COMM 2120: Interpersonal Communication

· Fall 2026 · Leslie Jernegan · lesliejernegan@unm.edu
· Online, asynchronous · Office: https://unm.zoom.us/j/7315512804
· Office Hours: Mondays, 4–6 p.m. MST, or by appointment

Incontestably Important Disclaimer: Information in the syllabus and calendar is reflective of our class (and life, in general)—flexible, tentative, and thus subject to change.

Course Catalog Description
This course provides an introduction to the study of interpersonal communication. Students will examine the application of interpersonal communication in personal and professional relationships.

So, human terms, what this means: In this class, we'll examine the factors that influence our ability to effectively communicate, the development of relationships, the role of the self in communication, and the resolution of conflict and communication in daily life.

TL;DR: We'll look within and outside of ourselves; we'll learn to listen, to reexamine our preconceived notions of what it means to communicate well; and we'll do the work not onto to maintain healthy relationships, but to construct new ones, too.

COMM 1120 is a three-credit course. We'll move at a deliberate pace, with extra scaffolding to help you grow your confidence and clarity as a communicator.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, you'll be able to:

- Explain major interpersonal communication concepts, theories, and frameworks supported by careful research.
- Apply evidence-based interpersonal communication skills to foster effective and healthy relationships.
- Evaluate interpersonal communication through ethical frameworks and demonstrate ethical communicate practices in a variety of contexts.
- Analyze how communication needs, norms, and processes vary across individuals, relationships, and cultural contexts.
- Think critically and creatively about interpersonal communication concepts and apply them to real-world situations and interpersonal challenges.
- Demonstrate increased competence in interpersonal communication through active participation, self-reflection, and skills-based practice.

Required Course Materials:

- Internet access
- Canvas (All readings will live here; no purchase of a text is required. College is pricey! Save that $$!)
- Zoom (So we can chat!)

Evaluation
In this class, you'll be evaluated on your resolve to engage with the assigned readings, discussion posts, and class presentations, all of which will help you build to your construction of a final project, based on—*wait for it*—*you*!

Grade Weight

Value	Assignment
30%	Reverse-Outline of Chapters
30%	Discussion Participation
20%	Creation of One Class Presentation
20%	Final Project
100%	**Course Total**

Letter Grades:

A: 100-93 A-: 92-90 B+: 89-87 B: 86-83 B-: 82-80 C+: 79-77

C: 76-73 C-: 72-70 D+: 69-67 D: 66-63 D: 62-60 F: 59-0

You will pass this course by:

1.) Staying in communication with me
2.) Submitting assignments regularly and on-time
3.) Meeting labor-based grading criteria for assignments
4.) *Smiling

*Kidding—but can't hurt!

Reverse-Outlines of Chapters
To encourage you to better engage with our readings, you'll be given credit for turning in reverse-outlines of each chapter (i.e., chapter notes you'll submit once per week, fourteen times in total). We'll go over reverse-outlining the first week of class by practicing with Chapter 1. The goal here is to get you in the habit of thorough note-taking prior to class. By the end of the semester, you should have a sizeable document of notes to help you participate in the final project. :)

Creation of One Class Presentation
Not so scary, I swear! Across the semester, each of you will help lead one online discussion about one of the weeks' topics. These presentations will be posted on Canvas—i.e., for your peers and me to se—and they'll serve as the foundation for a class discussion.

Discussion Posts
My preferred way for you to engage with content is to flee from the confines of solo-study. About once per week, you'll have a fresh discussion topic to which you'll be expected to respond. Generally, responses should range from 300 to 500 words. In addition to posting your own response, you must also respond to two peers' posts.

Final Project
In our last month of class, we'll begin construction of a final project, which will be comprised of a personal essay and "life map." More on this as we slide further into the semester!

COURSE POLICIES

Late Work
Assignments are due no later than the date and time posted on Canvas. I understand that we're human, that illness and emergencies happen; that said, **if you email me in advance and set an agreed-upon make-up date with me, I will accept your late work. Late submissions without pre-approval will lose ten percentage points per day for five days, starting the day after the due date.** Assignments submitted five or more days after the due date are therefore worth only fifty percent of the total points.

Diversity Statement
The core value in this class is respect. Your voice—and everyone else's—adds value to discussions. Please give space for, listen to, and respect the contributions, experiences (shared and not), beliefs, and values expressed by your fellow students. In this classroom, we welcome and benefit from people of all abilities, ages, citizenships, colors, educational backgrounds, family statuses, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, languages, national origins, political affiliations, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, veteran statuses, and any other identity with which you do or do not identify. Everyone matters. Take advantage of our classroom's diversity; grow from its strengths, its lessons.

Attendance
Because this is an asynchronous class, you have the freedom to take this class on your own time…*mostly*. We'll still have deadlines for assignments. Open communication is key. If at some point, you feel like you're falling behind or unable to participate as actively as you usually would, let me know, and we'll work together to help you learn and successfully complete the course.

Credit-Hour Statement
This is a three credit-hour course delivered in an entirely asynchronous online modality over 16 weeks during the Fall 2026 semester. Please plan for a minimum of 7 hours per week to learn course materials and complete assignments.

Let's Talk!
If at any moment you find yourself confused about an assignment, on the verge of a stress-out, or simply needing to talk about writing, school, The Beyond, etc., please don't hesitate to email me and/or schedule a meeting with me. If you're having a gut-punch of a life experience that's affecting your academic life, I can't help you if I don't know you have something going on. I'll be more than happy to talk and work with you. And while I'm not a trained counselor, I can put you in touch with resources on campus to support you.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

UNM-Valencia Learning Commons (Tutoring)

Tutoring is available to you in math, science, writing, and other subjects through the Learning Commons: Learning and STEM Centers and Writing Center. In-person tutoring is in these centers in the LRC (the building that also has the library). Tutoring in Zoom and, for writing, through email, is also available.

Making use of tutoring is a fantastic way to use your resources and set yourself up to learn deeply and well in your courses. To schedule an appointment, please go to: Learning Commons Bookings.

If you are making an email appointment with the Writing Center, email your draft to tutor@unm.edu after you fill out the form above.

If you have difficulty with the scheduling link above, would like an appointment in a subject not listed at that link, or have a question, email tutor@unm.edu. You'll get answers during business hours Monday through Friday. The webpage, with more details about available hours, is here: Learning Commons: Tutoring Services webpage.

Resources to support study skills and time management are available through Student Learning Assistance at the Center for Teaching and Learning in Zimmerman Library or online.

These are valuable, free services. The support is there! Why not use it? :)

Accommodations

UNM is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an inclusive classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact the UNM-Valencia Equal Access Services (Sarah Clawson, Coordinator), at (505) 925-8840 or by email at sjclawson@unm.edu. Also available is the Accessibility Resource Center at UNM-Albuquerque at arcsrvs@unm.edu or 505-277-3506.

UAP 2720 and 2740

Our classroom and university should foster mutual respect, kindness, and support. If you have concerns about discrimination, harassment, or violence, please seek support and report incidents. Find confidential services at LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center, the Women's Resource Center, and the LGBTQ Resource Center. UNM prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including gender, sex stereotyping, gender expression, and gender identity). All instructors are "responsible employees" who must communicate reports of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence to Compliance, Ethics and Equal Opportunity. For more information, please see UAP 2720 and UAP 2740.

Land Acknowledgement

Founded in 1889, the University of New Mexico sits on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. The original peoples of New Mexico Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache since time immemorial, have deep connections to the land and have made significant contributions to the broader community statewide. We

honor the land itself and those who remain stewards of this land throughout the generations and also acknowledge our committed relationship to Indigenous peoples. We gratefully recognize our history.

Citizenship and/or Immigration Status: All students are welcome in this class regardless of citizenship, residency, or immigration status. Your professor will respect your privacy if you choose to disclose your status. UNM as an institution has made a core commitment to the success of all our students, including members of our undocumented community. The Administration's welcome is found on our website: http://undocumented.unm.edu/.

Responsible Learning and Academic Honesty

Cheating and plagiarism (academic dishonesty) are often driven by lack of time, desperation, or lack of knowledge about how to identify a source. Communicate with me and ask for help, even at the last minute, rather than risking your academic career by committing academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty involves claiming that work created by another source is your own original work. It is a Student Code of Conduct violation that can lead to a disciplinary procedure. When you use a resource in work submitted for this class, document how you used it and distinguish clearly between your original work and the material taken from the resource.

Thriving and Finding Support

Students are especially successful at UNM when they take advantage of support and get involved in campus and academic life. Your MyUNM login page provides direct links to wellbeing resources, including financial capability, mental health, food, jobs, and resource centers. MyUNM will help you identify academic resources like peer tutoring and opportunities like study abroad. You can contact academic advisors and resource advisors for information and guidance via Student Hub on MyUNM. I look forward to providing you with information about academic opportunities related to our class and to helping you find support resources.

Fall 2026 Semester Calendar

Week 1 (Week of August 17): Intro Week

- Due Sunday, August 23: Intro post and reading of Chapter 1: "Introduction to Human Communication"

Week 2 (Week of August 24): Interpersonal Communication

- Due Sunday, August 30: Reverse-outline of Chapter 2: "Overview of Interpersonal Communication"

Week 3 (Week of August 31): Intrapersonal Communication

- Due Sunday, September 6: Reverse-outline of Chapter 3: "Intrapersonal Communication"

Week 4 (Week of September 7): Verbal Elements of Communication

- Due Sunday, September 13: Reverse-outline of Chapter 4: "Verbal Elements of Communication"

Week 5 (Week of September 14): Nonverbal Communication

- Due Sunday, September 20: Reverse-outline of Chapter 5: "Nonverbal Communication"

Week 6 (Week of September 21): Cultural and Environmental Factors in Interpersonal Communication

- Due Sunday, September 27: Reverse-outline of Chapter 6: "Cultural and Environmental Factors in Interpersonal Communication"

Week 7 (Week of September 28): Talking and Listening

- Due Sunday, October 4: Reverse-outline of Chapter 7: "Talking and Listening"

Week 8 (Week of October 5): Building and Maintaining Relationships

- Due Sunday, October 11: Reverse-outline of Chapter 8: "Building and Maintaining Relationships"

*October 8–9=Break! Please allow yourself rest, recovery, and time and space for self-care :)

Week 9 (Week of October 12): Conflict in Relationships

- Due Sunday, October 18: Reverse-outline of Chapter 9: "Conflict in Relationships"

Week 10 (Week of October 19): Friendship Relationships

- Due Sunday, October 25: Reverse-outline of Chapter: Chapter 10: "Friendship Relationships"

Week 11 (Week of October 26): Family & Marriage Relationships

- Due Sunday, November 1: Reverse-outline of Chapter 11: "Family & Marriage Relationships"

Week 12 (Week of November 2): Interpersonal Communication in Mediated Contexts

- Due Sunday, November 8: Reverse-outline of Chapter 12: "Interpersonal Communication in Mediated Contexts"

Week 13 (Week of November 9): Interpersonal Relationships at Work

- Due Sunday, November 15: Reverse-outline of Chapter 13: "Interpersonal Relationships at Work"

Week 14 (Week of November 16): The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication

- Due Sunday, November 22: Reverse-outline of Chapter 14: "The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication"

*November 26–27=Break #2! Time to rest, socialize, hug your loved ones, touch a tree.

Week 15 (Week of November 23): Final Project Prep

- Due Sunday, November 29: Final Project Draft

Week 16 (Week of November 30): Final Project Prep

- Due Sunday, December 6: Final Project