

**Comm. 240—Introduction to Interpersonal
Communication**
Spring 2026- Dr. Denker

Catalog Description: Focuses on understanding interpersonal communication as a dynamic and complex system of interactions rather than on the skills of platform speaking. Stresses the importance of understanding and applying communication theory in everyday communication situations.

Course Description: This course is designed to meet important needs of Ball State students, needs which cut across all areas of their work, family, and social relationships. Students need to understand and manage conflicts, create positive interactions with others, and develop healthy interpersonal relationships. This course integrates the cognitive understanding of concepts of communication with the learning of communication skills.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this semester, in this class you will:

1. **identify** the components of the transactional and linear models of communication;
2. **identify** and **explain** factors that contribute to the development of the self-concept;
3. **identify** and **explain** the process of perception;
4. **define** “language” and **recognize** how different factors (e.g., gender, culture) impact language use
5. **identify** the types and characteristics of non-verbal communication;
6. **define** and **explain** the listening process; **recognize** the differences between effective and ineffective listening;
7. **identify** and **explain** theories of relationship development and maintenance;
8. **explain** the conflict process and elements of conflict; **identify** different conflict styles; **identify** different types of conflict resolution;
9. **explain** and **apply** the principles of communication.

Course Outcomes:	Workplace Competencies:	Assignments:
identify the components of the transactional and linear models of communication	Critical Thinking	Quiz In-Class activities
identify and explain factors that contribute to the development of the self-concept	Communication Equity & Inclusion	Self-reflection assessments, Quiz
identify and explain the process of perception	Communication	Quiz In-Class activities
define “language” and recognize how different factors (e.g., gender, culture) impact language use	Communication Equity & Inclusion	Quiz In-Class activities
identify the types and characteristics of non-verbal communication	Communication	Quiz, In-Class activities Self-reflection assessments
define and explain the listening process; recognize the differences between effective and ineffective listening	Communication	Quiz In-Class activities
identify and explain theories of relationship development and maintenance	Communication	Quiz In-class activities

explain the conflict process and elements of conflict; identify different conflict styles; identify different types of conflict resolution	Communication	Quiz In-Class activities
explain and apply the principles of communication	Communication Teamwork	Paper, Quiz In-Class activities

Required Text:

Adler, R. B., & Proctor, R. F. (2024). *Interplay: The process of interpersonal communication* (16th ed.). Oxford.

Supplemental Readings will be posted on Canvas and noted in the course schedule

Students' course materials are available via Canvas and through the [Ball State First Day](#) partnership with Barnes & Noble. This program ensures students obtain all their course materials the first day of classes. Students are automatically enrolled in the program and charged the flat course material fee on their BSU eBill. Students can opt out of the program by the deadline listed on the "Course Materials" page in Canvas. Please review the program details to make the most informed decision regarding your course materials and participation in this program: [Ball State First Day](#)

Course Assessment:

The instructors for COMM 240 will use student performance data on specific course assignments, activities, and tests as the means of assessing the UCC-21 Cognitive Skills. Instructors will provide: (1) A list of all UCC-21 Cognitive Skills associated with the specific E→ I and I→K transformations that the course addresses, (2) A description of course assignments that were used to assess each of these UCC-21 transformations, (3) Data regarding the number of students assessed and success rates (e.g., mean scores, score distributions, the percentage of those students who passed each of the assessments), and (4) Data regarding the weight given each UCC-21 transformation in the course.

Course Policies:

Welcome to the world of Interpersonal Communication, we are all here as we are interested in learning more about the ways that we interact with our relational others. Central to effective interpersonal interactions are respect, honesty, and trust, which we will hold as the frame for our entire course policies. Conversely, we can all agree on the "no jerk" rule. Together we will construct more expectations for class behaviors which will be updated on Canvas.

To support a respectful and engaging academic community that encourages the free exchange of ideas and civil discourse, we will follow these ground rules:

- Respect different perspectives. Share your ideas and let others share theirs.
- Challenge ideas, not people. Disagree respectfully. No personal attacks/put-downs. Focus on exploring ideas critically and constructively.
- Listen to understand. Stay curious, ask questions to understand, and give others space to speak.
- Assume good intentions. Approach discussions with curiosity and compassion.
- Keep it private. What is shared in class stays in class. Do not share others' words or work without permission.
- Be respectful. Avoid hurtful language, stereotypes, or content that may demean others. Keep feedback constructive.

My Assumptions of a 200 Level Course: With a 200-level class, our goal is to expose you to the key concepts and research in interpersonal communication with a focus on practical application.

In this class, I hold the same standards for you that I do for myself. We will be at all class meetings, unless illness or an emergency occurs, in which case we will be in contact with each other right away, or

if a pressing conflict arises that we spoke to each other about in advance. We will be ready each day to engage in a productive, thoughtful, and respectful conversation about course material, and we will all make productive, thoughtful, and respectful contributions. If you violate these assumptions, it should be understood that this could impact your final grade. It is also understood that if I violate these assumptions, this should be represented in my teaching evaluations.

Class Expectations and Participation:

- In order for this class to be successful, your attendance and participation is imperative. We will conduct this class as a seminar, performing the roles of teachers and learners simultaneously. This is possible only if everyone prepares in advance for class by giving meaningful attention to the assigned content/readings and assumes a constructive role by asking questions, thoughtfully attending to the ideas of others, and sharing your own insights.
- Your participation is important not only to your own intellectual development, but also to the development of others in the class who might benefit from your input. To be successful in this course, you must engage with the course material each week.
- Ask questions! If you don't, I will assume that everything is clear.
- Type all assignments. Please utilize APA formatting and citations. All written assignment should reflect a strong command of writing.
- - If you are having a problem that is impacting your ability to be successful in this course, please set up a time to meet with me as soon as possible.
- If you are a member of a university-sponsored team that requires you to miss classes, please provide me with an official list of the date(s) you will be missing class within the first weeks of the semester.
- In accordance with university policies, I will be taking attendance daily and sharing that information with appropriate audience.
- While attendance does not impact your grade directly, in class assignments, quizzes, and participation/engagement points cannot be made up without documentation of university approved absences.

Late Work:

- Completed written assignments should be submitted via Canvas **by the deadline**. An assignment will be considered late if it is not by the deadline. Late work will be penalized **10% off** for each business day late unless there has been communication and a documentable emergency. I understand that all of us will have off days, therefore everyone will have **eight** late day passes to use as they need throughout the semester on course papers. Each late pass day will erase one 10% late penalty for an assignment, so if you need to turn in a paper two days late, you can submit it with a note to use two of your late day passes. Late pass usage must be requested with the assignment submission and cannot be applied retroactively. Absolutely no late work will be accepted after **April 30th**. EOD, unless again extreme and documented emergency.
- In class assignments, quizzes, and participation points cannot be made up without documentation of university approved absences.

Academic Dishonesty: Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the complete [Student Academic Ethics Policy](#). As a communication professional, I expect that you know and understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Any incident will at minimum result in a zero on the assignment.

You may use AI programs (e.g. ChatGPT) to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, you should

note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Additionally, the use may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity, both which are tools you should be building. However, all final written work/material submitted should be your own.

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own, be it mostly or entirely written by AI. You may not use AI for generating citations, examples, or arguments that you present as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor). Additionally, as you respect the work you do, you should not freely give it to AI for future use.

Communication and Feedback: I will try to return e-mail from your official BSU e-mail address within 24 hours during the business week. If you haven't heard from me within that timeframe, please feel free to nicely follow up. Sometimes e-mails become buried. I will make every effort to grade assignments within 5 business days of submission. End of semester assignments may take longer. Please feel free to e-mail me before that time if you have any questions or concerns about your performance in the course.

Grade Appeals: As you know, grades are not given; they are earned. Though I thoughtfully assign grades, I'm also a human and may make mistakes. All grade appeals must follow these guidelines:

- 24 Hour Rule. Receiving grades can be upsetting. To make sure our conversation is productive, please wait at least 24 hours before notifying your instructor of your wish to appeal a grade.
- One Week Timeline. All grade appeals must be made within one week of receiving your initial grade on an assignment.
- Written. All grade appeals must be first put in writing and sent in an email.
- Evidence-Based. Grade appeals must be evidence-based arguments as to where more points were earned on an assignment than were assessed. This is not a "re-do" or a chance to provide correct answers. It also isn't enough to ask "for more points" because you're close to a certain letter grade. Rather, this is your opportunity to articulate specific places where I was mistaken, where your work met and exceeded the expectations of the rubric (when applicable), the assignment description, spirit of the assignment, and procedures of the course.

If you have any questions or concerns about your grade (on a specific assignment or in general), please visit me during office hours or make an appointment. I will not discuss grades over email to protect your privacy.

Canvas: This class utilizes canvas. It is your responsibility to check it for updates, schedule changes, assignments, and handouts. You will be responsible for printing documents off of Canvas. Most assignments will be submitted through canvas.

To support a learning experience that is responsive to the needs, interests, and pace of our class community, the course schedule may shift over the semester. The most current version of the schedule will always be available on Canvas. I encourage you to check Canvas regularly for updates and contact me if you have any questions

This syllabus is subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances

University Policies

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Disability Statement: If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's [Disability Services](#) office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office

before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Freedom of Expression: In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's [Statement on Freedom of Expression](#), the [resources](#) on Ball State's Freedom of Expression webpage, and Ball State's [Beneficence Pledge](#).

Writing Center and Learning Center: All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays, Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings, or online during any of our regularly scheduled hours) to get additional feedback on your writing. The Writing Center offers free planning, feedback, and accountability sessions (in person and online) to all students. To schedule a free appointment, go to <http://www.bsu.edu/writingcenter>. Online and in-person appointments are available; however, plan ahead because appointments book quickly!!

The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make appointments for online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit my.bsu.edu and click on "Navigate" in the Additional Tools section, or just go directly to <https://bsu.navigate.eab.com>. Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center. For more information about Learning Center programming, visit bsu.edu/learningcenter or call 765-285-1006. Follow us on Instagram: [BallStateLC](#).

The Speaking Center: The [Speaking Center](#) is a free resource available to all members of the BSU community wanting to improve their public speaking abilities. We offer personalized coaching designed to help you become a more confident and effective speaker. Our trained coaches provide constructive feedback and support throughout the entire speech preparation process, whether you are in the early stages of brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts, or you need to practice your delivery and refine your message. The Center is in the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, room 302. To schedule an appointment, please access us through your Navigate app or **use this [direct link](#) to sign up for a time**. Appointments are available both in person, on Zoom, and in virtual reality (VR) for those interested in practicing in an immersive speaking environment.

Title IX Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit bsu.edu/titleix or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at titleix@bsu.edu.

As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment. This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.

What happens after I report? The Title IX Coordinator will email the person who experienced sexual harassment (complainant) and invite them to schedule a meeting. If the complainant chooses to meet with the Title IX Coordinator,

Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures (e.g., counseling, extensions on deadlines, course-related adjustments, changes to work or class schedules, and/or referrals to campus offices), review the policy, and discuss options to move forward.

If a complaint is filed by the complainant or the University, an investigation will begin following University policy.

The Basic Needs Hub If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the [Basic Needs Hub](#). The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a [Basic Needs Assistance Form](#).

The Counseling Center The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. We assist students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found [here](#).

Course & Instructor Evaluation: Students will have an opportunity to participate in formal assessment of this course and the instructor’s teaching performance at the end of the semester through the university’s online evaluation process.

Course Copyright/ Recording & Broadcasting: No electronic recording or broadcast of any portion of this class is permitted without permission; posting audio or video recordings of any portion of this class online is not permitted without permission.

Changes: This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

Grades:

- A= Achievement significantly above requirements
- B= Achievement over and above requirements
- C= Meets the basic course requirements
- D= Does not meet the requirements, but is effort worthy of credit
- F= Work neither meets requirements, nor is worthy of credit

This class uses the

typical scale: A	100% - 93%,	A-	92.99% - 90%,		
B+	89.99% - 87%,	B	86.99% - 83%,	B-	82.99% - 80%,
C+	79.99% - 77%,	C	76.99% - 73%,	C-	72.99% - 70%

Final grades will not be curved.

Course Assignments and Assignment Overview

See Canvas for more details

Total Number of Points Possible= 500 Points

APPLICATION DISCUSSION LEADERS	75 Points
COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROJECT (CSP assignments)	175 Points
Week Two Self-Evaluation (30 pts)	
Week Three Others Evaluation (20 pts)	
Vlog Journals (15 pts each x 4= 60pts)	
Post Self-Evaluation Assessment and Presentation (65 pts)	
Quizzes	100 Points
Final/ Translating IPC Application Assessment:	50 Points
In class assignments & Participation:	100 Points

Application Discussion Leaders (75 points) Throughout the course of the semester, we will have 11 Application Discussions. During these class periods, we will explore a topic that connects what we've been learning with a contemporary popular topic. The additional popular culture texts selected for these days will be shared with you in the class period prior. In class, the discussion leaders will review the text and explore the topic while engaging. I will lead the first application day.

For every application day after that, a small group of students will be responsible for leading discussion. Each group will select their application day early on in the semester. Then, each group will be required to develop a short critique, discussion, and/ or activity to help your fellow classmates explore the text and topic of discussion. Discussion plans and popular culture texts will be due in class the class period before your group is scheduled to present. The group will also leave the class with an infographic to help us remember the content. See the full assignment description on Canvas for more details and project break down.

Communication Skill Project- The Communication Skills Project gives you a chance to reflect on your skills and past communication with others over the course of the semester. You will get the choice to reflect on the skills that you want to focus on and then also pick the chapters/ topics that you want to journal on. As this is a major assignment, to help keep you on track and break up the workload, this assignment will be due in multiple parts/process pieces. The overall project is worth 175 points.

Quizzes- (12 quizzes at 10pts each- Your lowest 2 scores will drop)-

Your lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped. Alternative routes to success- For 3 of the Quizzes- On the day of the quiz, you can show me at least one page of handwritten notes from both the book and in class for credit for the quiz. All quiz attempts will earn 3pts-

Final Exam/Presentation/ Translating IPC Application Assessment- This presentation will take place after we have discussed all course content. The final presentation will focus on application and translation of course materials. More details will be provided as we move closer to the final presentation. 50 points

In Class Assignments & Participation- In-class assignments, class research activities, reflections, presentations, peer engagement, and participation will comprise the remaining 100 points.