

CMST 2318: Interpersonal Communication

Tuesday/Thursday 2:00pm-3:20pm, CAS 208, CRN #80952

University of Texas – Tyler, Department of Communication

Professor: Erik Gustafson, Ph.D

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Office Hours: Daily availability by appointment

Required Textbook/Readings:

Ronald B. Adler and Russell F. Proctor II (2023). *Looking Out, Looking In*, 16th ed. (Boston, MA: Cengage Learning).

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

Course Description:

This course seeks to familiarize students with principles of interpersonal communication and to equip students with communication skills for improving interpersonal relationships in personal, professional, and social contexts. 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.

Student Learning Objectives:

Toward fulfilling the major outcome of this course, students minimally must be able 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
- Identify, understand, and practically apply concepts related to language, perception, listening, and non-verbal communication
- Understand the effects that societal change and technological development have on interpersonal communication in personal, professional, and social contexts.

Course Policies and Expectations

Description of Instructional Methods: Instruction will be student-centered and require the development of theoretical knowledge and the demonstration of practical competence in professional interpersonal communication through a variety of instructional methods. The tools implemented include, but are not limited to, textbook readings, supplementary readings, PowerPoints, online exams/quizzes, independent and guided research, individual and group presentations, and written documents.

Communication: *The best way to reach me will be via email. Do not use the messenger app in Canvas.* During the work week (M-F 9:00am – 5:00pm) I will respond to emails within 48 hours. If you do not receive a response from me within this time frame please send another message. Response times are subject to delay on the weekends and evenings.

Attendance & Participation: You will be expected to attend class in-person (there will not be an option to Zoom in). In the workplace, unexplained absences are not tolerated. This class will adopt a similar policy. You are allotted two “freebies” each semester in which you can miss class without penalty. Regardless of whether you are using your freebie or have another excused absence, you should notify me prior to the class period. After your three freebies, you will be docked 5% from your overall grade for each additional absence.

Late Work & Make-Up Assignments: As a rule of thumb, I do not accept late-work. In the workplace, you will be expected to complete your assigned work by the date it is required. This class will mirror that expectation. Of course, I do understand that life happens. If something comes up, *please contact me prior to the assignment deadline to discuss your options.*

Technology Use: During our class sessions we will do a variety of activities that will require you do research, craft documents/written materials, and create presentations. Thus, you should have at least one device capable of connecting to the internet (phone, tablet, laptop, etc.) and at least one form of writing and recording information (notebook, laptop, etc.).

While we will use technology in the classroom quite a bit, it is important to note that even with the ubiquity of such devices, they should be used primarily for course-related activities. Any egregious use of devices for activities unrelated to the course (texting, doom scrolling , snapchatting, watching Netflix, etc.) are subject to disciplinary action.

Classroom Etiquette: During the course of the semester, you all will be tasked with completing both written and verbal work independently and with groups. You are expected to be cordial and cooperative with your group mates. Any disrespectful or malicious behavior towards classmates will not be tolerated and is subject to disciplinary action and/removal from the course.

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

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>

UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University

All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct

The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the Student Conduct and Discipline policy (Links to an external site.) in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

Student Standards of Academic Conduct

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. "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.

“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. “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. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

The UT-Tyler Writing Center

The Writing Center provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Appointments: 903.565-5995, writingcenter@uttyler.edu

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 Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible 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 of 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.

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 (September 3, 2021). 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 (September 3, 2021) 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

Final Exam Policy:

Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members are required to maintain student final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.

Incomplete Grade Policy:

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in lieu of a grade only when all of the following conditions are met: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all course work or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor; and (c) the student presents these reasons prior to the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average for a student.

The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail

to complete all of the work for the course within the time limit, then the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has not been assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F, or to NC if the course was originally taken under the CR/NC grading basis.

Grade Appeal Policy:

UT Tyler's Grade Appeal policy requires the completion of a Grade Appeal form for this action to take place. The grade appeal begins with the instructor of your course. If you do not agree with the decision of the instructor, you may then move your appeal to the department chair/school director for that course. If you are still dissatisfied with the decision of the chair/director, you may move the appeal to the Dean of the College offering that course who has the final decision. Grade appeals must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade. The Grade Appeal form is found on the Registrar's Form Library.

Withdrawing from Class:

Students you are allowed to withdraw (Links to an external site.) (drop) from this course through the University's Withdrawal Portal (Links to an external site.). Texas law prohibits students 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 other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Make sure to consider the impact withdrawing from this class has on your academic progress as well as the financial implications.

We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and financial aid for additional guidance.

CAUTION #1: Withdrawing before census day does not mean you get a full refund. Please see the Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule (Links to an external site.). CAUTION #2: All international students must check with the Office of International Programs (Links to an external site.) before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms.

Absence for Official University Events or Activities:

This course follows the practices related to approved absences as noted by the Student Manual of Operating Procedures (Sec. 1 -501 (Links to an external site.):

Absence for Religious Holidays:

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious holiday are requested to inform the instructor by the second class meeting of the semester.

FERPA:

UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in University Policy 5.2.3 (Links to an external site.). The course instructor will follow all requirements in protecting your confidential information.

Military Affiliated Students:

UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with me if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make me aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. I am willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. Campus resources for military affiliated students are in the Military and Veterans Success Center (MVSC ([Links to an external site.](#)) The MVSC can be reached at MVSC@uttyler.edu, or via phone at 903.565.5972.

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)

Brief Description of Assignments

Syllabus Contract (25 Points): Fill out the syllabus contract and submit document to Canvas.

Class Activities (200 points): In line with the nature of an interpersonal communication course, we will spend much of our time together practicing our interpersonal skills together during our course meetings. Activities will vary in scope and requirements, but can only be completed during the in-person course meeting in which they are assigned. If you miss class, you will not be able to make up the activity points for that course meeting.

Book Club Assignment (100 Points): Throughout the semester you will be tasked with independently selecting, reading, and annotating a book of your choosing related to interpersonal communication. This book must be approved by the instructor, but you have a great deal of freedom in your selection, permitted that you provide adequate justification for your selection. At the end of the semester, you will turn in your annotated book, provide a brief written summary, and present to the class.

Interpersonal Interactions Assignment (3 x 50 = 150 Points): The totality of knowledge related to interpersonal communication cannot be learned nor taught from textbooks in classrooms. As such, you will be tasked with seeking out, attending, and reflecting upon *three* different events and opportunities that help to develop and test your acumen as an interpersonal communicator. All interactions will require documented proof (via selfie), a brief reflection, and an informal presentation to the class.

Unit Projects (3 x 150 = 450 Points): At the completion of each module you will complete a project putting into practice the conceptual and practical knowledge which you have gained during that module. These projects will vary in scope and requirements, but will require both written and presentation components. Please see individual assignment sheets for more detail.

Participation (75 Points): This class will require you to meaningfully engage with members within and outside of the class. It is integral to your success in the course that you are active member in discussions and activities. Additionally, the goal of this course is become an effective interpersonal communicator. Thus, you will be expected to model the behaviors we are learning in digital (i.e. email) and in-person interactions.

Point Breakdown

A = 900 – 1000

B = 800 – 899

C = 700 – 799

D = 600 – 699

F = 599 and below

			Schedule (Tentative)		
	Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments
	1	25-Aug	No Class		
		27-Aug	Course Introduction		
Module #1: Looking In	2	1-Sep 3-Sep	A First Look at Communication Interpersonal Comm and Social Media (pt I)	Adler Ch1 Adler Ch 2	
	3	8-Sep 10-Sep	Interpersonal Comm and Social Media (pt. II) Comm and Identity	Turkle Ch 1 + 2 Adler Ch 3	
	4	15-Sep 17-Sep	Self Reflection and Solitude Perception	Turkle Ch 3 + 4 Adler Ch 4	
	5	22-Sep 24-Sep	Emotions: Feeling, thinking, and Communicating No Class - Online Assignment	Adler Ch 5	
	6	29-Sep 1-Oct	Project #1 Presentations Interpersonal Interaction Roundtable #1 + Book Check #1	N/A	Project #1 due by Class Time II #1 Reflection due by Class Time + Physical Book due by Class Time
Module #2: Looking Out	7	6-Oct 8-Oct	Language + Family Non-Verbals	Adler Ch 6 Adler Ch 7	
	8	13-Oct 15-Oct	Listening Project #2 Presentations	Adler Ch 8 + Turkle Ch 5	Project #2 due by Class Time
	9	20-Oct	Interpersonal Interaction Roundtable #2		II #2 Reflection Due by Class Time + Book Check #2 due by Class time
Module #3: Looking At		22-Oct	Communication and Relational Dynamics	Adler Ch 9 + Turkle Ch. 6	
	10	27-Oct 29-Oct	Communication in Close Relationships Communication Climates	Adler Ch 10 + Turkle Ch. 7 Adler Ch 11 + Turkle Ch 8	
	11	3-Nov 5-Nov	Interpersonal Conflict (pt. I) Interpersonal Conflict (pt. II)	Adler Ch 12 Turkle Ch 9	
	12	10-Nov 12-Nov	Project #3 - Assignment Day Project #3 - Description Day		
	13	17-Nov 19-Nov	Project #3 - Analysis Day Project #3 - Presentation Day		Project #3 Materials due by end of Class
	14	24-Nov 26-Nov	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break		
	15	1-Dec 3-Dec	Interpersonal Interaction #3 Rountable + The Future of Interpersonal Communication Book Clup Presentations + Course Wrap	Turkle Ch 10, 11, & 12	II#3 Due by Class Time Final Book/Reflection due by Class Time
	16	8-Dec	Finals Week		TBD
** All assignments due by 11:59pm unless specified otherwise **					

CMST 2318 (Fall 2026) Syllabus Contract

I have read the syllabus for CMST 2318 and agree to the terms for required coursework and acceptable behavior.

Name:

Year in School:

Major/Minor:

Hometown:

Professional Headshot:

What do you hope to get out of this class?

What are your career interests?

Who are the top 3 people who inspire you (this can be personally or professionally) and why?

Who are your top 3 musical artists and/or songs?

What are your favorite TV Shows, movies, or books/authors?

Lastly, if you feel comfortable doing so, please list any time commitments (work, extra-curriculars, family, etc.) you have – or expect to have – outside of CMST 2318 this Fall. (This section is entirely optional and exists just so that, if you wish, I am aware of your general schedule and can accommodate you accordingly).