

Family Communication

COMX 311 Fall, 2019

Instructor Information:

- ✧ **Instructor:** Dr. Christina Granato Yoshimura
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- ✧ **Office Hours:** 8-9am and 11am-12pm, Tues/Thurs
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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.

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.

Basic Needs Statement:

Any student who faces challenges securing food, housing, or health care and believes that this could affect their performance in this course, is urged to contact any or all of the following campuses resources:

- **Food Pantry Program**
 - UM offers a food pantry that students can access for emergency food. The pantry is open on Tuesdays from 9 to 2, on Fridays from 10-5. The pantry is located in UC 119 (in the former ASUM Childcare offices). Pantry staff operate several satellite food cupboards on campus (including one at Missoula College). For more information about this program, email umpantry@mso.umt.edu, visit the pantry's [website \(https://www.umt.edu/uc/food-pantry/default.php\)](https://www.umt.edu/uc/food-pantry/default.php) or contact the pantry on social media (@pantryUm on twitter, @UMPantry on Facebook, um_pantry on Instagram).
- **ASUM Renter Center**
 - The Renter Center has compiled a list of resources for UM students at risk of homelessness or food insecurity [here: http://www.umt.edu/asum/agencies/renter-center/default.php](http://www.umt.edu/asum/agencies/renter-center/default.php) and [here:https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog](https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog).
 - Students can schedule an appointment with Renter Center staff to discuss their situation and receive information, support, and referrals.
- **TRiO Student Support Services**
 - TRiO serves UM students who are low-income, first-generation college students, or have documented disabilities. TRiO services include a textbook loan program, scholarships and financial aid help, academic advising, coaching, and tutoring.
 - Students can check their eligibility for TRiO services online [here: http://www.umt.edu/trioss/apply.php#Eligibility](http://www.umt.edu/trioss/apply.php#Eligibility).
- **Curry Health Center (Dental, Mental Health, and Medical)**
 - Curry Health Center provides quality, affordable, accessible health care for students at the University of Montana. They promote a healthy campus by treating students with dignity and respect and through collaborating and sharing expertise. They offer online appointments and online screening tools, and same day walk-in appointments if needed: <http://www.umt.edu/curry-health-center/>

If you are comfortable, please come see me with concerns you have and I will do my best to help connect you with additional resources.

Date	Topic(s)	Readings due to done before class
Aug 27	Introductions	
Aug 29	Family Defined	Chapter 1
Sept 3	Theories	Chapter 2, reading on Moodle
Sept 5	Methodology	Pgs 84-88, reading on Moodle
Sept 10	Rules and Roles	Chapter 3
Sept 12	Consolidation, Discussion, and Review	
Sept 17	Exam 1 - #2 pencil and skinny red scantron sheet required	
Sept 19	Intimacy and Closeness	Chapter 5 and pgs 345-354
Sept 24	Sex	Reading on Moodle
Sept 26	Storytelling and Rituals	Chapter 6
Oct 1	Family Stress	Chapter 8
Oct 3	Privacy and Boundaries	Reading on Moodle
Oct 8	Consolidation, Discussion, and Review	
Oct 10	Exam 2 - #2 pencil and skinny red scantron sheet required	
Oct 15	Power and Discipline	Chapter 7
Oct 17	Family Violence	Chapter 7 and reading on Moodle
Oct 22	Conflict	Chapter 7 and reading on Moodle
Oct 24	Communication Technologies	Chapter 4
Oct 29	Consolidation, Discussion, and Review	
Oct 31	Exam 3 - #2 pencil and skinny red scantron sheet required	
Nov 5	Strong Families Group Project – Mandatory Attendance	Chapter 9
Nov 7	Model Strong Families Class	
Nov 12-14	Group Work times on Strong Families (no class held)	
Nov 19	Family Interface: Health and Religion	Pgs 157-167, Readings on Moodle
Nov 21	Family Interface: Government and Schools	Pgs 360-368, readings on Moodle
Nov 26	Group Work Time/Consultations with Christina	
Nov 28	Thanksgiving – No Class	
Dec 3	Strong Families Presentations	Strong Families Assignment Due
Dec 5	Consolidation, Discussion, Review	
Exam 4 will be held 10:10-11:30 Monday, Dec 9 th		