

Vanguard University
School for Professional Studies
Degree Program

**“INTRODUCTION TO
INTERPERSONAL
COMMUNICATION”
COMM 290**

Student Guide

9/10

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TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Required texts:

Adler, R. B. , & Proctor II, R. R. N. (2011). *Looking out/Looking in* (13th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. ISBN -13: 978-0-495-7962-3

Doyle, S. (2011) *Student activities manual: For Adler and Proctor's Looking out/Looking In*. (13th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. ISBN -13: 978-1-4390-8516-5

Recommended texts:

Tannen, D. (1990) *You Just Don't Understand*. (2nd ed.). NY: Ballantine Books.

Tannen D. (1994) *Gender and Discourse*. NY: Oxford University Press.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to teach students the primary elements of the communication process as it occurs between persons in everyday settings. Among the topics considered are language and meaning, nonverbal communication, person perception, self-concept and conflict resolution.

OVERVIEW

The study of Interpersonal Communication is valuable because it impacts us in many areas: emotionally, intellectually, physically and spiritually where we live, work and enjoy community.

Such a study can enhance emotional well being. Men and women were created with a full palate of emotions. Perhaps part of our life's journey is to learn about the mystery called self, about our unique needs and feelings, and about how to nurture our selves in God's love. Learning to express in safe and direct ways depends upon intellectual skills in choosing language that doesn't provoke defense in others, while enjoying productive, nurturing relationships depends on our ability to listen well. The study of Interpersonal Communication even touches our ability to communicate physically as we become aware of expressing ourselves non-verbally.

From a Christian perspective, the study of Interpersonal Communication can be a practical way of expressing our faith. When we take the time to share our selves in degrees of self-disclosure and respect others enough to learn about them, it is a sign that we care. Interpersonal Communication has a direct scriptural application. God asks us to live in relationship with others and with Him. His healing is at work in our lives as we learn to use the communication tools provided by a study of Interpersonal Communication, and as we actively follow the guidelines set before us in scripture.

The texts provide a combination of theory and practice. Adler and Proctor's textbook *Looking In/Looking Out*, presents a good overview of the basics of Interpersonal Communication and will serve as the foundation of this introductory study. It contains individual and group exercises, poetry and literature that illustrate the points made in each section, and is a visually stimulating text. The issue of cultural diversity as it affects interpersonal communication is addressed

throughout the text, and is addressed within the framework of each topic. Gender differences are addressed in depth through Deborah Tannen's text. Her study comes from a linguistic perspective and is based on many years of research at Georgetown University. Optional, recommended text, *You Just Don't Understand* offers practical understanding for interpersonal communication between men and women, both at home and in the work place.

This course is intended for three semester hours of credit with 20 hours for group time. The condensed group time is compensated by exercises and readings the student is required to complete. It is important to note that the course will require adequate reflection time outside of group. Encourage the students to take the time for thoughtful preparation and enjoyment!

What we can expect from one another

It is important that students understand how the course will be conducted and the expectations that all members of the course both faculty and students will be required to model in the class. Based on the working assumptions, we can expect that each member of the class will fulfill his or her responsibility to other members by reading the assigned material, preparing carefully for in-class assignments, and providing thoughtful feedback during class discussion. Since this is a class that relies heavily on class interaction it is particularly important that students and instructors are prepared for class. If you are not prepared then the entire class is affected.

An additional responsibility for student and instructor is the creation and maintenance of a supportive climate. Comments and questions should be constructed with this in mind. If you have a criticism then present it in the most supportive manner and precede it with a positive statement. If we cannot apply what we learn in class, **in class**, than how can we possibly apply these principles in other situations?

Working Assumptions

1. **All of us have something to learn.** Interpersonal Communication is dynamic and rich in theory. Both instructor and students will gain new information about how communication has an impact on the people that are involved.
2. **All of us have something to teach.** Your method of communication may affect your life differently than those methods would affect the life of someone else because of different life experiences. We can learn from each other as we work together.
3. **Everyone here has a preferred pathway to excellence.** Knowing who we are and valuing our preferences allow us to value and respect the differences in others. Developing effective interpersonal communication skills means the development of respect for differences and recognition of the breadth of diversity.
4. **All communication in the class is confidential.** People will share only when they want to share. Each person is invited to be as open as personal comfort level allows. It is important that you feel free to speak your mind and that such is kept confidential.

5. **We are all in this learning experience together.** We are all resources to others in this class. Learning here is not an "us versus them" situation, but rather a "we" situation. Giving and sharing of resources with other members of the class is heartily encouraged.
6. **"When the student is ready, the teacher will appear."** This Chinese proverb reminds us of the importance of being ready for learning and for change to occur. This class assumes a shared responsibility in the learning experience.
7. **Students can expect to gain from the course experience in direct proportion to what they put into it.** Remember, "You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink." Because of the nature of this class your expectations will have an affect on the way your peers function as well.
8. **Questions are encouraged and can be asked as they come to mind.** There is an old adage: The only dumb question is the one that does not get asked. This is especially true when we discuss communication principles and concepts that may be new to you.
9. **We do not have to agree; we do need to understand.** All the material presented here is open to dialogue. There will be ample opportunity during the class to actually see the differences in the way people use perception and judgment.
10. **We will work hard, but we will have fun.** Self-appraisal can be one of the most difficult kind of work there is. It also can be very rewarding and enjoyable.
11. **More time and help are available.** You need only ask: This course is designed for learning. If you require additional time and assistance to learn then ask and you shall receive.
12. **There are great variations within the topics and principles of interpersonal communication.** We are initiating self-awareness and effective interpersonal communication skills; they are not ends in themselves.
13. **There is no panacea for communication difficulties.** We will be discussing useful ways for understanding and communicating with yourself and others but the course does not present cure-alls.
14. **When it comes to communicating, there are few simple answers.** Need more be said?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- You will come to understand the theoretical research foundations for the study of interpersonal communication
- You will learn how to learn as you discover the benefits of applying the strategies of effective interpersonal communication to your daily life.
- You will integrate faith and daily living by improving your ability to effectively and ethically relate to others.
- You will understand the importance of having an ethical foundation as a guide for your interpersonal interactions.
- You will be able to demonstrate an increased understanding of viable options and alternatives for action in a wide variety of interpersonal situations.
- You will learn to appreciate the diversity of individual expression in dyadic encounters.
- You will come to understand the importance of facilitating a supportive environment for the sharing of individual perspectives, problems and concerns.
- You will come to understand the importance of analyzing your audience and being sensitive to their unique cultural perspective in your dyadic encounters.

COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Because each course meets only five to eight times, it is important that students not miss class unless it is unavoidable. To receive the full participation points students must arrive on time to class with a working knowledge of each sessions assignments and they must actively engage in class discussions.

Students who miss more than five class hours in any given course will automatically receive a failing grade and need to retake the course to obtain a passing grade. If an instructor deems that a student's absence, beyond the 5 hours was under extremely unavoidable and unusual circumstances (i.e. hospitalization, death in the family, major auto accident), the professor may file an academic petition on behalf of the student to the Program Chair. If the academic petition is approved, the instructor may give the student a "W" (Withdrawal) grade in place of a failing grade. The student will be required to re-take the course.

Students who miss the first two class sessions, or the first five hours of a course, will automatically be dropped and be required to retake the course.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY (incl. Plagiarism)

Academic dishonesty, either cheating or plagiarism (presenting the words or opinions of others as one's own work), is regarded as a serious violation of both the academic and moral standards of Vanguard University. Dishonesty in any class assignment can result in: loss of credit for the assignment, loss of credit for the entire course, and referral to the Director and/or Provost. It is the prerogative and responsibility of the instructor to determine if academic dishonesty has

occurred and the seriousness of the infraction. The Office of the Provost is to be notified of instances of academic dishonesty.

A student commits plagiarism if he/she submits as his/her own work:

1. Part or all of an assignment copied from another person's assignments, notes, or computer file.
2. Part or all of an assignment copied or paraphrased from a book, magazine, pamphlet, or website.
3. A sequence of ideas transferred from another source which the student has digested, integrated, and reorganized, and for which he/she fails to give proper acknowledgement.

A student is an accomplice in plagiarism if he/she

1. Allows his/her paper or other assignments, in outline or finished form, to be copied and submitted as the work of another.
2. Lends his/her computer disk to another student or otherwise allows his/her computer files to be copied for the purposes of plagiarism.
3. Prepares a written assignment for another student and allows it to be submitted as another's work.

DISABILITY SERVICES

For students with documented medical or psychological disabilities, please contact the Coordinator of Disability Services to request reasonable accommodations. The Coordinator of Disability Services is located in the Counseling Center on the second floor of the Scott Academic

Center and can be reached at extension 4489 or by email at disabilityservices@vanguard.edu

For students with a documented learning disability who would like to request appropriate accommodations, please contact the Director of Learning Skills, located upstairs in Scott Academic Center at extension 2540 or by email at disabilityservices@vanguard.edu

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The School for Professional Studies intends to foster a Christ-centered community that promotes appreciation and respect for individuals, enhances the potential of all members, and values differences in gender, race, abilities, and generation. As such, we endeavor to communicate with honesty, to speak with encouraging and edifying words, and to create a safe environment in our classes and interactions.

GRADED HOMEWORK/ASSIGNMENTS

If an instructor chooses to submit graded papers or assignments to the SPS office, students may pick-up their work at the SPS Office Front Desk. Graded work is not kept 5 weeks beyond the last class session. Please note: the SPS office is not responsible for unclaimed or lost papers or assignments.

If a student chooses to submit their paper or assignment to the SPS office, this must be arranged between the instructor and student prior to submission. The SPS Office will gladly forward the

completed paper or assignment to the instructor, however the SPS office is not responsible for unclaimed or lost papers or assignments.

LATE WORK

No late work is accepted. Exceptions may be made between the instructor and student.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Percentages	Points	Grade	Significance	GPA
93-100%	930-1000	A	Exceptional	4.00
90-92.9%	900-929	A-		3.67
87-89.9%	870-899	B+		3.33
83-86.9%	830-869	B	Above Average	3.00
80-82.9%	800-829	B-		2.67
77-79.9%	770-799	C+		2.33
73-76.9%	730-769	C	Average	2.00
70-72.9%	700-729	C-		1.67
67-69.9%	670-699	D+		1.33
63-66.9%	630-669	D	Below Average	1.00
60-62.9%	600-629	D-		0.67
00-59.9%	000-599	F	Failure	0.00

Students will be evaluated in this course on the basis of new knowledge and understanding they acquire from the readings in the books and the discussion about those books during the group time. Students are advised to take notes and to do an outline of the major portions of the books assigned. The final grade in this course will be based upon the following:

- Take Home Final: 50%.
- Contribution to group discussion and participation in exercises based upon a thoughtful reading of the books: 25%.
- Quality of the written responses to the study questions: 25%.

STUDENT CHAPTER QUESTIONS**WEEK ONE**

Read Adler and Proctor Chapters 1-2. Submit in essay form, answers to the following questions:

1. Describe how the communication principles on pages 13-15 and the misconceptions on pages 15-16 are evident in a specific situation. (Ch. 1)
2. Describe the degree to which communication (in a specific instance or a relationship) is qualitatively impersonal or interpersonal, and describe the consequences of this level of interaction. (Ch. 1)
3. Describe the relationship between self-concept, self-esteem and communication. (Ch. 2)
4. Compare and contrast the perceived self and the presenting self as they relate to identity management. (Ch. 2)

WEEK TWO

Read Adler and Proctor Chapters 3-4. Submit in essay form, answers to the following questions:

5. Describe how the processes of selection, organization, interpretation, and negotiation shape communication in a given situation. (Ch. 3)
6. Demonstrate how you might use the skill of perception checking in a relationship (Ch. 3.)
7. Describe how the four components listed on pages 122-126 affect your emotions and hence your communication, in an important situation. (Ch. 4)
8. Identify and dispute the fallacies (pages 145-150) that are creating debilitating emotions in an important situation. Explain how more rational thinking can lead to constructive communication. (Ch. 4)

WEEK THREE

Read Adler and Proctor Chapters 5-7. Submit in essay form, answers to the following questions:

9. Describe how principles presented in the section of this chapter titled "The Impact of Language" operate in your life. (Ch 5)
10. In a given situation, analyze how gender and/or cultural differences may affect the quality of interaction.
11. Explain the defining characteristics of nonverbal communication as described on pages 201-210 and use them to analyze a recent communication interaction. (Ch 6)
12. Define and explain five nonverbal signs that you have used that members of the opposite gender have misinterpreted. How could you make your nonverbal communication clearer in these situations? (Ch 6)
13. Identify the circumstances in which you listen ineffectively, and the poor listening habits you use in these circumstances. (Ch 7)
14. Identify the response styles (listed on pages 247-261) that you commonly use when listening to others. (Ch 7)

WEEK FOUR

Read Adler and Proctor Chapters 8-9. Submit in essay form, answers to the following questions:

15. Describe the possible strategies for repairing a given relational transgression. (Ch 8)
16. Identify factors that have influenced your choice of relational partners. (Ch 8)
17. Describe how metacommunication can be used to improve the quality of a given relationship. (Ch 8)
18. Identify the dimensions of intimacy that operate and how they are expressed in specific relationships. (Ch 9)
19. Explain the need for both intimacy and distance in a given relationship. (Ch 9)

WEEK FIVE

Read Adler and Proctor Chapters 10-11. Submit in essay form, answers to the following questions:

20. Identify confirming, disagreeing, and disconfirming messages and patterns in you own important relationships, and describe their consequences. (Ch 10)
 21. Describe how the messages you identified in the previous question either threaten or honor the self (face) of the communication involved. (Ch 10)
 22. Describe you personal conflict styles, evaluate their effectiveness, and suggest alternatives as appropriate. (Ch 11)
 23. Demonstrate how you could use the win-win approach in a given situation. (Ch 11)
- “Student Weekly Activities Manual”

STUDENT WEEKLY ACTIVITIES MANUAL**WEEK ONE**

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 1-4. (Chapter 1) Answer Activities 1.1 & 1.4

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 19-21. (Chapter 2) Answer Activities 2.1 & 2.2

WEEK TWO

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 49-52. (Chapter 3) Answer Activities 3.1 & 3.3

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 73-75. (Chapter 4) Answer Activities 4.1 & 4.5

WEEK THREE

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 103-106. (Chapter 5) Answer Activities 5.2 & 5.3

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 126-128. (Chapter 6) Answer Activities 6.1 & 6.3

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 150-152. (Chapter 7) Answer Activities 7.2 & 7.3

WEEK FOUR

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 179-181. (Chapter 8) Answer Activities 8.2 & 8.4

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 199-201. (Chapter 9) Answer Activities 9.1 & 9.3

WEEK FIVE

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 224-226. (Chapter 10) Answer Activities 10.3 & 10.4

Read the outline in the workbook on pages 253-255. (Chapter 11) Answer Activities 11.2 & 11.4

- For this week, you pick and label 3 activities that were not already assigned to you during the class.
- You will also write a 1-2 page reaction as to what you have learned about yourself in the first 4 weeks of the course and how can you apply this information to your life.

TAKE HOME FINAL

The Take Home Final is to be submitted seven days following the last session no later than 6:00 p.m. at the professor's office or other location designated by the professor. It is to be submitted in word-processed form on 8.5 by 11 paper indicating the student's name and the date. Please repeat the question prior to stating the response. Each question and response is to begin on a separate page and all pages are to be stapled together in numerical order. The grade primarily will depend upon depth of application of the principles studied during the course and clear organization of these ideas, and secondarily on grammar and spelling. The length should be three pages per question.

Any work handed in late will have a grade reduction. The later the work is handed in, the greater the reduction. See Student Evaluation to determine the weight placed on the Take Home Final compared to other elements that will compose the final grade.

Final Exam

1. Imagine a situation in which an important person in your life of the opposite gender has a conflict with you and you with them. From what you have learned about interpersonal communication, discuss the ways in which you would try to resolve the situation. Be as specific as possible.
2. List ten new things you have learned about your personal communication style, five positive and five negative. For the five areas you hope to improve, describe what you need to do to become a better communicator. For the five areas in which you feel successful, describe what is working for you and why.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER TWO from Counseling and Self-Esteem by David Carlson, Word, 1988.

EMOTION	SENSATION	CONTEXT	EXPRESSION	RELATION-SHIP
What am I feeling?	How do I physically recognize what I'm feeling?	When or where do I have this feeling?	What do I do with the feeling? Express, implode or explode?	Whom does this feeling involve, if anyone?
SCARED Panicked, afraid terrified, anxious nervous, jittery,	Tight down the back of neck and shoulders, across chest, with constricted breathing			
ANGRY Violent, irate, furious, mad, upset resentful, disgusted frustrated irritated, depressed	Tight jaw, clenched fists and teeth, pain in stomach, tension in neck,			
SAD Grieved, mournful, melancholy, heartbroken, dejected, distressed, blue	Tightness in throat, behind eyes, down center of chest			
HAPPY Joyous, complete, fulfilled, optimistic satisfied, content relaxed, peaceful	Relaxed, energized muscles			
EXCITED Ecstatic, perky, energetic aroused, effusive, bouncy	Fast pulse, jumpy and skin shivers			
TENDER Intimate, loving warmhearted touched, kind gentle, empathic,	Softness around eyes, full sensation around heart			

"This exercise is designed to help you become aware of your feeling experience. 1. Familiarize yourself with the SASHET words (sad, angry, scared, happy, excited and tender) and add your own feeling words to the chart. 2. Being with identifying a feeling. If you're not able to identify an emotion, describe the physical sensations that accompany the way you feel and match it to one of the SASHET experiences. 3. Write the place, time and circumstances. 4. Monitor what you do with your feeling (express it in appropriate words and actions), implode (hold it in), or explode (put it into destructive forms). 5. Is this feeling toward anyone?"