

“More stress is created in the work-place by interpersonal conflict than by hard work”

Wood and Schweitzer

**GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

HS 1203: Interpersonal Communication in the Workplace

Winter 2009	March 11, 2009 – April 8, 2009
Credits:	1 (15 hours)
Class Times:	Mondays 1:00 to 2:20 p.m. Wednesdays 1:00 to 2:20 p.m.
Location:	B303
Instructor:	Dolly McArthur, M.Ed.
Instructor’s Office:	H210
Office Hours:	Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:00 – 12:00 or by appointment.
Phone:	Office: 780- 539 - 2787
Email:	dmcarthur@gprc.ab.ca
Prerequisite:	HS1000

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course builds on the interpersonal communication skills from HS1000 and applies them to the development of skills for more complex situations including conflict management and communication in the work environment.

REQUIRED TEXT

Adler, R.B., Proctor, R.F., Towne, N., and Rolls, J. A. (2008) Looking Out Looking In. (3rd Canadian ed.). Scarborough, On: Nelson Thomson Learning.

CLASS FORMAT

Classes will involve a variety of activities. There will be small group work, class discussions, mini-lectures, and a variety of other activities designed to promote active learning of the course content.

Student participation in learning activities is vital to this course. According to Edgar Dales's (University of Texas) research, we tend to remember 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, 50% of what we hear and see, 70% of what we say and **90% of what we both say and do.**

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. Identify and discuss factors that contribute to a positive or negative communication climate in work settings.
2. Apply communication skills to promote a positive communication climate.
3. Discuss the significance of conflict in interpersonal and workplace relationships, communication factors that affect it, and methods of dealing with conflicts.
4. Demonstrate the use of communication skills to resolve a conflict situation while maintaining a positive communication climate.
5. Discuss the role of communication in the workplace.
6. Develop knowledge and skills to become productive team members in the workplace.

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE EVALUATION

Specific instructions and requirements for the following assignments will be handed out in class.

Gibbs' Categories	20%	Due: March 18, 2009
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Using Gibb's categories of supportive and defensive behaviours, analyze your comments in each of the three scenarios that are provided, both defensive and support. Justify your answers.

Clear Message Format	20%	Due: March 30, 2009
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This assignment is designed to provide students with an opportunity to use assertive communication by using a clear message. Specific instructions and requirements will be given out in class.

Working in Groups	40%	Due: April 6, 2009
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This assignment is worth 40% of your course grade. 25% or $\frac{1}{4}$ will come from the group submission and 75% or $\frac{3}{4}$ will come from your individual evaluation of the group processes.

The purpose of this assignment is to allow you to work in teams to experience the theories which you will be exposed to in class. The most important aspect of the assignment is to experience the process of team development and to practice your roles as an effective team member. Knowing and applying the theory of the evolution of groups should help the cohesion and effectiveness of your team. Specific instructions and requirements will be given out in class.

Exam	20%	Date: April 8, 2009
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An exam covering all course content will be given on the last day of class.

Participation	5%
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Participation will be based on attendance, punctuality, participation in group and class activities, participation in class discussions, and even interaction during lectures (e.g. asking clarifying questions, offering illustrative examples, etc.).

GRADING POLICIES

Final grades will be assigned using a **LETTER GRADING** system with a **FOUR-POINT SCALE** of numerical equivalents for calculating grade point averages.

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Point
Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0
	A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7
Satisfactory	C+	2.3
	C	2.0
	C-	1.7
Poor	D+	1.3
Minimal Pass	D	1.0
Failure	F	0.0

STUDENT SUPPORT

The Learning Center is available to assist students with written assignments. The center is located in room F215 and the contact number is 539-2957. If you have difficulty understanding a particular concept or have any other concerns regarding the course, please do not hesitate to discuss this as soon as possible with the instructor.

BLACKBOARD

Blackboard is a Learning Management System that will be used to improve communication with, and between students. Course resources will be posted such as the course outline, notes, handouts, etc. Blackboard is a password-protected environment that can be accessed 24/7 from any computer as long as you have internet access. Ensure you bring blackboard notes and readings to class.

RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROFESSIONALISM

Students are advised to familiarize themselves with their rights and responsibilities as outlined in the College calendar. Please refer to the College policy on Plagiarism and Cheating (pages 48 and 49).

ATTENDANCE

Studies have found a correlation between attendance and final grades. Students will be responsible for content covered, assigned readings, and for any announcements that are made in class. If a student is unable to attend a particular class, it will be her/his responsibility to find out what was missed. For optimal learning and readiness for class participation, students should read the assigned chapter and articles before coming to class on the dates indicated on the class schedule.

ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are responsible to submit assignments **ON** or **BEFORE** the date they are due. Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day (weekends and holidays included). For instance, an assignment graded at 75% would be credited 70% after one day late, 65% after two days, etc. Assignments **10 days past the due date will receive a grade of 0.**
2. Unless stated otherwise, assignments must be typed, double-spaced and have at least one inch margins on sides, top and bottom to permit instructor comments. They must be printed on only one side of the page. Spelling and grammar will be considered in grading. (Please see rubrics) *You are advised to keep either a hard copy or an electronic copy of everything you submit. It is also recommended that you back up your electronic copies as you are working on assignments.*
3. Exams must be written on the scheduled date. Arrangement to write the exam on another date must be requested in writing before the scheduled exam date, otherwise a grade of 0 will be given for the exam.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Cell phones and other electronics are to be turned off during class. Cell phones and other electronics are not to be brought into exams.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The classroom learning environment is created by a joint effort between students and the instructor. If we work together, we can make classes more enjoyable and productive. Therefore please:

- Stay on topic.
- Avoid personal and private conversations.
- Ask for clarification whenever you need it.
- Participate in small group and large group class discussions and ensure others get equal opportunity to participate as well.
- Come prepared for class. Having your readings completed and assignments done on time will help with the understanding of topics discussed and assist you in knowing what questions to ask and/or prepare you to participate in class discussions.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENT/TEST
Mar 11	Introductions, review course outline Unit One – Workplace Culture, Climate and Communication		
Mar 16	No Class		
Mar 18	Unit One – Workplace Culture, Climate and Communication	Pg. 404 – 427 Blackboard Notes	Gibb’s Categories
Mar 23	Unit One – Responding Non-defensively to Criticism	Pg. 434 – 449 Blackboard Notes	
Mar 25	Unit Two – Dealing with Conflict	Pg. 454 – 497 Blackboard Notes	
Mar 30	Unit Two Dealing with Conflict	Blackboard Notes	Clear Message Format
Apr 1	Unit Two – Dealing with Conflict	Blackboard Notes	
Apr 6	Unit Three – Communication and Working in Groups	Blackboard Notes	
Apr 8	Unit Three – Communication and Working in Groups		
Apr 13	Unit Three – Communication and Working in Groups		Working in Groups
Apr 15	Exam		

Although the instructor feels that all the material in the textbook and on the Blackboard is important and interesting, **limited class time prevents discussion of all the material covered in the text and on the Blackboard.** You are responsible for learning textbook/blackboard material that is not discussed in class.