

The University of Puerto Rico
College of Humanities
English Department
Rio Piedras Campus

Syllabus Fall 2018
INGL 4145 Family Communication

Class Meetings: M-W 7:00 -8:20am PED 210

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Office Hours: weekdays 12:00-12:30 (or by appointment) Janer Building -HUMA

I. Course Description:

An introduction to the nature and functions of the family as a communication system. To study Family as a communication system implies the exploration of human communication processes such as openness, conflict, social support, intimacy, decision-making, and context. Also, the course will address marital, parent-child, siblings, and inter-generational interactions and relationships.

In this class we will be able to:

1. identify major concepts and theories related to family communication;
2. learn and apply family communication theories to specific family situations;
3. explore the diversity of family structures and organizations
4. develop a theoretically informed perspective about what constitutes “competent, effective and appropriate” communication practices at home in family units and family relationships.

II. Course objectives:

Things you should know about what I expect from your work in this class:

1. TO attend class regularly
2. TO participate assertively in class discussions
3. TO ask smart questions
4. TO use critical and active listening skills when not speaking
5. TO complete readings and turn in assignments on time.
6. TO prepare supplementary assignments and reports as required. All written assignments are to be computer-generated unless specifically exempted by the instructor.
7. TO share with me any concern you might have about your progress in this course.

III. Texts and materials:

Family Communication: Cohesion and Change (5th Edition) [8/2/1999] Kathleen M. Galvin

IV. Required readings:

Academic articles published in the Journal of Family Communication and other Human Communication journals.

V. Grading:

Your final grade will be composed of:

1. Mid-term exam (Oct. , 100 pts.)
2. FOUR case studies (25 pts. x 4 = 100 pts.)
3. A written final paper (50 pts. ORAL PRESENTATION + 50pts. WRITTEN PAPER = 100 pts.)
5. Attendance (100 pts.)

Grading Scale*****:

400-348 pts. A

347-298 pts. B

297-258 pts. C

257-198 pts. D

Below 198 pts. F

*****Students with special needs will be graded accordingly.

Class Attendance (100 pts):

Attendance to class is mandatory. Violation of this policy will seriously your academic standing in the course. You should notify your instructor of any absences due to medical conditions or any other reason in advance. Messages for your instructor may be left at the instructor's mailbox or sent by email to englishmgv@yahoo.com.

VI. Students Rights & Responsibilities

A. Grievances

Students with a grievance against another student in this class or students with a conflict with the instructor are referred to the grievance procedures outlined in the Student Handbook. It says, in part, "in academic matters such as a grade complaint, the student should first speak with his or her professor. The normal hierarchy then leads to the department chairperson, dean of the college, and provost."

B. Cheating & Plagiarism

Students are reminded that cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Even one incident of cheating or plagiarism is grounds for failing the course or more serious action by the university. Please study carefully the University policies on cheating and plagiarism that are detailed in the UPR Student Handbook.

C. Special accommodations (Law 51): For those students who are registered with the Rehabilitation Services Administration or students who are in need of special accommodations, please let me know on the first day of class. Possible arrangements dealing with assistive technology or equipment you may need should be coordinated through the Disability Services Office (OAPI) of the UPR-RRP, Dean of Students Affairs.

Below, you will find the class schedule and due dates for assignments. This is SUPER-important. Do NOT lose this syllabus!

VII. CLASS SCHEDULE (due to changes)

WEEK	Topics	Assignment
Week One AUG 20-22	Introduction to class Understanding Communication Language and Culture Perception	READ: Symbolic Interactionism and Relational Dialectics Cognitive Dissonance Systems Theory
Week Two AUG 27-29	Basics of Interpersonal Communication Basics of Small Groups Communication	READ: Ecological Model of Family Interactions: patterns and processes: routines, rituals, stories, secrets In class activity (25 pts)
Week Three SEPT 3-5	Defining Family: functions, forms and interactions Family Systems: norms, roles and values	Case Study #1 : Courtship and Commitment Movie: AS GOOD AS IT GETS
Week Four SEPT 10-12	Family as a Meaning Making System	Families coming together How to develop a search for academic references using academic databases: J-stor, Ebscohost, ERIC, LANIC, CIOS...
Week Five SEPT 17-19	Family Structures: legal, political, cultural aspects	The Construction of Marital Reality
Week Six SEPT 24-26	Family Complexities and Patterns of interactions	Goffman's Saving Face Case Study 2 - Movie: Little Miss Sunshine

Week Seven Oct 1-3	Mid-Term Exam TAKE HOME NO CLASS	Mid-Term Exam TAKE HOME NO CLASS
Week Eight Oct 8-10	Family stories, Myths and Metaphors	Case Study #3
Week Nine Oct 15-17	Rules and Rituals	
Week Ten Oct 22-25	Power Communication and Family Stress	
Week Eleven Oct 29-31	Families and developmental stages	Case Study #4
Week Twelve NOV 5-7	Families and CONFLICTS	
Week Thirteen NOV 12-14	Improving Family Communication	
Week Fourteen NOV 19-21	Thanksgiving Recess NO CLASS	Thanksgiving Recess NO CLASS
Week Fifteen NOV 26-28	ORAL PRESENTATIONS 5 PRESENTERS per day	ORAL PRESENTATIONS 5 PRESENTERS per day
Week Sixteen Dec 3-5	ORAL PRESENTATIONS 5 PRESENTERS per day	ORAL PRESENTATIONS 5 PRESENTERS per day
Dec 10, 2018	DUE DATE - FINAL PROJECT	DUE DATE-FINAL PROJECT

VIII. Bibliography:

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REFERENCE MATERIALS

Critical Essay SOURCE: http://essayinfo.com/essays/critical_essay.php

The word "critical" has positive as well as negative meanings. You can write a critical essay that agrees entirely with the reading. The word "critical" describes your attitude when you read the article. This attitude is best described as "detached evaluation," meaning that you weigh the coherence of the reading, the completeness of its data, and so on, before you accept or reject it. A critical essay or review begins with an analysis or exposition of the reading, article-by-article, book by book. Each analysis should include the following points:

1. A summary of the author's point of view, including
 - *a brief statement of the author's main idea (i.e., thesis or theme)
 - *an outline of the important "facts" and lines of reasoning the *author used to support the main idea
 - *a summary of the author's explicit or implied values
 - *a presentation of the author's conclusion or suggestions for action
2. An evaluation of the author's work, including
 - *an assessment of the "facts" presented on the basis of correctness, relevance, and whether or not pertinent facts were omitted
 - *an evaluation or judgment of the logical consistency of the author's argument
 - *an appraisal of the author's values in terms of how you feel or by an accepted standard

* Once the analysis is completed, check your work! Ask yourself, "Have I read all the relevant (or assigned) material?" "Do I have complete citations?" If not, complete the work! The following steps are how this is done.

Now you can start to write the first draft of your expository essay/literature review. Outline the conflicting arguments, if any; this will be part of the body of your expository essay/literature review.

Ask yourself, "Are there other possible positions on this matter?" If so, briefly outline them. Decide on your own position (it may agree with one of the competing arguments) and state explicitly the reason(s) why you hold that position by outlining the consistent facts and showing the relative insignificance of contrary facts. Coherently state your position by integrating your evaluations of the works you read. This becomes your conclusions section.

Briefly state your position, state why the problem you are working on is important, and indicate the important questions that need to be answered; this is your "Introduction." Push quickly through this draft--don't worry about spelling, don't search for exactly the right word, don't hassle yourself with grammar, don't worry overmuch about sequence--that's why this is called a "rough draft." Deal with these during your revisions. The point of a rough draft is to get your ideas on paper. Once they are there, you can deal with the superficial (though very important) problems.

Consider this while writing:

- The critical essay is informative; it emphasizes the literary work being studied rather than the feelings and opinions of the person writing about the literary work; in this kind of writing, all claims made about the work need to be backed up with evidence.
- The difference between feelings and facts is simple--it does not matter what you believe about a book or play or poem; what matters is what you can prove about it, drawing upon evidence found in the text itself, in biographies of the author, in critical discussions of the literary work, etc.
- Criticism does not mean you have to attack the work or the author; it simply means you are thinking critically about it, exploring it and discussing your findings.
- In many cases, you are teaching your audience something new about the text.
- The literary essay usually employs a serious and objective tone. (Sometimes, depending on your audience, it is all right to use a lighter or even humorous tone, but this is not usually the case).
- Use a "claims and evidence" approach. Be specific about the points you are making about the novel, play, poem, or essay you are discussing and back up those points with evidence that your audience will find credible and appropriate. If you want to say, "The War of the Worlds is a novel about how men and women react in the face of annihilation, and most of them do not behave in a particularly courageous or noble manner," say it, and then find evidence that supports your claim.

- Using evidence from the text itself is often your best option. If you want to argue, "isolation drives Frankenstein's creature to become evil," back it up with events and speeches from the novel itself.
- Another form of evidence you can rely on is criticism, what other writers have claimed about the work of literature you are examining. You may treat these critics as "expert witnesses," whose ideas provide support for claims you are making about the book. In most cases, you should not simply provide a summary of what critics have said about the literary work.
- In fact, one starting point might be to look at what a critic has said about one book or poem or story and then a) ask if the same thing is true of another book or poem or story and 2) ask what it means that it is or is not true.
- Do not try to do everything. Try to do one thing well. And beware of subjects that are too broad; focus your discussion on a particular aspect of a work rather than trying to say everything that could possibly be said about it.
- Be sure your discussion is well organized. Each section should support the main idea. Each section should logically follow and lead into the sections that come before it and after it. Within each paragraph, sentences should be logically connected to one another.
- Remember that in most cases you want to keep your tone serious and objective.
- Be sure your essay is free of mechanical and stylistic errors.
- If you quote or summarize (and you will probably have to do this) be sure you follow an appropriate format (APA format is the most common one when examining communication and sociological topics) and be sure you provide a properly formatted list of works cited at the end of your essay.

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What Is a Case Study? SOURCE: www.materials.ac.uk/guides/casestudies.asp

It is now documented that students can learn more effectively when actively involved in the learning process (Bonwell and Eison, 1991; Sivan et al, 2001). The case study approach is one way in which such active learning strategies can be implemented in our institutions. There are a number of definitions for the term case study. For example, Fry et al (1999) describe case studies as complex examples which give an insight into the context of a problem as well as illustrating the main point. We define our case studies as student centered activities based on topics that demonstrate theoretical concepts in an applied setting. This definition of a case study covers the variety of different teaching structures we use, ranging from short individual case studies to longer group-based activities. In our experience of using case studies, we have found that they can be used to:

- Allow the application of theoretical concepts to be demonstrated, thus bridging the gap between theory and practice.
- Encourage active learning.
- Provide an opportunity for the development of key skills such as communication, group working and problem solving.
- Increase the students' enjoyment of the topic and hence their desire to learn.