

Course Abstract

If you need accommodations due to a disability, contact Disability Services in Edison Hall Room 100, 732.906.2546.

To foster a productive learning environment, the College requires that all students adhere to the Code of Student Conduct which is published in the college catalog and website.

Course ID and Name: COM 110 Interpersonal Communication

Department: Visual Performing Media Arts

Chairperson: Annie Hogan

Office Location: CC 341

E-Mail: AHogan@Middlesexcc.edu

Telephone: 732-906-2589

Prerequisites: COM 105

Co-requisites: N/A

Course Description:

This course explores the ways people interact verbally and nonverbally and introduces the basic theories and modes of interpersonal communication as well as relationship development. Interpersonal contexts will be examined including initial encounters, friendships, marriage, family and professional settings. Activities include participation in groups, pairs and interactive communication situations.

General Education Status:

Credits:

3

Lecture Hours:

3

Lab Hours:

0

Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the fundamental theories and modes of interpersonal communication, including relationship development and deterioration.
2. Application of basic models (verbal/non-verbal communication) in personal and professional relationships.
3. Differentiate between various interpersonal contexts and utilize effective verbal/non-verbal communication skills.
4. Apply effective compliance gaining and conflict resolution techniques.
5. Define and describe power in interpersonal relationships.

Course Content Areas:

The Nature of Interpersonal Communication

The elements of the interpersonal communication process are examined, including encoding/decoding, competence, messages (feedforward messages), channel, noise, context, purpose and ethics.

Culture

The nature of culture is analyzed in the context of interpersonal communication. Cultural concepts include acculturation, enculturation, masculine and feminine cultures, individualistic, collectivistic, power distances and uncertainty reduction theory. The stages of culture shock include honeymoon, crisis, recovery and adjustment.

The Self in Interpersonal Communication

Self concept, self awareness and self esteem are all examined. Self disclosure is analyzed in terms of influential factors, rewards, dangers and guidelines. Similarities and differences between assertiveness, nonassertiveness and aggressiveness are studied.

Communication Apprehension in the Interpersonal Context

Communication anxiety is thoroughly investigated, which includes the nature of CA (trait/state), influential factors and management. Theories to reduce CA include cognitive restricting, systematic desensitization, skill acquisition and visualization.

Interpersonal Perception

An in-depth analysis of interpersonal perception is conducted which includes the stages: stimulation, organization, interpretation-evaluation, memory and recall. The perceptual process also includes implicit personality theory (halo/reverse halo effect), self fulfilling prophecy theory and increasing perceptual accuracy.

Listening in Interpersonal Communication

The listening process is examined, which includes the stages of receiving, understanding, remembering, evaluating and responding. The styles of effective listening include participatory, passive, empathic, objective, nonjudgemental, critical, surface and depth. Immediacy and nonimmediacy is also studied as part of the interpersonal communication process.

Verbal and Nonverbal Messages

An in-depth examination of verbal and nonverbal communication includes utility, meaning, message characteristics, packaging, body communication, haptics, spatial messages, temporal communication, artifactual communication, and written/vocal paralanguage.

The Conversation Process

Messages are examined within a conversation which includes the five stages of opening, feedforward, business, feedback and closing. Conversation management is also analyzed, regarding initiating, maintaining and proper closing methods. In maintaining conversations, the four maxims are studied, including the maxim of quality, quantity, relation and manner. Conversation problems, prevent and repair are also examined.

Universals of Interpersonal Relationships

Advantages and disadvantages of relationships are analyzed as well as parasocial and on-line relations. The stages of a relationship are examined including Knapp's staircase model. Other relationship theories include uncertainty reduction theory, social penetration theory, relationship

dialectics theory, rules theory, attraction theory, affinity seeking strategies, social exchange theory, and equity theory. Causes of relationship deterioration, communication characteristics and strategies of disengagement are also examined.

Relationship Maintenance and Repair

Maintenance behaviors and repairing relationships are examined. The nature of conflicts is subject to analysis as well as conflict resolution stages. Conflict management strategies are examined including avoidance behaviors, fighting actively, face enhance/face detracting behaviors, verbal aggressiveness and argumentativeness.

Power in Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal power is examined along with power plays and different types of power. Communication power includes various compliance gaining strategies.