

## **CMST 410: Family Communication**

Fall 2020

Location: James A Haslam II Business Building 104

Meeting Times: TR: 8:10 a.m. – 9:25 a.m.

Note: This is a hybrid class. Students whose last name begins with the letter A through K will attend class in-person on Tuesdays and online on Thursdays. Students whose last name begins with the letter L through Z will attend class online on Tuesdays and in-person on Thursdays. Please refer to the attendance policy below for more information about in-person and online attendance.

### **Instructor: Dr. Quinten Bernhold, Ph.D.**

Office: 266 Communications Building

Office Hours: Given the coronavirus pandemic, faculty have been advised to keep in-person contact in the Communication Studies suite to a minimum. I will therefore not be holding weekly office hours to adhere to this guidance. However, I want to make sure that you have an opportunity to get your questions answered. Please email me at the below email address if you ever have any question about the course procedures or material. I check my email multiple times a day, so you should receive a fairly quick response. We can also arrange a telephone call or Zoom session if doing so would be helpful.

Email: qbernhol@utk.edu

### **Course Overview:**

Communication Studies 410 is an upper-division course that provides students with an overview of major theoretical perspectives and research methods relevant to family communication. By the end of the semester, students will have an understanding of the major areas of the field, including affectionate communication, attachment styles, family communication patterns, relational maintenance, conflict, divorce, culture, and other topics relevant to families. Because this is an upper-division course, students will read and comprehend a variety of peer-reviewed journal articles in addition to the textbook. Students will also leave this class with a research proposal that they can further pursue if they would like to do so (e.g., for a senior honors thesis).

### **Main Textbook Information:**

Galvin, K. M., Braithwaite, D. O., Schrodt, P., & Bylund, C. L. (2019). *Family communication: Cohesion and change* (10th ed.). London, UK: Routledge.

### **Optional Textbook Information:**

Braithwaite, D. O., Suter, E. A., & Floyd, K. (Eds.). (2018). *Engaging theories in family communication: Multiple perspectives* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Note about the optional textbook: This handbook includes theoretical chapters written by various scholars. I will lecture on several theories based on readings from this handbook. You can buy this handbook as a second textbook. Alternatively, you can take thorough notes from my lectures based on the readings from this handbook.

## **Grading:**

Grades will be assigned based on the following criteria:

Midterm One: 20%

Midterm Two: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

Final Paper: 30%

Attendance and Participation: 10%

## **Grading Scale:**

Grades will be assigned based on the following criteria:

A 94% - 100%

A- 90% - 93%

B+ 88% - 89%

B 84% - 87%

B- 80% - 83%

C+ 78% - 79%

C 74% - 77%

C- 70% - 73%

D+ 68% - 69%

D 64% - 67%

D- 60% - 63%

F 59% and below

## **Exams:**

Midterm one, midterm two, and the final exam will each consist of 50 multiple choice and true/false questions.

1). **Midterm one** will cover material from the start of the semester up until the day of midterm one.

2). **Midterm two** will cover material from after midterm one up until the day of midterm two. There might be some review questions on midterm two from the first part of the course, but I will notify students ahead of time regarding which content from before midterm one they are expected to know for midterm two. Students are not expected to know all of the content from before midterm one for midterm two.

3). **The final exam** will cover material from after midterm two up until the day of the final exam. There might be some review questions on the final exam from before midterm two, but I will notify students ahead of time regarding which content from before midterm two they are expected to know for the final exam. Students are not expected to know all of the content from before midterm two for the final exam.

**All three exams will be online through our Canvas website. All three exams are closed-book, and you cannot refer to your lecture notes, course readings, or any other resources when taking the exams. You must install Respondus LockDown Browser on your computer before taking the exams.** More information on how to install this browser will be provided on Canvas. An ungraded practice exam will also be available on Canvas so that you can become familiar with taking online exams.

**Midterm one and midterm two will occur on their officially scheduled dates between 8:10 a.m. and 9:25 a.m. The final exam will occur on its officially scheduled date between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are logged onto Canvas during these exact time periods on all three exam days. Please refer to the schedule below for the specific dates of the three exams.**

**All three exams must be taken in their officially scheduled time windows in order to maintain fairness to everyone.** It is your responsibility to make sure that your travel arrangements for winter break (e.g., booking an airline ticket home) do not interfere with the final exam. If your holiday plans do not allow for you to take the final exam at its officially scheduled time, this section of CMST 410 will not work out, and you are advised to take this course in a future semester.

#### **Final Paper:**

Please refer to the separate instructions posted on the course website.

#### **Attendance and Participation:**

I will take attendance through Zoom and in-person before each class session. Students are allowed **three** absences for the semester with no penalty. If you have three or fewer absences, you will earn a 100% for the attendance and participation portion of your grade. A fourth absence will result in a 75% for the attendance and participation portion of your grade. A fifth absence will result in a 50% for the attendance and participation portion of your grade. A sixth absence will result in a 25% for the attendance and participation portion of your grade. Students who have seven or more absences will receive a zero for the attendance and participation component of their grade.

**If you have coronavirus, have another contagious illness, or are not feeling like yourself, please do not attend class in-person for the sake of everyone else's health. If you get coronavirus, I can work with you to make up the missed attendance and participation points through another route that does not jeopardize other people's health. If you are self-isolating and feel like normal, please attend class online through Zoom to receive the daily attendance and participation credit.**

It is also considered to be poor form to log into Zoom or arrive to class late or engage in activities not related to the course during lecture (e.g., text messaging friends). Although I may not verbally confront students during class, students who engage in these disruptive activities may see their attendance for that day counted as an absence.

If an emergency arises during the course of the semester (e.g., a close family member passes away, you get coronavirus), please notify me for a possible exception to the attendance policy. Exceptions to the attendance policy will only be made for compelling circumstances such as a death in the family or a coronavirus diagnosis, and documentation will be required. Family weddings, graduations, vacations, employment-related events, and other similar activities will not be considered for an exception to the attendance policy. If you know you have an activity such as a family wedding sometime during the semester, it is your responsibility to designate one of your three absences toward that event. Use your three absences wisely.

### **Academic Integrity:**

I assume that students abide by UTK's academic standards in all of their work. Direct quotations are needed when using authors' exact words in the final paper. When quoting directly, you must give the authors' last names, year of publication, and page number. **However, it is almost always better to paraphrase content rather than quoting directly.** When you paraphrase content, you need to include the authors' last names and year of publication in a parenthetical citation, but you should not include a page number.

I never release copies of my exams, so you should never be in possession of one of my exams outside of this course. Students found in violation of this policy will be referred to the appropriate department on campus for disciplinary action and may receive a failing grade in the course or expulsion from the university. More information about the UTK academic integrity policy can be found at [http://web.utk.edu/~osja/faculty\\_dishonesty.php](http://web.utk.edu/~osja/faculty_dishonesty.php)

### **Late Work:**

An electronic copy of the final paper must be submitted before the official due date and time. The paper must be submitted through our course's Canvas webpage.

Students who submit their paper between the end of class on the due date and one day late will receive a 10% deduction on the paper's grade. Students who submit their paper between one and two days late will receive a 20% deduction on the paper's grade. Students who submit their paper after two days past the due date will receive a zero on the paper.

### **Exam Accommodations:**

Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact Student Disability Services in Dunford Hall, at 865-974-6087, or by video relay at, 865-622-6566, to coordinate reasonable academic accommodations. Students who are part of this program should inform me early in the semester and make arrangements for their exam time and date as soon as possible.

### **Additional Course Readings:**

Additional readings will be posted in PDF format on the course website. Additional readings come from the following sources:

- Afifi, T. D., & McManus, T. (2010). Divorce disclosures and adolescents' physical and mental health and parental relationship quality. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage*, *51*, 83-107. doi: 10.1080/10502550903455141
- Afifi, W. A., & Matsunaga, M. (2008). Uncertainty management theories: Three approaches to a multifarious process. In L. A. Baxter & D. O. Braithwaite (Eds.), *Engaging theories in interpersonal communication: Multiple perspectives* (pp. 117-132). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Amaro, L. M., & Miller, K. I. (2016). Discussion of care, contribution, and perceived (in)gratitude in the family caregiver and sibling relationship. *Personal Relationships*, *23*, 98-110. doi: 10.1111/per.12113
- Colaner, C. W., & Soliz, J. (2017). A communication-based approach to adoptive identity: Theoretical and empirical support. *Communication Research*, *44*, 611-637. doi: 10.1177/0093650215577860
- Floyd, K., & Riforgiate, S. (2008). Affectionate communication received from spouses predicts stress hormone levels in healthy adults. *Communication Monographs*, *75*, 351-368. doi: 10.1080/03637750802512371
- Simpson, J. A., Collins, A., Tran, S., & Haydon, K. C. (2007). Attachment and the experience and expression of emotions in romantic relationships: A developmental perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92*, 355-367. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.92.2.355
- Soliz, J., Thorson, A. R., & Rittenour, C. E. (2009). Communicative correlates of satisfaction, family identity, and group salience in multiracial/ethnic families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *71*, 819-832. doi: 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2009.00637.x
- Stafford, L. (2008). Social exchange theories: Calculating the rewards and costs of personal relationships. In L. A. Baxter & D. O. Braithwaite (Eds.), *Engaging theories in interpersonal communication: Multiple perspectives* (pp. 377-389). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

### **College of Communication and Information Diversity Statement:**

CCI recognizes and values diversity. Exposing students to diverse people, ideas and cultures increases opportunities for intellectual inquiry, encourages critical thinking, and enhances communication and information competence. When all viewpoints are heard, thoughtfully considered, and respectfully responded to, everyone benefits. Diversity and fairness unite us with the wider professional and global community

### **Final Note:**

Family Communication is one of my specialties, and I am excited about this course's content. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me whenever you have a question about course content, the final paper, or course procedures. I am always willing to help you succeed, and no question about course content is a stupid question. I hope to get to know you better and hear your ideas about this area of the field.

**Course Schedule:**

| Week   | Day                    | Course Topics   | Readings                                  |
|--------|------------------------|---|---|
| Week 1 | Thursday, August 20    | Syllabus, Discussion of Final Paper, and Introduction to Family Communication | Textbook, Chapter 1                       |
|        | Tuesday, August 25     | Circumplex Model and Metaphors  | Textbook, Chapter 2                       |
|        | Thursday, August 27    | Family Communication Theories   | Textbook, Chapter 3                       |
| Week 2 | Tuesday, September 1   | Attachment Theory   | Simpson, Collins, Tran, and Haydon (2007) |
|        | Thursday, September 3  | Family Communication Patterns and Couple Types                                | Textbook, Chapter 7                       |
| Week 3 | Tuesday, September 8   | Affection Exchange Theory   | Floyd and Riforgiate (2008)               |
|        | Thursday, September 10 | Relational Maintenance in Families  | Textbook, Chapter 5                       |
| Week 4 | Tuesday, September 15  | Social Exchange Theories  | Stafford (2008)                           |
|        | Thursday, September 17 | Midterm One   |   |
| Week 5 | Tuesday, September 22  | Attribution Theory  | Optional Textbook, Chapter 5              |
|        | Thursday, September 24 | Communication Accommodation Theory and Communication Theory of Identity       | Optional Textbook, Chapter 7              |
| Week 6 | Tuesday, September 29  | Communication Privacy Management Theory                                       | Optional Textbook, Chapter 8              |
|        | Thursday, October 1    | Facework Theory   | Optional Textbook, Chapter 12             |

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|---------|--------------------------|---|---|
| Week 7  | Tuesday,<br>October 6    | Multiple Goals Theories                             | Optional Textbook,<br>Chapter 18        |
|         | Thursday,<br>October 8   | Relational Turbulence Theory                        | Optional Textbook,<br>Chapter 23        |
| Week 8  | Tuesday,<br>October 13   | Social Learning Theory                              | Optional Textbook,<br>Chapter 26        |
|         | Thursday,<br>October 15  | Theory of Resilience and<br>Relational Load         | Optional Textbook,<br>Chapter 29        |
| Week 9  | Tuesday,<br>October 20   | Midterm Two   |   |
|         | Thursday,<br>October 22  | Power in Families                                   | Textbook, Chapter 8                     |
| Week 10 | Tuesday,<br>October 27   | Family Conflict                                     | Textbook, Chapter 9                     |
|         | Thursday,<br>October 29  | Adoption  | Colaner and Soliz<br>(2017)             |
| Week 11 | Tuesday,<br>November 3   | Divorce   | Afifi and McManus<br>(2010)             |
|         | Thursday,<br>November 5  | Caring for Aging Family Members<br>*Final Paper Due | Amaro and Miller<br>(2016)              |
| Week 12 | Tuesday,<br>November 10  | Culture in Families                                 | Soliz, Thorson, and<br>Rittenour (2009) |
|         | Thursday,<br>November 12 | Communication and Family<br>Developmental Stresses  | Textbook, Chapter 10                    |
| Week 13 | Tuesday,<br>November 17  | Family Communication and<br>Unpredictable Stress    | Textbook, Chapter 11                    |
|         | Thursday,<br>November 19 | Uncertainty Management Theories                     | Afifi and Matsunaga<br>(2008)           |

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|---------|--------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Week 14 | Tuesday,<br>November 24  | Family Communication and Well-Being   | Textbook, Chapter 12 |
|         | Thursday,<br>November 26 | Happy Thanksgiving!   | No Class             |
| Week 15 | Tuesday,<br>December 1   | University-Wide Study Day   | No Class             |
|         | Thursday,<br>December 3  | The online final exam will run from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 3. Be sure to take the final exam in Canvas during this specific time frame. |                      |