

CMST 3355: Communication and Personal Relationships

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Office Hours: Virtual office hours TTH 1-2pm & by appointment

Course Description

This course develops a framework for exploring the processes involved in focused social interaction and communication in the context of personal relationships. This course will increase the knowledge of how appropriate communication processes and competencies can strengthen these relationships.

Learning Outcomes

1. Apply various concepts covered in this course to our own practical processes and problems.
2. Demonstrate understanding of course content by producing well written work related to course concepts.
3. Study various theoretical perspectives that provide a framework for understanding how and why individuals communicate the way they do in personal relationships.
4. Explore definitions of “interpersonal relationships,” and examine how communication influences their development, maintenance, and dissolution.

Course Texts

Guerrero, L., Andersen, P.A., & Afifi, W.A. (2013). *Close encounters: Communication in relationships, 4th edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Assignment Evaluation

	<u>Maximum</u>
The final grade will be based on the following criteria:	
“Best Practices for Communication in Relationships”	50
Midterm	75
Chapter Presentation	100
Vlogs/Blogs (10 @ 10points a piece)	100
Final Presentation on a Close Relationship w/PowerPoint	100
Participation in Discussion Posts (10 @ 5points a piece)	50

Total: 475

Point Break Down

428-475 = A
 380-427 = B
 333-379 = C
 285-332 = D
 284- ↓ = F

Grades: Standard Grading Scale

90% - 100%	=	A
80% - 89%	=	B
70% - 79%	=	C
60% - 69%	=	D
59% - ↓	=	F

Assignment Descriptions

“Best Practices for Communication in Relationships.” This assignment is worth 50 points. You will research an aspect of communication in relationships that we’ve discussed so far in class that appeals to you. You will pick a topic and write either a 2-4 double spaced page document or record a 4-6 min video discussing the best practices for communicating in a relationship during the topic you choose. For example, you could decide to discuss End of Life Communication and write a paper discussing how families can hold a *Death over Dinner* with their families to help people feel less taboo about the topic of death. You will give the best practice that you/your research would recommend. Make sure to cite our book (citation listed on the first page of the syllabus) and at least one other source (book, article, etc).

Chapter Presentation: This assignment is worth 100 points. As a small group, you will be asked to present on the chapter of your choice (chosen in week 1). Can choose either Chapters 4, 5, 9, or 10. At least 3 concepts should be presented from the chapter and at least one must be a theory. Please create a PowerPoint, Prezi or other way we can follow you. You are encouraged to please be creative and use innovative formats, such as creating games, debates, role-playing, video clips, and other original learning techniques. However, know that this assignment is expected to be recorded on a platform such as Zoom where we (the audience) can see each group member at the same time. **I AM NOT EXCEPTING YOU TO BE IN THE SAME ROOM TO RECORD THIS ASSIGNMENT.**

Vlogs/Blogs. This assignment is worth 100 points. The purpose of this assignment is to get you thinking about your own close relationships and how you interact within your family. You will submit a Vlog/Blog 10 times over the course of the semester. Except the week you give your chapter presentation-you are not excepted to also give a volgs/blog unless you want to and skip another week. Vlogs can be up to 5 minutes and Blogs (just a word document, but a fun name ☺) can be up to 3 double space pages. You should talk/write about some key terms that stood out to you, what you found interesting, and how you could apply it to you a current or past/future relationship.

Midterm. This assignment is worth 75 points. It will be over Chapters 1-8; multiple choice & true/false with 1-2 essays.

Final “Poster” Presentation. This assignment is worth 100 points. This will be an individual presentation on a close relationship that you have. You will create a poster/PowerPoint presentation to give based on this close relationship using course concepts you will explain the relationship, what impacts you from having this relationship, and what you do to maintain this

relationship or hope to do to improve this relationship. More details will be provided as the semester unfolds.

Participate in Online Discussion board posts: This assignment is worth 50 points. Throughout the semester (10 times specifically), you will be asked to partake in discussions. You are expected to post **an original post by Thursday and reply to at least one other person's post by Sunday.** Details will be posted on each discussion post.

Course Policies

Participation: Throughout the semester, you will be asked to partake in discussion and contribute to class. Please be ready, having read the course materials for that class period, with your own thoughts, questions, or insight. This type of participation is key in a small class like this; different point of views will also allow the class to understand the material better.

Attendance: Attendance is necessary in this class. However, you will be given THREE (3) "FREE" days to miss with no penalty for your absence(s). For each and every absence thereafter, 4 points will be deducted from your course point total. Eight (8) total absences earn an automatic "F." For every speech day you miss, 5 additional points will be deducted. Arriving to class late or leaving class early is inconsistent with an efficient and productive class session. Students who consistently (i.e., more than twice) fail to arrive by the time designated and/or who leave class before the end of the period will receive an absence. Finally, an attendance sheet distributed at the beginning of class will record your attendance. If you do not sign in, you will be considered absent for that day. **You are responsible for signing your name on this sheet. At the end of the semester all questions concerning your attendance will be answered by recourse to this sheet.**

Elasticity Clause: I reserve the right to modify the existing course calendar and assignments. If changes must be made, I will notify students as soon as possible.

Classroom Civility: People and ideas must be treated with respect. Please avoid disruptive behavior that makes it difficult to accomplish our mutual objectives.

Changes to the schedule: Changes may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. I will do my best to notify you via email, in class, and with a hard copy of the changes. It is I your responsibility to note these changes when announced. Readings must be completed for the day they are assigned on the course schedule. Lectures are intended to complement the readings.

Plagiarism

Academic Honesty: The core values of The University of Texas at Tyler are integrity, optimism, curiosity, accountability, leadership, initiative, and development. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values.

All students must adhere to the UT- Tyler Honor Code (“Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor accept the actions of those who do”). Furthermore, students must complete their work with academic integrity outlined at <http://www.uttyler.edu/judicialaffairs/scholasticdishonesty.php>. All students are expected to maintain absolute honesty and integrity in academic work undertaken at The University. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be pursued to the fullest extent allowed by University policies and procedures. Adding another student’s name to an attendance roster when he or she is not in class is academic dishonesty.

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

- i. “Cheating” includes, but is not limited to:
 - copying from another student’s test paper;
 - using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
 - failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
 - possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed “crib notes”. The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
 - using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
 - collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
 - discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
 - divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
 - substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
 - paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
 - falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit; • taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and

- misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.
- ii. “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.
- iii. “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.
- iv. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by SafeAssign™, available on Canvas

The “Common Knowledge” Clause: Material does not have to be cited if it is common knowledge—that is, knowledge that most American high school graduates already know. (E.g. Humans once painted in caves. Berlin is the capital of Germany. Etc.)

The “Textbook” Clause : Material does not have to be cited if both of these points are true:

1. If the information contained in a student’s work is found in a course textbook or other assigned reading
2. And if that information is presented in such a way that the work is not copying or nearly copying the reading material word–for–word.

For example, if a student's textbook lists the Stone Age as beginning in 3,000 BCE, then a student can simply include this date. But, if a student copied full sentences from the textbook, then that would be plagiarism.

The “10% Rule”: As a general rule, a college assignment is considered an original work only if the vast majority of text is original. Generally, no more than 10% of a work can be someone else’s words, regardless of proper quotes or citation.

Intent: When reviewing a possible case of plagiarism, the student’s intent will not be taken into consideration. In other words, an act of plagiarism is plagiarism whether or not the student claims to have intended plagiarism.

Mistakes & Accidents: The possibility that the student mistakenly or accidentally committed plagiarism will not be taken into consideration. I strongly suggest that you discuss your sources with the Writing Center before turning in work.

Appeal to Ignorance: A student’s claim to ignorance with concern to policy will never be treated as a valid justification of plagiarism.

Collaboration: Students are not permitted to collaborate on an essay, discussion post, quiz, test, or any written assignment. Having someone proofread your work is ok, but that can only entail matters of style, grammar, and spelling.

Disciplinary Action for Plagiarism: Per departmental policy, the first offense of plagiarism will result in a zero for the assignment. Any additional acts of plagiarism will result in an F for the course and possible disciplinary action by the Dean (e.g. expulsion).

University Policies

UT Tyler Honor Code: Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link:
<http://www2.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

Classroom Diversity: It is my desire to create a stimulating work environment that challenges each student in this class to perform at top levels. In order for our learning community to succeed, each member must treat others that way that they would like to be treated. I expect students to respect the opinions and ideas of each individual. As an instructor, I am committed to providing an atmosphere of learning that is representative of a variety of diverse perspectives, including race, religion, gender, nationality, age, sexual orientation and physical abilities. In this class, you will have the opportunity to express and experience culturally diversity as we discuss diversity issues as they pertain to the classroom environment and the course materials.

Tobacco-Free: All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler campus or in my classroom or office. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, affiliates, contractors, and visitors. This includes cigarettes, pipes, cigars, water pipes, e-cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, and all other tobacco products.

Campus Carry: We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at
<http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy: Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date). Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies: Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. (For Fall, the Census Date is Sept. 9th.) Grade Replacement

Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract. The Census Date (Sept. 9th) is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

Disability/Accessibility Services: In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Tyler at Texas offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible a diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application. The

Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities: If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement: It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation: Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

UT Tyler Resources for Students

- UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
- UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
- The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.
- UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)

Course Calendar*

Week	Reading	Assignment	Due Dates
1	Getting to know how I set up our Canvas Shell	Google Excel doc: Mark your group choice Introduction Discussion Post	Sun. Jan. 17 th by 11:59pm CST
2	Chapter 1: Conceptualizing Relational Communication Chapter 2: Communicating Identity: The Social Self	Vlogs/Blogs	Sun. Jan. 24 th by 11:59pm CST
3	Chapter 3: Drawing people Together	Vlogs/Blogs Answer discussion question	Sun. Jan. 31 st by 11:59pm CST
4	Chapter 4: Making Sense of Our World	Vlogs/Blogs Group 1 Chapter Presentations Respond to chapter presentation discussion	Sun. Feb. 7 th by 11:59pm CST
5	Chapter 5: Changing Relationships: Stages, Turning Points, and Dialectics	Vlogs/Blogs Group 2 Chapter Presentations Respond to chapter presentation discussion	Sun. Feb. 14 th by 11:59pm CST
6	Chapter 6: Revealing and Hiding Ourselves: Self-disclosures and Privacy Chapter 7: Communicating Closeness: Intimacy, Affection, and Social Support	“Best Practices for Communication in Relationships” Answer discussion question about your papers/tutorials	Sun. Feb. 21 st by 11:59pm CST
7	Chapter 8: Making a Love Connection: Styles of Love and Attachment	Vlogs/Blogs	Sun. Feb. 28 th by 11:59pm CST
8	Chapter 9: Communicating Sexually	Midterm	Sun. March 7 th by 11:59pm CST
9	SPRING BREAK		

10	Chapter 10: Staying Close	Vlogs/Blogs Group 3 Chapter Presentations Respond to chapter presentation discussion	Sun. March 21st by 11:59pm CST
11	Chapter 11: Coping with Conflict	Vlogs/Blogs Group 4 Chapter Presentations Respond to chapter presentation discussion	Sun. March 28 th by 11:59pm CST
12	Chapter 12: Influencing Each Other	Vlogs/Blogs Group 5 Chapter Presentations Respond to chapter presentation discussion	Sun. April 4 th by 11:59pm CST
13	Chapter 13: Hurting the Ones we Love	Vlogs/Blogs	Sun. April 11 th by 11:59pm CST
14	Chapter 14: Healing the Hurt	Vlogs/Blogs Answer discussion question	Sun. April 18 th by 11:59pm CST
15	Chapter 15: Ending Relationships	Vlogs/Blogs	Sun. April 25 th by 11:59pm CST
16	Finals Week	Final Presentations Respond to presentations discussion	Wed. April 28 th by 11:59pm CST

*Subject to change