Interpersonal Communication
COM 170, Spring 2016

Name: Dr. Kennedy-Lightsey (pronounced “Light-SEE”)
Department: Languages, Cultures, and Communication; Communication Studies
Email: kennedylcd@sfasu.edu
Phone: 936-468-1262 (direct office #); 936-468-4303 (main office #)
Office: Liberal Arts North—Dugas 413

Class Meeting Times:
- COM 310.001, MWF 9-9:50a
- COM 470.001, MWF 10-10:50a
- COM 170.003, MWF 11-11:50a
- COM 170.004, MW 12-12:50p

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1p-2:45p; Tuesdays, 10a-11:30a
If these times don’t work with your schedule and you need to meet with me, we can arrange a
time that works with both of our schedules.

Course Required Text/Materials:

There does not seem to be much difference between the 2nd and 3rd ed of the textbook other than the advanced online
system that is supposed to come with newest edition of the textbook. If you choose to purchase the 2nd edition (listed
below), you are responsible for staying abreast changes.

Student Learning Outcomes: This course introduces the study of interpersonal communication. Throughout the semester, we’ll explore a variety of concepts, theories, frameworks, and perspectives that apply to human communication and interaction. I’ve designed this course to increase their understanding of interpersonal communication and how to apply course concepts and theories to real-world experiences. By the end of the semester, you should be able to:
- Recall and describe communication concepts and theories.
- Apply theoretical concepts to diverse interpersonal situations.
- Distinguish and design competent verbal and nonverbal messages based on the communication context.
- Evaluate effective and appropriate verbal and nonverbal messages in various interpersonal encounters.

This course also meets several objectives for those of you majoring in Communication Studies as well as satisfies a General Education/Core Curriculum Requirement. Below, you’ll find several outcomes accomplished in this course.

Program Learning Outcomes:
Students majoring in Communication Studies…
- Should display comprehension of major communication theories.
- Will apply the major theories in the field to communicate effectively in a variety of settings.
- Will be able to use and demonstrate understanding of appropriate methodology in critical, humanistic, or social scientific paradigms in examining research questions in communication.
- Will be able to recognize the central role of diversity and freedom of expression in a global community.
- Will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the constitutive nature of communication, which includes forces that enable and constrain communication such as technology, ethics, and organizational life.
- Will be able to demonstrate oral and written competence in logical and critical thinking.

**General Education Core Curriculum**

This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core curriculum courses. This student work will be collected in D2L through LiveText, the assessment management system selected by SFA to collect student work for core assessment. LiveText accounts will be provided to all students enrolled in core courses through the university technology fee. You will be required to register your LiveText account, and you will be notified how to register your account through your SFA e-mail account. If you forward your SFA e-mail to another account and do not receive an e-mail concerning LiveText registration, please be sure to check your junk mail folder and your spam filter for these e-mails. If you have questions about LiveText call Ext. 1267 or e-mail SFALiveText@sfasu.edu.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to LiveText this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be uploaded to LiveText. Not every assignment will be collected for assessment every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for assessment in LiveText this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in LiveText</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>Group Presentation and Reflection Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Group Presentation and Reflection Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical and Quantitative Skills</td>
<td>To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.</td>
<td>Group Presentation and Reflection Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
<td>Group Presentation and Reflection Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Group Presentation and Reflection Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>Group Presentation and Reflection Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Requirements

**Student Evaluation.** There is a total of 650 possible points in this class. The due dates for exams and group video presentations are listed in the Course Timeline. Your final grade in this course is based on your cumulative point total (not percentage) and will be assessed as the following:

\[
A = 585-650, \quad B = 520-584, \quad C = 455-519, \quad D = 390-454, \quad F < 389
\]

**Course Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Your Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam One</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Two</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Three</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Four</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities/Quizzes</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Presentation &amp; Reflection Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>650</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Readings.** You are expected to **complete the assigned readings prior to coming to class.** These are important for learning the communication concepts, theories, and terminology that you will see on exams and quizzes. Although we will discuss some of the material in greater detail in class, you’re still responsible for material covered in the textbook even if we don’t discuss it in class.

**Group Presentation (80 pts) and Individual Reflection Paper (20 pts).** This is a major class assignment that encourages you to **critically think about course concepts/theories/ideas** in the chapters in your textbook and **creatively apply the material** in order to **teach the concepts to specific audiences** or in specific contexts. You will work in teams to prepare for this assignment and **each** group member will be presenting at least a 5-minute long virtual, recorded presentation of the material. **The video presentation will be submitted to LiveText and delivered to me as either a DVD, USB, or on youtube.**

The group work will be logged (every student will keep a record of their contribution and the date on which they contributed) where each student’s suggestion is listed and shows what each group member provided in terms of assistance for the betterment of the presentation being created by the individual student.

The log will also be used to write a **short reflection paper** (1+ pages) discussing (1) what ideas you contributed, (2) how you constructively facilitated others’ ideas, (3) how you synthesized ideas for and with the group, (4) how successful you and your team was in developing and implementing the ideas generated, and (5) how you helped motivate each other to complete the task. You will also discuss how you fostered a constructive team climate and responded to conflict if and when they arose. **The paper is to be a written essay submitted as a .docx or .rtf file to both D2L and LiveText.** See the Course Timeline for the due dates for this assignment.

**Activities/Quizzes.** Throughout the semester, you will complete various experiential activities, quizzes, short reflection papers, surveys, experiments, and assignments that pertain to the course content. The purpose of these activities is for you to practice competent communication behavior as well as analyze and reflect on appropriate and effective communication. Each activity will be worth various points that will be added for a cumulative score out of 150 points. If an activity
entails group discussion/involvement and you’re not contributing to the group, you’re at risk of losing points. Some activities may include active participation in online discussion board posts. If you will be away for official university business and will miss an assigned activity, it is your responsibility to arrange a time to complete the assignment **BEFORE** you leave. Official documentation is required if you’ll be missing class for official university business.

**Exams.** There will be four exams worth 100 points each. Exams will include multiple-choice/true-false, with a short answer/essay bonus question over the designated chapters. Not only should you demonstrate ability to retain and comprehend concepts and theories, but you will need to apply the concepts to life-like situations and be able to analyze (in)effective/(in)appropriate communication. You will be allotted the entire class period to complete exams. However, late students will not receive any additional time. If you arrive after the first exam has been turned in, you will not be allowed to take the exam. **On exam days, you will be asked to turn off ALL technology.** If any technology comes out during the exam, I will pick up your exam and you will automatically receive a zero. Make-up exams are **not** permitted unless otherwise arranged with the professor for extreme, unavoidable circumstances. I reserve the right to adjust the exam when giving a make-up instead of giving the original exam. If you will be away on official university business on an exam day, you will need to arrange to take the exam **BEFORE** the exam date. It is your responsibility to arrange this meeting and you must provide documentation.

**Attendance/Participation.** Attendance and active participation in class discussions and activities are very important for your success in this class. Formal attendance will be taken randomly over the course of the semester at the instructor’s discretion. It is the student’s responsibility to sign in on the days attendance is collected and/or to complete the attendance activity. Students will be allowed three (3) absences over the course of the semester without fear of grade penalty. However, students with four (4) or more absences are at risk of point deduction (minus 10 points per absence). Arriving late and leaving early could negatively affect your grade. **Perfect attendance, which means being physically present for EVERY single class meeting, is worth 10 additional points toward your final grade (out of 650 points).** Signing someone else’s name or requesting someone else to sign your name is academic dishonesty and will be handled in the same manner as academic plagiarism/cheating (see Academic Integrity statement). If you miss **seven** or more classes, you will automatically **receive an F** in the course, regardless of the reason.

**Course Policies**

**Late Assignments.** Assignments are due by the designated date and time on the Course Timeline. Any exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will require extremely compelling, well-documented reasons. You must provide documentation for dire circumstances (e.g., accident, hospitalization, family death etc.). If you will be away on official university business when an assignment is due, you must provide appropriate documentation and arrange to complete assignments/tests **BEFORE** departing.

**Grading Policy.** I cannot explicitly measure effort. The final product is all that can be evaluated. Although effort is typically associated with improved results, you should not confuse the two. If you are dissatisfied with a grade on an assignment, you **must wait at least 24 hours and no more than 7 days** before discussing the issue with me. At that time, you should focus on what can be done to improve your performance on the next assignment, rather than disputing the grade itself. I spend a great deal of time ensuring that I grade assignments in a fair and consistent manner and any error that does occur will be in your favor. Please feel free to speak with me at any time.
about ways to improve your performance in the course. I strongly suggest however that this is
done early in the semester rather than waiting until the end of the semester.

If you “need” an A or B, good grade, passing grade, etc in this class... I understand that
success in this class is important to many of you, and I will do the best that I can to help you.
**Begging for a grade is unethical** and will not be tolerated! To deter such unethical practices,
students will lose 5 points per request. Here are some general tips to help you earn your grade
in this class.

1. Come to class.
2. Take advantage of participation opportunities that are given.
3. Complete the readings before class – at the very least, know the topic of class that will be
covered that day. Quizzes are based on the readings for class.
4. Ask questions if you have them, either during class, during office hours, or through
email. If my office hours are not convenient for you, make an appointment.
5. Follow the rules in this syllabus. Clear up any questions that you have early on.
6. Complete and submit your work on time or early.
7. Utilize on-campus resources that are available to you, including the AARC and the
library.
8. Proofread your work before submission.

**Technology.** It is important that you be familiar with D2L. You can anticipate that any
unexpected changes or prompt announcements will be distributed via D2L. Moreover, all of your
grades will be posted in D2L and all of your quizzes and discussion board assignments will be
completed through D2L (unless otherwise notified). You are encouraged to check D2L on a daily
basis for updates and other information. Students who do not check their D2L regularly will still
be held accountable for missed information regarding the course.

Technology use during class time however should be kept to a minimum. Texting in class,
especially while someone else is talking, is rude and will not be tolerated. If you would like to
use a laptop or electronic device (other than a phone) for note taking, you will be allowed to do
so. If you’re using such technology for other, non-educational reasons however, your technology
use will be suspended for the rest of the semester.

**Classroom Civility.** Civility in the classroom is not only expected, but also required. We may
discuss some sensitive issues in this class. Please be mindful that although you have not
experienced certain things first hand, it is very possible and highly likely that some of your
classmates have. A vast array of opinions, points of view, and experiences will be expressed
during class, and we will work together to create an environment where everyone feels safe to
express their ideas. While different opinions, experiences, and ideas will be welcomed, incivility
and disrespect will not be tolerated.

“Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the
ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code,
policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt
the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or
other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic,
classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over
what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class
regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert
Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other
assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.”
**Academic Integrity (A-9.1)**

“Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**

“Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.”

**Students with Disabilities**

“To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).”
### Interpersonal Communication I: Tentative Daily Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Course Reading/Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week One   | Course Overview and Introductions Introduction to Interpersonal Communication | ◐ Communication Survey and Discussion  
| 1/20-1/22  |                                                                         | ◐ Read Chapter 1                                              |
| Week Two   | Definitions and Models Communication and Culture                        | ◐ Finish Chapter 1                                            |
| 1/25-1/29  |                                                                         | ◐ Read Chapter 2                                               |
| Week Three | Communication and Culture Cont. The Perception Process Culture, Sex, and Gender | ◐ Finish Chapter 2                                            |
| 2/1-2/5    |                                                                         | ◐ Read Chapter 3                                               |
| Week Four  | How We Perceive and Present Our Selves                                 | ◐ Finish Chapter 3                                            |
| 2/8-2/12   | Exam One (Ch. 1 – 3)                                                    | ◐ Exam One (2/12)                                             |
| Week Five  | The Power of Words Improving Verbal Skills                               | ◐ Chapter 4                                                   |
| 2/15-2/19  |                                                                         |                                                              |
| Week Six   | How We Use Nonverbal Codes to Communicate                                | ◐ Chapter 5                                                   |
| 2/22-2/26  |                                                                         |                                                              |
| Week Seven | Understanding Poor Listening Habits Effective Listening and Responding  | ◐ Chapter 6 (Online Module)                                   |
| 2/29-3/4   |                                                                         | ◐ Meet with Group Members                                      |
| Week Eight | Meet in the Computer Lab (Ferguson G77) to Submit Presentations, Reflection Papers, & Logs to LiveText (Papers & Logs to D2L) Exam Two (Ch. 4 – 6) | ◐ Presentations & Reflection Due to LiveText (DVD/USB to me-3/7)  
| 3/7-3/11   |                                                                         | ◐ Exam Two (3/11)                                             |
| Week Nine  | SPRING BREAK                                                            | ◐ NO CLASS                                                   |
| 3/14-3/18  |                                                                         |                                                              |
| Week Ten   | Experiencing & Expressing Emotions Easter Break (3/25)                  | ◐ Read Chapter 7                                              |
| Week Eleven| Easter Break (3/28) Emotions (possibly online modules—ECA Conf)         | ◐ No Class (3/25)                                             |
| 3/28-4/1   |                                                                         | ◐ Finish Chapter 7                                            |
| Week Twelve| Disclosure theories and effectiveness (possibly online modules—SSCA Conf) | ◐ Read Chapter 8                                              |
| 4/4-4/8    |                                                                         |                                                              |
| Week Thirteen| Embracing Constructive Conflict PUGSS                                   | ◐ Chapter 9                                                   |
| 4/11-4/15  |                                                                         |                                                              |
| Week Fourteen| Exam Three (Ch. 7-9) Developing and Managing Close Relationships       | ◐ Exam Three (4/15)                                           |
| 4/18-4/22  |                                                                         | ◐ Chapter 10                                                  |
| Week Fifteen| Communicating in Context                                               | ◐ Chapter 11                                                  |
| 4/25-4/29  |                                                                         |                                                              |
| Work Sixteen| Catch up Course Wrap Up                                                |                                                              |
| 5/2-5/6    |                                                                         |                                                              |

**Exam Four (Ch. 10 & 11 Only)**
- ◐ COM 170.003—class meets at 11-11:50a—Final on Wednesday, May 11th at 10:30a
- ◐ COM 170.004—class meets at 12-12:50a—Final on Monday, May 9th at 1p

***This schedule is subject to change. It is your responsibility to stay abreast any changes made to the schedule throughout the semester.***