

COMM 348: Interpersonal Communication (On-Line) Spring 2021

Dr. Holly Payne

Office: 100 Ivan Wilson Fine Arts Center

Contact Information: Email holly.payne@wku.edu; 270 745-5876

Office Hours: By appointment/Zoom

Course Description

COMM 348--Interpersonal communication introduces you to the complex interaction of social and psychological forces operating in human communication. You will critically evaluate the intricacies of interpersonal relationships and the communication issues surrounding human interaction in various contexts. We will examine basic concepts, theories, and research findings relevant to initiating, developing, modifying, maintaining, and terminating relationships with an eye to the role of communication in the process. This course requires you to participate in written and verbal activities designed to develop your understanding of interpersonal communication and has the potential to improve the quality of your life if you keep an open mind and participate actively. Lecture, discussion, in and out-of-class observations, and research assignments will be used to increase your knowledge and behavioral competence in interpersonal communication.

Course Objectives

COMM 348 introduces you to the fundamentals of interpersonal communication and exposes you to interpersonal theory and scholarly research. At the conclusion of the course it is expected that you will:

1. Know, understand, and be able to articulate the definition, realm, and scope of interpersonal communication and relational communication.
2. Demonstrate competence and an ability to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of interpersonal strategies used in various interpersonal relationships.
3. Comprehend effective ways to listen and manage conflict.
4. Make connections between what you learn in the course and what you experience in your own relationships.
5. Demonstrate an increased awareness of interpersonal communication theories and how they influence communication behaviors.
6. Be introduced to and practice analyzing interpersonal research.

Required Course Materials

1. An active WKU email account
2. Required Readings: Posted in Blackboard.
3. Guerrero, L.K., Andersen, P.A., & Afifi, W.A. (2018). *Close encounters: Communication in relationships*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
4. Regular computer access including high-speed Internet, sound capability, Adobe PDF reader, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft PowerPoint
5. Access to the Movie: *500 Days of Summer* available via streaming on Starz, iTunes, Google, Amazon Prime, Youtube, etc.

Technical Assistance

If you are experiencing technical difficulties with Blackboard, call WKU's IT Help Desk (270-745 -7000) *IMMEDIATELY*. If the issue is not resolved and may affect your ability to complete an assignment, email me at holly.payne@wku.edu explaining your situation.

Course Attendance

Successful learning online requires you to actively participate and *attend* the course. Attendance for this online course is defined as signing on to the Blackboard site, participating in the discussion, reading the course pack, viewing video, listening to lectures, and completing course assignments. You are required to have substantive participation. If you have not attended class during the first three days of the term, you will be considered to be in non-attendance and will be withdrawn from the course.

Student Academic Assistance

If you have serious problems with writing (and many people do), I advise you go to the Writing Center.

Trained writing instructors are there most weekdays and on weekends to assist you in the writing process. The Center takes appointments (745-5719) and drop-ins. The university provides this service for students, so take advantage of it!

Academic Integrity

I expect that all of the individual assignments you complete for COMM 348 (and in all of your other courses) are always your own work. However, many students are not sure exactly what "your own work" means, so, please read again the information on plagiarism and cheating from your student handbook. Aside from copying work, plagiarism includes incorrectly citing sources or presenting someone's information as your own, without crediting the source. To avoid this, you should carefully make notes to keep track of where your information came from. In written form, you must use quotation marks when referring to another's work. In a speech where you are paraphrasing, you can say "According to.....(give name).....". It does not take much effort to make sure you follow the rules for using another's thoughts.

Penalty for Academic Dishonesty

Western Kentucky University and the Department of Communication are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on an exam, or purchasing papers, speeches, or other assignments will immediately receive a failing grade on the assignment and in the course, and will be reported for disciplinary action. Falsified medical excuses and presenting another student's work as your own fall within the guidelines of this academic integrity policy.

Plagiarism Detection

In this course we will be using an electronic plagiarism detection tool, SafeAssign (through Blackboard), to confirm that you have used sources accurately in your papers. Students agree that by taking this course all assignments are subject to submission for textual similarity review to SafeAssign. Assignments submitted to SafeAssign will be included as source documents in SafeAssign's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents.

Student Accessibility Resource Center (SARC)

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745- 3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu . Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

WKU's Policy On Sexual Misconduct /Assault and Discrimination/Harassment

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040). For more information click on the following links for the full policies:

[Title IX Policy](#) & [Discrimination & Harassment Policy](#). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and **MUST** report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

Course Activities and Requirements

Class Activities and Reflection Papers

One of the most interesting components of this course is the incorporation of case studies, research articles, and other activities. These activities serve to explain and reinforce concepts studied in the textbook. You may occasionally have quizzes on assigned readings, complete case studies, and participate in several in-class activities and assessments. There will also be four reflection papers you will complete related to the theory and articles assigned. Reflection papers will address a posed question in one-page double spaced. Papers will be graded on content, introspection, and qualities of good writing.

Song Analysis Discussion Board

Music has a powerful social influence on our society and with us as individuals. Popular music and lyrics are often focused on issues related to interpersonal communication. Sometimes this type of music takes the form of "happy love songs". Other songs speak to the problems and challenges people face in creating, maintaining, and ending relationships. The purpose of this assignment is for you to analyze and interpret contemporary music in terms of interpersonal communication. This assignment requires you to consider interpersonal theory and concepts, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues. For this assignment you are to select a song that is personally meaningful to you and analyze and interpret the music and lyrics in light of interpersonal communication concepts and principles that we have covered so far this semester. You will create and participate in a discussion board that includes a link to the

song, lyrics, and your analysis of how the concepts apply. More details of the assignment are located in Blackboard.

Film Analysis Paper

You will view the movie, *500 Days of Summer* and write a 5-6 page paper (not including the cover page and references) analyzing the movie from an interpersonal communication perspective. Specifically, you will apply theories and concepts learned in the course to situations revealed in the movie. This paper requires in depth analysis (not superficial analysis) of communication theory and concepts. You can also add an analysis of how communication could have been improved and what might have occurred if certain behavior demonstrated in the film had continued or stopped. Do not feel a need to go in depth on the plot of the movie, but make reference to situations in the film to guide your discussion of interpersonal theory. Use quotes as needed to demonstrate key points. Your job is not to provide a movie review or critique of the film, but rather, you should think analytically about how the topics we have covered in class this semester describe, predict, or explain the situations in the movie. You are required to identify three major interpersonal themes or principles present in the film (i.e., self-disclosure, relationship maintenance) and describe how different theories and concepts apply (i.e., Petronio's CPM, Baxter's dialectical tensions, Fitzpatrick's marital typologies, etc). You will also cite outside sources when discussing the relevant concepts. (See Blackboard for the full assignment description).

Exams

You will take 3 exams covering course readings and lecture material. Exams will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, and short essay questions. For the exam, you will need to use the Lockdown Browser. Details are provided in Blackboard.

Assignments and Point Distribution

Reflection Papers (4)	80 points
Song Analysis	20 points
Song Analysis Discussion Board Participation (2)	20 points
Class Activities (Quizzes, Assessments, etc) (8)	80 points
Final Paper—Film Analysis	50 points
Exam 1	50 points
Exam 2	50 points
Exam 3	50 points
TOTAL	400 points

A (400-360 points) **B** (361-320 points) **C** (319-280 points) **D** (279-240 points) **F** (Below 240)

Final grades will be assigned according to the above scale. Do not expect final grades to be curved, and do not ask to be awarded those couple of extra points needed to reach the next letter grade. Remember throughout the semester that every point counts! Please do not email me at the end of the semester asking for make-up work or a rounding up of grades.

COMM 348 Online Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to Interpersonal Communication and Communicating Identity

Due by January 24

Read Chapters 1 and 2

Listen to the Lectures

Complete the “I Am” Activity

Week 2: Forces of Attraction

Due by January 31

Read Chapter 3

Listen to the Lecture

Complete the Chapter Quiz

Week 3: Managing Uncertainty & Expectancy Violations Theory

Due by February 7

Read Chapter 4

Listen to the Lecture

Read the Article by Miller-Ott & Kelly (2015)

Complete the Reflection Paper #1 Assignment

Week 4: Relational Development

Due by February 14

Read Chapter 5

Listen to the Lecture

Complete the Relational Dialectics Assessment

Complete Exam 1: Chapters 1-5 (Use Lockdown Browser)

Week 5: Self-Disclosure, Privacy, and Secrets

Due by February 21

Read Chapter 6

Listen to the Lecture

Read the Article by Romo, Thompson, & Donovan (2017)

Complete the Reflection Paper #2 Assignment

Week 6: Closeness, Affection, and Immediacy

Due by February 28

Read Chapter 7

Listen to the Lecture

Complete the Song Analysis Discussion Board (Round 1)

Week 7: Love Styles and Attachment

Due by March 7

Read Chapter 8

Listen to the Lecture

Complete the Love Styles Assessment and Submit Results

Complete the Love Languages Assessment and Submit Results

Week 8: Relational Maintenance

Due by March 14

Read Chapter 10

Listen to the Lecture

Complete Exam 2 (Chapters 6, 7, 8, 10) using Lockdown Browser

Week 9: Coping with Conflict

Due by March 21

Read Chapter 11

Listen to the Lecture

Complete the Conflict Style Assessment and Submit Results

Read the Article by Fowler & Dillow (2011)

Complete the Reflection Paper #3 Assignment

Week 10: Relational Transgressions

Due by March 28

Read Chapter 13

Listen to the Lecture

Read the Article by Guthrie & Kunkel (2013)

Complete the Reflection Paper #4 Assignment

Week 11: Film Analysis Project

Due by April 4

View the Film for the Film Analysis Paper

Complete the Film Analysis Paper

Week 12: Healing the Hurt

Due by April 11

Read Chapter 14

Listen to the Lecture

Complete the Song Analysis Discussion Board (Round 2)

Week 13: Ending Relationships

Due by April 18

Read Chapter 15

Listen to the Lecture

Complete the Activity on Relational Dissolution

Week 14: Family Communication

Due by April 25

Read Appendix: Family Communication

Listen to the Lecture

Complete the Family Communication Patterns Assessment and Submit Results

Week 15: Final Exam Week

Due by April 30

Review for Final Exam

Complete the Final Exam (Chapters 11, 13, 14, 15, Appendix on Family Comm) using Lockdown Browser