**Marshall University**

**CMM 413/513: Theories of Interpersonal Communication**

**Section 201; CRN 2949**

**Fall 2012, Tuesdays, 6:30 – 9:00 pm, Smith Hall 261**

Dr. Cynthia Torppa Office Hours: Mondays 2:00 – 3:45 pm

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**University Policies**

By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy at [www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies](http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies): Students with Disabilities | Affirmative Action | Computing Services Acceptable Use | Excused Absence (undergraduate) | Academic Dishonesty | Inclement Weather | MU Alert

**Course Description**

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| A survey and analysis of theories related to interpersonal communication in relationships. Emphasis is on the communication processes and contingencies underlying relationship development, maintenance, and disengagement in various interpersonal contexts. (PR CMM 213) |

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| **Course Student Learning Outcomes** | **How students will practice each outcome in this Course** | **How student achievement of each outcome will be assessed in this Course** |
| Students will be able to define, describe, and classify theories and theoretical concepts about interpersonal communication processes. | Readings, lecture, in-class discussions and activities, additional research for projects and papers. | Exams, presentations, and papers. |
| Students will be able to apply  theories and theoretical concepts  in various contexts including  family relations, intimate  relations, work relationships, and  intercultural relations. | Readings, lecture, in-class discussions and activities, additional research for projects and papers. | Exams, presentations, and papers. |
| Students will be able to compare and organize findings about theories and theoretical concepts. | Readings, lecture, in-class discussions and activities, additional research for projects and papers. | Exams, presentations, and papers. |
| Students will be able to use theories and theoretical concepts to explain and predict probable outcomes of interpersonal interactions. | Readings, lecture, in-class discussions and activities, additional research for projects and papers. | Exams, presentations, and papers. |
| Students (especially Graduate  Students) will be able to  demonstrate ability to integrate,  organize, and evaluate theories  and theoretical concepts in  various contexts including family  relations, intimate relations, work  relationships, and intercultural  relations. | Readings, lecture, in-class discussions and activities, additional research for projects and papers. | Exams, presentations, and papers. |

**Required Texts, Additional Reading, and Other Materials**

Wood, J. T. (2013). *Interpersonal communication: Everyday encounters,* (11th ed). Boston: Wadsworth Publishers**.**

**ISBN: 13:978-1-111-34640-9**

Additional scholarly and journal articles as assigned to complete projects, activities and papers (see descriptions of assignments, following).

**Access to this Syllabus**

This is the only physical or hard-copy of this syllabus you will receive. Electronic versions of this syllabus can be accessed on MU Online (Blackboard) and MyMU under the appropriate course listing.

**Dates, Assignments, and Grading**

**CMM 413 (Undergraduate) Course Requirements / Due Dates**

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| **Date** | **Assignment** | **Points Value** |
| February 14th | Exam #1 (Introduction and Chapters 1 through 4) | 50 points |
| March 28th | Exam #2 (Chapters 5 through 8) | 50 points |
| May 6th | Exam #3 (Chapters 9 through 12) | 50 points |
| Various dates (to be selected on Tuesday, January 22) | Research Article Presentation | 50 points |
| April 18th | Book or Film Analysis | 100 points |
|  |  | **Total 300 points** |

**CMM 513 (Graduate) Course Requirements / Due Dates**

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| **Date** | **Assignment** | **Points Value** |
| February 14th | Exam #1 / Assimilation Paper #1 (Introduction and Chapters 1 through 4) | 50 points |
| March 28th | Exam #2 / Assimilation Paper #2  (Chapters 5 through 8) | 50 points |
| May 6th | Exam #3 / Assimilation Paper #3  (Chapters 9 through 12) | 50 points |
| Various dates (to be negotiated) | Journal Articles Summary | 50 points |
| May 1st | Term Paper and Presentation | 100 points |
|  |  | **Total 300 points** |

**Grading Policy**

A = 90 - 100%

B = 80- 89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59% or less

**All Students:**

Read the assigned chapters before each class and think about situations in which the concepts covered might be used. Be prepared to share some situations in which these concepts were illustrated or in which related miscommunications occurred and/or to share in a discussion of other students’ examples.

**Undergraduate Assignments**

**Exams**

All undergraduate students will take three exams, each covering a series of chapters from the text book as noted above. The exams will include multiple choice questions and short answer/essay questions.

**Research Article Presentation**

All undergraduate students will give a 15 to 20 minute presentation/summary of a research article to the class. Your goal is to find a journal article that explores a theoretical topic or concept introduced in our text book (or you may introduce a related theory or theoretical concept). Your presentations will be given on the dates for which your topic is assigned; that means some of you will give presentations early in the semester and some will give presentations late in the semester. Select a topic to present that is of interest to you so you’ll enjoy researching it in greater depth. Be aware that you must select a topic that enables you to give your presentation no later than April 18th (after April 18th you’ll be swamped with other end-of-the-semester studying and projects). You will sign up for the topic/day of your choice during the second week of the class. A handout with more details about this assignment will distributed in class and posted on Blackboard.

**Book or Film Analysis**

Select a book or movie and write a paper (roughly 8 – 10 pages, not including the cover page and references) analyzing a book or film by applying the theories and concepts learned in the course to interactions and/or situations in your book or movie. This assignment gives you an opportunity to comprehensively integrate the theories, findings, and concepts we’ve learned in throughout this course, so make sure it shows both breadth (a range of theories/concepts) and depth (a full, rich explanation of the concepts you discuss). A handout with more details about this assignment will distributed in class and posted on Blackboard.

**Graduate Assignments**

**Exams/Assimilation Papers**

Graduate exams will take the form of assimilation papers in which you will integrate the content presented within the text book chapters with theories of interpersonal communication. Your text book introduces many theories and theoretical concepts, but it does not give you a graduate level of depth in those theories, so this assignment is your opportunity to research and explore in greater depth the theories that support the content your text book presents. I will help you get started on the exams by providing (noninclusive) lists of theories (some grand, some specifically focused and limited) that inform our understanding of the concepts we’re studying that you may explore in greater depth and use to assimilate the body of findings from a section of our book. You may begin your exploration of the relevant theories using this list, but you are not limited to the theories on the list for your assimilation papers. The purpose of this assignment is to deepen your understanding of the theories that guide knowledge and research in our discipline and your ability to use those theories to expand your understanding and depth of knowledge of communication in interpersonal relationships. A handout with more details about this assignment will distributed in class and posted on Blackboard.

**Journal Article Summaries**

Graduate students will explore a topic within interpersonal communication in greater depth and will summarize their findings in brief (4-6 page) papers. Pick a focused topic of interest to you (but not the same topic as your term paper) and find 3 to 5 scholarly articles about it that together summarize a line inquiry into this topic. Then summarize the sequence of studies and explain the conclusions these articles led you to draw. A handout with more details about this assignment will distributed in class and posted on Blackboard.

**Term Paper**

Your principle concern should be the preparation of your **term paper.** This assignment requires that you choose a topic, theory or concept related to IPC.  Skim the text and review our class discussions for likely topics.  Three particular approaches to term papers are common: 1)  a paper might explain a single theory, discuss the research related to that theory and address the strengths and limitations of the theory as well as its future use and heuristic value; 2) a paper might compare and contrast the value of two or more theories as they attempt to explain and predict interpersonal communication phenomena and relationships; 3) a paper might review and evaluate the research related to a particular interpersonal dynamic, such as trust, self disclosure, deception, power, attraction, intimacy, relationship development.

Your term paper should summarize current knowledge about the topic, reviewing relevant literature (using research, scientific, and/or professional publications), and providing a synthesis of what you have learned. It should approximate an outline structure that is characteristic of scholarly papers. That is, it should have an introduction, literature review leading to a conclusion section that details insightful questions that remain to be addressed and/or an integrated summary of past findings. You will also present a summary of your paper to the class on April 30.

**Attendance, Assignments, and Classroom Policies**

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| **How many absences will be tolerated?**  You are encouraged to attend class each session, and you should note that if you miss one class, you’ve missed one week of the course. I realize it’s flu season, sometimes we get bad colds but do not need to see a doctor, and sometimes this time of year weather conditions make roads unsafe for travel to an evening class, so I will tolerate two missed classes without a university excuse. If you miss a third class without a university excused absence report, your final course average grade will be reduced by 10% of the points you have earned and another 10% will be deducted for each additional unexcused absence. In order to make up missed work, you must contact me promptly when you have missed a class during which assignments are due.  **Mobile Phones and Computers**  University policy allows students to carry mobile phones to the classroom, but they must be set on vibrate or silent so they do not disrupt the class. Please do not text, surf, or otherwise use your mobile devices during class. Similarly, if you bring your lap top to class, please use it to take notes rather than for other purposes. |

**Course Schedule**

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| **Week/Date** | **Reading Assignments / In-class Topics and Activities** |
| **1**  **January 15th** | Orientation and Overview of the Course  Introduction and Chapter 1: A First Look at Interpersonal Communication |
| **2**  **January 22nd** | Chapter 2: Communication and Personal Identity |
| **3**  **January 29th** | Chapter 3: Perception and Communication |
| **4**  **February 5th** | Chapter 4: The World of Words |
| **5**  **February 12th** | **Exam #1**  **Given in class for undergraduates; take home exam due for graduate students.** |
| **6**  **February 21st** | Chapter 5: The World Beyond Words |
| **7**  **February 28th** | Chapter 6: Mindful Listening |
| **8**  **March 5th** | Chapter 7: Emotions and Communication |
| **9**  **March 12th** | Chapter 8: Communication Climate: The Foundation of Personal Relationships |
| **March**  **17 – 24** | Spring Break |
| **10**  **March 26th** | **Exam #2**  **Given in class for undergraduates; take home exam due for graduate students.** |
| **11**  **April 2nd** | Chapter 9: Managing Conflict in Relationships |
| **12**  **April 9th** | Chapter 10: Friendships in Our Lives |
| **13**  **April 16th** | Chapter 11: Committed Romantic Relationships  **Undergraduate Book or Film Analysis** |
| **14**  **April 23rd** | Chapter 12: Communication in Families |
| **15**  **April 30th** | **Graduate Student Term Paper Presentations** |
| **Finals Week**  **May 6 - 10** | Final Exam Period: Tuesday, May 7th from 6:30 – 9:00  **Exam #3**  **Given in class for undergraduates; take home exam due for graduate students.** |