

Family Communication

COMX 311 Spring, 2019

Instructor Information:

- ✧ **Instructor:** Dr. Christina Granato Yoshimura
- ✧ **Office:** LA 358
- ✧ **Phone:** 243-4244
- ✧ **Office Hours:** M, F 12:00-1:00; W 3:00-3:30
- ✧ **E-mail:** christina.yoshimura@umontana.edu (E-mail is the best way to contact me)

Format and Philosophy:

This class will mainly be structured around a class lecture and discussion. Usually, I will give a lecture that incorporates the assigned readings into a broader outline that includes related material. During main points of the lecture we will discuss the relevance and application of these concepts together. Not only is your participation necessary for discussion, but at some points you will be broken down into small groups to teach or discuss with one another. Your learning and the learning of your peers will be based on your own preparedness and willingness to participate.

I am committed to fairness. I generally abide by the ethical system of the categorical imperative – something is just and fair if it can be applied to everyone in the same circumstance. I created the policies in this syllabus to be applied to everyone in the course – I do not grant exemptions, extensions, or extra credit to one person if I cannot do so for the entire class. The entire class is being held to the policies in this syllabus, and the timeline and schedule for this course – please make sure that you are willing to accept this. If not, you will want to drop the course.

Course Objectives:

- To understand definitions and theories of families based on contemporary communication research
- To gain a greater understanding and recognition of the communication practices that are typical in family interactions
- To learn how family relationships are created and constrained by communication norms imposed by religion, government, and culture
- To closely investigate specific communication patterns in a variety of family relationship types

Required Materials:

Turner, L.H., & West, R. (2018). *Perspectives on Family Communication* (Fourth or Fifth Edition). McGraw Hill.
Four skinny red scantrons and a #2 pencil for exam days
Online readings (as assigned) on Moodle supplement

Policies:

Attendance & Participation-

Although there are no direct penalties for missing class, you will find that in this class that there are substantial direct and indirect consequences of missing class. Class is conducted in order to share important information. By missing class, you not only are missing out on that information, but the rest of the class is missing out on information that you may have been able to share. If you choose to miss class, you must take responsibility for this choice. I give lectures only once, so you will need to gather the information from class in some other way. Additionally, you may not make up any class activities, so missing class may mean missing out on points for the course. Finally, please be punctual. I will arrive for class on time, and hope that you will make it a point to do so, as well. This will be especially important on exam days – no latecomers may take an exam after the first person has finished on an exam day.

E-Mail –

Although you may come meet with me during office hours if you are on campus, many people choose to communicate with me via e-mail. Please always put COMX 311 in the subject of your e-mail, especially if you are not emailing from your university account. Please allow up to 48 hours for me to reply to any email. Generally, I will reply well before 48 hours is up, however, you should not email drafts or questions the night before an assignment or exam. You may or may not receive a reply.

When emailing, please write professionally and courteously. This means forming complete sentences, with appropriate punctuation and capitalization, as well as formulating your questions or requests in a considerate way. I will reply to you in the same manner. If your e-mail deviates too far from these expectations, I will reply by pointing you back to this section of the syllabus and asking you to try again.

Academic Integrity –

All students taking this course must adhere to the University of Montana’s academic dishonesty policy as presented in the Student Conduct Code (SCC). As noted in the code, students are expected to practice academic honesty. Any actions that include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors are reasons for pursuing academic and university sanctions: plagiarism, copying another student’s exam, allowing another student to copy from your exam or work, sharing information with another student during testing sessions, acquiring or possessing an exam without the instructor’s permission, tampering with course materials or resources (including library references) submitting false information (data, quotations, citations, etc.), representing someone else’s work as your own, representing work for other courses you’ve taken as new work for this class, etc. Students will be charged with academic dishonesty for any breach of these standards. No work done for credit in any other class may be turned in for credit in this class. The *minimum* consequence for engaging in cheating or plagiarism is failure on the related assignment, but this type of activity usually results in failure in the entire course. At worst, academic misconduct can result in expulsion, denial of your degree, and/or revocation of a degree that has already been awarded. See the Student Conduct Code for definitions and consequences of cheating and plagiarism. The unabridged student conduct code is located at: [Student Conduct Code](#)

Consideration –

The overall atmosphere in the class should be that of respect - for yourself and everyone else in the class. In the course of our discussions, personal information may be disclosed. Please do not repeat this information or use it to harm others. Help foster a classroom where a priority for education is valued by turning off all cellular phones, pagers, or other noise-making devices. Understand that harassment of any kind is both inappropriate and intolerable, and disciplinary action will be taken should it occur. If you need/will potentially need consideration due to travel plans for university-sponsored activities or for university documented disability accommodations, you must let me know within the first week of class.

Contesting Grades –

I am very willing to go over your exam with you to discuss concerns that you might have. I ask that you abide by three guidelines, all of which make it easier for us both to concentrate on your concerns.

- 1) Wait 24 hours after a test has been returned to you to contact me.
- 2) write your concerns and your backing for these concerns down so that we can both look them over as we meet.
- 3) 3) approach me only during an appointment that we’ve scheduled - discussing your grade in class violates your privacy and doesn’t provide an environment where I can adequately focus on your concerns.

Students requesting alternate options –

If you require consideration not mentioned in this syllabus (perhaps you are a student athlete, a student working with DSS, a graduate student seeking graduate credit, etc.) please contact me within the first week of class so that we can see if your needs can be met in this course. I cannot guarantee any alternate options in this class if you do not meet me with documentation during this time period.

Grading:

Assignment	Points
Exams (3 @ 100)	300 points
Strong Families Group Project	50 points
In-class collaboration	50 points
Total points available	400 points

I do not curve grades, nor do I use the +/- system. I follow the traditional breakdown (A= 100-90%, B=89-80%, etc.) that you earn out of the total points available in the course.

Exams:

There will be four, non-cumulative exams in this course. These exams will include multiple choice and/or matching questions. Information to be covered on each exam will be announced prior to the date of the exam, and a study guide will be provided. Your three highest exam scores will be taken to calculate your grade in this class.

Strong Families Group Project:

Towards the end of the class, you will join a group to create a series of programs for the public that will utilize your expertise in the theory, research, and execution of communication in families. You will outline very specifically a class you would propose to be a part of this series. You will be responsible for choosing courses that you think would be most helpful and practically useful to participants, and also for backing up these courses with theoretical and/or research-based rationale. This will require a synthesis of what we've covered in our course together, as well as the ability to explain these concepts to people unfamiliar with family communication concepts. You will present a portion of this project in class.

In-Class Collaboration:

Frequently throughout the semester I will be asking you to work with me in conceptualizing and understanding our readings for the day. This might come about through individual, paired, or group work; these collaborations will occur throughout the semester and although graded, will not be announced in advance.

Date	Topic(s)	Readings due to done before class
Jan 14	Introductions	
Jan 16	Family Defined	Chapter 1
Jan 21	<i>No Class – MLK Jr. Day</i>	
Jan 23	Theories	Chapter 2
Jan 28	Methodology	Pgs 84-88, reading on Moodle
Jan 30	Rules and Roles	Chapter 3
Feb 3	Consolidation, Discussion, and Review	
Feb 5	Exam 1 - #2 pencil and skinny red scantron sheet required	
Feb 11	Intimacy and Sex	Chapter 5 and pgs 345-354
Feb 13	Storytelling and Rituals	Chapter 6
Feb 18	<i>No Class – President’s Day</i>	
Feb 20	Family Stress	
Feb 25	<i>No Class – WSCA Conference</i>	Chapter 8
Feb 27	Privacy and Boundaries	Reading on Moodle
Mar 4	Consolidation, Discussion, and Review	
Mar 6	Exam 2 - #2 pencil and skinny red scantron sheet required	
Mar 11	Power and Discipline	Chapter 7
Mar 13	Family Violence	Chapter 7 and reading on Moodle
Mar 18	Conflict	Chapter 7 and reading on Moodle
Mar 20	Communication Technologies	Chapter 4
Mar 25-27	<i>No Class – Spring Break</i>	
Apr 1	Consolidation, Discussion, and Review	
Apr 3	Exam 3 - #2 pencil and skinny red scantron sheet required	
Apr 8	Strong Families Group Project – Mandatory Attendance	
Apr 10	Religion/Family Interface	Chapter 9
Apr 15	Government/Family Interface	Pgs 157-167, Readings on Moodle
Apr 17	Work/Family Interface	Pgs 360-368, readings on Moodle
Apr 22	Family/School Interface	Readings on Moodle
Apr 24	Wrap-up, Strong Families Discussion	Strong Families Assignment Due
Exam 4 will be held Monday, April 29, from 10:10-12:10		