

## COM 212: Interpersonal Comm. – Syllabus (Fall 2014)

Kurtis D. Miller  
mille518@purdue.edu  
765.239.9878 (in Office)

BRNG 2161 by appointment or:  
4:00 to 5:00 pm, Monday  
9:30 to 10:30 am, Tues. & Thurs.

### **Textbook:**

Trenholm, S., & Jensen, A. (2013). Interpersonal Communication (7th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

**Course Overview:** This class focuses on face-to-face communication, primarily between pairs of interactants. During the course, students will learn about current theories underlying our understanding of interpersonal communication. Students will apply current theories to examples of the interactions of real world groups, and the students' own experiences.

**Availability:** I am available in person during office hours, and by appointment in addition. My office hours are scheduled for your benefit, but some students go an entire semester without stopping by. I like students! Feel free to come by for any reason or no reason at all—even after you're done taking the class. I check and respond to my e-mail once every day, except on the weekend. I do not check my e-mail at the same time every day, so I cannot guarantee a response within 24 hours. Sometimes messages do fall through the cracks or are zapped by overzealous spam filters—if I have not replied after a few days, please re-send the message. You can also call when I am in the office.

**Classroom Environment:** You are an adult; be respectful to others. Students who are not respectful will be asked to leave. Electronic devices should be silenced and may only be used for minor tasks during the occasional lull in classroom activity. You may not leave electronic devices out, or use them in a sustained fashion, including taking notes or accessing copies of readings for the class. (Studies consistently show that students perform best in class when they hand-write their notes.) The sound on my phone will be on during class because Purdue distributes emergency information via text message.

**Access:** All students have the right to an accessible environment. Students who think they would benefit from accommodation (seating placement, arrangements for examinations, exceptions to policies, etc.) should inform me at the beginning of the course so appropriate arrangements can be made. Accommodations cannot be retroactive, so work from the beginning to ensure you get the most possible from this course. Students should also contact the Office of the Dean of Students for additional information on accommodation: <http://www.purdue.edu/odos/drc/welcome.php>.

**Campus Emergencies:** There are two predominant types of emergencies: evacuation and shelter-in-place. I am familiar with the proper course of action in both cases, so please follow those

directions. After a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Information about course changes related to campus emergencies can be accessed via Blackboard in the safety information presentation.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty is bad, and will not be tolerated in this course. Purdue has strong policies against academic dishonesty. Anyone engaging in academic dishonesty will be reprimanded and subject to disciplinary action which can result in a minimum of a ZERO on an assignment, but may include failure of the course or expulsion from the university. Students are advised to become familiar with Purdue's Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities to resolve questions about this matter. The following publication from the Office of the Dean of Students may prove helpful as well: <http://www.purdue.edu/odos/aboutodos/academicintegrity.php>. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

A. Plagiarism:

1. Copying someone else's work and claiming it as your own.
2. Paraphrasing someone else's work and claiming it as your own.
3. Collaborating with another person and claiming the work solely as your own.

B. Misrepresentation:

1. Re-using work from another course.
2. Re-using work from a previous semester in this course.

C. Cheating

## Grading

**Assigned Materials:** The entire content of assigned materials is important. Some content will not be reviewed in class. Assigned materials will generally be written, but I reserve the right to assign other media. You should approach these media the same way you would approach other assigned materials. Content from assigned materials which has not been discussed in class **will** affect your grade.

**Attendance:** Attendance is strongly encouraged. The classroom environment encourages discussion, which promotes clear understanding and familiarity with course content. Attendance will be taken in each class. Content from class meetings which has not been covered in assigned reading or media **will** affect your grade. You will lose one percentage point (1%) from your final average grade for each absence after the first three. Being late for class 3 times is considered one absence.

**Reading Quizzes:** There will be several short online quizzes throughout the semester. You can expect a quiz for every assigned reading. They must be completed before class on the date the reading is due. The quizzes are very easy, and your lowest two quiz grades will be dropped from your quiz average, but **quizzes cannot be made up** except in extreme and unforeseeable circumstances as required by

university policy. Quizzes are administered electronically and are completed outside of class time, so an ordinary attendance excuse will often not apply to them. Contact me with specific questions.

**Exam Questions:** Students sign up for four days during the semester to write and submit multiple choice exam questions based on the readings, lecture, and discussion from the assigned day. These questions will be graded, and many will be used on the exam. The questions will also be compiled into an exam study guide which will be distributed prior to the exam.

**Exams:** There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. The exams will include multiple choice and short answer questions. Multiple choice questions will be drawn from the pool of questions submitted online by students. If there are not enough quality submitted questions to prepare the exam, then I will write additional questions. The final exam will cover the same amount of new material as the midterm, but will be longer since it is semi-cumulative (there will be one review question from the midterm exam for every two new questions). Do not miss exams. **You will only be allowed to make up exams for legitimate university authorized reasons with official documentation.**

**In-class Examples:** Students will sign-up for two different dates to bring in a short video example of interpersonal communication which illustrates the concepts we have discussed. In-class examples are an important part of the course because they are an opportunity to apply the principles discussed in class in the real world through observation.

**Writing Projects:** Students will also be responsible for turning in two in-depth written analyses of their own interpersonal interactions.

**Grading Disputes:** You must wait 24 hours after receiving a grade to discuss it with your instructor. This ensures that you have the opportunity to prepare a solid case **with documentation** to support it. A meeting should be scheduled with the instructor to contest a grade. I will not discuss grades (good or bad) in front of other students, in the classroom before/after class, in the hallway, or if you run into me around campus or in town. I cannot discuss the grades of other students, and will not discuss student grades in the presence of other students, friends, family, etc. **Grades and scores are considered final unless the instructor is contacted within two weeks of their return.**

**Extra Credit:** Participation in research is not a requirement of this course. However, students may earn a bonus of 1% on their final grade in the course for each 1% a student earns through participation in research administered through the Department of Communication's Research Participation System, up to a maximum of 2%.

This opportunity allows you to see how we develop the communication theories that underlie the principles and advice covered in this course. The sessions usually last between 30 minutes and one hour.

For information about times and dates of specific studies visit the Department of Communication's Research Participation's website at <http://purdue-comm.sona-systems.com/>. The website will allow you to register for the study of your choice. Please note that if you sign up to participate in a study and fail to show up without canceling your appointment in advance (up to 2 hours before the study), you will be automatically restricted from signing up for any studies for 30 days.

Students who do not wish to participate in research may request (by e-mail) 1 or 2 short writing assignments to complete in order to earn this bonus.

**Grading Policy:** Grades are a system of communication, and as such must be used in similar ways by everyone in order for them to have meaning. Work which satisfies the requirements of an assignment is not "A" level work—it is "C" level work. Professionalism is expected. Although this is not a grammar or writing class, it is a communication class. All work should be free of significant (i.e. distracting or confusing) spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors, as these impair communication.

**Late Work Policy:** *ALL assignments must be turned in for you to pass this course!* Late assignments are accepted, but will earn no points and will only receive limited grading feedback. Regardless of your performance on any other course material, you must turn in ALL of your assignments by the end of the last class period of the semester in order for you to pass.

**Calculating Final Grades:** Final grades are a weighted average:

<b>Weights</b>	<b>Grade Cut-offs</b>	
Reading Quizze 10%	A+ 97-100	C+ 77-79
In-Class Example: 10%	A 93-96	C 73-76
Exam Question: 10%	A- 90-92	C- 70-72
Written Analysis 15%	B+ 87-89	D+ 67-69
Written Analysis :30%	B 83-86	D 63-66
Midterm Exan 10%	B- 80-82	D- 60-62
Final Exan 15%		

**For all COM Majors & Minors:** If you are planning to count this class toward your requirements for either the COM major or the COM minor, you must earn at least a C- in this course.

## COM 212: Interpersonal Communication – Schedule (Fall 2014)

- |                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Introduction                 | pp. 4-9, 24-41      |
| 2. Production                   |                     |
| 2.A. Non-verbal                 | pp. 45-75           |
| 2.B. Verbal                     | pp. 71-100, 159-173 |
| 3. Reception                    |                     |
| 3.A. Listening                  | pp. 107-116, p. 125 |
| 3.B. Perception                 | pp. 131-146         |
| 3.C. Attribution                | pp. 146-153         |
| 4. Skills                       |                     |
| 4.A. Openings and Closings      | pp. 100-103         |
| 4.B. Self-Disclosure            | pp. 192-197         |
| 4.C. Conflict Management        | pp. 116-125         |
| 4.D. Influence                  | pp. 201-224         |
| 4.E. Comforting                 | pp. 253-255         |
| 5. Major Contexts               |                     |
| 5.A. Public Relationships       | pp. 295-301         |
| 5.B. Intimate Relationships     | pp. 260-291         |
| 5.C. Family Relationships       | pp. 229-255         |
| 5.D. Professional Relationships | pp. 301-320         |
| 5.E. Culture                    | pp. 325-348         |
| 6. Conclusion                   |                     |

This schedule is subject to change during the course of the semester based on progress in the course. Additional readings will be assigned to supplement the text.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Information about changes will be distributed in class and/or on the Blackboard web page.