Course Title: Advanced Interpersonal Communication Skills  
Course Code: COM 144  
Instructor: Marianne Neuwirth, PhD

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is designed for those who have already taken a basic interpersonal communication course, and want to take the next step in learning how to interact with others in productive and healthy ways. We will examine how to navigate highly challenging interactions in work, home, and public life.

Through this course, participants will learn specific techniques for addressing misunderstandings, establishing boundaries, addressing offensive behavior, managing power differences, and diffusing conflict. Participants will learn how to ask effective and creative questions, identify discrepancies between verbal and nonverbal messages, and distinguish between what people say and what they might mean.

Through class discussions, participation in role plays and case studies, viewing example videos/DVDs, and receiving feedback, students will develop a greater understanding of the behind-the-scenes rules that can drive people’s communication behavior, and will learn how to respond most effectively and productively.

Assignments:

Readings
For this course, I was mindful in choosing readings that I think are interesting, relevant, and useful, including very new, forward-looking articles and book excerpts. Many foundational and seminal readings in the field of Communication are also included in the reading list.

Two Options for Self-Reflection Paper
There will be one 3- to 5-page paper, due during the sixth week of class. In this paper you will address either your personal communication skills, or a current conflict in your life. Details will be handed out during the second class period.

One Class Presentation
At the end of the quarter, you will share with the class a concept that you have found particularly relevant and useful. I will provide you with basic information on how to present information in a cogent and coherent manner. Your presentation will be two to three minutes.
**Class Policies:**

- During class, please turn off all beepers, pagers, and mobile phones, and please completely refrain from using your laptop and/or text-messaging. I know this can be challenging, but please consider it a courtesy to me and to those around you.

- Please do your best to be on time for each class.

**Tentative Weekly Outline:**

**Note:** Due dates, assignments, and topics may change during the quarter.

Most readings are between two and five pages. Additional readings may be handed out as pertinent articles are published during the quarter. These articles will usually be one to three pages long. A full reference list will be provided to those enrolled in the course.

You should complete the following reading/homework assignments by the date listed.

**Week One (June 22)**

*Intro class and selves; Listening lecture and exercises; Grice’s Maxims*

Read: The Art of Listening; Characteristics of Effective Listening

**Week Two (June 29)**

*Asking Questions; Perception, Content and Relational Messages; Langue and Parole as Applied to Misunderstandings*

Read: Perception Chapter; Content and Relational Comm article; CMM Theory Handout; Question Typology Handout; Circular Questioning Handout

**Week Three (July 6)**

*The Seeds of Conflict*

Read: Lying, Part One and Part Two; Searle’s Speech Act Theory; Vertical vs. Lateral Thinking (Welcome Chance Intrusions)

TED Talk: John Gottman

**Week Four (July 13)**

*Attribution Theory and Application*

Read: Attribution Theory Summary; Motivational Interviewing, Ch. 1

Label Exercise

**Week Five (July 20)**

*Judgment and Praise, Attribution Theory cont.*

Read: Read: Judgment article; Two Praise articles

TED Talk: Brene Brown – The Power of Vulnerability
Week Six (July 27)
Conflict and Power – How to Deal With – and Give – Criticism
Read: Managing Conflict in Relationships; Asserting Yourself; Getting to Yes;
Circular Questioning revisited; Identity-Based vs. Resource-Based conflict
TED Talk: William Ury – The Third Side (Dealing with Public Incivility)
Video: Power Critique
In class - Status exercises, role-plays
SELF-REFLECTION PAPER DUE

Week Seven (Aug. 3)
Non-Verbal Communication; Apologizing and Forgiving
Read: Non-Verbal Communication; Motivational Interviewing Ch. 3;
Two Apology articles; Nine Steps to Forgiveness
Video: Forgiveness

Week Eight (Aug. 10)
Presentations
Course Wrap-Up