

## **Interpersonal Communication, COMST 2656**

**Spring, 2006 TH 9:30-10:45 Maag 130**

Dr. Cary Horvath

office hours: (Bliss 2011) TH: 1:00-3:00, W: 2:00-3:00

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### **Catalogue Description**

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*Interpersonal Communication.* An examination of the skills necessary to develop, maintain, and evaluate one-to-one relationships. Through practical experiences from everyday life, the class examines what occurs when one person communicates with another. 3sh.

### **Cary's Course Description**

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The purpose of this course is to acquaint you with interpersonal communication theory and research. Upon completion of this course, you should have developed an understanding of the nature of communication during face-to-face encounters.

This class will specifically focus on your self-discovery: the way you perceive, talk, and listen to others, the rules you follow, and what errors you typically make. We will talk about how relationships with friends, family, and significant others fulfill you, how they develop, and how culture, conflict, and power confound them. This class devotes a considerable amount of time in this class to gender issues and interpersonal communication. Throughout this course, the guiding principle of our interaction will be that all of us can improve our communication with others through awareness and competence strategies.

In a complex and civilized society, it is essential that we become competent communicators. This course will introduce you to methods of competent interpersonal communication that will be valuable to you at work, at home, and at play.

### **My Policies**

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- Read your syllabus and assignment directions carefully. "I didn't know!" is never an acceptable excuse.
- Attendance is expected. You may miss two days this semester without penalty. Additional absences will result in a penalty of 10 points per day. Any late assignments will receive a penalty of one letter grade per class period. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this policy. I reserve the right to consider attendance when final grades are close.
- Do not ask me for missed information. It is wise to exchange contact information with an in-class neighbor in order to secure information, handouts, and such, should you miss class.
- Be on time for class. I have little tolerance for tardiness. Always show respect to others around you with attention and kindness.

I will not tolerate plagiarism and cheating and will prosecute in strict accordance with YSU policy. Remember that this applies to spoken and written work.

## **Texts**

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DeVito, J. A. (2001). *The interpersonal communication book* (10th ed.). New York: Longman.

Frey, J. (2005). *A million little pieces*. New York: Anchor.

## **Evaluation**

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Your final grade is based on your knowledge and application of interpersonal communication concepts:

3 tests	(1 = 90, 2 = 70, 3 = 90) 250 points	(50%)
1 interpretive paper	50 points	(10%)
2 class activities	25 points each / 50 points	(10%)
3 journal collections	50 points each / 150 points	(30%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>500 points</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

## **Assignment Descriptions**

### **Tests**

KNOW YOUR STUFF! Three exams will constitute half of your grade in this class. All material that we cover will be fair game, including texts, and any supplemental material discussed or handed out in class. You will have to keep up on readings to know the content well. Make sure to clarify any questions that you have about text material before the test. I will post a review sheet at least one week before the tests. Expect a mixture of (mostly) multiple choice, some true-false, matching, short answer, and one to two short essay questions on each exam.

### **Interpretive Paper**

For this paper, you will apply the content of one text unit (randomly assigned) to the novel *A million little pieces*. Explain how you saw the characters exemplify concepts from texts. Be specific when referring to concepts from class and events in the texts, but don't include unnecessary quotes throughout your paper to fill space. The paper will be graded for style, as well as the thoughtful and thorough nature of your analysis. The paper should be 5 full - 7 full pages in length (no more, no less), using a 10 or 12 font, double spaced, with one-inch margins all around. Please staple your cover page in the upper left corner, and do not place the paper in a cover or binder. Your grade will also include a brief, informal oral report.

### **Class Activities**

Two in-class activities will be graded this term. Both will consist of working (interpersonally!) with a partner to apply text concepts to selected videos.

## **Journals**

You will generate a typed journal to be turned in on hard copy. This journal is designed for you to relate text concepts to your life experience. Important: I do NOT wish to read repetition of what was said in the text or in general class discussion (i.e., defining concepts). I DO wish to read descriptions of your communication with others (i.e., specific situations, exchanges, and events) that are examples of specific content. There are no "right" or "wrong" entries.

I will post the journal assignments/questions. Guidelines:

- Put journal entries in a 1" binder.
- Personalize your journal: Decorate your binder cover and include photos somewhere within. Feel free to include additional scrap booking materials.
- Respond to and post your entries IN ORDER.
- Double-space your entries and DO NOT add unnecessary spaces anywhere else.
- Use New York Times 12 font, with one-inch margins all around.
- Each question should be answered FULLY in your journal, complete with examples from your life experience.
- In general, each open-ended question demands at least ½ (11-12 lines) page worth of response. I invite you to write more than the minimum required. If you have more to say or simply find pleasure in expressing thoughts this way, please continue. You might also find that you want to write about something in the unit that I didn't request for the journal assignment. Go ahead and add it after your completed assignment. Feel free to do so whenever something intrigues you. However, remember to keep journal entries relevant to the current text unit. (This is not the place to write about the great book you read last night, who you think will win the World Series, or how you hate your carpet. However, describing a wonderful discussion with someone about your book, a fight with your dad over the World Series, or the fact that your carpet sends a bad message about you could be appropriate in different units.)

Your journal entries will be evaluated for clear labeling and order, meeting the suggested page requirements, and for the thorough nature of your answers (only that you answer each part of each selected question). Obviously, your journal will not be anonymous, but it will be confidential; I will not discuss your entries with anyone. Be honest.

Have fun this semester!  
Learn something about yourself.  
Take pride in your skills.  
Know that everyone has faults -- forgive yourself.  
Help others improve themselves with patience and kindness.  
Keep improving your own communication with others.

Tentative schedule: Spring 2006

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
<b>Part One: Interpersonal Preliminaries</b>		
#1	1/17 Course Introduction, Assign Units	1/19 Unit 1 - Universals and Axioms
#2	1/24 Unit 2 Culture	1/26 Culture
#3	1/31 Unit 3 Self	2/2 Self
#4	2/7 Unit 4 Perception	2/9 <b>Class Activity 1</b>
#5	2/14 Unit 5 Listening	2/16 Listening
#6	2/21 <b>Journal part one</b>	2/23 <b>Exam 1 (part one)</b>
<b>Part Two: Verbal and Nonverbal Messages</b>		
#7	2/28 Unit 6 - Universals of Verbal and Nonverbal	3/2 Universals, Unit 7 - Verbal Messages
#8	3/7 Verbal	3/9 Unit 8 - Nonverbal Messages
* * *	* * * * <b>S P R I N G</b> * * *	* * <b>B R E A K</b> * * * * * * * * * *
#9	3/21 Nonverbal	3/23 Unit 9 - Messages and Conversation
#10	3/28 <b>Journal part two</b>	3/30 <b>Exam 2 (part two)</b>
<b>Part Three: Interpersonal Relationships</b>		
#11	4/4 Unit 10 - Relationship Universals	4/6 Unit 11: Development and Deterioration
#12	4/11 Development and Deterioration <b>Class Activity 2</b>	4/13 Unit 12 - Communication Contexts
#13	4/18 Contexts	4/20 Unit 13 – Conflict
#14	4/25 Unit 14 – Power	4/27 Catch up
#15	5/2 <b>Journal part three</b>	5/4 <b>Interpretive Paper Due w/brief reports</b>
<b>FINAL</b>	Date TBA <b>Exam 3 (part three)</b>	