

# COMM 210, Interpersonal Communication

Kurtis D. Miller

**COMM 210: Interpersonal Communication:** This course examines the current theory and research traditions in the areas of interpersonal communication. Topics in the course will include scripted and role-based interaction, intimate relationships and relationship development, deception, verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication.

There are no prerequisites for this course, but students who need to complete ENGL 110 will find this course significantly more difficult.

The syllabus for this course is subject to change at any time. This includes, but is not limited to, such elements as required assignments, grading requirements/scales and the course calendar.

## Instructor Information

Instructor	Office Hours
Kurtis D. Miller, PhD. <a href="http://kurtisdmler.com">kurtisdmler.com</a> <a href="mailto:kdmiller@tusculum.edu">kdmiller@tusculum.edu</a> 423-636-7300 Ext. 5783	Library 126 1:00 pm – 2:50 pm, Tuesdays 1:00 pm – 2:50 pm, Fridays also by appointment

## Course Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will employ interpersonal communication theory. This outcome will be assessed in the [Literature Review](#).
2. Students will understand the location of interpersonal communication as a field within communication studies. This outcome will be assessed in Exam 1.

## General Education Student Learning Outcomes

1. Writing: Students will structure evidence to convincingly support their arguments. This outcome will be assessed in the [Literature Review](#).
2. Public Speaking: Students will create messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context. This outcome will be assessed in the [Fishbowl Discussion](#).

3. Public Speaking: Students will evaluate personal communication strengths and weaknesses. This outcome will be practiced in Exam 1 and Exam 2. This outcome will be assessed in the Final Exam.

## Required Materials

The textbook for this course is “Interplay: The Process of Interpersonal Communication” (Adler, Rosenfeld, & Proctor). 13th or 14th edition are both acceptable.

## How to be Successful

I have taught hundreds of students. I have never seen a student do all four of these things and fail:

1. Turn in all of your assignments by the deadline.
2. Deliver every presentation by the deadline.
3. Participate in class.
4. Talk to me if you are having trouble.

If you want to get at least a B:

1. Do everything in the first list.
2. Take notes, including a short paragraph summary at the end of each class.
3. Review these notes when you get home.
4. Review the notes again right before we start the next class.
5. Work on your assignments before the day that they are due.
6. Read the directions on assignments and ask for help if you aren’t sure how to follow them.
7. Work ahead. Do not wait to start an assignment until the current assignment has been turned in.

I have *rarely* seen a student do all seven of these things and not be satisfied with their final grade.

## Assignments and Grading

Your final grade will be determined by the total points received out of 1,000 points possible. The assignments receiving points are: Participation, including attendance and classroom activities, 100 points; [Fishbowl Discussion](#), 100 points; [Literature Review](#), 400 points; Exam 1, 100 points; Exam 2, 100 points; Final Exam (cumulative), 200 points. Students may earn up to 60 points of [Extra Credit](#).

## Grading Scale

Total Points	Grade	Quality Points <sup>1</sup>
930+	A	4.0 per semester hour
900+	A-	3.7 per semester hour

Total Points	Grade	Quality Points <sup>1</sup>
880+	B+	3.5 per semester hour
830+	B	3.0 per semester hour
800+	B-	2.7 per semester hour
780+	C+	2.5 per semester hour
730+	C	2.0 per semester hour
700+	C-	1.7 per semester hour
680+	D+	1.5 per semester hour
630+	D	1.0 per semester hour
less than 630	F	0.0 per semester hour

## Extra Credit

Students may earn up to 60 points by participating in debate team practice sessions, 20 points for each session. Additional extra credit opportunities may also be announced as they become available. Extra Credit may not be turned in after the last class meeting.

## Course Policies

### Email Policy

Email is the primary and preferred method of communication for most student issues. I check and respond to my email once daily, except weekends and holidays. You should plan to check your official student email account on a similar schedule.

The privacy of student educational records is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). I will not respond to any communication about a student which does not come from an official school email address. I do not accept assignments by email. I do not reply to emails asking questions which are already answered in course documents.

Engaging in professional communication with your professors and the university staff is important. Some students benefit from the below email template, which comes from a post I wrote to help students with [writing professional emails](#). Whether you are in my class or any other class at the university, this template should work well. Just replace the information in brackets as needed:

Subject: [class number and section]: [your issue]

Dear [Title Last Name – if you can't find out, use "Professor" to be safe],

I am in your [time] [class name] class on [days class meets]. I have checked the [syllabus/assignment instructions/rubric/textbook/class resources] for an answer, but it does not adequately answer my question. I need some additional help with [your issue].

[Second paragraph explaining your question. Describe where you looked for answers, what you found, and how that information is not enough for you to have a clear answer to your question. You may also include other relevant aspects of your situation.]

[OPTIONAL third paragraph where you propose answers or next steps.]

Thank you,

[Your First and Last Name]

## Final Exam Policy

A final exam is a required part of this course; students must take the final in order to pass the course. Final exams are administered only during three days of Final Exam Week and may not be taken early for any reason. Consult the syllabus and the Tusculum website to determine when your exams will take place and do not make travel, family, or any other plans that conflict with any of your final exams. If you see that there will be an unavoidable conflict, drop this course before the Add/Drop period concludes and sign up for a different section.

## Grade Check Policy

Prepare your grade check form with information from the course management system (Moodle) prior to bringing it to me. Please remember that grade check forms are not binding. Final grade estimates for classes in progress are based on incomplete information. FERPA restrictions prevent me from looking up your grade in front of other students. This means I must rely on my memory of how students are doing in the course.

## Grade Disputes

If you believe that you have been graded unfairly, wait 24 hours after receiving the grade and schedule a meeting to discuss it with me. I cannot discuss your grades publicly. Come to this meeting prepared to provide evidence supporting the need for a grade change. Grades are considered final one week after they are returned to you (or 2 days after the last class meeting).

## Late Work Policy

Late work may be turned in up to 7 days after the deadline. Late work will be graded ***pass/fail for half credit without feedback***. Late work that would normally receive a “C” or higher will receive 50% of the maximum points available. Late work that is not at least “C” quality will receive zero points. Late work is not accepted after 7 days.

### *Alternate Deadlines*

In some rare cases an emergency may require you to miss class and turn in work after the assigned due date. These situations are handled on a case-by-case basis and, depending on the situation and documentation, this work may be assigned an alternate deadline. Coursework assigned an alternate deadline is graded for full credit, but will not receive feedback.

Alternate deadlines will not be assigned for absences that can be planned for – this includes school-sponsored events, such as athletics.

## Participation Policy

Participation will be considered as part of the course grade. Students who are not present and actively engaged in the course will not be awarded participation points, regardless of the cause for their inability to be present and actively engaged. Students are expected to be present and on time for all classroom activities and are held responsible for all learning activity missed.

## Technology

We will often use laptops/tablets/phones or other personal electronic devices for class activities. Outside of these activities, all devices should be stored out of sight with sound switched off. There is no exception for activities such as checking the time, taking notes, or accessing copies of readings for the class. Headphones should not be worn. Please contact me if you require an exception to any course policy. Please see the section on [Accommodations](#) for additional information.

These policies are in place because students using cell phones during class take less detailed notes, and score an average of 1.5 letter grades lower on multiple choice tests.<sup>2</sup> Research clearly shows that increases in student cell phone use during class are associated with lower GPAs and lower test performance.<sup>3</sup> Studies also show that students remember information better when they hand-write their notes<sup>4</sup> and that using laptops in the classroom has negative effects on the learning of those around you.<sup>5</sup>

### *Technology Issues*

Issues with technology are not an excuse for late or missing work. Using technology is a basic expectation of students at this level of study. I strongly suggest that you do not wait until the last minute to complete assignments in order to allow time to resolve any technological issues that arise. If you need assistance with technology, contact [Information Services](#).

## University Policies

The following policies apply to *all* courses at Tusculum University.

### Minimum Grade for a Course to Count Toward a Major or Minor

Grades below C- earned in the student's major and minor will satisfy the course prerequisites requirement; however, grades below C- cannot be counted in the total number of hours required in the major and minor.

<sup>2</sup>Kuznekoff, J. H., & Titsworth, S. (2013). The Impact of Mobile Phone Usage on Student Learning. *Communication Education*, 62(3), 233–252. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2013.767917>

<sup>3</sup>Bjornsen, C. A., & Archer, K. J. (2015). Relations between college students' cell phone use during class and grades. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, 1(4), 326–336. <https://doi.org/10.1037/stl0000045>

<sup>4</sup>Mueller, P. A., & Oppenheimer, D. M. (2014). The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking. *Psychological Science*, 25(6), 1159–1168. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797614524581>

<sup>5</sup>Sana, F., Weston, T., & Cepeda, N. J. (2013). Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers. *Computers & Education*, 62, 24–31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2012.10.003>

## **Tusculum Communication Policy**

All students are responsible for checking their personal Tusculum University email account each day, as it is the university's only official communication tool.

## **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty Policy**

Cheating and plagiarism are violations of Ethics of Social Responsibility – one of the outcomes that has been identified as essential to the Civic Arts. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty. It consists of knowingly presenting in writing or in speech the intellectual or creative work of others as if it were one's own. This includes:

1. Failing to identify direct or word-for-word quotations by use of appropriate symbols and reference to the source.
2. Restating in your own words the work (ideas, conclusions, words) of another without reference to the source.
3. Presenting as your own the creative work (for instance, music or photographs) of another without proper acknowledgment. Besides plagiarism, other forms of academic dishonesty include the following:
4. Submitting the same work in two or more courses without significant modifications or expansion and without the approval of the instructors involved.
5. Submitting purchased, borrowed, copied or specially commissioned work as if it were one's own.
6. Knowingly permitting others to submit your work under their names.
7. Copying the work of others during an examination or other academic exercise.
8. Knowingly allowing others to copy your work during an examination or other academic exercise.
9. Using "cheat sheets" or any other unauthorized form of assistance during an exam, quiz or other academic exercise.
10. Manipulating or fabricating data to support erroneous conclusions.

## **Academic Accommodations and Students with Disabilities**

Tusculum University makes available to qualified students with disabilities those reasonable accommodations or services as are necessary to provide such students with unrestricted access to the learning environment and the opportunity to demonstrate academic achievement. In order to procure services or classroom accommodations, the qualified student is responsible for self-identifying and directing all requests or accommodations or services to the Academic Resource Center counselors. Contact information: Counseling and ADA Services, 423-636-7300, ext. 5402; [counselingandadaservices@tusculum.edu](mailto:counselingandadaservices@tusculum.edu); Room 233, Garland Library.

## **Tutoring**

Free tutoring services are provided by Tusculum University. The campus Tutoring Center is located in the Garland Library on the Greeneville campus. Tutoring is available in English and

Mathematics, including Statistics, in the Tutoring Center, Rooms 317-318, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. For all other subjects, sign in at the Garland Library Circulation Desk (Main Floor/2nd floor), 7:00 PM – 9 PM, Sunday through Thursday. Tutoring is available during the stated hours on a walk-in basis, and you can also schedule an appointment by emailing [tutoring@tusculum.edu](mailto:tutoring@tusculum.edu). In some circumstances, written approval to meet in other public locations can be obtained from the Tutor Coordinator. Please note that the faculty reserves the right to require students to attend tutoring sessions.

## **Title IX**

Tusculum University is committed to providing a safe learning environment that is free of all forms of sex and gender-based discrimination and harassment, including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. If you or someone you know has experienced any form of sexual misconduct, you are strongly encouraged (but not required) to contact the Title IX Co-Coordinators at (423) 636-7318 or email either of them: [jgresham@tusculum.edu](mailto:jgresham@tusculum.edu) or [mcooney@tusculum.edu](mailto:mcooney@tusculum.edu). Please note that all Tusculum University faculty members are considered “responsible employees,” meaning any situation involving sex or gender-based discrimination shared with faculty must be reported to the Title IX Co-Coordinators. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, contact Dr. Michell Temple (Garland Library 233; tel. 423-636-7402; [counselingandadaservices@tusculum.edu](mailto:counselingandadaservices@tusculum.edu)). For more information regarding Title IX reporting options and links to available resources, please visit <https://web.tusculum.edu/titleix/>.

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

When Tusculum University classes are cancelled due to inclement weather, students will receive direction on how to complete scheduled and assigned activities on the Moodle site. In the case of inclement weather and the University is not closed, students and faculty are to exercise good judgment concerning personal safety related to traveling. If the University does not close and students miss class, they are responsible for contacting the course instructor prior to the class. Tusculum University will post information regarding closings or changes in the schedule on the home page of the university website, as well as to the Tusculum Facebook page and the Twitter feed. All students are encouraged to sign up for the Pioneer Alert system by following the instructions at <http://www3.tusculum.edu/pr/inclement-weather-policy/>.

## **Student Veterans**

For information on support provided by Tusculum to veterans, contact Dale Laney, Director of Veteran Services, 121 Garland Library, tel. 423-636-7371, or [dlaney@tusculum.edu](mailto:dlaney@tusculum.edu).

## **Section Information**

Fall 2019

Tu/F, 9:30 - 10:45, Library 115

## Calendar

#	Date	Topic	Resources	Due	To prepare...
1	T, 8/20	Course Overview	HO	-	-
2	F, 8/23	Fishbowl Discussion and Literature Review Assignments	HO1, HO2	-	-
3	T, 8/27	Interpersonal Process	-	-	Read Ch.
4	F, 8/30	Culture and Interpersonal Comm.	-	-	Read Ch.
5	T, 9/03	Culture and Interpersonal Comm.	-	Fishbowl Discussion 1	-
6	F, 9/06	Interpersonal Comm. and the Self	-	-	Read Ch.
7	T, 9/10	Interpersonal Comm. and the Self	-	Fishbowl Discussion 2	-
8	F, 9/13	Perceiving Others	-	-	Read Ch.
9	T, 9/17	Perceiving Others	-	Fishbowl Discussion 3	-
10	F, 9/20	<b>Exam 1</b>	-	<b>Exam 1</b>	Study
11	T, 9/24	Language	-	-	Read Ch.
12	F, 9/27	Language	-	Fishbowl Discussion 4	-
13	T, 10/01	Nonverbal Communication	-	-	Read Ch.
14	F, 10/04	Nonverbal Communication	-	Fishbowl Discussion 5	-
15	T, 10/08	Listening: Receiving and Responding	-	-	Read Ch.
16	F, 10/11	Listening: Receiving and Responding	-	Fishbowl Discussion 6	-
17	T, 10/15	Emotions	-	-	Read Ch.
18	F, 10/18	Emotions	-	Fishbowl Discussion 7	-
-	T, 10/22	No Classes, Fall Break	-	-	Read Ch.
19	F, 10/25	<b>Exam 2</b>	-	<b>Exam 2</b>	Study
20	T, 10/29	Dynamics of Interpersonal Relationships	-	-	Read Ch.



#	Date	Topic	Resources	Due	To prepare. . .
21	F, 11/01	Dynamics of Interpersonal Relationships	-	<b>Fishbowl Discussion 8</b>	-
22	T, 11/05	Communication in Close Relationships	-	-	Read Ch.
23	F, 11/08	Communication in Close Relationships	-	<b>Fishbowl Discussion 9</b>	-
24	T, 11/12	Communication Climate	-	-	Read Ch.
25	F, 11/15	Communication Climate	-	<b>Fishbowl Discussion 10</b>	-
26	T, 11/19	Managing Conflict	-	-	Read Ch.
27	F, 11/22	Managing Conflict	-	<b>Fishbowl Discussion 11</b>	-
28	T, 11/26	Special Topic	-	<b>Literature Review</b>	-
-	F, 11/29	No Classes, Thanksgiving	-	-	-
29	T, 12/03	<b>Literature Review Presentations</b>	-	-	Practice
30	F, 12/06	<b>Literature Review Presentations</b>	-	-	Practice
31	T, 12/10	<b>Final Exam</b> at 10:00 am	-	<b>Final Exam</b>	Study