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# CMST 2318: Interpersonal Communication

Fall 2021

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**Dr. Dennis Cali**

**Syllabus**

**Office** CAS 227  
**Location:**  
**Office Phone:** 903-566-7440  
**Office Hours:** Mondays 2:30-4:40 and by  
appointment. *Always email first  
please!*

**Texts (Required):**

Ronald B. Adler and Russell F. Proctor II (2017). *Looking Out, Looking In*, 15<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston, MA: Cengage Learning).

Sherry Turkle. (2015). *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*. (New York: Penguin Press).

***Welcome to the Senior Seminar in Interpersonal Communication!*** You have embarked on a field of communication studies that will fascinate you as it enlightens you to role of communication within relationships and other interpersonal exchanges. And you could not have chosen a more suitable time to take this course than at this point in your studies and at your level of personal development! As we “look in and look out,” I’m looking forward to all the personal and interpersonal discoveries we’ll make together as we examine interpersonal communication concepts, theories, and practice!

## **Course Objectives**

This course seeks to familiarize students with principles of interpersonal communication and to equip students with communication skills for improving interpersonal relationships. Through lectures, reading, class exercises and presentations, the course attempts to increase students’ awareness of their own present ways of communicating and of the influences particular communication behaviors exert on interpersonal transactions. More specifically, the Student Learning Outcome that this course seeks to achieve is:

**Practice Application:** The student will be able to analyze how communication theory and/or research function in society, contribute to solving real-world problems, and how communication phenomena manifest outside of the classroom. The application of communication theory and/or research is correctly applied in the student’s analysis to propose logical conclusions and solutions to address the identified problem.

The “Listening Assignment” will be signature assignment for achieving and assessing the above Student Learning Outcome.

Toward fulfilling this major outcome of this course, students minimally must be able to demonstrate their ability to:

- ✓ identify the elements and characteristics of the transactional model of communication
- ✓ identify the content and relational aspects of messages
- ✓ recognize how people’s psychological make-up, personal needs, interests, biases, social roles, culture, and the like shape the way that they perceive others and communicate with them;
- ✓ engage in perception-checking communication
- ✓ understand characteristics of language
- ✓ identify and describe non-verbal communication
- ✓ understand listening response styles and apply empathic listening principles in a class session with a classmate;
- ✓ understand the effects on conversation that social media have wrought and to explore solutions.

### **Graded Assignments and Weighted Values**

“Role Reversal” Assignment	20%
Listening Assignment	20%
Specialized Population Report	20%
Reclaiming Conversation Chapter Report	10%
Participation/Attendance	10%
Final Exam	20%

To figure the weight of a graded assignment, multiply the numeric value of that grade by the percentage that assignment carries. For example, if you scored a B on your Listening Assignment, you would multiply 3.0 (the numeric value of a B) times 20% (the percentage the exam carries) and arrive at .60. At the end of the semester, each graded assignment will be tallied and divided by 100 to determine your overall grade. That number grade will be converted to a letter grade according to the scale on Canvas.

### **Participation and Attendance**

This course places high value on the dynamics between individuals in small communication settings. Often some of the most rewarding experiences of this course arise spontaneously and unexpectedly. Your attendance and active participation in this course thus contribute substantially to everyone’s educational experience in the course. I therefore urge you to attend every course session. Both your classmates and you suffer when you are absent or fail to contribute to class discussion and activities.

Three class absences are allowed without penalty to the Participation/Attendance Grade. Even excused absences will count toward those 3 no-penalty absences. After 3 absences, the grade for Participation and Attendance drops one letter grade. For example, if a student misses 4 classes, that student’s grade for Participation/Attendance will be a B.

Your Participation/Attendance grade will be based on attendance and active engagement in class and will be assigned at the Instructor’s discretion. Absences can adversely affect the grade for this category.

### **Late Work**

Performing work on-time is essential to efficient management of this course. Remaining on-schedule relies on your cooperation. Therefore, all work must be handed in or presented on the date assigned. No late work will be accepted. A student who fails to

present work as assigned receives an F for the missed assignment. Any exceptions to this policy—which would be very rare!—would be at my discretion; in this case, the student:

- must be prepared to present the missed work at the very first class meeting I make available after the student's return
- must provide appropriate documentation that his/her failure to complete the assignment on the assigned date was unavoidable
- may be penalized for failure to present work as assigned.

Please note that in some cases, a make-up will not be possible.

### **Use of Cell phone or other electronic devices**

**Any use of cell telephones, pagers, and all other electronic devices during class time is forbidden.** It is the students' responsibility to make sure that their telephones or pagers do not ring, vibrate, or otherwise create the possibility of a class disruption. A student whose telephone rings, vibrates, or otherwise creates a distraction during class will be counted as absent for that class period, along with the attendant attendance policy ramifications. A student using any electronic device during testing shall be subject the policy on academic integrity.

## CLASS CALENDAR (TENTATIVE)

Date	Class Unit
	<b>Looking In</b>
Tue., Aug. 24	Orientation to Class: Overview of Assignments; Introductions
Thu., Aug. 26	A First Look at Communication (Chapter 1, LILO)
Tue., Aug. 31	Interpersonal Communication and Social Media (Chapter 2, LILO); Assignment: Chapter Report on Turkle, Reclaiming Conversation
Thu., Sept. 2	Communication and Identity (Chapter 3, LILO)
Tue., Sept. 7	Perception (Chapter 4, LILO); Assignment: Role Reversal
Thu., Sept. 9	Emotions (Chapter 5, LILO)
Tue., Sept. 14	<b>Role Reversal Presentations</b>
Thu., Sept. 16	<b>Role Reversal Presentations</b>
	<b>Looking Out</b>
Tue., Sept. 21	Language (Chapter 6, LILO)
Thu., Sept. 23	Non-Verbal Communication (Chapter 7, LILO)
Tue., Sept. 28	Listening (Chapter 8, LILO)
Thu., Sept. 30	Empathic Listening
Tue., Oct. 5	Empathic Listening
Thu., Oct. 7	Listening Workshop
Tue., Oct. 12	Listening Workshop
Thu., Oct. 14	<b>In-Class LISTENING Graded Assignment</b>
Tue., Oct. 19	<b>In-Class LISTENING Graded Assignment</b>
Thu., Oct. 21	<b>In-Class LISTENING Graded Assignment</b>
	<b>Looking At Close Relationships</b>
Tue., Oct. 26	Interpersonal Communication in Close Relationships (Chapter 9, LILO)
Thu., Oct. 28	Communication and Relational Dynamics (Chapter 10, LILO)
Tue., Nov. 2	Improving Communication Climates (Chapter 11, LILO); Reviewing of "Reclaiming Conversation" Assignment; Review of Research Assignment
Thu., Nov. 4	<b>Interpersonal Communication in Specialized Contexts</b>
Tue., Nov. 9	<b>Interpersonal Communication in Specialized Contexts</b>
Thu., Nov. 11	<b>Interpersonal Communication in Specialized Contexts</b>
Tue., Nov. 16	"Reclaiming Conversation": The Empathy Diaries; The Flight from Conversation; Solitude; Self-Reflection
Thu., Nov. 18	"Reclaiming Conversation": Family; Friendship; Romance; Education
Tue., Nov. 23	<b>THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS</b>
Thu., Nov. 25	<b>THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS</b>
Tue., Nov. 30	"Reclaiming Conversation": Work; The Path Forward; The Nick of Time; The End of Forgetting
Thu., Dec. 2	LAST DAY OF CLASS; Review for Final Exam