

# COMM 280 Introduction to Interpersonal Communication

## Spring 2018 Course Syllabus

**Important Note:** This syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to check D2L and your UWSP Email regularly for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be clearly noted in a course announcement or through Email.

### Course Information

**Course Description:** 3 credits. Investigation of and experience with communication that facilitates the establishment and maintenance of effective personal relationships. (GEP: Social Science) Course meets in 100% online format during Spring 2018.

### Instructor Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Rhonda Sprague

**Office:** CAC 208

**Office Telephone:** 715.346.2812 (office phone cannot receive text messages)

**Email:** [rsprague@uwsp.edu](mailto:rsprague@uwsp.edu) or [Rhonda.Sprague@uwsp.edu](mailto:Rhonda.Sprague@uwsp.edu) (preferred mode of contact)

**Office Hours:** Unless I tell you differently, I will be in my office on TR 12:30 – 1:30 (face-to-face only) and W 2:00 – 3:15 (virtual or face-to-face). If you want to *meet with me* face-to-face or virtually, please send me an email at least 24 hours in advance to make an appointment. You can send me an Email at any time, but please be sure it follows the guidelines below.

Online office hours will be hosted in the Online Room for this course. To access that room during the scheduled period, please follow these instructions:

1. Click "Online Rooms (Ultra)" on the Course navigation bar.
2. Select the appropriate session and click on "Join Room."
3. Start chatting. I have only enabled the chat function in these rooms.

[Collaborate Ultra \(Online Rooms\) Student Instructions](#)

**Frankly, your better bet is to send me an Email or call me during my posted office hours.**

### Instructor Contact Etiquette

I expect that you will communicate with me in a professional manner at all times. To that end, please attend to the following hints for engaging in professional communication with me (and all your university instructors):

<u>DO:</u>	<u>DO NOT:</u>
Be polite. Say please when you ask for help and thank you when you receive it. Be brief and clear. Include an informative <i>subject line</i> in Emails. I will not even open emails without a subject specified. Include a <i>salutation</i> (such as Dear Professor Sprague, Greetings, or Hello) and a <i>signature</i> . Specify the <i>course and section</i> about which you are writing or calling. Be patient. I should respond within 24 hours.	Contact me to ask about something you could find out easily on your own (e.g., something on the syllabus, on the D2L site, or the like). Send Emails that read like text messages. Watch grammar, spelling, and formality. Make demands. Instead, <i>ask</i> for help. Send Email about anything complicated. Make arrangements to see me in person to discuss complicated issues. Put anything into an Email message that you would not be willing to say in person.

## Expected Instructor Response Times

1. I will attempt to respond to student emails within 24 hours. If you have not received a reply from me within 24 hours, please resend your email. At that point, you have my permission to add one of those obnoxious exclamation points to your message, to identify it as important to you.
2. I will attempt to grade submitted work within one week; however, longer written assignments may take me longer to read and evaluate.

\*\*\*If you have a general course question (not confidential or personal in nature), please post it to the Course Q&A Discussion Forum found on the course homepage. I will post answers to all general questions there so that all students can view them. Students are encouraged to answer each other's questions too.

## Course Technology Requirements

1. **Minimum Recommended Computer and Internet Configurations** for online courses can be found [here](#).
2. **Prepare Yourself for an Online Course.** UWSP has a helpful site you can use to learn what to expect in an online learning environment. It can be found at [www.uwsp.edu/online](http://www.uwsp.edu/online). On the left navigation pane, select “student links” and then “online student orientation.” There are 6 short “quizzes” you can take to help you be a successful online student.
3. **Technology Needs for COMM 280 Online.** To be successful in this course, you will need to be able to access UW-Stevens Point’s online learning management system: Desire2Learn (D2L). First and foremost, that means you must have an *active UWSP student account*. If you have not activated your UWSP account, please visit the [Manage Your Account](#) page to do so. You will use your UWSP account to login to the course from the [D2L Login Page](#). You also will use those to access your *UWSP student Email account*, which you should check *every day*. I might send out notices via Email, as well as posting News items in D2L.
4. **Course Materials and Learning Activities Will Be Posted in D2L.** That means you will need access to a desktop or laptop computer with a *reliable internet connection*. You will have the option of watching videos embedded into course materials, so a *high-speed internet connection* is optimal. *Mobile devices and tablets are not recommended for D2L.*
5. **Use of Campus Computing Equipment.** You may use any campus computing lab to access course materials and engage in class activities. If you do so, you will need a pair of *headphones* to listen to audio material, since most public computers do not have speakers. Your headphones do not need to have a microphone unless your group is meeting virtually, or unless you are participating in virtual (online) office hours through
6. **Basic Computing Skills Needed.** You should be able to access D2L, download and upload materials in D2L, search for information through the library and on the Internet, and use a word processing program and an Email program competently.
7. **A Warning for Anyone Who Does Not Use Microsoft Word for Word Processing.** If you use Mac Pages or a knock-off Word program (like the ones you can get for free online) for word processing, you will need to do one of the following:

- a. Sign up for Office 365 for *free*. Information about this option can be found at <https://www.uwsp.edu/office/Pages/default.aspx>. You will then be able to use Microsoft Word as your word processing program, and everything will be compatible with my equipment both at work and at home.
- b. Save every assignment as a .pdf file before submitting it to the Dropbox. This is clearly the easier option, but I strongly encourage you to consider getting Microsoft Office or using Office 365 online. The choice is yours. Just remember that *I cannot grade what I cannot read*, and I cannot read documents in Pages format or those formatted with knock-off Word programs. You or your group will receive a grade of zero if I cannot read what is submitted.

## Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with D2L you can:

1. Visit with a [Student Technology Tutor](#)
2. Seek assistance from the [IT Service Desk](#) (Formerly IT Help Desk)
  - a. IT Service Desk Phone: 715-346-4357 (HELP)
  - b. IT Service Desk Email: [techhelp@uwsp.edu](mailto:techhelp@uwsp.edu)

## Technology Accessibility

1. D2L Accessibility Statement: <https://www.d2l.com/accessibility/>
2. Microsoft Office Accessibility: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/accessibility/office>
3. Kaltura Player Toolkit: <https://knowledge.kaltura.com/508-support-within-kaltura-player-toolkit>
4. GoAnimate Diversity and Inclusion Information: <https://blog.goanimate.com/diversity-inclusion/>
5. YouTube Accessibility Information: <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/189278?hl=en>

## Technology Privacy Policies

1. D2L Privacy Statement: <https://www.d2l.com/legal/privacy/>
2. Microsoft Privacy Statement: <https://privacy.microsoft.com/en-us/privacystatement>
3. Kaltura Privacy Policy: <https://corp.kaltura.com/privacy-policy>
4. GoAnimate Privacy Policy: <https://goanimate.com/privacy>
5. YouTube (Google) Privacy Policy: <https://www.google.com/intl/en/policies/privacy/>

## Course Learning Outcomes

Every student completing this course should have gained the following abilities:

1. Describe the major areas covered by the term “interpersonal communication;”
2. Distinguish between elements of major theories of IPC;
3. Distinguish between elements crucial to understanding IPC in various contexts;
4. Examine real or simulated IP situations and apply specific theoretical concepts to them; and
5. Identify and apply recommendations for improving your own and others’ IPC.

## Learning Outcomes for the Communication Major:

By the time they complete all major requirements, students will have gained the following competencies:

1. Communicate effectively using appropriate technologies for diverse audiences;\*

2. Plan, evaluate and conduct basic (quantitative and qualitative) research;
3. Use theories to understand and solve problems;\*
4. Apply historical perspectives to contemporary issues and practices; and
5. Apply principles of ethical decision making in a variety of contexts.\*

\*Outcomes supported by this course. You should produce materials related to these learning outcomes in this course. Communication majors should be sure to upload those materials to your ePortfolio storage space to use as evidence for your final assessment portfolio in COMM 400. Students in other majors should ask your advisors whether evidence of learning outcomes acquisition is required in your capstone experiences.

## Textbook & Course Materials

**Required Text:** University of Minnesota Libraries. (2013). *Communication in the real world: An introduction to communication studies*. Produced and distributed under a Creative Commons license (CC BY-NC-SA). Available to read or download at <http://open.lib.umn.edu/communication/> or <https://doi.org/10.24926/8668.0401>. I recommend you download this in PDF or a format that will enable you to read it on a Kindle or similar reader. Available formats are indicated on the home page for the text.

**Additional Readings and Resources:** Additional resources will be detailed in weekly assignment descriptions and overviews. Links will be provided.

## Graded Course Activities

You will meet the outcomes listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

### Assignments:

Tests (3)	35%
Group Papers (3)	25%
Weekly Papers (12)	25%
<u>Discussion Peer Ratings (12)</u>	<u>15%</u>
Total	100%

### Grading Scale:

93 – 100% = A	90 – 92% = A-	
87 – 89% = B+	83 – 86% = B	80 – 82% = B-
77 – 79% = C+	73 – 76% = C	70 – 72% = C-
67 – 69% = D+	60 – 66% = D	Less than 60% = F

**Tests.** All tests taken in this course will contain a combination of matching, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, ordering, and similar questions. Some items will focus upon straight recall of information, but because you have access to all your course materials to take the tests, testing you that way only shows me how good you are at looking up information. I want you to be able to “see” these concepts in action. Therefore, *most test questions will require you to be able to apply concepts* (such as recognizing examples of specific types of interpersonal communication or determining what is going on in a “story problem” and identifying the best option). *You must take all tests to be eligible to receive a passing grade for COMM 280.*

**Group Papers.** You will work in groups to complete 3 formal papers applying course concepts and evidence from outside sources to communication artifacts. *Just as in Math class of old, you must show your work: You must do all work toward these formal papers in the D2L Discussion areas (i.e., not via private email, group meetings, text, etc.). Failure to do so will result in a grade of zero for the entire group.* Specific information about each assignment, as well as guidelines for producing writing

for me, can be found in the Content area of our D2L site. I urge you to start there before producing any written work for a grade. *Your group must submit all 3 papers to be eligible to receive a passing grade for COMM 280.*

Weekly “Final Answer” Papers. You will participate in a weekly discussion forum with an assigned group of other students. The first week’s topic asks all students to participate equally. After the first week, group members will adhere to assigned “roles” in each group discussion activity. Assigned roles will vary according to a set schedule. The goal will be the creation of a group response (a “final answer”) to each week’s assigned questions. *You must do all work toward these weekly papers in the D2L Discussion areas (i.e., not via private email, group meetings, text, etc.). Failure to do so will result in a grade of zero for the entire group.* Group members are required to participate each week, but I will count only your group’s highest 12 scores when calculating this portion of your grade, with one exception: *If you or your group do not make a submission in a given week, you or the group will earn a zero for the week, and that week’s zero grade will replace your or your group’s highest discussion grade when final calculations are made.*

Weekly Discussions Peer Ratings. At the conclusion of each weekly group activity (Final Answer paper or Group Paper), group members will rate the quality of each member’s contributions to that week’s assignment. *Your peer ratings will be confidential. While I might issue a “warning” to a group member if someone does not appear to be contributing sufficiently, I will release these grades only at the end of the semester, and names will not be attached. It is crucial that you are honest about your group members’ contributions.* The average score for the highest 12 of those ratings will be calculated to make up this portion of your overall course grade, with two exceptions: *(1) If you do not provide evaluations for your peers in any given week, you will earn a zero for your weekly grade, and that week’s zero grade will replace your highest peer rating grade when final calculations are made; and (2) If your group members’ scores are not in line with what I can see in the Discussion forum (i.e., it is obvious everyone decided to give one another great marks regardless of actual effort or achievement), your entire group will earn a zero for its weekly grade, and that week’s zero grade will replace your highest peer rating grade when final calculations are made.*

## Viewing Grades in D2L

Unless I tell you differently, the D2L Grade Book will be updated within one week of the conclusion of each graded activity. Click on the Grades link to view your points. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your D2L home page under the link to the course.

## Topic Outline/Schedule

**Important Note:** This schedule is likely to change, but will not do so without notice. Refer to the D2L course calendar for specifics. Activity and assignment details will be explained in detail within each week’s corresponding learning module. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor.

WEEK	DATES	TOPIC
1	Jan. 22 – Jan. 28	Introduction to Interpersonal Communication (IPC)
2	Jan. 29 – Feb. 4	The Self and IPC
	<i>Wed., Jan. 31</i>	<i>Deadline to drop course without receiving a W grade</i>
3	Feb. 5 – Feb. 11	Perception and IPC

4	Feb. 12 – Feb. 18	Culture and IPC
<b>5</b>	<b>Feb. 19 – Feb. 25</b>	<b>Test and Group Paper #1 due by 11:59 PM on Sunday</b>
6	Feb. 26 – Mar. 4	Listening and IPC
7	Mar. 5 – Mar. 11	Verbal Communication and IPC
8	Mar. 12 – Mar. 18	Nonverbal Communication and IPC
9	Mar. 19 – Mar. 25	Power, Persuasion, and IPC
	<i>Mar. 26 – Apr. 1</i>	<i>SPRING BREAK – NO ASSIGNED COURSE WORK</i>
<b>10</b>	<b>Apr. 2 – Apr. 8</b>	<b>Test and Group Paper #2 due by 11:59 PM on Sunday</b>
	<i>Friday, Apr. 6</i>	<i>Deadline to drop course with a W grade</i>
11	Apr. 9 – Apr. 15	Foundations of IP Relationships
12	Apr. 16 – Apr. 22	Romantic Relationships
13	Apr. 23 – Apr. 29	The Dark Side of IPC
14	Apr. 30 – May 6	IPC in Context – Communication with Friends and Family
15	May 7 – May 13	IPC in Context – Workplace Communication
<b>16</b>	<b>May 14 – May 20</b>	<b>Test and Group Paper #3 due by 11:59 PM on Sunday</b>

## Course Policies

### Attendance Policy

As this class is taking place in an online environment, physical attendance in a classroom is neither expected nor possible. However, you do need to make time each week to participate in classroom activities. Approximately 65% of each student's grade in this course is derived from group activities. This means your attention to course deadlines is crucial for your own success and the success of others in your group. The specific timing of your involvement will change from week to week, according to your group responsibilities, but you must adhere to expectations for involvement in course activities.

### Late Work Policy

You are expected to meet all deadlines for coursework. Work that is not in its assigned Dropbox by the time it closes will not be eligible to receive credit, unless you have received explicit permission from me to submit late work. I will accept late work only for extremely compelling circumstances (e.g., family emergency or illness *that can be documented*, documented university activity), and **ONLY IF YOU HAVE TOLD ME AHEAD OF TIME THAT YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MEET THE DEADLINE**. Unless you have documentable evidence that you were completely incapacitated and unable to hold your phone or sit at a computer for long enough to leave a voicemail or send an Email telling me about your situation ahead of time, you will not be allowed to make up missed work, regardless of the reason for your absence.

### Grade Appeal Policy

If you feel your work did not receive a fair evaluation, you may request a reconsideration of the grade you received. However, you must observe the following:

1. The appeal must be in writing, 1-2 pages in length. You must submit it via Email.
2. The appeal cannot be made before 24 hours after the grade has been posted, but must be made within 72 hours of that time.

3. You must state the grade you think you should have received and the reasons why you think you should have received that grade. Your statement must make it clear that you have read the instructor's feedback thoroughly. Your reasons must conform to the standards used on the grading rubric.
4. If you wish to appeal a group grade, one person in the group should file the request on behalf of the group.
5. Failure to follow any of these rules will result in immediate dismissal of the challenge.

Your instructor will respond to your appeal within one week. Recognize that you will be requesting that the instructor re-grade your work. At the conclusion of that exercise, your instructor will do one of the following: a) adjust your grade to a higher grade; b) adjust your grade to a lower grade; or c) not adjust your grade.

### **Netiquette Guidelines**

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Your instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course community.

The following netiquette tips will enhance the learning experience for everyone in the course:

1. Do not dominate any discussion. Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
2. Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
3. Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, writing in ALL CAPS suggests shouting.
4. Popular emoticons such as ☺ can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them.
5. Avoid using vernacular or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
6. Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write. When appropriate, however, you may make editorial suggestions (such as when constructing a group answer to a weekly discussion question).
7. People's *contributions* are up for critique; their *personalities* are not.
8. Share tips with other students.
9. Keep an open mind; be willing to express and respect minority opinions.
10. Think and edit before you push the "Send" button.
11. Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
12. Using humor is acceptable, but be sure it is relevant to the discussion.

Adapted from:

Mintu-Wimsatt, A., Kernek, C., & Lozada, H. R. (2010). *Netiquette: Make it part of your syllabus*.

Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 6(1). Retrieved from [http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no1/mintu-wimsatt\\_0310.htm](http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no1/mintu-wimsatt_0310.htm)

Shea, V. (1994). Netiquette. Albion.com. Retrieved from: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/book/>.

## **Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed**

If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Disability and Assistive Technology Center](#) and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of disability to Disability Services and meet with a Disability Services counselor to request special accommodation *before* classes start.

The Disability and Assistive Technology Center is located in 609 Albertson Hall and can be contacted by phone at (715) 346-3365 (Voice) (715) 346-3362 (TDD only) or via email at [datctr@uwsp.edu](mailto:datctr@uwsp.edu)

## **Statement of Policy**

UW-Stevens Point will modify academic program requirements as necessary to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. The modifications should not affect the substance of educational programs or compromise academic standards; nor should they intrude upon academic freedom. Examinations or other procedures used for evaluating students' academic achievements may be adapted. The results of such evaluation must demonstrate the student's achievement in the academic activity, rather than describe his/her disability.

*If modifications are required due to a disability, please inform the instructor and contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center in 609 ALB, or (715) 346-3365.*

## **Academic Integrity**

*Every assignment you submit in this class must be original work.*

*I will not tolerate academic dishonesty of any sort. If I catch you engaging in academic misconduct, you will fail this course and I will report you to appropriate university personnel for further disciplinary action.*

### UWSP Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures

#### UWSP 14.01 Statement of principles

The board of regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the university of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the university of Wisconsin system. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

#### UWSP 14.03 Academic misconduct subject to disciplinary action.

- (1) Academic misconduct is an act in which a student does any of the following:
  - (a) Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
  - (b) Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;



- (c) Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- (d) Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- (e) Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
- or
- (f) Assists other students in any of these acts.

(2) Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to: cheating on an examination; collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course; submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another; submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas; stealing examinations or course materials; submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course; tampering with the laboratory experiment or computer program of another student; knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

### **Build Rapport**

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let your instructor know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise during the semester so that I can help you find a solution.

### **Understand When You May Drop This Course**

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider unenrolling from a course. Refer to the UWSP [Academic Calendar](#) for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons includes: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student's family.

### **Religious Beliefs**

Relief from any academic requirement due to religious beliefs will be accommodated according to UWS 22.03, with notification within the first three weeks of class.