

**Communication Studies 121: Interpersonal Communication (UC:CSU, Section 8037)**

**West Los Angeles College**

**Winter 2016 (1/4-2/7)**

Instructor: Linda Alexander, Ph.D.

Office Hours/Contact Information

- In-person office hours: Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday 10:35-10:55am. GC 280J.
- Virtual office hours in ETUDES Chat: By appointment.
- Best to contact me through the ETUDES "Private Message" option in our course site (allow at least 48 hours for a response).

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*Dear Communication Studies Student,*

*I hope you will find this to be an exciting and informative class. In this totally online class, we will explore how and why we communicate with each other. Emphasis will be placed on interpersonal influence, relationship dynamics, and interpersonal communication in different contexts. We will also examine the impact of culture on verbal and nonverbal communication. Should you have any questions about the course material, or have any issues that you would like to discuss, I invite you to reach out to me. In the coming weeks, you and I will work together to maximize your potential in our class.*

*Thank you for the opportunity to teach you!*

*Dr. Alexander*

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Course Description

Communication Studies 121 is an advanced course in the analysis of the principles and significance of interpersonal social interactions in all areas of life. Perception, building positive relationships, personal disclosure, self-fulfilling prophecies, effective listening, communication apprehension, verbal and nonverbal communication, the impact of gender and culture on communication, expressing emotion, assertiveness, aggression, and conflict management will be examined.

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**Institutional Student Learning Outcomes**

**"B. Communication: Effectively communicate thought in a well-organized manner to persuade, inform, and convey ideas in academic, work, family and community settings."**

In assignments and class exercises, exchange ideas and present different points of view.

**Communication Studies Program Outcomes**

"Employ effective interpersonal communication skills and strategies that foster improved relationships with other individuals in dyads or small groups."

"Employ small group communication strategies."

**Communication Studies 121 Student Learning Outcomes:** At the end of the course, the successful student will be able to:

1. Explain and analyze the stages of close interpersonal relationships.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the stage model of interpersonal relationships by applying the model to a concrete example.

### **Course Objectives**

- Define interpersonal communication and its major components.
- Appraise the value of studying interpersonal communication.
- Define dyads.
- Analyze the communication model of sending and receiving messages including feedback, feedforward, channel and noise.
- Analyze semantic noise.
- Employ ethics in communication.
- Evaluate the irreversibility of messages.
- Describe the Johari Window.
- Evaluate the risks and rewards of self-disclosure.
- Demonstrate how to manage communication apprehension.
- Analyze the role of perception in communication.
- Recognize barriers to accurate perception.
- Evaluate self-fulfilling prophecies.
- Question stereotyping.
- Demonstrate active listening.
- Distinguish between denotation and connotation.
- Judge artifactual communication: color, clothing and space decoration.
- Analyze non-verbal communication including body language, facial expression, eye contact, touch and spacial messages.
- Employ non-verbal communication to encode and decode meaning.
- Compose role-playing scenarios.
- Evaluate the impact of culture on verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Describe emotions.
- Employ empathy in responding to the emotional messages of others.
- Identify the major obstacles to effectively communicating emotions.
- Employ "you" statements.
- Distinguish between assertive and aggressive communication.
- Employ effective listening techniques.
- Compare and contrast defensive and supportive communication climates.
- transform defensive climates into supportive ones.
- Assess the appropriateness of effective interpersonal strategies used in various situation.
- Recognize how relationships develop.
- Plan and employ ways to improve self-esteem.
- Explain and employ the skills for conversation effectiveness.
- Explain the stages of relationships.
- Define the equity theory in relationships.
- Evaluate and practice communication in relationships.
- Evaluate power plays.
- Identify and value nourishing people.
- Define gunnysacking.
- Evaluate a model of conflict resolution.

### **Required Textbook and Other Materials**

- *The Interpersonal Communication Book, 14<sup>th</sup> Edition*, by Joseph A. DeVito (2016)
- The textbook is available in the WLAC bookstore.
- Supplemental materials may be provided by the instructor.
- You will need the textbook for this class so you should get a copy as soon as possible.

**COURSE FORMAT: ALL OF THE COURSEWORK WILL TAKE PLACE ONLINE IN ETUDES.**

**\*STUDENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

- I will frequently post announcements in ETUDES and send out emails to you. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOUR EMAIL INFORMATION IN ETUDES IS CORRECT.
  - Class Announcements and emails (Private Messages sent through Etudes) should go straight to your email. **You can check the email info that is linked to Etudes by clicking on Account (it's a tab at the top of the Etudes screen).** Edit your email information if necessary.
  - West emails should be going to your LACCD.edu email address. Learn how to automatically forward West emails from your LACCD account to your personal account so you do not miss important information. View this video: <http://www.wlac.edu/online/emailhowto.asp>
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**LOG INTO OUR COURSE SITE OFTEN AND CHECK YOUR EMAIL AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION.**

\*Please note: The action begins in Week One. If you have not logged in and participated by the end of the first week of class you may be dropped. Students who are dropped might not be reinstated. However, it is the student's responsibility to drop the class. Failure to do so can result in an "F" in the class.

**Computer Access/Technical Requirements**

- ALL of the coursework will take place online.
- You must have access to a computer that meets technical requirements. If you haven't already done so, please make sure that your computer is properly configured for ETUDES.
- Go to: [http://www.wlac.edu/online/NG\\_Tech\\_Reqs.htm](http://www.wlac.edu/online/NG_Tech_Reqs.htm)
- Carefully read through "Technical Requirements" and make sure to address all the issues on this page.

**\*TO ACCESS OUR CLASS, LOG IN AT:** <http://myetudes.org>

Your login ID is the first 2 letters of your first name + the first 2 letters of your last name + the last 5 digits of your Student ID Number (not your social security number). If you do not know your Student Identification Number you can look it up using the Student Information System (SIS) at <http://www.laccd.edu>

If this is your first ETUDES class your password is your Month and Day of birth. However, since ETUDES passwords are permanent, if you have already taken a class using ETUDES your password has not changed.

Example: Juan Straub, 88-459-0210, born July 4

\* User ID: just90210                      \* Password: 0704

After you login, you will see a list of the courses you are enrolled in on the top menu bar to the right of My Workspace. Just click on a course number to access a course. Once you have entered the course, use the left-side menu to navigate the course.

If you have trouble accessing the course on, or after, the start date, visit the Online Student Help Desk at <http://www.wlac.edu/online/helpdesk.asp>. Review the Common Login Mistakes information on the left for solutions to common login problems. If your problem is not addressed, contact the Distance Learning Program Office at (310) 287-4306 or via email: [shemwer@wlab.edu](mailto:shemwer@wlab.edu).

Communication 121 is an online class and all coursework takes place in our ETUDES course site. You are expected to engage in extensive reading, participate actively in discussions, complete written assignments, and take quizzes based on the required textbook. Students are expected to complete and submit coursework on time. Modules contain course information.

Grading: Students are encouraged to submit their work early if possible rather than wait until the deadline. Please note that in general, submissions are not opened/evaluated until about 1-2 weeks after a deadline has passed.

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**IMPORTANT:** Go to the Assignments, Tests and Surveys area and note the due dates for the written assignments. Do the same in the Discussions area. Discussion topics have two deadlines (see "DISCUSSION BOARD" section below). Quizzes will remain open until the end of our session, but they should be taken in a timely manner. **Make a note of ALL coursework deadlines as soon as possible, as late work cannot be submitted.**

Grading Criteria	Maximum Points
Quizzes (10 total, 25 points each)	250
Written Assignments (2 total, 150 points each)	300
Participation in Discussion Forums (10 total, 50 points each)	500

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TOTAL: 1050 points (900 to 1050 = A; 800 to 899 = B; 700 to 799 = C; 600 to 699 = D; 599 and below = F).  
 Note: Percentages (90%, 80%, etc.) are based on 1000 points, not 1050. **This means that there are 50 extra credit points built into the grading structure!**

\*In order to pass the course, all assigned work must be completed and meet course standards.

Academic Integrity Policy: Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated (WLAC 2012-2014 Catalog, pg. 41).

Student Conduct: Disruptive, disrespectful, or obstructive behavior will be dealt with in accordance with the LACCD Standard of Student conduct. Disciplinary action can be taken if student behavior interferes with instruction (WLAC 2012-2014 Catalog, pg. 42).

Dropping the Class: According to college policy, you will be excluded for excessive absences or for not following the Standards of Student Conduct. It is your responsibility to drop the class. Failure to drop a class can result in an "F" in the class (WLAC 2012-2014 Catalog, pg. 46).

3 Attempts to Pass: In the past, a student at any LACCD college could have attempted to pass a class up to 7 times. Up to 4 'W's and up to 3 'D' and/or 'F' grades were permitted. Effective July 2012, the rule changes. A student may only attempt to pass the same class 3 times. Receiving a 'W,' 'D,' or 'F' count as attempting to pass the class. Students who unsuccessfully attempt a class 3 times but still want another opportunity to pass the class will have to enroll in the class at a non-LACCD campus or go through the appeal process with Admissions. (WLAC 2012-2014 Catalog, pg. 48).

Disabled Student Services

If you know or think that you have any learning or physical disabilities, please contact Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) Office in HLRC 121 at (310) 287-4450.

Instructional Support (Tutoring) & Learning Skills Center, Heldman Learning Resources Center (HLRC) | (310) 287-4486

## **QUIZZES**

There are 10 quizzes, 25 points each. Each quiz is timed (you have 30 minutes to complete it) and you can only take the quiz one time. Quizzes will remain open until the end of our session but you should complete them in the appropriate Module. Quizzes are available in the Assignments, Tests, and Surveys area of our course site.

## **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

There are two assignments. Each is worth 150 points. Assignments have a specific deadline, and each assignment has a set of instructions. You will submit assignments by pasting content in the appropriate submission box. No attachments, please. Assignments are submitted in the Assignments, Tests, and Surveys area of our course site.

**STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED TO SUBMIT EACH ASSIGNMENT ONLY ONCE.** All submissions are accepted "as is." It is your responsibility to make sure that you are submitting the correct document. Proofread your work. Excessive spelling and grammatical errors may result in points being deducted.

Each assignment must be at least 800 words minimum. Points will be determined by: 1) information content, 2) the details and examples provided to illustrate your understanding of the assignment, 3) responding to every aspect of the assignment, 4) meeting the minimum word count, and 5) citing your source or sources. Quality and quantity.

When you are asked to refer to various readings to complete assignments and/or discussion responses, **you must cite your sources in MLA or APA format and include a list of references.** You can use your textbook as a guide. The WLAC library also has additional information on citation format.

## **\*PLAGIARISM**

Please note that when asked to consult the textbook or other materials, **DO NOT** simply copy sentences word for word from a source and put it into your assignment submissions. **YOU MUST SAY THINGS IN YOUR OWN WORDS.** If you copy more than three words in a row from a source (such as your textbook), you must use quotation marks ("\_\_\_"). Otherwise, you are committing plagiarism, and the penalties are severe (see "Academic Dishonesty Policy" in the previous section of this syllabus). In addition, you are required to cite your source (such as your textbook) when you use information from that source. You are **REQUIRED** to give credit to an author in terms of the author's ideas, words, etc. **Basically, you should cite your sources in the text of all written work AND include a list of references.**

## **DISCUSSION BOARD**

There are 10 discussion topics, 50 points each. You will submit your posts into the submission box. No attachments, please. Discussions can be accessed in the Discussions area of our course site.

You are expected to actively participate in the Discussion Board by 1) replying to the topic posted by me and 2) replying to at least one other person's post. \*You will only be **REPLYING** to messages. You must **cite your sources in MLA or APA format and include a list of references.**

For each week, the discussion topic has two deadlines. In general, the first is on Thursday, 11pm (reply to me), and the second is on Sunday at 11pm (reply to a classmate's post). For each topic, the initial reply to my original post must be done by the first deadline, and the follow-up post must be done by the second deadline.

By submitting the **FIRST** post several days before the actual close date, everyone gets a chance to respond to what others have said. Submit your responses in a timely manner, as each topic will close promptly at 11pm on the final deadline date, and late posts will be locked out. Note that deadlines are based on Pacific Standard Time.

I will keep an eye on your posts but will not participate, as the discussion board is a place for students to interact with each other. Keep in mind, however, that any online communication, such as emails and discussion board postings, must always be courteous, civil, and respectful.

Discussion Grades: Each discussion topic has specific instructions that will indicate expectations. What is a strong original discussion board post vs. a weak post? Points are determined by the quality and quantity of comments.

Example: "Do you agree with the research finding that there are distinct differences in emails written by men vs. women? Be sure to include specific examples and lots of detail to support your answer."

=>Strong original response: "In my own experience, emails from men seem to be qualitatively different from those written by women. For example, my uncle and aunt live in Florida. Uncle Fred emails me about once every couple of months unless there's a special circumstance (big earthquake in California). His emails are pretty short and to the point. On the other hand, Aunt Jackie emails me whenever she has something to share, like a bake sale at her church, or the crazy day she had at work." (Students: Keep in mind that each discussion topic has different instructions and word count minimums.)

=>Weak original response: "Men send short emails and women go on and on."

=>Strong follow up to a classmate's post: "I agree with you, Nancy. I often have long email discussions with my cousin Brenda, but my brother's emails are so brief that they border on rude. It's really odd because he talks nonstop when he's with his friends. By the way, I, too, have relatives in Florida. Mine are in Miami."

=> Weak follow up to a classmate's post: "Right on, Nancy!"

\*Each student is expected to submit their own work. DO NOT COPY SOMEONE ELSE'S DISCUSSION RESPONSES AND SUBMIT AS YOUR OWN. See "Academic Dishonesty Policy" in the previous section of this syllabus for penalties.

#### **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!**

- Computer problems can occur at your end or on the ETUDES site. Computer-related problems are not an excuse for submitting late discussion posts or for not submitting them at all.
- Keep in mind that ETUDES can sometimes run slow, so plan accordingly.
- **You should do all your work off-line, make sure to save it, and then submit it in ETUDES.** Work can be lost if the computer connection breaks down while you are composing something in the ETUDES site.
- Please observe all deadlines, as they are firm deadlines. **Late work will not be accepted.** Giving time extensions to some and not to others is simply not fair to everyone. Students are encouraged to work ahead whenever possible. This will help you to keep to your schedule should unexpected events occur during the semester.

*Dear Communication Studies Students,*

*Who is your best resource in this class? Me!*

*I encourage you to ask any questions you might have by sending me a Private Message in Etudes or finding a mutually convenient time for a virtual meeting.*

*Please know that you are capable of doing excellent work in this class by following instructions, asking for clarification when necessary, managing your time well, and applying yourself to the task at hand.*

*I look forward to getting to know you as the semester progresses!*

*Dr. Alexander*