



**USC ANNENBERG**  
**COMM 480 Nonverbal Communication**  
**Spring 2020 M/W 2-3:20 ANN 409ABC**  
Section 20695R 4 Units

Instructor:	Jillian Pierson, Ph.D.	I encourage you to connect with me outside of our regularly scheduled class meetings! I am available many times other than what is listed here as my official hours. We can usually talk before or after class, we can set a meeting for a different time, or we can meet by phone.
Office	ASC G21F	
Hours:	Mon 2-3 Wed 10:30-11:30 Thurs 11-12	
Phone:	xxx-xxx-xxxx (cell)	You can text me to see if I'm in my office before heading over—even the official hours sometimes are disrupted by meetings or talks I'm attending, so it's a good idea to check first.
Email:	jilliank@usc.edu	Please text only with a very quick “are you in your office” type of question—otherwise, use email for content or assignment-related issues.

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### Course Description

Can you read a person like a book? Does nonverbal communication account for 93% of meaning in conversation? While we explore the key issues, theories, and research findings in the field of nonverbal communication, we will refute some popular myths and we will also pose many questions. In addition to studying the codes people typically refer to as “body language,” we’ll investigate appearance, the environment, perceptions of time and the application of nonverbal theories to deception, persuasion and interpersonal interactions.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- Define and recognize examples of the codes of nonverbal communication
- Apply nonverbal concepts and theories to “real world” situations
- Describe and evaluate nonverbal research and theories
- Propose an original research study to address a specific question within the arena of nonverbal communication

### Required Course Materials

Andersen, P.A. (2008). *Nonverbal communication: Forms and functions* (2nd Ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Guerrero, L. K. & Hecht, M. L. (2008). *The nonverbal communication reader: Classic and contemporary readings* (3rd Ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Additional readings will be required, available as Blackboard postings.

### **Tentative Course Schedule *Subject to Change:***

Please note that even when class lectures do not repeat material from the texts, you will be required to read and understand the readings assigned on the course calendar.

	Date	Topic	Assignment due <i>before</i> class	Read <i>after</i> class
1	Jan 13	Intro to the class		
	Jan 15	Defining our terms	Student Info Sheet	G&H 1
2	Jan 20	<i>No class—Martin Luther King Day, University Holiday</i>		
	Jan 22	Kinesics		Andersen 1; G&H 11, 13
3	Jan 27	Facial expressions		Andersen 2; G&H 15
	Jan 29	Appearance & adornment		G&H 5, 6, 7, 8
4	Feb 3	Proxemics		G&H 14, 21
	Feb 5	Haptics		G&H 24, 25, 26
5	Feb 10	Researching nonverbal comm	Research Article Report	G&H 3
	Feb 12	Chronemics, vocalics		Andersen 3 (pp. 67-74) G&H 17, 19, 20
6	Feb 17	<i>No class—Presidents Day, University Holiday</i>		
	Feb 19	Emotion		Andersen 6
7	Feb 24	Flirting		G&H 43,44
	Feb 26	(cont.)		Andersen 8
8	Mar 2	Intimacy & relationships	Scavenger Hunt	Andersen 9
	Mar 4	(cont.)		G&H 39,40,42,53,54
9	Mar 9	Exam 1	Exam 1	
	Mar 11	Exams returned/writing a research proposal		Bb: research handouts
<i>Enjoy Spring Break March 16-20</i>				
10	Mar 23	Deception		Andersen 11
	Mar 25	(cont.)		G&H 46, 48
11	Mar 30	Influence	List of citations for annotated bibliography	Andersen 10
	Apr 1	& Power		G&H 50, 51, 52
12	Apr 6	(cont.)	one Annotated Bib entry	Andersen 12, G&H 49
	Apr 8	Environment		Andersen 3 (pp. 58-74)
13	Apr 13	and context	Annotated Bibliography	G&H 31, 33, 37
	Apr 15	Cultural influences		Andersen 4

14	Apr 20	Gender influences	Andersen 5
	Apr 22	Stress; nonverbal disorders	Andersen 7
15	Apr 27	applications	Check Blackboard for readings
	Apr 29	Exam 2	Exam
	May 8	11 am-1 pm Research colloquium	Research proposal final paper and presentation
[note this is in our final exam time slot; the date and time are set by the university]			

## Course Policies

### No laptops or electronics.

In order to create the best possible learning environment, I ask you to not use your laptops, tablets or phones. I completely understand the temptation, but I think we all benefit from focusing without technology. Current research shows that taking notes by hand is more effective than typing them. Read the articles posted on Blackboard on this topic for a lengthier discussion of this policy. (Sometimes students have documented reasons for using laptops for note-taking; exceptions are made only for students with such documentation.)

Please bring old-fashioned pen and paper to lectures for note-taking and activities.

**Late papers:** If your paper is late, it will be marked down by one third of a letter grade for every day it is late. Also, please be aware that if you end up handing a paper in late (thus accepting the automatic deduction), it falls to the bottom of my stack of things to do and will most likely not be returned to you in a very timely manner.

**Back up your work:** Computer failures are sadly not uncommon. Please cover yourself by saving your work to cloud storage and an external storage device.

**Missed exams:** Missing an exam is very difficult for you and for me. You would never miss unless you were really, seriously ill or had a true emergency. Contact me immediately so we can try to remedy the situation and make sure you do not end up with a zero score.

### Electronic Submission of Assignments

Please upload your assignments to Blackboard only; no hard copies are needed. If you have trouble with Blackboard, reach out to them directly for help—service is available 24/7 at 213-740-5555. Encountering a problem with Blackboard is not a reason to submit a late paper. Uploading the incorrect paper from your computer is also not an acceptable excuse for a late submission of the correct work.

## Attendance and Participation

1. To get the most out of this class, you must be here. While it is normal to miss a few times during the course of a semester, you can't "take" this class without attending our meetings regularly. We learn from a variety of lectures, discussions, and activities that are supplemented but not necessarily overlapped by the readings.

2. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Please don't send me notes from the health center or even tell me why you're missing. As long as your overall record of attendance is good, and you're not absent on the day of an exam, then I certainly wouldn't hold three or four absences against you. If you miss more than that, you're in a danger zone and should communicate with me.

Note for student athletes, band members, and similar: I expect that if you are in-season, you may have to miss several classes. You should go ahead and email me notices from your university sponsors.

3. When you miss class, please do not ask *me* what you missed. It is your responsibility to seek out that information from other students. Once you have, I welcome the opportunity to talk with you and to go over any questions.

## Grading

Grades will be calculated as follows:

Misc quizzes, homework	10%
Scavenger Hunt	10%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Research Article Report	10%
Annotated Bibliography	15%
Research Proposal	15%

Participation and attendance are not only positively correlated with your learning experience, they will affect your grade in borderline cases. For example, excellent participation could move your grade from a B+ to an A- and poor attendance could move a grade from a B to a B-.

To achieve a "C" or better on papers, you must write at a level appropriate for a university student, i.e., with correct grammar, punctuation and spelling. Be sure to build in time when you write a paper for the full cycle of researching, writing, resting, revision, resting, and proofreading.

I believe an "A" represents excellent, thoughtful, and enthusiastic work. A "B" represents really good work. A "C" merely meets all the requirements of the assignment. If you are disappointed by a grade, I would be happy to give you additional feedback and to help you improve for the next assignment.

The grading scale for this class will be that an A is 94 or above; A- is 90-93; B+ is 87-89; B is 84-86; B- is 80-83; C+ is 77-79; C is 74-76; C- is 70-73; D+ is 67-69; D is 64-66; D- is 60-63; and F is 59 and below.

I like to provide a variety of learning experiences in my classes. Therefore, we will use a combination of lectures, readings, discussions, film clips, exercises, and research assignments to approach the subject matter. I really hope we'll enjoy our class sessions; please keep in mind that no matter how good a time we have in class, I take your exams and assignments seriously and so should you.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

One key to success will be reading all of my directions carefully. Some directions are in this syllabus but more will be given in class and posted on Blackboard. Always feel free to ask questions; I'd much rather clarify expectations in advance than learn afterwards that you didn't fully understand the assignment.

### **Student Information Sheet**

Please download the sheet from Blackboard, complete it, and upload to the slot on Blackboard.

### **"Scavenger Hunt"—Five entries**

This assignment is a collection of five entries rather than one cohesive paper. By working on the scavenger hunt, you should become more aware of the major role nonverbal communication plays in our everyday lives.

Ideas about nonverbal communication can be found everywhere, from daily experiences to popular culture. The objective of the scavenger hunt is for you to collect a number of these examples from a variety of both primary and secondary sources. You are to draw an idea from the class lectures or readings then find data to support it. Any of the following types of data may be used, but please do not use any one type of data more than twice. *Choose a different course concept for each report.*

Scavenger Hunt data choices:

1. Account of a personal experience.
2. Interview with someone about their experience.
3. Description of a scene from a television program or movie.
4. Photograph or drawing.
5. Synopsis of an article in a magazine or newspaper.
6. Excerpt of a scene from a novel.
7. Quotation from a biography or autobiography of a well known person.
8. Published cartoon (where the nonverbal idea is the main point of the cartoon).
9. Newspaper account of a true incident.
10. Report of a mini field observation (report what you did and what you found).

One of my criteria is *variety*. For example, do not choose three propositions from one day's lecture. Another is that your choice of data and propositions really enhance each other, so that your report helps increase our understanding of nonverbal communication. The best reports will be so good that I'll want to remember them to share with future classes.

You will turn in a set of **five** of these reports, each being about one page long (doubled spaced). Each report should have:

- The idea or course concept (cite your source, including the page number)
- The type of data you collected
- The description of the data (and an image, where applicable) and how it supports the course concept
- References in APA format for the proposition and for the data

### **Research Article Report (Detailed Notes on a Research Article)**

Find a recently published (no earlier than 2014) research article in the field of nonverbal communication. This has to be an article reporting on research the authors conducted, not a critique, review or meta-analysis. It also should not be a brief report, but a full length article.

Provide the citation in APA format and the published abstract, and then write up details about the work in your own words, in note-taking format (rather than in paragraphs of prose). The goal is to create a document you can easily skim for important information.

1. Note the background upon which the authors based their study, naming the major theories or streams of research that they are continuing.
2. What research questions or hypotheses were they posing?
3. Describe their research methods.
4. State what methods of analysis the authors used (e.g., you might just say they used statistical procedures, or qualitative analysis).
5. What were the findings?
6. What conclusions do the authors draw?
7. What future studies to the authors recommend?
8. What is your own opinion or analysis of this article?

Your report should look like an outline of the article.

### **Annotated Bibliography**

An annotated bibliography is a method of gathering sources and specific notes about those sources. You will choose a narrow, specific sub-area of nonverbal communication that has sparked your interest and start building your list of citations that will eventually become part of your research proposal. More information will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

### **Research Proposal & Presentation**

If you had the resources at your disposal to do a study of nonverbal communication, what would it be? Your task is to write a formal proposal that lays out why such a study would be justified

(by crafting an argument based on previously published studies, i.e., a literature review), and describes exactly what the study would entail. As a very general guideline, this paper should be around 8-10 pages long. More information will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

You may work alone or on a small team of no more than four members.

We will hold a colloquium on the day of the final where each researcher or team will present their proposals.

### **Exams**

The exams assess if you have learned the material covered in the readings, lectures, and class discussions. They will also ask you to put your knowledge to use by applying it to material presented in new examples. Prepare for a series of rigorous multiple choice questions on the exams. If you know yourself to be someone who finds these kinds of tests particularly challenging, check my posts on Blackboard for tips and seek help early in the semester.

Please note that you are responsible for the material presented both in the readings and in class. The two do not always overlap. If you miss a class, it would be a good idea to get notes and discuss them with at least two other students.

The second exam will not be “cumulative” in that you won’t have to go back to the earlier chapters and study them in depth, but your knowledge will build and some questions may rely on that foundation.

### **Looking Ahead**

Studying communication seems to me like a bit of an adventure. I look forward to investigating the field with all of you this semester.

## **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

### **Academic Conduct:**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

### **Support Systems:**

*Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. [engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255*

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. [engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp)

*Sexual Assault Resource Center*

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: [sarc.usc.edu](http://sarc.usc.edu)

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086*

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. [equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu)

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support)

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

*Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710*

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa)

*Diversity at USC*

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. [diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

*USC Emergency Information*

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

*USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.* Provides overall safety to USC community. [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

**Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/13/20 – 5/1/20)**

**Friday, January 31:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

**Friday, January 31:** Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

**Tuesday, February 4:** Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund for Session 001

**Friday, February 28:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Friday, February 28:** Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

**Friday, April 3:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001