

Communication 304
Interpersonal Communication
Fall, 2013, 11:00 to 12:20
Tuesdays and Thursdays, ASC 231

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Meetings by appointment

Texts: Canary, D.J., Cody, M.J., and Manusov, V. (2008). **Interpersonal Communication: A goals-based approach.** NY: St. Martin's Press (4th edition).

NOTE: I have copies of this book for you to borrow. I have about 40 copies, numbered, that you can check out on the first day of class. You must sign out for them and return them. **If you bought one or received one through your scholarship / fellowship, I'll buy it from you. Just tell me what it costs.**

Grading

Research Reports/Overview of Published Literature	20% of grade	Due: October 1
Classic Term Paper / Review of Literature Paper	20% of grade	Due: November 5
Research Presentation (Group Mini-lecture)	20% of grade	November 21, November 26 December 3, December 5
Test 1	20% of grade	October 22
Test 2	20% of grade	Tuesday, Dec 17; 8-10 a.m.

All tests are multiple choice/true/false; there are no questions involving "short answers." The two tests are **not cumulative**.

Course Objectives

This course deals with communication in interpersonal relationships, including friendships (same sex and opposite sex; also called "cross sex" or platonic), dating and romantic relationships, family relationships, and work relationships. We adopt a "goal orientation," meaning that much of our behavior is "strategic" in terms of how we groom and maintain public images and communicate with others. After coverage of some "fundamentals," we organize our discussions about two overarching goals –

a) how one presents an image to the public (face-to-face, job interviews, *Facebook*, online dating sites, etc.), how individuals "self-disclose" to build images, and how individuals defend an image when they do something that is called into question. Presentation of self in everyday live profoundly influences what communicators do or say on dating sites, Facebook, twitter, dates,

job interviews, contact with police, and far more; and

b) how to initiate, maintain and terminate relationships (friendship or romantic). The latter topic is rarely discussed in some classes, but it is an important topic to study. Although people “break up” over an argument, or, simply let a relationship fade away, some people “strategically” break up when it is convenient to do so -- “seasonally” <http://mathiasmikkelsen.com/2010/10/amazing-facts-about-facebook-and-breakups/>

The topics we will discuss include friendship formation, self-disclosure, relational growth, escalation, decay, self-presentation, maintenance of friendships, face-to-face influence, online relationships, family influences in studying communication patterns [intergenerational], and individual differences in interpersonal communication (the effects of “attachment styles,” and personality).

The instructors will provide a broad-based exposure to research and theory in the area of interpersonal communication, providing examples along the way (one exemplary study in each lecture, some videos, etc.). Second, the instructors will advise and assist students in their paper projects (described below). In this class, we want you to understand theories and communication processes, draw conclusions that are based on research findings, and apply the theory and research to practical examples.

Graded Written Assignments

I. Research Report / Overview of Published Literature

What interpersonal topics **fascinate** you? What topics or process are you eager to know more about and research?

We are going to assume that there are a few topics discussed in this class that truly interest you, such as online self-presentation, making friends, attraction (beauty), humor and attraction, “flirting” (date initiation), infidelity, jealousy, maintaining relationships over time, or the quality of same sex vs. cross sex relationships.

The world of research in interpersonal communication was once the domain of social psychology and communication scholars, and has expanded to include telecommunications, business applications, online dating, Facebook, health and far more. The world of interpersonal communication research is huge. As you will see in this class, research and debates about interpersonal communication have been exploding. People used to quietly have “friends with benefits” and quietly “hook up” for casual sex. Now they “disclose” their exploits online. In fact, the process of “oversharing” is now studied.

We want to maximize what you gain from this class and we want to get you actively involved in studying interpersonal communication processes. In order to do so, we want you to select a key topic or process to study, conduct library / internet research relatively early in the class so you

know the gist of the existing research, and to post the studies in a Drop box folder on this topic (due October 1), which will be shared by a group of individuals all interested in the topic. Also on October 1 you will submit a 3 page summary of the research you have located on the topic.

However, the first action you need to take is to decide a topic.

Let's look at four examples of popular topics today, and what we mean by published literature and popular culture:

A. The quality of same sex and opposite sex relationships (i.e., “platonic relationships”). This one clip has sparked considerable interest in the “truth” about cross sex relationships, and even the quality of adult cross sex relationships:

Why Men and Women Can't be Friends:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=T_lh5fR4DMA

However, publications in the area gained the interest of writers at **Psychology Today**:

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-first-impression/201211/can-men-and-women-be-friends>

Which draw attention to the academic published articles, like the following:

Bleske-Rechek, A., Somers, E., Micke, C., Erickson, L., Matteson, L., Stocco, C., . . . Ritchie, L. (2012). Benefit or burden? Attraction in cross-sex friendship. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 29(5), 569-596.

[This article appears as “Attraction in cross-sex friendships 2012” in the “Friendship” folder in the Drop Box for “General Interpersonal Communication.”]

B. The rise of narcissism. This topic is of interest because the number of high school and college students scoring high on narcissism increases each year, and narcissism has a significant impact on interpersonal relationships. You will take a narcissism test later in the class...

It is hard to be in a steady long-term relationship with a narcissist individual, who often demands more from a relationship and is self-centered and self-absorbed. They also use “negs” (negative statements, along with praise statements to keep their relational partner's off-balance and willing to work harder to keep the relationship going. Listen, for example, to “Dmitri” – an audio tape of a now infamous “narcissistic” individual using “negs” on a female, eventually become mean-spirited (which Narcissistic individuals do when they feel others are not idolizing them):

<http://melodymaker.posterous.com/the-reason-some-girls-stay-single-very-funny>

In “popular culture” Dr. Drew and others have written about celebrities and narcissism.

C. Another topic that continues to be popular is “flirting” (showing interest in another for short term goals, such as “hooking up,” or for long term dating).

First, you should know that not everyone flirts in the same way nonverbally or vocally; some people are more proactive and others are more cautious. For example, one recent project surveyed more than 5000 eHarmony singles in order to develop a measure of different styles. There are five: physical, playful, traditional, polite, and sincere. Go here to find out your flirting style:

<http://connect.ku.edu/tests/flirt/>

Here is the study:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01463373.2010.524874> [which is also posted on Blackboard and can be downloaded for free if you log on through the USC Library system.] The citation is formally:

Hall, J. A., Carter, S., Cody, M. J., & Albright, J. (2010). Individual differences in the communication of romantic interest: Development of the flirting styles inventory. *Communication Quarterly*, 58(4), 365-393.

And, I have several copies of this book for you to borrow:

Hall, J. A. (2013). *The Five Flirting Styles: Use the Science of Flirting to Attract the Love You Really Want*. Harlequin Enterprises: Ontario, Canada.

D. Another current topic of interest is misrepresentation of the self on Facebook and dating websites.

Some of these publications have been uploaded onto Blackboard for our class, but this one was the most “downloaded” publication on the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* website in 2010:

Hall, J. A., Park, N., Song, H., & Cody, M. J. (2010). Strategic misrepresentation in online dating: The effects of gender, self-monitoring, and personality traits. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 27(1), 117-135.

It also is available on the drop box (folder on “online self-presentation):

<http://spr.sagepub.com.libproxy.usc.edu/content/27/1/117.full.pdf+html>

Here is the CNN News story:

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/LIVING/03/05/online.dating.liars/?hpt=T2>

Above, we have given 4 examples. **What peaks your interest?**

We have uploaded files into a Drop Box that contains examples of the kinds of publications available in certain areas [which I will lecture on later], including

Attachment
Breaking up
Flirting and Hooking up
Forgiveness
Friendships (general)
Grice's maxims
Humor and Dating
Infidelity
Instant Messaging
Leisure activities
Love
Narcissism
Online Self-Presentation
Relational Maintenance

Your task now is to do the following;

- (1) Select a topic that you will want to examine more closely this semester;
- (2) Conduct a library search / internet search on publications and articles on the topic. When doing this search as a library search please limit the search to "full text" articles and to "peer reviewed" publications. We recommend Google Scholar, First Search, PsychInfo or ProQuest. There are a number of choices. You can include articles from quasi-pop publications like **Psychology Today**.
- (3) Find 20 publications and upload these to the Drop box folder for this class.

The due date is Thursday **October 1**. Label it with your name and topic; example: "Cody, Michael Relational Disengagement."

Note that we want everyone in class researching a topic to share materials because during the second half of the semester we will propose conducting a group research project, so it would be important to share academic materials. You will probably want to use these materials to write the classic literature review term paper.

- (4) Write a **3 page summary of the main conclusions** you can make based on locating the publications and what the authors have found out about the topic. E-mail the three page summary as a word document to cody@usc.edu by midnight October 1 [The articles can go directly into the Dropbox. Dropbox is a system for sharing documents on different computers. Each student can add Dropbox easily, and folders will be created for each topic selected – "relational maintenance," "long-distance relationships," "flirting," "online dating," "online self-presentations.]

For a Grade of A – upload 20 publications on the topic you have selected into the drop box, and then submit a three page overview of what you have found, followed by a "References" page

listing the 20 publications in APA format. The three page summary need not provide much depth or detail concerning the findings (which you can read throughout October when you write the classic term paper (see II below)). The three page summary need only comment on what the articles currently say about the topic, any controversies addressed, if there appears to be a “leading expert” in the field, and if authors suggest that there are certain consistent findings.

II. The Classic Term Paper / A Review of the Published Literature

This paper is due on November 1. You submit a “classic term paper” / review of literature as an attached Word document to cody@usc.edu. NOTE: You will want to submit the paper as a Word document, because I will complete a thorough line-by-line editing of the paper and give you ample feedback. If your paper is not an “A” paper, you can re-submit for a better grade. We want you to produce a paper you can use as a writing sample for graduate school applications.

What is a “review of literature?” A classic review of literature term paper is a paper in which you review published literature on a particular topic. You do not have to take a position, but you can voice your opinion(s) on research and findings through the paper. If you write a paper based on the publications you found during the first four weeks of the semester, then it is just a matter of reading the papers and summarizing what the publications say. You can use all 20 publications, or perhaps only 14 or 16 that are important enough to include.

What is important is to include in a review of the literature are findings and outcomes, and how the authors interpreted the results. You do not need to say much at all about the “research methods” – which is often very technical and boring. In fact, the highlights in any study are included in the abstract, the literature reviewed in the beginning of the publication and in the “Discussion” section of the publication. You will probably want to write one or two paragraphs on each publication.

It is also important to organize the paper in some systematic way. One easy way to organize a review of literature paper is chronologically. Start with older publications in the 1990s and then move toward 2013.

Another way to organize the paper is by identifying certain sections. Say you write a paper on friendships. You can write a section on childhood friendships, middle school, high school and adult. Or, you may write about same-sex female friends, same-sex male friends, and cross sex friends.

Some term paper topics from recent semesters include:

Attachment styles	Personalities (Narcissism, apprehensiveness, etc.)
Intergenerational communication	Platonic Friendships
Friendship formation	Mate selection
Same sex and opposite sex friendships	Relational maintenance (business, friends, lovers)
Flirting, success and mistakes	Escalating relationships
Disengaging from relationships	Maintaining relationships
Self-disclosure	Politeness theory
Need complementarity/compatibility	Forms of “love”

Accounts (and forgiveness)	Stereotypes and their impact
Friendships over the life span	Online friendships
Long distance relationships	Online self-presentation
Accuracy of self-presentation	Self-presentation and employment interviews
Humor in dating, work	Self-disclosure of secrets
There are many other topics....	

Papers are graded on quality and clarity of the writing. You want to **demonstrate that you have located primary sources in peer review publications (which you should have found by October 1); that you read the publications and you were able to synthesize the main findings, write a well-written coherent paper in APA format, and make a conclusion based on what you have read.** By “APA format” we mean that you follow certain rules in manual for the American Psychological Association.

For more information and examples on how to cite various types of publications (e.g. journal articles, book chapters, newspaper articles, websites, etc.) according to the APA style, please visit the online writing lab of Purdue University at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

The paper you write will include

- (1) A cover page [page 1]
- (2) An Introduction. This is often a one or two paragraphs discussing the problem, its significance, and justifying the reason for conducting the study.
- (3) Body. The literature reviewed should be 12 to 20 studies, usually organized chronologically, or grouped on the basis of content area. The 12 – 20 studies is an arbitrary designation – some excellent papers are written based on 2 books, a book chapter and 8 publications (journal articles in peer-reviewed journals), or any other number of publications.

Note that we do not count the number of references; we look for reasonable detail in citations to research.

- (4) A Summary and Conclusion section contains at least one paragraph in which you overview the goals of the paper. There may be a paragraph discussing any unusual findings.

This is an academic paper, but you can express your opinions throughout, but mostly in the conclusion and in the introduction. This is not a “reaction” paper you might write in other communication classes.

The grade is based largely on how well written it is, that you have demonstrated reasonable exhaustiveness and comprehensiveness in your review, and that you have demonstrate that you can synthesize materials from the different source materials. Typical papers are 12 to 15 pages in length—starting with the cover page as page one and references at the end – meaning that the

length of the text is 9 to 11 pages. The instructors have copies of papers previously written for this course.

III. Research Presentation (Group Mini-lecture)

By November 1 you will have researched an area of interest and completed an initial review of literature for your term paper. During the month of November, class time will be devoted to forming groups and having groups prepare a Research Presentation to the class.

The Research Presentation is a 10 to 15 minute presentation to the class about what you believe to be the important highlights of the content area. The content should reference materials you have researched and relate to the text materials; but otherwise individuals can be creative in assembling clips from the popular media (news, television, online materials, or music videos). Students in the past have also interviewed students on campus, conducted an experiment using pheromones, interviewed the bartenders at a local pub (9-0), or conducted surveys of students on what they post on Facebook, and why.

We will tentatively introduce individuals together on October 24 and October 29, and on this date individuals can talk about a research/educational presentation.

The instructors will not place individuals in groups; students should discuss their interests in the topic area and form groups – which can vary in size from two individuals to 8 individuals, and we can have as many groups as needed.

The instructors will meet with the groups and advise on group projects. We will post some examples of group presentations presented from previous semesters.

You are later graded on the mini-lecture itself. For a grade of “A” you will want to make a professional presentation in less than 15 minutes, educating the class on the current status of research and findings on a particular topic, citing published academic materials and offering conclusions.

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructors as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is 213-740-0776.

Schedule

- Day 1; August 27. Introductions.
- Day 2; August 29. Read chapter 4. Fundamentals of Listening.
In class: An Active Listening Exercise
- Day 3; September 3. Read chapter 2. Fundamentals of Verbal Messages
The focus is on **Grices's Principle of Co-operation, Staying on Topic, Changing Topics and Confirming and Disconfirming Messages, and Communication Accommodation Theory**, page 27 – 45. Skip Message Design Logics (p. 45-46)
- Day 4; September 5. Read chapter 3. Fundamentals of Nonverbal Communication
Take the test:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/surveys/smiles/index.shtml>
Also, briefly tour:
http://www.uni-regensburg.de/Fakultaeten/phil_Fak_II/Psychologie/Psy_II/beautycheck/english/index.htm
September 5 is Rosh Hashanah, and some students will be excused from attending class – but please examine the two websites listed above.
- Day 5; September 10. Dr. Jeff Hall: Five flirting styles
- Day 6; September 12. Beauty and attraction. Watch sections of “**The Science of Sex Appeal**,” which aired on the Discovery Channel and was featured on Oprah.
- Day 7; September 17. **Personality and Attachment Theory**
Read: Chapter 14, pages 434 – 457; Chapter 15, pages 468 – 477
- Day 8; September 19. Chapter 5. Fundamentals of Social Cognition – **relational expectations and violations of expectations**. Exercise on dating rules.
- Day 9; September 24. **Attributions and Stereotypes**
- Day 10; September 26. Chapter 6. **Presenting the self**; pages 154 – 180
- Day 11; October 1. **Politeness Theory**
Turn in articles and a 3 page summary on this date.
- Day 12; October 3. Chapter 7. **Disclosing the Self**, pages 186 – 206. Exercise on self-disclosure

Day 13; October 8.	Privacy, Secrets, negotiating boundaries among family members
Day 14; October 10.	Chapter 8. Defending the Self , pages 216 – 239
Day 15; October 15.	Apologies and Forgiveness in relationships, business and in legal areas
Day 16; October 17.	Review for Test 1
Day 17; October 22.	Test 1
Day 18; October 24.	Test 1 returned. Individuals who are interested in the same topic should meet and talk about mutual interests in crafting a “mini-lecture”
Day 19; October 29.	Individuals who are interested in the same topic should meet again and decide who will join which group project for a “mini-lecture” on topics. Share e-mail addresses, and I recommend you share copies of your term paper to see what each person has read, reviewed on the topic.
Day 20; October 31.	Chapter 9. Escalating Relationships
Day 21; November 5.	Class period will be used to work in group projects. PAPER 1. Classic term paper is due
Day 22; November 7.	Chapter 10. Maintaining Relationships.
Day 23; November 12.	Allow groups to work
Day 24; November 14.	Chapter 11. De-escalating Relationships, Causes and processes, and aftermath (grave dressing and beyond)
Day 25; November 19.	Allow groups to work
Day 26; November 21.	Several groups will make their presentations
Day 27; November 26.	Several groups will make their presentations
Day 28; December 1.	Several groups will make their presentations
Day 29; December 5.	Several groups will make their presentations / Review for Test 2

Test 2 will be given during the “Final Examination” period for the Fall Semester:
Classes beginning at 11 or 11:30 or 10-11:50 TTh will take the final examination on **Tuesday,**
Tuesday, Dec 17; 8-10 a.m.