**Communication Arts 272 –**

**Introduction to Interpersonal Communication**

Summer, 2016; 3 credits

## Course Description

Interpersonal communication refers to the use and effects of communication, both verbal and nonverbal, within personal relationships. This type of communication is fundamental to the human experience. By communicating with the people around us, we develop a sense of self and we establish a network of relationships that is critical for our survival, success, and emotional well-being. This course will introduce you to the key theories and research findings in the field of interpersonal communication. We will read and discuss both classical works in the field and cutting-edge, emerging findings. We will also work on connecting theory with practical applications in view of developing your own competencies as an interpersonal communicator.

CA272 is designated as a Comm-B course at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As such, it provides instruction in writing, public speaking, and library research as part of the curriculum.

## Course Objectives:

## By the end of this course, you will:

* Become familiar with the major theories and research findings in the field of interpersonal communication
* Understand how interpersonal communication affects vital relationships, such as those with family, friends,  and romantic partners
* Become reflective of your own interpersonal communication patterns within these relationships, and become better attuned to the needs, motivations, and communication styles of relational partners
* Develop your own interpersonal communication skills, such as emotional intelligence, active listening, and  conflict management
* Hone writing, public speaking, and library research skills

## Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

## Instructor:

[](https://commarts.wisc.edu/people/ctoma)

## Catalina L. Toma (PhD, Cornell University)

## Department of Communication Arts

## University of Wisconsin – Madison

## 6144 Vilas Hall

## (608) 262-8760

## [ctoma@wisc.edu](mailto:ctoma@wisc.edu)

## Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

## Graders:



## Miranda Kolb (graduate student)

## Department of Communication Arts

## University of Wisconsin-Madison

## 6067 Vilas Hall

## (608) 263 – 3997

## [mrkolb@wisc.edu](mailto:mrkolb@wisc.edu)

## Virtual Office Hours: By appointment



## Emily Strand (graduate student)

## Department of Communication Arts

## University of Wisconsin-Madison

## 6067 Vilas Hall

## (608) 263 – 3997

## [ewstrand@wisc.edu](mailto:ewstrand@wisc.edu)

## Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

## Course Environment

This is a fully online course, which means that all course materials will be available online, and all interactions with your peers and me will also take place online. There will be no on-campus class sessions, and it is unlikely that you will meet me or your classmates in person. You will need regular access to a computer, video recorder, and the Internet to complete this class.

## A Few Words about Online Courses

Online education offer students a great deal of **flexibility** and **control** over their learning. You will be able to go over class materials at your own pace, to download them, and to review them as many times as you want (unlike face-to-face lectures). Students greatly enjoy these aspects of online learning.

However, online learning also has challenging aspects. Since there will be no scheduled meetings, **it is up to you to manage your time effectively**. Please note that, on the whole, it takes just as much time to complete all the activities in an online course as it does in a face-to-face course. The fact that there are no lectures and discussion sections does not save time. University guidelines specify that, for a 3-credit online summer class, **you should spend 20-25 hours of work per week.** My advice is that you save a block of time to work on this class **every day**.

Time management also means that **it will be your responsibility to keep track of due dates**. Please keep in mind that there are many moving pieces to this class (e.g., discussion board postings, quizzes, paper assignments – see below), which is why it is vital that you keep a close eye on your schedule. I will send out periodic reminders and have created a checklist of activities that are due every week (along with their deadlines). However, it is your responsibility to make sure you complete and submit your work on time. I recommend that you log in every day to check for news, announcements, and due dates, and that you keep a personal schedule where you allocate enough time prior to every assignment/quiz for writing and studying.

Research shows that students and instructors need to be more mindful about creating **a sense of community** in an online than a face-to-face class. There is no built-in face-to-face contact, and if you procrastinate and only log in to the course before deadlines, it is possible to feel isolated and disconnected. **It is vital to log in regularly and actively communicate with your peers and myself**. I have created many opportunities for social interaction. You will be split into various groups throughout the semester, allowing you to get to know and work closely with classmates. You will also be able to ask each other questions and offer advice through open (i.e., non-graded) forums. I will log in every day and offer feedback and comments. I will also be available to schedule video-chatting sessions if you’d like them. It is up to all of us to create an enthusiastic and supportive learning community and it is my sincere hope that we do so! Research shows that the more you engage with each other and make an effort to get to know your classmates, the more you will enjoy the class and the more you will learn.

# Course Requirements

## Required Textbook

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/51VQdMhCRGL._SY300_.jpg | * Textbook: Steven McCornack, 2012. *Reflect & relate: An introduction to interpersonal communication* (3rd Edition). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s. * Additional readings are posted on Learn@UW. |

## Required Course Material/Software

You will be required to post videos of yourself delivering oral presentations. You may use a desktop/laptop camera or video recorder to do so. The only requirement is that you do NOT use a handheld device which you hold yourself while delivering your presentations. That is, no selfie-style videos! You are free to use any software you’d like for recording the videos.

## Technical Requirements

* [Hardware and software](https://sites.google.com/a/wisc.edu/epd-ehelp/technical-requirements) (Note: We will not be holding live web conferences, but all other guidelines apply.)
* Learning Management System: [Desire2Learn](https://kb.wisc.edu/luwmad/page.php?id=5278)

# Course Units & Schedule

The course contains a total of 8 modules, each to be covered during one week of the summer term. Each module will open at 12:01 am on the Monday of the week it is assigned. For each module, you will complete the following **mandatory activities**:

1. Study the online lecture. Each lecture will include a mixture of text and videos.
2. Read the assigned textbook and/or additional articles.
3. Take a quiz on the lecture + readings.
4. Post two discussion board comments and, during your assigned weeks, an oral presentation on module material
5. Work on and/or submit portions of the paper project

**WEEK 1: ORIENTATION & FOUNDATIONS**

* Familiarize yourself with the course:

Study syllabus & orientation module

Take practice quiz on syllabus content

* Online lecture 1
* Readings: Chapter 1
* Discussion board: read the discussion assignment description then introduce yourself in the

discussion board (not graded)

* Paper project: Read “selecting a topic” document
* Quiz #1 due (**open Fri – Sun**)
* Optional: Read article on “Posting videos in Learn@UW” and post your proposed topic in the

discussion board

**WEEK 2: SELF & OTHERS**

* Online lecture 2
* Readings: Chapters 2 & 3
* Discussion board: No assignment this week

Paper project: Read the Annotated Bibliography assignment

Study “APA style for reference lists”

Complete the library instruction session

* Quiz #2 due (**open Fri – Sun**)

**WEEK 3: VERBAL & NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION**

* Online lecture 3
* Readings: Chapters 6 & 7

Discussion board: Post comments (**Th – Sun**) and, if applicable, oral presentation (**by Wed. night**) in Week 3 Forum

* Paper project: Study “writing resources”

Annotated bibliography assignment **due by Sun night**

* Quiz #3 due (**open Fri – Sun**)

**WEEK 4: DECEPTION**

* Online lecture 4
* Readings: Ekman (2001) and Hancock, Thom-Santelli, & Ritchie (2004)
* Discussion board: Post comments (**Th – Sun**) and, if applicable, oral presentation (**by Wed.**

**night**) in Week 4 Forum

* Paper project: Review feedback on Annotated Bibliography assignment

Read “thesis proposal” document

Complete the Thesis Statement Activity

Thesis proposal **due by Sun night**

* Quiz #4 due (**open Fri – Sun**)

**WEEK 5: EMOTIONS & EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

* Online lecture 5
* Readings: Chapter 5 and Goleman (1995)
* Discussion board: Post comments (**Th – Sun**) and, if applicable, oral presentation (**by Wed.**

**night**) in Week 5 Forum

* Paper project: Review feedback on Thesis Proposal assignment

Read “first draft” document and “APA style for papers”

* Quiz #5 due (**open Fri – Sun**)

**WEEK 6: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

* Online lecture 6
* Readings: Chapters 5 & 8
* Discussion board: Post comments (**Th – Sun**) and, if applicable, oral presentation (**by Wed.**

**night**) in Week 6 Forum

* Paper project: First draft of research paper due by Sun night
* Quiz #6 due (**open Fri – Sun**)

**WEEK 7: ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS**

* Online lecture 7
* Readings: Chapter 9 and Buss (1994)
* Discussion board: Post comments (**Th – Sun**) and, if applicable, oral presentation (**by Wed.**

**night**) in Week 7 Forum

* Paper project: Review feedback on your First Draft

Read “final draft” document

* Quiz #7 due (**open Fri – Sun**)

**WEEK 8: FAMILY & FRIENDS**

* Online lecture 8
* Readings: Chapters 10 & 11
* Discussion board: Post comments (**Th – Sun**) and, if applicable, oral presentation (**by Wed.**

**night**) in Week 8 Forum

* Paper project: Final Draft of Research Paper due by Sun night
* Quiz #8 due (**open Fri – Sun**)

# Course Assessment

## Assignments

## Quizzes (7 x 6% each = 42%)

At the end of every module, you will be tested on the online lecture and readings through a quiz. The quiz will contain **10 multiple choice questions** and **5 true/false questions**, randomly selected from a large bank of quiz questions. This means that you are unlikely to get the same questions as your classmates.

The quizzes are **closed-book**. Please do not consult any class materials or the Internet while answering the quizzes. You will have **9 minutes** to complete each quiz, with a 1 minute grace period. When the grade period is over, your answers will be recorded automatically and the quiz will shut off.

To help you study, I have prepared a **study guide** for every quiz. The study guide contains a list of keywords from the lecture and readings that are likely to be covered in the quiz. While the study guide should give you solid guidance on what to focus on in your studying, it is NOT meant to be exhaustive.

Each week, the quiz will open on **Friday at 8 am** and close **on Sunday at 11:59 pm**. **You will only be able to take each quiz once**. Please be sure you are well prepared and are situated in a quiet environment with no distractions when you begin the quiz.

There will be a total of 8 quizzes available for you to take (1 for each module). **You will be able to drop your lowest quiz grade**; therefore, only your 7 highest quiz grades will count towards your final grade in this class (each is worth 6% of the final grade).

**A word of advice about quizzes**: Time will be tight. This is done on purpose to make it impossible for you to consult class materials while taking the quiz. **Plan on spending about 30-45 seconds per multiple-choice question and 10 - 15 seconds per true/false question.** It will be important to read the questions carefully, be sure to understand them, and proceed to reason through them. This will take time. If you consult your notes, you run the very serious risk of running out of time. Be warned that many of the questions are applied, in that you will be given a hypothetical scenario and asked which theory/concept best describes it. For these questions, it will be impossible to find the correct answer in the notes anyway.

Please be advised that the quizzes themselves are short (maximum 10 minutes). However, **the studying that is necessary to perform well on these quizzes will take a long time – several hours every week.** As described earlier, time will be very limited while taking the quiz; therefore, you need to know the correct answer almost on the spot. This can only be achieved if you have a strong handle on the material when you start the quiz. Please plan accordingly.

1. **Paper project (40% total)**

Throughout the semester, you will work on a paper project which will require you to conduct library research and formulate a novel thesis on a topic of your choice in the area of interpersonal communication. The paper project is meant to enable you to immerse yourself in and achieve **deep** understanding of a specific topic that is personally interesting to you. The paper project also fulfills this course’s Comm-B requirements related to writing and library research. This paper project is broken down into a series of assignments, due at various points during the semester (see schedule). Detailed information about each assignment is available on Learn@UW.

1. Annotated bibliography (**5%**)
2. Thesis proposal (**10%**)
3. First draft of research paper (**15%**)
4. Final draft of research paper (**10%**)
5. **Discussion board postings (18% total)**

You will be assigned to groups of three to work on the discussion board component of this class. Each week, one of you will be designated as **discussion leader** and asked to post a short video (about 5 minutes) in which you discuss the class material assigned to that week. Then, all three group members (including the discussion leader) will be required to post comments in response to the oral presentation. You are required to post a **minimum of 2 comments each week**. The purpose of this assignment is to get you to engage with one another and the class material deeply.

Detailed instructions about the content of the oral presentation and of the comments are provided on Learn@UW.

You will remain in the same group throughout the semester, so that you get to know your group members well and develop a sense of community. Please check the GROUPS function on Learn@UW to identify your group members.

**The discussion board postings begin in Week 3.** Each of you will get to lead discussion twice during the course of the semester. To determine the order of leading discussion, list all the group members in alphabetical order by last name. The first person on that list will lead discussion in Weeks 3 & 6; the second person will lead discussion in Weeks 4 & 7; and the third person will lead discussion in Weeks 5 & 8.

Each oral presentation is worth **5%** of your final grade, for a **total of 10%**. The discussion board comments posted throughout the semester are worth **a total of 8%** (**1.33% per week**). Both the oral presentation and comments will be graded as **pass/fail**. Grading criteria are posted on Learn@UW.

## Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted by the due date (see “General Schedule” above) via the Dropbox function of Learn@UW. Please submit each assignment into its designated folder (e.g., “Annotated Bibilography,” “Thesis Proposal”). All written assignments must be submitted in **Microsoft Word format**.

Please submit all assignments with the following file-naming convention: CourseInitials\_LastnameFirstInitial\_Assignment Name

For example: CA272\_TomaC\_Annotated bibliography

## Late Assignments

Due dates are firm deadlines. It is your responsibility to communicate with me if you need an extension. Extension requests are only granted under exceptional circumstances (e.g., illness) and at the discretion of the instructor. You will need to provide documentation of your exceptional circumstances. Late assignments will **marked down 10% for each day they are late**. Assignments that are more than 3 days late will not be accepted.

## Grading

All your work will be graded by our course graders, Miranda Kolb and Emily Strand. Miranda and Emily are both highly experienced graduate students in the Department of Communication Arts who have served as teaching assistants for this course numerous times, to stellar reviews. Miranda and Emily will provide detailed, thoughtful, and constructive feedback on your work. However, if you are dissatisfied with your grade or the feedback you have received, you may appeal your grade.

Please follow the following **guidelines for grade appeals**. First, contact your grader directly and try to resolve the problem. If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome, you may make a direct appeal to me. You must do so **within 1 week** from the date you have received your grade. Your appeal must be written and must make a compelling case as to why you deserve a different grade. Please know that when I re-grade your work, you might earn a **higher or lower grade than originally assigned**.

Your graders will be available to discuss your grades and grading criteria via email or video-conferencing. At certain times during the summer they might be available for in-person meetings in Madison. Please email them directly if you have questions, would like to set up a video-conferencing appointment, or would like to check their availability for an in-person meeting.

## Grading Scale

All assignments and quizzes will be graded on a scale from 1 to 100. We will be using the following percentage to letter-grade conversion scale:

| Letter Grade | Percentage |
| --- | --- |
| A | 93 – 100 |
| AB | 92.5 – 88.0 |
| B | 87.5 – 83.0 |
| BC | 82.5 – 78.0 |
| C | 77.5 – 70.0 |
| D | 69.5 – 60.0 |
| F | < 59.5 |

## Academic Integrity

You are required to abide by University of Wisconsin’s code of academic integrity (<http://students.wisc.edu/doso/students.html>). While you are encouraged to collaborate with your peers and to draw upon relevant literature, any work that you submit for academic credit must be your own, written entirely in your own words (unless clearly marked as quotations and properly attributed to sources). You must at all cost avoid copying peers’ work or cheating on exams.

Since this is an online class, you will not be proctored while taking the quizzes. It will be your responsibility to conduct yourself with integrity during quiz-taking. As previously mentioned, you are not allowed to consult any class material or the Internet while taking the quizzes. Under no circumstances should you attempt to make copies of the exam questions and distribute them to classmates. Similarly, you should never accept copies of quiz questions should anyone offer them to you. You should never divulge any information about quiz content during your interactions with your classmates.

**All cases of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic F in the class and will be reported to the Dean of Students.** Please be warned that I will act ruthlessly and decisively in cases of academic dishonesty. There will be no warnings, no second chances, no opportunities to rewrite, and no negotiations. If you cheat, you will fail this class – not just the assignment/quiz in which you cheated, but the entire class. **Do not cheat.**

# Communicating with the Instructor

If you have questions about any aspects of this course, please follow the “three before me” rule:

1. **consult the syllabus**. As you can tell, the syllabus contains extremely detailed rules about course organization and management.
2. **consult the course website**. Detailed guidelines about each assignment, study guides, and obviously much of the course content are always available on Learn@UW.

**IMPORTANT:** If you have technology-related questions (e.g., about how Learn@UW works, system compatibility, etc.), there are university resources to assist you. A comprehensive list of these resources can be found in the Orientation module, under Tech Support.

1. **consult your classmates**. I have created discussion groups in Learn@UW for each major component of this course (e.g., assignments, quizzes). Please ask your questions in these forums. Also, please be generous with your time and expertise and answer your classmates’ questions when you can. I will also answer questions posted on the forums. It is important that you check these forums because your question may have been answered by your classmates or myself. Think of the discussion forums as a permanent repository of knowledge about the course.

If you have exhausted these information resources but still do not have the answers you need, or if you have questions of a personal nature, you are welcome to contact me directly **via email**. Please insert “CA272” in the subject line of each email you send me. **I will respond to you within 2 business days.**

**IMPORTANT**: This course will require you to use your wisc.edu email. Please be sure to use and check this email address regularly!

If your question requires extensive communication, I might suggest that we discuss it using **video-conferencing**. You are also welcome to request a video-conferencing appointment with me if you think it will be more useful than email communication. I will be available via **Skype**, with the username: **catalina\_toma**.

If you have questions about a grade or feedback you received on an assignment, please contact your grader. If you are dissatisfied with your grade or feedback, please follow the grade appeal policy outlined earlier.

I will log into the course every day to monitor your discussion postings and provide feedback when necessary.

If you are a **McBurney student**, please introduce yourself to me and email me your visa as soon as the class starts. We will work together to make all the accommodations that you need. More information about the services offered by McBurney Center can be found at [www.mcburney.wisc.edu](http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu)

# Subject to Change Notice

All material, assignments, deadlines, and rules are subject to change. I will make timely announcements about any such changes. As always, it is your responsibility to check the course site and/or your email to receive these announcements.