

**SPCH 1318 Interpersonal Communication,  
Section 2A1**

**CREDIT**

3 Semester Credit Hours (3 hours lecture, 0 hours lab)

**MODE OF INSTRUCTION**

Online

**PREREQUISITE/CO-REQUISITE:**

None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Application of communication theory to interpersonal relationship development, maintenance, and termination in relationship contexts including friendships, romantic partners, families, and relationships with co-workers and supervisors.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to

- Exhibit understanding of interpersonal theories and principles.
- Demonstrate ability to analyze and critique verbal and nonverbal interactions in mediated and face-to-face contexts.
- Identify perceptual processes as they relate to self and others.
- Demonstrate critical thinking ability by effectively researching, evaluating, and applying communication theories in oral and/or written assignments.
- Demonstrate understanding of the relevance of cross-cultural, co-cultural, gender and age influences on human communication.
- Demonstrate ability to identify, evaluate, and apply conflict styles and conflict management techniques in dyads and/or groups.
- Identify types of and barriers to effective listening.
- Demonstrate written and oral competencies as it relates to employment (including job searches, interviews, interpersonal interaction, conflict management, and leadership and performance appraisals).

**INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION**

Instructor: Tonya Blivens

Email: [tblivens@lit.edu](mailto:tblivens@lit.edu)

Office Phone: (409) 247-5347 (LIT)

Office Location: LIT campus: Building T5 102



**LAMAR INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY**

Office Hours: KCA MWF 8:05-8:35, 11:15-12:15 LIT TTH 9:30-11:00, 12:15-1:30

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS**

- Usera, Daniel. *Communicating to Connect-Interpersonal Communication for Today*. LibreTexts, 2024. <https://sites.google.com/austincc.edu/interpersonaloeer/title-page>
- *Interpersonal Communication: A Mindful Approach to Relationships* by Jason S. Wrench, Narissa M. Punyanunt-Carter and Katherine S. Thweatt. This is a free e-book available online at [Interpersonal Communication: A Mindful Approach to Relationships - Milne Open Textbooks](#) as a PDF. You can also view and download the PDF on Blackboard.
- *Other readings will be posted on Blackboard*
- 1 package of 3x5 or 5x8 index cards
- Must have the ability to upload/print documents for class.
- We will be using Blackboard for this course.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Regular attendance in class or online is expected at Lamar Institute of Technology. Student absences will be regularly recorded in Starfish, so that you can log in and check it throughout the semester. Students are allotted three excused absences for the semester. For anything above three the instructor will consider allowing make-up work on a case-by-case basis. The key is to communicate with the instructor if you must miss more than three days. For online and hybrid courses incomplete or missing assignments will result in an absence for the week.

### **DROP POLICY**

If you wish to drop a course, you are responsible for initiating and completing the drop process by the specified drop date as listed on the [Academic Calendar](#). If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will earn an "F" in the course.

### **STUDENT EXPECTED TIME REQUIREMENT**

For every hour in class (or unit of credit), students should expect to spend at least two to three hours per week studying and completing assignments. For a 3-credit-hour class, students should prepare to allocate approximately six to nine hours per week outside of class in a 16-week session OR approximately twelve to eighteen hours in an 8-week session. Online/Hybrid students should expect to spend at least as much time in this course as in the traditional, face-to-face class.

### **COURSE EVALUATION**

Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:

- 20% Speeches
  - Who Am I
  - Family Structure
  - Relationship Analysis
- 30% Journals
  - Journals (6)
- 20% Tests
  - Test 1

- Test 2
- 10% Participation
  - Participation
- 20% Theory Speech (Common Assignment)
  - Theory Presentation

#### **GRADE SCALE**

- 90-100 A
- 80-89 B
- 70-79 C
- 60-69 D
- 0-59 F

LIT does not use +/- grading scales

#### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Students found to be committing academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, or collusion) may receive disciplinary action. Students need to familiarize themselves with the institution's Academic Dishonesty Policy available in the Student Catalog & Handbook at <http://catalog.lit.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=80#academic-dishonesty>.

Academic Dishonesty (Cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will not be tolerated. On the first offense, you will fail the assignment. On the second offense, you will fail the class.

#### **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

The latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, etc. can be online at <https://lit.edu/online-learning/online-learning-minimum-computer-requirements>. A functional broadband internet connection, such as DSL, cable, or WiFi is necessary to maximize the use of online technology and resources.

#### **DISABILITIES STATEMENT**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. LIT provides reasonable accommodations as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, to students with a diagnosed disability. The Special Populations Office is located in the Eagles' Nest Room 129 and helps foster a supportive and inclusive educational environment by maintaining partnerships with faculty and staff, as well as promoting awareness among all members of the Lamar Institute of Technology community. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409)-951-5708 or email [specialpopulations@lit.edu](mailto:specialpopulations@lit.edu). You may also visit the online resource at [Special Populations - Lamar Institute of Technology \(lit.edu\)](http://Special Populations - Lamar Institute of Technology (lit.edu)).

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT**

It is the responsibility of all registered Lamar Institute of Technology students to access, read, understand and abide by all published policies, regulations, and procedures listed in the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook*. The *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* may be accessed at [www.lit.edu](http://www.lit.edu). Please note that the online version of the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* supersedes all other versions of the same document.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STATEMENT**

Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) recognizes the recent advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, have changed the landscape of many career disciplines and will impact many students in and out of the classroom. To prepare students for their selected careers, LIT desires to guide students in the ethical use of these technologies and incorporate AI into classroom instruction and assignments appropriately. Appropriate use of these technologies is at the discretion of the instructor. Students may not use AI to create speeches, assignments, or any original content that is required for grading. Students are reminded that all submitted work must be their own original work unless otherwise specified. Students should contact their instructor with any questions as to the acceptable use of AI/ChatGPT in their courses.

## **STARFISH**

LIT utilizes an early alert system called Starfish. Throughout the semester, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades, attendance, or academic performance. Faculty members record student attendance, raise flags and kudos to express concern or give praise, and you can make an appointment with faculty and staff all through the Starfish home page. You can also login to Blackboard or MyLIT and click on the Starfish link to view academic alerts and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the student to pay attention to these emails and information in Starfish and consider taking the recommended actions. Starfish is used to help you be a successful student at LIT.

## **COURSE CALENDAR (subject to change at the instructor's discretion) SPCH 1318 OL 2A1**

<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Jan 20-23</b>	1. Orientation to the course – Read Syllabus 2. Course Icebreakers 3. Read Chapter 1 Human Communication 4. Review Who Am I Speech Assignment	Jan 25 by 11:59 PM  <b>Syllabus Quiz</b> <b>Introduction Discussion Post</b>
<b>Week 2</b> <b>Jan 26-30</b>	1. Read Chapter 2 Interpersonal Overview 2. Read Chapter 3 Intrapersonal Communication	<b>Due Feb 1 by 11:59pm</b>  <b>Journal 1</b> <b>Personality Tests</b>
<b>Week 3</b> <b>Feb 2-6</b> <b>4<sup>th</sup> Census Day</b>	<b>Who Am I Presentations</b>	<b>Due Feb 8 by 11:59pm</b>  Presentation Video

		Who Am I speech Slides & Video
<b>Week 4</b> <b>Feb 9-13</b>	1. Read Chapter 6 Cultural Factors 2. Read Chapter 8 Building & Maintaining 3. Chapter 10 Friendships 4. Review Guidelines Relationship Analysis	<b>Due Feb 15 by 11:59pm</b> <b>Journal 2</b> <b>Relationship Maps</b>
<b>Week 5</b> <b>Feb 16-20</b>	1. Conduct Relationship Research 2. Prepare for Interview Questions 3. Collect Pictures & Key Moments	<b>Due Feb 22 by 11:59pm</b> <b>Journal 3</b> <b>Interview Questions</b>
<b>Week 6</b> <b>Feb 23-27</b>	<b>Friendship Relationship Analysis</b>	<b>Due Mar 1 by 11:59pm</b> Journal 4 RA Slides/Works Cited
<b>Week 7</b> <b>Mar 2-6</b>	1. Read Chapter 4 Verbal Elements of Com 2. Read Chapter 5 Nonverbal Com 3. Review Guidelines for Theory Presentations	<b>Due Mar 8 by 11:59pm</b> <b>Journal 5</b> Select your Theory on the discussion board.
<b>Mar 9-13</b>	Spring Break	
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Mar 16-20</b>	1. Read Chapters 9 Conflict and 14 Dark Side 2. Review Guidelines for Theory Presentations	<b>Due Mar 22 by 11:59pm</b> <b>Test 1</b>
<b>Week 9</b> <b>Mar 23-27</b>	1. Read Chapter 7 Talking & Listening 2. Review Theories & Theorists	<b>Due Mar 29 by 11:59pm</b> Difficult Conversations Activity
<b>Week 10</b> <b>Mar 30-3</b>	1. Research Theory & Theorist 2. Start PPT, Outline, Works Cited	Work on Theory Assignment
<b>Week 11</b> <b>Apr 6-10</b>	<b>Theory Presentation</b>	<b>Due Apr 12 by 11:59pm</b> Post Final PPT, Outline, Works Cited, & Video <b>Journal 6</b>
<b>Week 12</b> <b>Apr 13-17</b> April 13 <sup>th</sup> Drop Day	1. Read Chapter 11 Family 2. Review Family Structure Assignment	<b>Due Apr 19 by 11:59pm</b> Select TV Family (Discussion Board)
<b>Week 13</b> <b>Apr 20-24</b>	1. Read Chapters 11 Marriage & Dating	<b>Due Apr 26 by 11:59 PM</b> Marriage & Dating Norms DB
<b>Week 14</b> <b>Apr 27-1</b>	<b>Family Structure Analysis</b>	<b>Due May 3 by 11:59pm</b>

		Post Family Structure Slides & Video
<b>Week 15</b> <b>May 4-8</b>	1. Read Chapters 12 Computer Mediated & 13 Work Relationships Last class day Dec 6	<b>Due May 10 by 11:59pm</b>
		<b>Test 2</b>
<b>Week 16</b> <b>May 11-15</b>	Dec 13 Grades due by Noon	

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Blackboard – You all have an LIT Blackboard account that you should check 3-4 times per week, at minimum. In addition to finding assignment directions, PowerPoint files, grades, etc, you will also turn in some of your assignments on Blackboard.
- LIT Email – You should check your LIT email daily.

### ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES/INFORMATION

- Respectful participation in class discussions and speeches is expected. At times, students may have differing viewpoints from those of their classmates. Disagreements lead to critical thinking, scholarly debates, and learning, however, disrespect for the opinions of others will not be tolerated. Refrain from using profanity, name calling, tangents, and/or diatribes.

#### Speech Days- Face to Face Courses

- Attendance on Speech Days- All students are expected to be present on speech days. We should support our classmates and participation points are given.
- A formal outline must be turned in for all speeches (i.e. no impromptu speeches). No outline, works cited... No speech grade. No partial credit for speeches will be given without both paperwork and a presentation.
- On speech days please be attentive to the speaker. No reading, working on homework, playing on your laptop or talking etc... Computers should be closed during speeches.
- Speaking order- We will draw randomly.
  - If you are absent for draw you should assume you are going on the first day.
  - **It is your responsibility to find out when you will present! Speaker order will be posted on Blackboard.**
- Students are expected to dress appropriately for speeches. Please dress **BUSINESS CASUAL**.
- Speeches that are read will be penalized up to 2 letter grades per speech. The goal of this class is to speak **extemporaneously**; well-researched, well-rehearsed, effective use of notecards, and overall well-prepared speeches are the expectation.

#### Speech Days- Online

- Speech videos should be set-up like a formal classroom presentation. The presenter is speaking to an audience. Refrain from “reading speeches” to your computer without an audience. For example, reading while seated at a computer desk or from your bed. Set-up a formal public speaking environment by having an audience, note cards, strong posture, and eye contact.

- Student speech videos must clearly show the front of the student throughout the entire speech.
- The audience must be a minimum of 3 adults this can be older students, family, friends and/or staff.
- Videos must be unedited.
- Videos must be correctly uploaded to YouTube with an “unlisted” or “public” privacy setting. If you set it to “private,” I will not be able to view it and therefore it is as if you didn’t turn it in.
- Videos must be focused (not blurry, fuzzy, etc.) and preferably no background noise.
- Students are expected to dress appropriately for speeches. Please dress **BUSINESS CASUAL**.
- Watch your video before posting to YouTube. Do not let the first ‘take’ be the only time you do your speech. You should practice many times before you ever bring in the audience and the camera.
- Speeches that are read will be penalized up to 2 letter grades per speech. The goal of this class is to speak extemporaneously; well-researched, well-rehearsed, effective use of notecards, and overall well-prepared speeches are the expectation.
- Not following these guidelines will result in a 2-letter grade deduction.

### **Topic Selection**

- All topics must be posted on the discussion board. This course utilizes a topic list. Your topic must be selected from the posted list.
- All topics should be appropriate for class and should refrain from using derogatory or inflammatory language of any kind. The instructor reserves the right to make the final decision on what’s an appropriate speech topic.

### **Email Policy**

- LIT email only
- Email is checked in the afternoon. Allow 24 hours for a response. Weekend emails may be answered on Monday.
- Please include your class time and an accurate subject.
- Assignments should only be emailed if Blackboard is having technical issues.
- Student emails requesting a review of class content may be directed to come in during office hours for more instruction.

### **Class time Conferences**

- Individual questions concerning grades, scheduling, & absences etc... will be discussed at the end of class. The last 10 minutes are reserved for individual concerns. Additionally for extended conferences consider coming in during office hours. This will allow for a smooth start to class and a specific space to address any concerns.

### **Assignment Submission**

- Assignments are accepted solely on Blackboard. The only exception is when Blackboard is having technical issues. If Blackboard is down due to technical issues, assignments should be emailed to the instructor by the due date ([tblivens@lit.edu](mailto:tblivens@lit.edu)).
- **Blackboard Error-** I make every attempt to check and re-check Blackboard dates at the beginning and during the semester. However, I'm human and might occasionally enter an incorrect assignment date/time on Blackboard. If this happens, please know you have my apologies and I've created an "**open assignment link**" for this reason. Use this link if you have any trouble submitting assignments on time. Blackboard will record your submission time and no late points will be deducted.

### **Late Work**

- Blackboard will automatically post zeros for all late assignments.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> late assignment will not incur a penalty.
- Multiple late assignments are highly discouraged and incur a 10% deduction each class day up to a 2-letter grade deduction.
- Late work is only accepted within 6 weeks of the original due date.
- For dual credit students -All late work must be submitted 1 week prior to grading deadlines. (Dates on schedule)
- If you are going to miss an upcoming assignment, it is the student's responsibility to let the instructor know ahead of time and schedule another time to complete the assignment within 6 weeks of the original due date.
- Extensions on assignments without penalty are not given via email. Please talk to the instructor during conference time or office hours.
- All late work should be submitted via the Late work submission assignment on Blackboard.

### **Grading Policy**

- Late work will be graded within 2 weeks unless a major assignment is currently in the process of being graded. Current assignments take precedence over late work. Late work grades will post after current assignments.
- The instructor will make every attempt to update all late assignment grades before grading reports are due. However, there are no guarantees if multiple assignments are submitted late the same week grading reports are due.
- Speech grades will be posted after the paperwork is submitted and the class completes the verbal presentations.

### **Participation and Punctuality Policy**

- It will benefit the student to be on time for class. The instructor is not obligated to repeat information that is missed due to lateness or absence.
- Students should participate in all activities and class discussions.
- Students must submit all assignments on the day scheduled.
- Students who are late after the instructor has called the roll will be considered absent.

- Sleeping is not permitted in class. There will be an in class warning the 1<sup>st</sup> time. If it happens multiple times the student will lose participation points for the day (even if the assignment is submitted). Please communicate with the instructor if you have extenuating circumstances that may impact your engagement.
- Cellphone usage during class instruction or class work is discouraged.

Participation is worth 100 points. It's based on the activities we complete in class. To receive points, you must actively take part in the discussions, games, quizzes, and written assignments. These assignments cannot be made-up, but you can complete an alternative assignment if your absence is excused.

### **Extra Credit**

Students can receive 10 points of extra credit for rehearsing their speech prior to presentations starting. You can submit a video or practice with the instructor. Please follow the video instructions for online students. 1 audience member is required.

### **Standard Speech Deductions**

Students are provided with detailed instructions for all speeches, and expectations are discussed in class and practiced before completing for a grade. For fairness, there is a list below of the standard deductions for common errors on speeches.

Error	Penalty
No Outline and/or Works Cited	Zero on the speech
Over/under time	-1 point per 5 seconds
Missing source(s) on Works Cited	-10 per source
Sources not verbally cited	-5 per source

### **Food & Drink Policy**

- All food and drinks (except water) should be put away during class time.
- The only exception to this would be on workdays or classroom celebrations.

### **Student Grievances**

As an instructor, I am committed to maintaining a respectful, fair, and inclusive classroom environment. If you encounter an issue or have a concern regarding myself or the course, please know that I have an open-door policy and will consider any grievance brought to my attention with an open mind. If we are unable to find a solution that satisfies you, then you would want to follow the steps below to seek further resolution.

Please follow the chain of command outlined below to ensure your issue is addressed promptly and appropriately:

1. **Instructor:** Your first point of contact should be your course instructor. They are available to discuss any issues related to the course content, assignments, or classroom environment. (If you are not able to resolve the issue with your instructor please proceed to the next level.)
2. **Program Director/Lead Faculty:** Contact the Program Director or Lead Faculty. They can provide additional support and mediation. Sarah Wallace ([sewallace@lit.edu](mailto:sewallace@lit.edu)).
3. **Department Chair:** Should the issue remain unresolved, your complaint will be escalated to the Department Chair. The Chair's office is equipped to handle more serious or persistent issues. Chair of the Department Dr. Maegan Collins ([mcollins3@lit.edu](mailto:mcollins3@lit.edu)).