

Communication 280  
**Introduction to Interpersonal Communication**  
Fall 2016

**Professor:** Dr. Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart

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Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 – 1:30 p.m., and by appointment.

**Course Description:** Communication 280 is an introductory course focused on theories and principles of interpersonal communication. In this course you will develop your own communication skills, engage in active learning, complete exams, and apply course material to everyday life.

**Required Textbook Rental:**

Solomon, D., & Theiss, J. (2013). *Interpersonal communication: Putting theory into practice*.

Routledge: New York, NY.

**Course Objectives:** After completing this course students should be able to:

- Describe the prominent theories and principles governing interpersonal communication.
- Employ effective interpersonal communication skills in everyday situations.
- Critically evaluate real-life and/or popular media examples of interpersonal communication using scholarly research and course concepts.

**Level of Difficulty:** Expect to be challenged. The readings go beyond information covered in lecture, and the tests cover both lecture and reading material. Assignments require reflection, analysis, and critical thinking. If you are not ready for a challenge, COMM 280 is not the course for you.

## **Assignments and Grading**

**Grading Philosophy:** My primary aim is for you to understand course material and its utility and application in your daily life. As such, I view grades as a means to an end, not an end themselves. In other words, I want you to be focused on learning rather than simply receiving a high grade. If you focus on the latter this course will seem onerous, assignments and tests will seem like obstacles, and your motivation will quickly evaporate. If you focus on the former, however, you are more likely to stay engaged, involved, and motivated. And, in more cases than not, this intrinsic desire and motivation often goes hand-in-hand with higher marks.

Based on my philosophy, I view grading as a tool that allows me to (a) assess your demonstrated competence of particular content area, and (b) provide you feedback on how well you appear to comprehend course material. Unfortunately, I cannot assess or assign a grade to effort or time.

Even if you worked “really hard” on a paper or spent “hours” studying for a test, I can only evaluate how competently you demonstrate knowledge and understanding of lecture and textbook material. If you are unhappy with your grade, I am happy to meet with you to discuss your approach to learning, such as how you prepare for class, assignments, and exams.

Additionally, students often ask why points were deducted from a writing assignment. This question suggests that you began the assignment with a 100%. I take the approach that all student assignments begin at a 0% and students *earn rather than lose points*.

**Grading:** Your grade will be calculated based on your scores from activities, quizzes, and exams (three total).

Activities	20%	(6 activities @ 3.33% each)
Quizzes	20%	(5 quizzes @ 4% each)
Exams	60%	(3 exams @ 20% each)
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100%		

**Grading Scale:** The following grading scale is used to determine your final grade.

100% - 94% = A	79% - 77% = C+	59% or less = F
93% - 90 = A-	76% - 74% = C	
89% - 87% = B+	73% - 70% = C-	
86% - 84% = B	69% - 67% = D+	
83% - 80% = B-	66% - 60% = D	

**Activities:** Activities are designed to encourage you to “engage” with course material in a variety of ways. Activities will draw on readings, in-class discussions, and screenings of audio and visual material. Activities will be assigned IN CLASS; thus, attendance is required to ensure that you receive the activity assignment unless other arrangements have been made prior to your absence. Students who are absent will be ineligible to receive the activity assignment and will receive a zero for that particular activity. Activities will be due via D2L by 11:59 p.m. on the assigned deadline noted on the calendar and activity assignment.

**Quizzes:** Quizzes have two functions (1) assess your comprehension of course material, and (2) to prepare you for exams. Much like exams, quizzes will be applied in nature rather than memorization. Quizzes will be short, no more than 10 questions, and draw on textbook readings and lecture content. Quizzes will be due by 11:59 p.m. on the posted due date. Due dates are listed on the calendar and the quiz in D2L.

**Exams:** You will have three exams throughout the semester. Exams are True/False and Multiple Choice and are designed to test your understanding of course material. Some questions will be straight recall (i.e., definitions, etc.) while others are application based and require you to apply course concepts to hypothetical examples. Exams *are not* cumulative and only cover the units’ concepts leading up to the exam.

## Course Guidelines and Policies

**Late Work:** Late work is not accepted. No exceptions. Failure to take a quiz or exam or submit an activity by the deadline will result in a zero for that exam/assignment.

**Grade Inquiry:** Students are encouraged to take action if they believe a quiz, exam, or activity was scored inaccurately. Students should submit a typed essay within one week after the grade has been posted. Essays should cite class material to convincingly argue for why particular assignment (e.g., quiz, test, activity) should be re-evaluated.

**Email Etiquette:** Email is a quick and convenient way for us to communicate outside of class. Remember, however, that you are still communicating with your professor. That being said, I expect all emails to be professional and courteous. Please make sure that all emails include a subject, a salutation (e.g., Dear Dr. Mikucki-Enyart, Hello Professor, etc.), content that is free of grammatical and spelling errors, a close (e.g., From, Sincerely, etc.), and your name. Also, be mindful of the tone of your email.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, and helping others commit violations) is taken very seriously and will not be tolerated. The *minimum* penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. Students who violate the university's academic code will be rigorously sanctioned. For more information, please visit: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/Academic%20Integrity%20Brochure.pdf>

**Disability Issues:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring education institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, please visit: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then notify me in writing within the first two weeks of the semester. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the LRC. You can also find more information here: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability>