledge, opinion, critical thinking, verbal facility, interviewing, and problem solving/decision making concerning the proposed concept/problem and/or issue. Each team member will be evaluated on his or her participation and contribution within the group discussion; however, the group shall be scored as a single entity.

Group Service Project (300 points): The group/team will identify, plan, and execute a service project that can be accomplished within the Northern Utah area; reported; and then presented to the class and instructor at the end of the semester.

1. The scope of the project, how much time and effort required, the complexity of the project, impact on others, etc. A minimum of eight hours, per person, of delivered work/activity interdependently as a group, in addition to planning and preparation time is required. (100 points)

2. Degree of participation by all group members in the planning, execution, and reporting of the project. (40 points)
3. The degree of reliable task interdependence required accomplishing the goals of the project (60 points.)
4. The quality of the group's written report (7-10 pages) summarizing and evaluating the group's **process** and **outcomes** for the project. (50 points)
5. The quality of the group's 10-15 minute presentation about the team's **process** and **outcomes** for the project and its documentation. (50 points)

Service activities include Habitat for Humanity; United Way; community or domestic violence programs; homeless shelters; soup kitchens; Sub for Santa; Make-A-Wish Foundation; Big Brothers, Big Sisters; etc. Research activities and reports that assist and benefit the university, business organizations, or service entities such as those listed above is greatly encouraged.

Group service projects must adhere to all appropriate Weber State University risk management policies.

The planning of your project, the report, and presentation should hold fast to the principles, issues, problem solving, and decision-making skills learned in the course that effective teams use in organizations. Teammates will assess the progress in building a real group and the success of achieving group goals. The team's written project report and oral presentation should both include a thorough explanation of the group's experience throughout the semester (**maintain a weekly, if not daily, log or diary of the group's development and performance**) and include the **process** the group experienced in planning and executing the project challenge as well as the actual **outcome** or product produced.

Process includes a) a description of how the group developed from onset to conclusion; b) a description of how the team identified and selected its project; and c) an analysis of how the group created climate and managed its conflicts. The explanation of the group's process may include reference to the phases of development, arrival of ideas for the project, goal(s) establishment, roles members utilized, emergence of leadership, conflicts experienced, conflict resolution, problem solving and decision-making processes.

Project **outcomes** include a description of the project itself with appropriate documentation (i.e. photographs, videos, letters from associates, or testimony from those associated with the service project, benefactors, etc.) as well as an evaluation of the group's effectiveness in achieving its goal within the project.

All group members must be involved in the oral groups have included videotape, photographs, poster boards, PowerPoint presentations presentation to document the

project. Superb and memorable presentations from prior classes include skits or re-enactments of parts of the project, etc. The Supplemental Materials Workbook include guidelines and instructions regarding Small Group Presentations to an Audience (symposium, forum, or panel discussion).

Class time is limited. Considerable time working outside of class is mandatory for successful completion of the group service project. **Meetings, gatherings, and activities away from the classroom and classroom hours is essential as part of the course preparation/ homework. Continued registration in the course must be terminated should individuals discover group time is too limited to schedule and fulfill group responsibilities, or service projects too difficult.**

Group Project Proposal: The group service project proposal is a two-three page proposal required before the team actually begins to engage its service activity. The proposal is intended for the group to assess and summarize accomplishments up to a designated point in the process of project development. The report must contain specific goals the group has established for the semester. The proposal will provide an opportunity for the instructor to give the group feedback and coaching regarding the project. **Proceeding with the project before receiving instructor feedback runs the risk of making errors that may negatively affect team performance.** This proposal is part of the 300 gradable points to be earned by the group.

However, each exam is required to pass the class—failure to complete any of the exams will result in failure of the course, not just a zero on the exam in question.

Participation: Attendance and participation are *not* the same thing. Participation requires contributing to class discussions and asking questions, while attendance is being physically present in the classroom. Half of life is showing up—so if you attend class regularly you will start with a baseline 50% of your overall participation grade. Participating in class will help raise that portion of your grade above the 50% baseline. Attendance is expected—so failure to attend class regularly will reduce your participation below the 50% baseline. *Multitasking during class (texting, Facebook, etc) is a distraction to you and other students, and is grounds for reducing your participation grade.* On the other hand, coming to office hours with questions will count toward class participation.

Re-grading: Instructors sometimes make mistakes in grading. For that reason, I will agree to re-grade exam or response paper, subject to a few restrictions. Please wait 24 hours after an item is returned to you before requesting a re-grade, and use that time to re-read the material covered by the quiz or response paper. (However, any request for a re-grade must be made within one week after the exam is returned to you, after which no regrading shall be done.) If, after re-reading the material, you feel that I overlooked or misunderstood a point you made, I ask that you prepare a one paragraph written statement (e.g. email) with your request, detailing what you believe I have overlooked or how you feel the grade is unfair. I will never penalize a request for re-grade by lowering your grade.

Student Code: All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Weber State University Student Code. Visit (http://www.weber.edu/ppm/Policies/6-22_StudentCode.html) for more information about the Weber State University Student Code. Violations of academic ethics and honesty include, but are not limited to, the following types of academic misconduct:

- Cheating, which includes copying another student's work or any actual or attempted use of materials or resources not authorized by the instructor for exams or assignments;

Please be aware that in this class cheating of any sort will result in a grade of zero on the assignment in question and may be grounds for failure of the course. Instances of academic misconduct will be documented in a memo and forwarded to the Chair of the Communication Department and Dean of Students for their records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please speak with the professor.

During exams, all electronic devices, including cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, etc., must be turned off and completely stowed out of reach, along with any notebooks or papers.

Disability Services: Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Services Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary. See the SSD website for more information: (<http://www.weber.edu/ssd/>)

Religious Observances: I will make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with exams or assignments. If you need an accommodation of any scheduled activity, due to a conflict with a religious holiday or observance, please let me know in writing (email) of the conflict during the first two weeks of the semester if possible, or as soon as possible after becoming aware of the conflict.

Class Decorum: We will be discussing potentially controversial subjects and you may vehemently disagree with something that is said by another student or perhaps even myself. However, part of respecting your colleagues is to honor differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Therefore, questions and comments by others should be treated with civility at all times. Your own opinions and arguments become stronger by considering alternative arguments seriously—consequently it is inappropriate to interrupt each other. Furthermore, it is only appropriate to address the substance of another person's argument, not the character of the person with which you disagree. Also, it is inappropriate to expect a student to explain or defend the views or positions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or political group with which they may be associated.

If you prefer an alternate name or gender pronoun please advise me of your preference (e.g. first day note cards or email) and I will happily honor your request. In addition please follow these in-class policies regarding decorum:

- ⤴ Please make every effort to come to class on time.
- ⤴ Please do not start putting your notebooks, etc, away until I dismiss class. If you must leave class early please alert me prior to class and sit near an exit.
- ⤴ Use electronics for course related purposes only. Facebook, Twitter, etc. will still be there after class (see Participation section above).
- ⤴ *If you miss class please obtain the notes from someone in class, review them and the readings for that day, then see me during office hours if you have any questions.*

- ⤴ If you have questions about the readings please raise them during class discussion. If your question is not answered, please see me during office hours or email me.
- ⤴ Weber State University is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and other forms of discrimination based upon race, color, ethnic background, national origin, religion, creed, age, lack of American citizenship, disability, status of Veteran of the Vietnam era, sexual orientation or preference or gender, including sexual/gender harassment. Specifically the University policy on sexual harassment prohibits both unwelcome sexual contact and unwanted sexual comments/language and includes an anti-retaliation policy to protect complainants. If you have questions regarding the University's policy against discrimination and harassment you may contact the university's Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity office (i.e. the AA/EO office) at 801-626-6239 if you face discrimination by faculty, staff or other students.

Counseling and Psychology Services:

College is a stressful time in your lives. On top of academic stresses such as exams, papers, presentations, reading, etc. you may also be struggling to balance work and family obligations, and many of you may also be dealing with illnesses of family members. Please know that if you are experiencing anxiety, depression, or grief there are University services available to assist you. Many of these services are free of charge to you as they are funded by student fees. The first step is just asking for help. So if you are struggling with depression, anxiety, relationship problems, academic or career uncertainty, identity confusion, loneliness, grief, or other concerns, the WSU Counseling & Psychological Services Center can help. Please call 801-626-6406 to schedule an appointment or visit <http://www.weber.edu/counselingCenter/> for more information.

Campus Closures:

If, for any reason, Weber State University must close the campus for an extended period of time, this course will continue online through Canvas.

Cancelled Classes:

If I need to cancel class unexpectedly, I will inform you via Canvas by posting an announcement. I would recommend that you set up your notifications so that you receive Canvas announcements immediately through your email so that you have as much notice as possible about class announcements (while I expect class cancellations will be exceedingly rare as I cannot recall ever cancelling class at the last minute, I also use the Canvas announcements for other more routine class communications regarding distributing review sheets, adjustments to course readings, drawing your attention to articles, etc).

Missing an Exam: If you absolutely must miss an exam due to medical or family emergency please be in touch with me as soon as possible (scheduled exam make ups for religious or athletic reasons should be arranged with the professor in the first two weeks of the semester). Please note, that I am much more sympathetic to those who contact me before missing the exam. You should also plan to document your emergency excuse (i.e. with a hospital or doctor's note), although I may waive this requirement if contacted prior to the exam. Granting make-up exams *is completely at the discretion of the instructor* without well-documented medical excuse of the student's or immediate family's illness or injury (i.e. children, spouse, or parents). Even if a makeup is granted the instructor reserves the right to penalize taking an exam late up to 75% of

your exam grade, especially if your request is after the fact, and is insufficiently explained and documented.

Success in this Class and Out of Class Consultation: The readings and concepts explored in this course are difficult, and students will need to carefully complete the reading assignments before class, come to class on a regular basis and take good notes, and participate fully in class discussion in order to be successful in the course. ***In addition, all students are welcome and encouraged to come to office hours, although students having trouble with the material should make an effort early on in the term to come to office hours, ask questions, and address ways of improving course performance. Please recall that attending office hours will count toward your participation grade.***

Course Texts and Materials:

One book is required reading and available at the Bookstore:

Johns, Becky 2013. *Connecting: Interpersonal and Small Group Communication – Second Edition* Weber State University

Additional readings listed on the schedule below will be posted on Canvas.

Timeline:

Week of	Topic	Assignments, Exams, Comments
August 26 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus Overview and Expectations • Team Building Exercise 	Due: No assignment due
August 28 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Brown Paper Bag Team Building Exercise 	Due: Introduction
August 30 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block Party - Team Building Exercise • Service Learning What is it? 	Due: Service Learning Paragraph
September 2 nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor Day No Class 	Due: No Assignment Due
September 4 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 [1.1-1.4] • Team Building Exercise – NASA Exercise 	Due: Interview of Peer
September 6 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 [1.4-1.9] • Team Building Exercise – One Step Beyond 	Due: Example Model of Communication
September 9 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter [2.1-2.4] • What Makes Up a Service Learning Proposal? 	Due: Teams Selected
September 11 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 2 [2.5-2.7] • Non-Verbal Communication 	Due: First Draft of Proposals

	Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication on a Global Scale 	
September 13 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 [3.1-3.3] • What are your inputs, throughputs and outputs? • Boundary Exercise 	Due: Weekly Meeting Time Due
September 16 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 [3.4-3.7] • What Are the Stages in Forming a Group? • Virtual Team Exercise 	Due: Service Learning Projects Proposals Due
September 18 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 [3.8-3.9] • History of Effective Teams and Ineffective Teams 	Due: Team Example
September 20 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam #1 Review 	Due: Questions for Exam
September 23 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam #1 	Due: No Assignment Due
September 25 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 [4.1-4.4] • Perceptions Impact On Reality 	Due: Perception Example
September 27 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 [4.5-4.7] • The Language of ‘Perceptions’ 	Due: Example of Word Associated with Perception
September 30 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 [5.1-5.4] • Barriers to Good Listening 	Due: Written Project #1 [4-5 pages]
October 2 nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 [5.5-5.6] • Verbal Responses In Becoming A Better Listener 	Due: Personal Listening Profile
October 4 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 [6.1-6.3] • Stanford Prison Study 	Due: Role Example
October 7 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 [6.4] • Characteristics of Leaders 	Due: What is a Leader Response?
October 9 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 [6.5-6.7] • Approaches to Leadership • Exam Prep 	Due: Leadership Approach Quiz
October 11 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam #2 	Due: No Assignments Due
October 14 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 [7.1-7.3] • The Power of Groupthink 	Due: Groupthink Example
October 16 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 [7.4-7.6] 	Due: Problem

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present Group Problem Solving Exercise 	Solving Exercise – Group Update & Status Report
October 18 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Break 	Due: No Assignments Due
October 21 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8 [8.1-8.3] • Why Conflict is Good 	Due: Assertive and Nonassertive Statements
October 23 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8 [8.4-8.7] • Managing Conflict in Constructive Ways 	Due: Conflict Example
October 25 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 [9.1] • What is Power 	Due: Most Powerful Exercise
October 28 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 [9.2] • Sources of Power 	Due: Perception of Power
October 30 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 [9.3-9.5] • Sources of Power Cont'd • Empowerment • Exam Review 	Due: Written Project #2 [4-5 pages]
November 1 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam #3 	Due: No Assignments Due
November 4 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10 [10.1-10.3] • Cooperation vs. Competition 	Due: Paragraph Response on Ethics
November 6 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10 [10.4-10.6] • Defensive vs. Supportive 	Due: Hidden Agendas
November 8 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10 [10.7-10.9] • Trust Exercise 	Due: Forgiveness Paragraph
November 11 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 11 [11.1-11.4] • Self-Presentation 	Due: Social Comparison Paragraph
November 13 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 11 [11.5-11.8] • I-Statements 	Due: Words Created for Emotion
November 15 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 11 [11.9-11.11] • Emotional Intelligence 	Due: Emotional IQ Quiz
November 18 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12 [12.1-12.2] • The Art of Attraction 	Due: Ad Example
November 20 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12 [12.3-12.5] • Self-Disclosure 	Due: Paragraph Response on Self-Disclosure
November 22 nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12 [12.6-12.7] • Bonding and Commitment 	Due: “Shared Experience

		Exercise”
November 25th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12 [12.8-12.11] • Relationship Repair 	Due: Written Project #3
November 27th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12 cont’d • Service Learning Presentation Expectations 	Due: No Assignments Due
November 29th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanksgiving Break 	Due: No Assignments Due
December 2nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Presentations 	Due: Lessons Learned
December 4th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Presentations 	Due: Lessons Learned
December 6th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Presentations 	Due: Lessons Learned
December 9th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam #4 [1:30 p.m. to 3:20 p.m.] 	Due: No Assignments Due

This syllabus is subject to revision at the discretion of the instructor by circulating an updated syllabus to the class via email and posting the new syllabus on Canvas. Reading assignments and schedule may be adjusted through in-class announcements.