A. Rationale/Justification for the Course

Communication plays a significant role in interpersonal relationships, and the study of relational communication is an important aspect of understanding human communication. As research on communication and close relationships continues to flourish, an increasing number of upper-division courses on relational communication and advanced interpersonal communication are being offered nationwide. To connect students with innovative scholarship and equip them with cutting edge theory/research, there is a need for such a course that is devoted to personal relationships within the discipline of communication in the undergraduate Communication program at EMU. In fact, relational communication has been offered before as a special topic course in the department. Student enrollment in the course was strong, and course evaluations were highly positive. Based on students’ feedback and interest, the department is proposing making relational communication a permanent course.

This proposed course is an advanced level of interpersonal communication that focuses on communication within close relationships such as friendships, dating relationships, and marital relationships. Although the course also will touch upon communication within family and gender relationships, the primary content of the course is organized around three general topic areas: (1) communication in developing and escalating relationships, (2) communication in maintaining fair and satisfying relationships, and (3) communication in coping with relational challenges, particularly between romantic partners and friends. Through readings, class discussion, activities, projects and analytic papers, students will gain a better understanding of themselves and their relationships beyond basic interpersonal communication.

B. Course Information

1. Subject Code and Course Number: CTAC 330
2. Course Title: Relational Communication
3. Credit Hours: 3
4. Catalog Description (Limit to approximately 50 words.):
   This is an advanced interpersonal communication course that focuses on communication in the process of development, maintenance, and dissolution of close relationships.

5. Prerequisites: (List by Subject Code, Number and Title.) Students MUST complete prerequisites before they can take this course.
   CTAC 227 Interpersonal Communication

6. Corequisites: (List by Subject Code, Number and Title.) Students MUST take corequisites at the same time as they are taking this course.
   None
7. Concurrent Prerequisites: (List by Subject Code, Number and Title.) Students MUST take concurrent prerequisites EITHER before or at the same time as they are taking this course.

None

8. Equivalent Courses: (List by Subject Code, Number and Title) Students may not earn credit for both a course and its equivalent.

None

9. Course Restrictions:
   a. Academic/Class Level (Check all those who will be allowed to take the course for credit within their academic program.):
      
      Undergraduate
      - Freshperson
      - Sophomore
      - Junior
      - Senior

      Graduate
      - Certificate
      - Masters
      - Specialist
      - Doctoral

      Note: Only 400-level undergraduate courses can be taken by graduate students for credit within their graduate program. Only Certificate and Masters students may take these courses. If this is a 400-level course to be offered for graduate credit, attach Approval Form for 400-level Course for Graduate Credit.

      Note: Only 500-level graduate courses can be taken by undergraduate students.

      b. Will only students in certain majors/programs be allowed to take this course? Yes___________ No____ x

      If yes, list the majors/programs

      __________________________________________________________________________

      c. Will Departmental Permission be Required? Yes___________ No____ x

      (Note: Department permission requires the department to enter authorization for every student registering.)

      d. Is admission to a specific College Required?
         
         College of Business
         - Yes___________ No____ x

         College of Education
         - Yes___________ No____ x

10. Will the course be offered as part of the General Education Program?

   Yes___________ No____ x

   If yes, attach Request for Inclusion of a Course in the General Education Program: Education for Participation in the Global Community form.

   Note: All new courses proposed for inclusion in this program will be reviewed by the General Education Advisory Committee. If this course is NOT approved for inclusion in the General Education program, will it still be offered? Yes___________ No____

C. Relationship to Existing Courses

Within the Department:

11. Will this course will be a requirement or restricted elective in any existing program(s)? Yes_x___________ No___________

   If yes, list the programs and attach a copy of the programs that clearly shows the place the new course will have in the curriculum.

   Program__________________________ Communication Major/Minor __________________________ Required_____ Restricted Elective x__

   Program__________________________ Required_____ Restrict Elective____
12. Will this course replace an existing course?  Yes ________  No ________ x ________

NOTE: Complete #13 only if the answer to #12 is “Yes.” Complete #14 only if the answers to #12 and #13b are both “Yes.”

13. (Complete only if the answer to #12 is “Yes.”)
   a. Subject Code, Number and Title of course to be replaced:

   _______________________________

   b. Will the course to be replaced be deleted?  Yes ________  No ________

14. (Complete only if the answers to #12 and #13b are both “Yes.”) If the replaced course is to be deleted, it is not necessary to submit a Request for Graduate and Undergraduate Course Deletion.
   a. When is the last time it will be offered?
      Term ________  Year ________

   b. Is the course to be deleted required by programs in other departments?
      Contact the Course and Program Development Office if necessary.  Yes ________  No ________

   c. If yes, do the affected departments support this change?  Yes ________  No ________
      If yes, attach letters of support.  If no, attach letters from the affected department explaining the lack of support, if available.

Outside the Department: The following information must be provided. Contact the Course and Program Development office for assistance if necessary.

15. Are there similar courses offered in other University Departments?  Yes ________  No ________ x ________
If yes, list courses by Subject Code, Number and Title

_________________________
_________________________

16. If similar courses exist, do the departments in which they are offered support the proposed course?

   Yes ________  No ________
If yes, attach letters of support from the affected departments.  If no, attach letters from the affected department explaining the lack of support, if available.

D. Course Requirements

17. Attach a detailed Sample Course Syllabus including:

   ⊗  Course goals, objectives and/or expected student outcomes
   ⊗  Outline of the content to be covered
   ⊗  Student assignments including presentations, research papers, exams, etc.
   ⊗  Method of evaluation
   ⊗  Grading scale (if a graduate course, include graduate grading scale)
   ⊗  Special requirements
   ⊗  Bibliography, supplemental reading list
   ⊗  Other pertinent information.

NOTE: COURSES BEING PROPOSED FOR INCLUSION IN THE EDUCATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY PROGRAM MUST USE THE SYLLABUS TEMPLATE PROVIDED BY THE GENERAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE. THE TEMPLATE IS ATTACHED TO THE REQUEST FOR INCLUSION OF A COURSE IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM: EDUCATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY FORM.
E. Cost Analysis (Complete only if the course cannot be implemented without additional University resources. Fill in Estimated Resources for the sponsoring department(s). Attach separate estimates for other affected departments.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Resources:</th>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th>Year Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty / Staff</td>
<td>$_______</td>
<td>$_______</td>
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<td>SS&amp;M</td>
<td>$_______</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$_______</td>
<td>$_______</td>
<td>$_______</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. Action of the Department/College

1. Department

Vote of department faculty: For __25____ Against __0____ Abstentions __0____
(Enter the number of votes cast in each category.)

4/15/13

Department Head Signature

Date

2. College/Graduate School

A. College

College Dean Signature

Date

B. Graduate School (if Graduate Course)

Graduate Dean Signature

Date

G. Approval

Associate Vice-President for Academic Programming Signature

Date
CTAC 330 Relational Communication

Instructor:

A. Office:
B. Office Phone:

Email:
Office Hours: or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to CTAC 330, a course on relational communication. The purpose of this class is to help you learn about communication processes that occur within the context of close relationships. The field of personal relationships is interdisciplinary, with scholars from areas such as communication, family studies, as well as social psychology all contributing to knowledge about relational processes. We will take an approach that emphasizes communication but also includes concepts and theories from other fields. The class is organized around three general topic areas: (1) developing and escalating relationships, (2) maintaining fair and satisfying relationships, and (3) coping with relational challenges. Learning how communication functions in close relationships can be an exciting and worthwhile enterprise. Although there are "no easy answers" when it comes to developing and maintaining good relationships, we hope the knowledge you gain from this class will help you better understand yourself and your relationships.

Required Text:
*Other materials as assigned by the instructor.

Course Requirements: Possible Points:
Exam #1 100
Exam #2 100
Exam #3 100
Position papers (3@20 points each) 60
Pop Psychology Paper 100
Movie Analysis Paper 40

Total Possible Points 500

Grading Scale: To help you understand your grades and your evaluation on tests as well as papers, you'd better remember that an "A" is not average, a "C" is. A "C" means that you have simply met the minimum requirements
for a particular assignment. In other words, if you only do everything that I require you to do, you are doing "C" work.

A=450-500  Outstanding work that is superior and demonstrates an in depth understanding of the skills and material that far surpasses the minimum expectations of a student in the class.

B=400-449  Above average work that demonstrates an understanding of the skills and the material that exceeds the minimum requirements.

C=350-399  Average work that illustrates the student has met the minimum requirements and expectations for a particular assignment.

D=300-349  Below average work in which the student does not meet the minimum expectations for a given assignment.

E=299 and below  Below average work in which little or no effort seems to have expended by the student.

Contesting Grades:
I understand that as students most of you are concerned about your grades and your progress in class. I am willing to discuss any questions you may have regarding your results on an exam, paper or an assignment; however, I encourage you to contact me during office hours and NOT during class or immediately following class. You may also make an appointment. As a rule of thumb, I recommend you review your assignment or exam and examine what mistakes were made (if that is the issue) prior to seeing me. Waiting one class period or at least 24 hours is suggested.

Graded Assignment Descriptions

Exams: Exams are not cumulative and are usually a combination of true/false and multiple-choice questions based on lecture, textbook, and classroom activities/discussions.

Position Papers: Each position paper involves answering one of the discussion questions posed at the end of the chapters in your text. You will be answering one question per unit (e.g., one question related to developing and escalating relationships, one question related to maintaining fair and satisfying relationships, and one question related to relationship challenges). For Position Paper #1 you will answer a discussion question found in Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. For Position Paper #2 you will answer a question posed at the end of Chapter 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10. Finally, Position Paper #3 will focus on a discussion question from Chapter 11, 12, 13, 14, or 15. Since there are 3 discussion questions at the end of each chapter, you will have the opportunity to choose from among 15 questions for each paper.

Position papers should be between 1 ½ and 2 pages long, using 1" margins and 12 point New Times Roman font. The purpose of the position papers is to demonstrate and elaborate on the information you learned from the lecture and textbook. Many of the questions require you to take a position or make an argument supporting one idea over another. To do a good job on these papers, you need to incorporate ideas from lecture and/or the textbook to support your opinions. You do not have to use a formal citation system such as APA or MLA, but you should identify where you obtained information. For example, you could say "In lecture we learned that..." or "According to our text book, ..."
Request for New Course

Papers will be graded on three criteria: (1) how well you incorporate ideas from lecture and/or the text book to answer your question, (2) the extent to which you provide a good argument or articulate a clear position, and (3) how well the paper was written, including writing style, grammar, punctuation, and organization.

**Pop Psychology Paper**: (6-8 pages) The “Pop Psychology” Paper involves finding an article in a popular magazine (such as Cosmopolitan, Glamour, Self, GQ, etc.) and comparing this article with the recent research that has been conducted in the field of personal relationships. The article you choose **MUST have been published within the last year**. For example, you might find an article that discusses how to talk about HIV and AIDS with your partner, how to handle feelings of jealousy, what to do if your partner cheats on you, or how to find a “perfect mate.” Whatever topic you choose it must be about communication and relationships. Read your chosen article carefully, and then find a **minimum of five research articles** on your topic (excluding class material). The research articles should be fairly recent (loosely defined, published within the past 10 years) and should come from scholarly journals or edited volumes. You may turn in a short summary of your magazine article and a list of the sources you are using for your paper midway through the session. In this way, you can make sure that you are on track and are not putting off this assignment until the last week.

**Movie Analysis Paper**: There is an assigned movie day during our session. During that class period we will watch a film in class. The film will not be announced prior to that class period. There will be an assignment/short paper corresponding with that film, which you will receive on the movie day.

**Policy**

**Attendance**: Although there are no direct penalties for choosing not to attend class, you will find that there are substantial indirect consequences of this choice. Approximately 2/3 of exam content will be covered in lecture. Therefore, regular attendance is **strongly recommended**. Keep in mind that you are responsible for lecture material, whether you attend or not.

**Participation**: Think of learning as a chance to grow. Allow yourself to participate in discussion and don’t sabotage other people’s opportunities for education by discouraging them from participating. Be open to other people and be willing to respond to ideas that are different from what you believe is “normal.” Never be afraid to share your ideas with others. Dialogue is how we advance knowledge. Believe that your ideas are as important as everyone else’s and share them with us.

**Deadlines**: Assignments are due when called for in class. Papers that are turned in during the class period in which they are due, but after the assignment has already been collected will receive a 5% grade deduction. Assignments turned in after the class period in which they are due will receive a 10% grade deduction PER DAY. This includes weekends and days when I do not come in to campus. An assignment is considered to be received when it is in my hand. Do not slide an assignment under my office door, place it on my desk, or turn it in to the main office. **I WILL NOT ACCEPT PAPERS/ASSIGNMENTS OVER EMAIL!!!** Papers will only be accepted over email only under circumstances deemed acceptable by the instructor and only if you have notified and asked me in advance. If you know you will not be in class, then it is your responsibility to get the paper to me before it is due.

If you miss an exam, you will be allowed to take a make-up exam **only** under extreme, documented circumstances, and usually only if you have contacted me about this circumstance **BEFORE** the exam. Do everything within your power to make it to class on exam day, as there are very few things I consider extreme
For known conflicts or for accommodations through the Disability Resource Center, you must come to me within the first week of class in order to be accommodated.

**Academic Integrity:** The College of Public Programs and the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication strongly believe in academic integrity; thus cheating and plagiarism is not tolerated. If a student is charged with academic dishonesty and found to be in violation, disciplinary action will be taken and a student’s name will be kept on file. Disciplinary action may result in the student being suspended or expelled from the College, given an XE on his or her transcript, and/or referred to Student Judicial Affairs. For further information, please read the Student Academic Integrity policy and the code of conduct for The Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at: [http://com.pp.asu.edu/academic/acadintpol.html](http://com.pp.asu.edu/academic/acadintpol.html)

No work done for credit in any other class may be turned in for credit in this class.

**Computers:** A known fact of technology is that it sometimes fails. Computers crash, printers run out of ink, Internet connections falter. In order to control for these failures, your guiding principles should be to think ahead and be prepared. Save your work often, and in several places. Leave yourself time before assignments are due to allow for printing errors, and familiarize yourself with the computer resources on campus in case you need to use them. I do not accept computer-related excuses, and I expect ALL assignments to be typed in 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one inch margins. Correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar are of course also expected.

**Consideration:** The overall atmosphere in the class should be that of respect - for yourself and everyone else in the class (including me). It is important that we keep in mind that each of us is different and comes to this class with unique life experiences, ethnic backgrounds, religious practices, political affiliations, social classes, and/or sexual orientations. Let’s work to understand these differences and realize there are a number of ways to interpret communication that is based on our OWN life experiences. So, let’s all be open minded to each other’s points of view and refrain from judgment and ridicule. If you are curious about your classmate’s perspective or opinion, it’s all right to raise a question, but be sure it is asked in a diplomatic manner. We want to create an environment for self-expression so that means validating each other as we contribute ideas.

### Tentative Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic, Assignment Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conceptualizing Relational Communication, Ch. 1</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Communicating Identity, Ch. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Drawing People Together: Attraction, Ch. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Making Sense of Our World, Ch. 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Managing Uncertainty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Initiating and Intensifying Relationship, Ch. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Disclosure/Stages of Relationship</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Development/Turning Point Approach</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review for Exam #1 (Position Paper#1 Due)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exam #1, (Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, &amp; 5 and class notes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Communicating Closeness, Ch. 6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Affection, Immediacy, and Social Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Making a Love Connection, Ch. 7</td>
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<td>Styles of Love and Attachment</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Communicating Sexually, Ch. 8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Closest Physical Encounter</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Staying Close, Ch. 9</td>
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<td>Relational Maintenance/Dialectics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Exchanging Rewards and Costs, Ch. 10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Interdependence and Equity in Relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review for Exam #2</td>
<td>(Position Paper #2 Due)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Influencing Each Other, Ch. 11</td>
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<td>Power plays and Dominance Moves</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Getting Too Close for Comfort, Ch. 12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Privacy and Secrets in Relationships</td>
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<td>Movie Day</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Hurting the Ones We Love, Ch. 13</td>
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<td>Relational Transgressions</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Coping with Conflict, Ch. 14</td>
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<td>(Movie Analysis Paper Due)</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Ending Relationships, Ch. 15</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Disengagement and Termination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review for Exam #3</td>
<td>(Position Paper #3 Due)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exam #3, (Ch. 11, 12, 13, 14, &amp; 15 and class notes) (Pop Psychology Paper Due)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References


