

CMST 4012, Spring 2016
Communication and Relationships
Time: 9:00 -10:20 am, 204 Coates Hall

If we are incapable of finding peace in ourselves, it is pointless to search elsewhere. ~Francois de la Rochefoucauld

Ultimately the bond of all companionship, whether in marriage or in friendship, is conversation. ~Oscar Wilde

Integrity is doing the right thing even when no one is watching .~ C.S. Lewis

Try not to become a person of success, but rather try to become a person of value. ~Albert Einstein

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 Office Hours: TTh 8-8:50 am; 10:30 – noon or by appointment

Book:

Honeycutt, J. M., & Bryan, S. P. (2011). *Scripts and Communication for Relationships*. New York: Peter Lang Publishers, Inc.

Rationale/Course Objectives: In this course, we examine the exciting dynamics of communication encounters in human relationships. Communication occurs in 4 ways in relationships; 1) intrapersonally in which we imagine in our heads encounters with a relational partner, 2) verbal interactions that are often scripted, 3) nonverbally (smiles, scowls, and silence) and 4) through e-mail in terms of cyber communication. Many individuals believe that "communication" is so basic that it is taken for granted and not thought about. Unfortunately, this myth tends to result in such things as misunderstandings, conflict, avoidance, and stereotyping. We will examine the basic concepts, theories and research findings relevant to initiating, developing, maintaining, and terminating relationships.

The course consists of the following units: 1) Emotions, Imagination, and Physiology of Relationships, 2) Basis of Relational Scripts, 3) Scripts for the Development of Relationships, 4) Scripts Associated with Relationship Demise, 5) Relationship Scripts in Context, and 6) Cautions and Recommendations in terms of abusive relationships as well as guidelines for effective communication in relationships. Upon completion of this course, you should be able to understand the following:

- ♥ Types of intimacy and love
- ♥ Emotions and physiology in relationships

- ♥ Imagined interactions and how we maintain relationships in our minds
- ♥ Scripts for the rise and demise of romance
- ♥ Benefits and Costs of Office Romance
- ♥ Benefits and Costs of Online Relationship Networking



Abuse in Relationships

- ♥ Skills for Improving Communication in interpersonal relationships

Grading: All assignments are due on the completion date assigned or before, but will not be accepted thereafter.

Course Requirements

UNDERGRADUATE:

| <u>Assignment</u> | <u>Weighting</u> |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Test 1 | 20% |
| Test 2 | 21% |
| Test 3 | 22% |
| Group presentation | 14% |
| Article outline | 4% |
| 1 Interview | 6% |
| 1 Self-Analysis | 6% |
| Readings | 7% |

GRADUATE:

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Test 1 | 20% |
| Test 2 | 20% |
| Test 3 | 20% |
| Research Project: | 25% |
| Readings | 5% |
| 3 Articles Outlines | 10% |

Grade Distribution:

A+ = 97% - 100

A = 93 - 96

A- = 90 - 92

B+ = 87 - 89

B = 84 - 86

B- = 80 - 83

C+ = 77 - 79

C = 73 - 76

C- = 70 - 72

D+ = 67 - 69

D = 63 - 66

D- = 60 - 62

F < 60

Since this is a course that **may or may not** contain graduate students, the graduates are required to work on their individual project in an area of relational communication of interest to them (e.g., online relationships, abuse, same-sex vs. heterosexual commitment, physiology of arguing). A brief article is the outcome of this that will be 20-25 pages (double spaced using APA style that includes the title page, abstract, text, tables, references). During the final week of class, the graduate students will have the opportunity to present to the class an oral report of their research. Graduate students need to meet with me to discuss this project in more detail.

Policies:

All grades are posted on MOODLE, the university software program for accessing grades. **We make one attempt to turn back assignments.** After that, they are placed in a holding file for the duration of the semester.

ADA Statement: The American with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office for Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations during the first two weeks of class.

Music: Before class begins and time permitting, I may play a song related to the topic of the day. I have played in three classic rock bands dating back to the University of Texas. I have researched how music affects moods and how background music affects communication and arguing. I love music (classic R& R, some jazz & symphony) and will play music at the beginning of class to affect moods. There are many songs about communication, arguing, family relationships, love, jealousy, and emotions.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:

Students are expected to conduct themselves as professional adults. Students are expected to be in class on time. Coffee/soda/water is permissible as long as it's not a distraction. **If you want to use a laptop for taking notes without distracting others, then you can. However, if I see that you are busy Facebooking, then I may close the laptop.**

Do not leave class unless prior permission has been granted. The central premise regarding classroom etiquette is to respect others by practicing simple manners. This is required in business organizations and so, it is here.

Format of the class: Most of our class meetings will be conducted in a mixed lecture/discussion format. We will use a portion of our class time to present information designed to supplement, reinforce, or clarify the ideas introduced in the reader. Another portion of our class time will be

devoted to questions, group presentations/discussions, or exercises related to the chapters from the book which is discussed below.

Questions about Readings from the book: In order to be sure that you stay on track with the assigned readings in the book, we want you to write four questions for the assigned chapters along with the answer and/or page that the answer is found on. These questions must be typed in a Word document. These are graded as 2, 1, or 0. They are due on the date of the assigned reading and only will be accepted in class; not online. Late questions will result in “0;” no excuses. We have found that the repeated “0” quickly diminish your grade for this activity; so it is very important for you to turn them in. They also act as study guides for the tests.

Use three guidelines for generating these questions; 1) Only T/F or multiple choice items are used with 4-5 item responses. 2) The answer is directly stated in the reading, 3) Some of the questions can provoke controversy, raise important theoretical issues or generate research ideas as much as possible.

Sample Questions from Chapter 1:

Four sample questions are below from Chapter 1 of the book where the pursuit of intimacy and the development of relational scripts is discussed:

1. On page 2, Honeycutt discusses how cyberspace relationships compared to face-to-face relationships are may be which of the following: a) more intimate, b) less intimate, c) more addictive, d) filled with deceptive information.” The answer is “b” and is at the top of page 3.
2. What is a fatal attraction? a) Accommodation b) communication apprehension c) traits that are later seen as annoying* d) all of the above are fatal attractions e) none of these are fatal attractions

Answer: C is the correct answers--The traits that initially attract people evolve into annoying aspect of another person’s personality or behavior. The answer is on page 5.

3. We tend to be attracted to those who are different from us and complement our interests. T or F. The answer is False and is on page 8.
4. The matching hypothesis says that “birds of a feather flock together.” If this is true, how do you account for all of the so-called “opposite attraction” you may see in everyday life (e.g., a thin person who is paired with a person with a much larger body mass index)?
a) Spirituality unites them b) Personality and sense of humor * c) Their pupils are constricted d) They have a fatal attraction e) They believe they have similar looks

The correct answer is on pages 10-12.

Examinations: There will be three scantron exams consisting of true-false and multiple choice items. Students are expected to take the tests at the schedule time on the daily listing of class topics and activities. Students who will miss an examination due to an authorized university activity should make arrangements to take the test in advance. The exams contain 60-65 objective items. The exams will cover the material presented in the lectures and in the book. Exams 2 and 3 are not comprehensive. "Make-up" exams will be given only in the cases of documented accident, illness, or emergency.

Group Presentation: In order to excel in your chosen career and in business organizations, you MUST work in groups. Some of you will like working in groups while others dislike it. Yet, those who can work in groups are more likely to be promoted, receive pay raises, and be respected while loners are ignored. The literature is replete with studies on this. Also, some groups contain “piggy-backers” who loaf, are lazy, and rely on others to get the job done. You will have to deal with these dysfunctional roles in the group and in organizations.

Everyone will be randomly divided up into a series of 5 groups containing 5-6 members. The groups will have a chance to choose a topic for in-depth library research out of class. The group will review relevant research studies in an area. The group will make a 45-minute class presentation of their research using PowerPoint derived from research reports from social science journals. Use library and scholarly, internet sources including the journal, PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS or JOURNAL OF SOCIAL AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. You are warned that sources that are solely derived from the internet often lack credibility and too many internet sources will result in the lowering of the group grade.

The presentation will consist of a review of empirical studies in the area and results of the group's own investigation. The presentation should begin with a discussion of why this is an important area to investigate, why this is of personal interest to the group members, previous results of studies, and current results of surveys or interviews.

Each group will electronically transmit a PowerPoint presentation to me and the teaching assistant as well as a composite list of references and sources using APA citation format as found in the book. You will receive two grades for this assignment. The first grade is a collective grade based on the quality of the presentation in terms of clearly showing the review of literature in an area, quality of tapes, and presentation of current results. Extensive details of this assignment will be presented in a separate document on Moodle.

Sample topics to be covered:

Initial or fatal attraction and the matching hypothesis
 Serial arguing in close relationships
 Social Media Relationships versus Face to Face Relationships
 Friends with Benefits
 Myths and Realities of self-disclosure in personal relationships
 Commitment in same-sex relationships
 Stalking on college campuses
 Abusive relationships
 Acquaintance Rape
 Strategies to end relationships
 Physiology of Couples Arguing
 Advantages and Disadvantages of Interethnic Relationships
 Flirting and Sexual Harassment
 Advantages and Disadvantages of Relationships at Work
 Types of Love

Article Outlines--I want the undergraduate students to read a journal article from one of the social science or communication journals from **2009 to the present calendar year**. I want the graduate students to read three articles. Prepare a full sentence outline of the article, single-

spaced, 2 pages. Copies of the article format are on Moodle. You will have to segment your outline into a brief literature review, hypotheses or research questions, method, and results/discussion section following the segmentation of the article. You choose one of the chapters from the textbook as a motivational source for the article that you choose. Articles will be accepted from the following sources:

-JOURNAL OF SOCIAL AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

-PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

-JOURNAL OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

-Any reputable communication or social science journal (e.g., HUMAN COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION MONOGRAPHS, COMMUNICATION REPORTS, COMMUNICATION RESEARCH, COMMUNICATION RESEARCH REPORTS, SEX ROLES, JOURNAL OF PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY, PSYCH. BULLETIN, ETCETERA)

Interviews: Since many of you are communication studies majors or have an interdisciplinary interest in communication, you are responsible for an interview. The purpose of the interviews is to discover how course concepts work in the real lives of people. The interviews can be accessed on MOODLE. You will need to download one of the separate interviews of your choice. You should follow the instructions on the interview schedule and record the answers given to you. You can use the interview form in Word format and insert their answers. **DO NOT** simply give the interview schedule to someone and tell them to fill it out. This is **not** an interview! You need to probe and **ask secondary questions besides those listed and insert the probes (e.g, Why did you feel that way? Please provide more information about how the situation arose—I cannot stress how important followup probes are).** You may write on the interview schedules when you conduct the interview and then later insert the responses and your followup probes and their responses. Fellow students in this class may not be used as interviewees for any of the interviews.

Grading criteria for interviews: Interviews handed in on time during class periods; readable and which conform to all assignment specifications start with an “A”. Interviews which are handed in on time during class period but which suffer any of the following problems will get grades between C- and A-. Problems include: not readable; not met 1 or more specifications for the assignment; conclusions drawn from interviews go too far beyond what is known from interview data; conclusions from interview data which are not warranted; interview responses which show little depth due to lack of probing; material in the “learnings” section are cliché’s or attempts to please the instructor—e.g., I learned that communication is really important in relationships’ the “learning” section is too abstract or imprecise; etcetera. If everything else is OK, but the interviews are turned in late (not during class period) they will receive a grade of “D”; “F” grades are given to interviews not turned within a week of the assignment due date and for interviews I am unable to verify.

Self-Analysis: The purpose of this paper is to critically examine your own relational communication behavior using 2 to 3 concepts discussed in the course (Typed, double-spaced, 4 pages maximum; one page for each of the 4 parts which are discussed below). Examples of concepts include, but are not limited to: self-disclosure, matching hypothesis, imagined interactions, emotions, interpersonal needs scripts and expectations for acting appropriately, relational stages, abuse, jealousy, uncertainty reduction, apprehension, attraction conflict,

uncertainty, deception, jealousy, etc. The concepts may come directly from my book or lectures, but have to be explicitly defined. The focus must be on communication in close relationships. The paper should be organized into four separate segments:

Part One: In part one of the paper, you should briefly review, define, and describe the concepts you are going to discuss. Appropriate references should be cited using the APA style citation that is used in my book. If the concept comes from lecture, cite my lecture including the lecture topic, date (e.g., Honeycutt, J. M. (2016). Maintaining Relationships through Imagined Interactions. Powerpoint slides. Retrieved from LSU Moodle at: .

Part Two: In part two, you should critically analyze your own attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors related to these concepts. Provide some specific examples related to you.

Part Three: In part three, you should analyze your weakest points related to these concepts and suggest some strategies for improving your interpersonal competence in the future.

Part Four: This is a simple reference page where you cite my book or other articles cited in my book, the lecture or even an additional outside reference. (See APA citation; <http://www.bibme.org/citation-guide/apa/>)

Hints: Follow my outline explicitly. The paper should contain four separate sections. Use a page to separate each section.

Attendance: You are expected to attend every class. **Attendance will be taken beginning on Jan. 26th which is the day after the final add date.** If you have perfect attendance, you will receive a bonus point of 1 point at the end of the semester. Following is the university's policy on attendance which I will follow:

When students have valid reasons for absence (see PS-22), they are responsible “for providing reasonable advance notification and appropriate documentation of the reason for the absence” and “for making up examinations, obtaining lecture notes, and otherwise compensating for what may have been missed.” Teachers “will assist those students who have valid reasons,” but some in-class activities are difficult to make up. Valid reasons that must be documented include: illness; serious family emergency; special curricular requirements such as judging trips or field trips; court-imposed legal obligations such as subpoenas or jury duty; military obligations; serious weather conditions; religious observances (see the interfaith calendar website); official participation in varsity athletic competitions or university musical events.

Absences without valid reasons, or unexcused absences, are limited to three per term in classes that meet three times a week (e.g., MWF) and two per term in classes that meet two times a week (e.g., TTH or MW). Beyond these limits, each unexcused absence will lower the final course grade by half a letter grade, or five points on a 100-point scale.

Note: An absence is excused if: You are required to participate in an official LSU activity (documentation required), you are under a doctor's care (documentation required), and you are

granted a leave of absence from LSU for reasonable cause by an academic dean (documentation required)

Tentative Daily Schedule

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Activity</u> | <u>Chapter</u> |
|--|---|----------------|
| <u>Early Theories of Initial Attraction and Relational Desire</u> | | |
| Th Jan. 14 | Course introduction: Theories to explain relational development including Uncertainty reduction, interdependence, systems, social penetration, script—Relational expectancies--Discuss what you expect from internet friends and face-to-face relationships | |
| T Jan. 19 | Defining Intimacy, Self-disclosure & Matching Hypothesis | H/B Chp. 1 |
| Th Jan. 21 | SVR theory; symbolic convergence | |
| T Jan. 26 | Why we form relationships? Social exchange & Interpersonal needs theories | |
| Th Jan. 28 | Friends with benefits & detriments; Casual Friendship development | |
| <u>Part 1. Emotions, Imagery, and Physiology of Relationships</u> | | |
| T Feb. 2 | Communication about emotions in relationships; Revealing vulnerability | H/B Chp. 2 |
| Th Feb. 4 | Anger & Contempt in Relationships | |
| T Feb. 9 | Mardi Gras holiday | |
| Th Feb.11 | Maintaining Relationships through Imagined Interactions; Journal article is due | H/B Chp. 3 |
| T Feb. 16 | Physiological Arousal in Relationships; | H/B Chp. 4 |
| Th Feb. 18 | Social learning, social exchange, & SI Assumptions of relational maintenance; Oxytocin | |
| T Feb. 23 | Test 1 | |

Part 2: Basis of Relational Scripts

| | | |
|------------|---|------------|
| Th Feb. 25 | Hooking Up, Dating, & Sexual Scripts; Interviews due | H/B Chp. 5 |
| T Mar. 1 | Date Rape: Violating Personal Scripts; Interview is due | |
| Th Mar. 3 | Prototypes of love versus friendship Group 1 Presentation | H/B Chp. 6 |

Part 3: Scripts for the Development of Relationships

| | | |
|------------|---|------------|
| T Mar. 8 | Introduction to Social Penetration Theory | H/B Chp. 7 |
| Th Mar. 10 | Social penetration theory (Continued); Group 2 Presentation | H/B Chp. 8 |
| T Mar. 15 | Dialectical theory: Balancing contradictory needs in relationships | |
| Th Mar. 17 | Test 2 | |
| T Mar. 22 | No class-Spring Break | |
| Th Mar. 24 | No class-Spring Break | |

Part 4: Scripts Associated with Relational Demise

| | | |
|------------|---|-------------|
| T Mar. 29 | Scripts for relational deterioration | H/B Chp.9 |
| Th Mar. 31 | Semantics of relational breakups | H/B Chp. 10 |
| T Apr. 5 | Internet, Facebook, & text messaging; Group 3 Presentation | H/B Chp. 11 |
| Th Apr. 7 | No class; SSCA conference | |

Part 5: Relationship Scripts in Context

| | | |
|-----------|--|-------------|
| T Apr. 12 | Relationships at work: Approved or Forbidden? | H/B Chp. 12 |
|-----------|--|-------------|

Part 6: Cautions & Recommendations

- Th Apr. 14 Cyber stalking & bullying; Teasing
- T Apr. 19 Persuasive arguing & verbal aggression in relationships H/B Chp. 13
- Th Apr. 21 Unpopular Children and Bullying;
Group 4 Presentation;
Self-Analysis is due
- T Apr. 26 Costly signaling theory & abuse detection;
Group 5 Presentation
- Th Apr. 28 Guidelines for Effective Arguing: LOVE H/B Chp. 14
Listen, **O**bserve, **V**alidate, **E**xpress

Note: Test 3 is Tuesday, May 3 10:00 - NOON