

**De Anza College, Spring 2025**  
**COMM-16.50Z: Interpersonal Communication**  
**Online Asynchronous**

**Instructor & Contact Information**

**Instructor:**

Nick Chivers  
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**Office Hours (F31B & Zoom):**

Tuesdays 8:30a-9:20a (zoom)  
Fridays 9:30a-11:20a (zoom)

**A note about contacting me:** *Please do it!* You may email me at literally any time, and I will get back to you as soon as I can (within 24 hours Mon-Fri, within 48 hours Fri-Sun). I am available via e-mail or Zoom during office hours to help you work through course material and assignments in any way I can. Please don't hesitate to ask any questions. ***Don't wait until the last minute!*** Check in with me early and often and I will assist you with the process. I never said it would be easy, but we can do it together.

**How you can contact me:** please use Canvas inbox for inquiries regarding the course. If we are outside of the active dates of the course, feel free to email me. Also you can drop in to office hours to chat 1-on-1 about anything you may need.

**How i will contact you:** my primary communication to the whole class will be **Canvas announcements**, so be sure you receive those and are notified when they are sent in Canvas (*they may be time sensitive!*). I may also use Canvas inbox to send direct messages regarding information that will need your attention specifically. Finally, i will use canvas rubrics and comments to communicate feedback on assignments and exercises.

**Interpersonal Communication: Course Description**

**De Anza College Course Schedule:** Study of interpersonal communication principles with an emphasis on developing the self-concept through listening, verbal and nonverbal communication, language, and cultural knowledge as a means of maintaining effective relationships in an increasingly diverse and interconnected global society.

**Your instructor:** It is part of the human condition to be social creatures. Yet the complexities and implications of those social interactions go largely unnoticed or uninterrogated in our general society and culture. This course aims to investigate the complexities of interpersonal communication in myriad contexts, in a wide variety of nuanced relationships. We will explore the best practices for navigating complex social structures to achieve the best outcomes, as well as the theoretical implications our social interactions have on cocreating our identities, our relationships, and our social worlds.

**Class Meetings**

This is an **asynchronous** online course with some video conferencing and presentation. "Asynchronous" means that there are **no** regular, fixed, mandatory meeting times. However, this course is not "self-paced": we will move through course content together as a group in a weekly rhythm. Also, a portion of this course *does* involve interacting with your classroom peers via video conference and recording technology.

**Student Learning Outcomes for Interpersonal Communication**

After completion of Comm-16, students will be able to:

1. Analyze and assess communication patterns and behaviors in Interpersonal relationships across various contexts (familial, personal, and professional).
2. Apply communication theories and concepts to improve communication effectiveness and relational satisfaction in interpersonal relationships.

**Course Objectives for Interpersonal Communication**

In order to meet the above outcomes, students in COMM-16 will:

1. Examine specific theoretical perspectives, the historical development, the definition of and principles of interpersonal communication.
2. Evaluate how culture and language influence all interpersonal relationships.
3. Analyze the development of the self-concept and evaluate how it is asserted, negotiated and redefined in interpersonal relations.
4. Recognize the personal, social, and ethical implications of online and face-to-face communicative interactions.
5. Develop skills necessary for building and maintaining relationships appropriate to various interpersonal contexts.

**Required Text/Materials**

- Wood, J. (2020). *Interpersonal Communication: Everyday Encounters* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN: 978-0357032947

- Wrench, J. S., Punyanunt-Carter, N. M., Thweatt, K. S. (2020). *Interpersonal Communication: A Mindful Approach to Relationships*. Retrieved from <https://textbooks.opensuny.org/interpersonal-communication-a-mindful-approach-to-relationships/>. License: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike CC BY-NC-SA
  - Wrench, Punyanunt-Carter, & Thweatt is a free, open access textbook. It will be linked in our Canvas course, no purchase necessary.
- This course requires reliable and regular access to technology, including a device capable of accessing our learning management system, Canvas, reliable internet access, and audio & video recording capabilities.

### Course Assignments

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points Possible</i>	<i>Your Total</i>
Self-Disclosure & Relationship Building Conversation	30	_____
Reflection Papers (3 @ 25 points)	75	_____
Online Chapter Quizzes (6 @ 20 points)	120	_____
Online Discussion Boards (4 @ 20 points)	80	_____
Midterm Exercise	60	_____
Dear De Anza Letters Project	60	_____
Final Media Analysis Paper	60	_____
Class Engagement	15	_____
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	_____

### Final Grading Scale

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Points</i>	<i>Total Point Range</i>
A	93-100	465-500
A-	90-92	450-464
B+	87-89	435-449
B	83-86	415-434
B-	80-82	400-414
C+	77-79	385-399
C	72-76	360-384
D+	67-71	335-359
D	63-66	315-334
D-	60-62	300-314
F	0-59	0-299

### Grading vs. Feedback

**Tl;dr:** you're gonna get points, but your points won't help you be successful in class; *feedback will*. Before you see your points, you'll get comments and feedback through canvas rubrics, and if you have questions about the comments and feedback you should talk to me.

In this class, we will prioritize narrative feedback over quantitative scoring. The longer explanation of the philosophy will be described on Canvas, but you should know that the evaluation of your execution of the above assignments will be quantified with grade points as described above, and your final grade will be calculated by the total number of grade points scored, as described above. *However*, during the course, as each assignment is submitted and evaluated, you will be given narrative feedback through Canvas rubrics and comments – *without revealing* the associated quantitative points – to inform you on areas of strength and opportunities to help guide your progress through the outcomes and towards the objectives of the course. Your quantitative points will be recorded and revealed to you some time after the narrative evaluations have been completed, but we will prioritize the narrative feedback over the quantitative scoring.

### Brief Descriptions of Assignments & Speeches

(More detailed assignment sheets to be given as the due dates approach)

#### Self-Disclosure & Relationship Building Conversation

You will schedule a video conference meeting with a classroom peer and ask each other a long series of questions to get to know each other.

#### Reflection Papers

Periodically, you will be required to do a written assignment asking you to apply a number of terms and concepts of interpersonal communication to your *own life and lived experience*.

#### Chapter Quizzes

Throughout the quarter you will be required to complete short quizzes that will test your knowledge of course content, including information from both required textbook readings and canvas lessons.

## Online Discussion Boards

Periodically, you will be required to engage in discussion with your peers via Canvas discussion boards regarding some type of prompt, reading, or video to respond to with your own opinions and application of course concepts. The expectation will be dialogue like what you would expect in a small group or classroom setting.

## Mid-Term Exercise

Near the halfway mark of the quarter, you will be required to do a short exercise to test your knowledge of key concepts from the first half of the course.

## Final Media Analysis Paper

For this paper, you will be required to engage with a mediated representation of an interpersonal relationship and use tools from the course to analyze the nature of the relationships – its formation, structure, dynamics, climate, conflicts, resolutions, and more!

## Dear De Anza Letters Project

For this quarter long project, we will be helping each other through our interpersonal struggles using a newspaper “advice columnist” format. Students will write anonymous letters to “Dear De Anza” chronicling a current interpersonal issue they are facing, and other students will give them advice utilizing specific course concepts.

## Course Engagement

In a communication course, the classroom time and space are incredibly important, perhaps sacred. Developing a community within the classroom is crucial to the success of this course, and *Course Engagement* is an evaluation of your *contribution to the community* we are creating. There will be several miscellaneous opportunities to demonstrate course and community engagement throughout the term, including but not limited to low-prompt module discussion boards, post-presentation conversation and discussion, ice-breaker participation, in-class activity participation receipts, Canvas content page “hidden gems” or community Wikis, etc. Most of these engagements will be “credit/no-credit” evaluation and must be present in-time to complete.

## Course Policies

### Online Course Work

This class is constructed to mirror the rhythm of a face-to-face class. That is, there will be several different learning materials to review and assignments due every week, and assignments will scaffold to build skills needed for later assignments, and we will move through them together as a group. You must check our Canvas course regularly to stay current with course concepts and complete assignments in order. Failure to log-in to Canvas to complete course work for 7 consecutive days will be interpreted as abandoning the course and grounds for removal from the roster.

### Artificial Intelligence & Coursework

Please know that my intention is not to stubbornly hold an artificial line of “*academic rigor*” with this policy, but rather want to transparently assist you in achieving success in this course. At its very core, this course is about human communication. Its primary objective is to help you feel for confident and competent in your communication and interaction with your communities around you. Every exercise and assignment in this course is rooted in this goal. Which means *overuse of AI will do you more harm than good, as overuse of AI will move you farther away from the primary objectives of this course*. AI can and should be used for help with basic writing skills, such as grammar, syntax, and citation formatting. In some instances, it can be used for brainstorming. Any assignment that is suspect or evidenced to have overused AI will be docked severely, potentially on grounds of plagiarism (see below), but more likely due to missing the objectives of the assignment and the course.

### Assignment Submissions

All assignments will be submitted via Canvas; i will not accept assignments via email unless cleared with me *in advance*. I will evaluate submissions with variable urgency depending on the assignment (for example, a “rough draft” assignment will be evaluated with maximum haste for you to successfully complete a final draft, but a “reflection paper” may take longer since no subsequent assignment is relying directly upon that feedback), with an approximate maximum of 10-14 days after initial due date. Assignments will be accepted late with no penalty up until I have completed assessing that assignment and redistributed feedback and evaluations for the whole class, or the very end of the quarter, **whichever comes first**. Once assignments have been closed for submission, they will not be reopened for any reason.

### Class Etiquette

This class is based on active engagement with the subject matter; therefore, full class attention and focus on course material are essential. I feel that class community is sacred. Having enrolled in this class, you are making a commitment to yourself, your instructor, and your peers. We will learn much from each other, so long as we are all contributing to the learning environment. The Communication Studies Department expects all members of the class (teachers and students) to treat each other with respect in their communication practices. This includes: 1) coming to class on time ready to participate; 2) listening to others actively; 3) staying focused on the material of the class; 4) not disrupting class; and 5) engaging in genuine dialogue, even amidst differences of opinion.

*Keys to Class Etiquette:* it is part of the course curriculum to learn the practices of effective interpersonal interaction, and we will practice these skills during class discussions. But here are a couple of basic rules:

- *You cannot not communicate: everything you do in class contributes positively or negatively to the class culture.*
- *Listen first and listen to understand; we are all here for new ideas, so let's embrace them.*
- *Contribute bravely but own our perspectives and our questions (the devil needs no advocates).*

### Plagiarism & Academic Integrity

The Center for Academic Integrity defines academic integrity as a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals to action. The entire campus affirms the importance of academic integrity, fosters a "love of learning," and holds each person responsible for defining and supporting academic integrity standards. In all phases of teaching and learning, the responsibility for fostering and maintaining campus-wide academic integrity must be shared by all.

If you were to ever consider breaking this code of academic integrity ... don't. If you are unclear about plagiarism, please see me. Plagiarism occurs when a student misrepresents the work of another as their own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgement, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or substantially alter work that a student then submits as their own. Any assignment found to be plagiarized **will be given an "F" grade (zero points)**. All instances of plagiarism in the Communication Studies Department will be reported to the Division Dean and may be reported to the Vice President of Student Services for further action.

### For Your Information & Consideration

*\*\*most of De Anza's student services are working to assist you remotely. Nobody has ever succeeded in life or in college on their own, especially during times like these. You will have to ask for help, the trick is to know when and who to ask:*

### Disabilities and Accommodations

College is supposed to be hard – if it was easy everyone would do it – however a disability should not be the barrier that makes college impossible. Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Programs and Services. The mission of the Disability Support Programs and Services (DSPS) Division is to ensure access to the college's curriculum, facilities, and programs, and to promote student success in realizing individual educational and vocational goals. For more information, please visit Disability Support Programs & Services Division at RSS 141, or at the [DSPS Website](http://www.deanza.edu/dsps) (<http://www.deanza.edu/dsps>)

### Student Success Center

One potential challenge in college is the increased expectations of academic skills; everything comes up a notch. Student Success Center peer tutors can relate and can help! Go to the [SSC homepage](https://www.deanza.edu/studentssuccess/) (<https://www.deanza.edu/studentssuccess/>) and click on the yellow links for schedules and Zoom links. The SSC is ready to offer: **Individual Weekly or Drop-in Tutoring:** Come with assignments or questions, or just drop by to see how tutoring works. **Workshops, group tutoring and group study:** Most people learn better with others...give it a try! **Support for online learning:** Speak with a friendly peer tutor or SSC staff member about motivation and organization strategies for online classes. We get it and are going through the same things, so let's support each other! **After-hours or weekend tutoring:** See the [Online Tutoring](https://www.deanza.edu/studentssuccess/onlinetutoring/) (<https://www.deanza.edu/studentssuccess/onlinetutoring/>) page for information.

### Stress and Mental Health

Balancing the rigors of academia with the ever evolving and complex social world students find themselves in can be challenging and potentially dangerous. If you feel you are having particular difficulty meeting all of the demands of your new lifestyle, perceived or real, do not fret! You are not alone. From time to time, problems of everyday living can be resolved through talking with friends, family, or someone whom we trust to help us. However, there are times when seeking help outside of one's familiar environment might be more helpful. The Mental Health and Wellness Center is here to meet such needs. For more information, visit the Mental Health and Wellness Center at RSS 258, or the [Mental Health & Wellness Website](https://www.deanza.edu/mhwc/) (<https://www.deanza.edu/mhwc/>)

### Student disclosures of sexual violence

De Anza College is committed to fostering a campus free of sexual and gender-based violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience as a De Anza College student, the course instructor is required to notify the Vice President of Student Services. To disclose any such violence confidentially, contact: **Campus Police** 408.924.8000; **Health Services** 408.864.8732; **Psychological Services** 408.864.8732; or **Dean of Student Development** 408.864.8828.

### LGBTQ+ Students

To maximize success, it is crucial for all students to build upon strong foundations both in and out of the classroom. Despite much recent legal, political, and social change, being of a minority gender or sexual identity can potentially create instability in these crucial foundations. If you are an LGBTQ+ student struggling with identity or finding community,

please see the Pride Center in Library 158 or visit the [Pride Center Website](https://www.deanza.edu/pride/) (https://www.deanza.edu/pride/)

### **Undocumented Students**

Applying, transferring, registering, and paying for college can be a complex maze of forms and deadlines for any student, and this complexity is compounded for students with undocumented residency. Undocumented students have extra layers of regulatory complexity to navigate, in addition to the fear and uncertainty surrounding legal citizenship status. De Anza College, it's staff and faculty, are steadfast in their commitment to supporting our undocumented students. If you are an undocumented student and seek knowledgeable, honest, and trustworthy assistance with financial aid programs such as AB540 and the California DREAM Act or have any other concerns about your citizenship or academic pathways, please reach out to HEFAS at the [HEFAS website](https://www.deanza.edu/hefas/) (https://www.deanza.edu/hefas/) for more information.

### **The Food Pantry**

Living in the Bay Area is financially challenging, to put it lightly, and to try to attend school here can be logistically impossible, and the financial stability to make it happen is a luxury we don't all have. Also, college is hard enough as it is, and it is even harder if you are truly hungry. If you qualify for EFAP, De Anza College has an on-campus food pantry available to you to help ease the financial burden and the health burden to maximize your success in your collegiate journey. See the [Food Pantry website](https://www.deanza.edu/outreach/food_pantry.html) (https://www.deanza.edu/outreach/food\_pantry.html) for more information.

## Course Calendar

\*Subject to (and in all honestly, *likely to*) change at any time by the instructor. Changes will be communicated in class, online, and in writing. Please make sure you are checking your De Anza e-mails as well as Canvas for any communications.

\*\*All readings should be *done before* class on the calendar date noted.

### COMM-16.50Z: Spring 2025 (Online Asynchronous)

Week	Date	Class Activity/Subject	Reading Due	Assignments
1	4/7 – 4/11	<p><b>Module #0: Interpersonal Communication Course Orientation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Syllabus, Course Policies</li> </ul> <p><b>Module #1: Communication Foundations - Models, Definitions, Competence, &amp; Ethics</b></p> <p><i>A First Look at Interpersonal Communication:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definitions &amp; Models</li> <li>Principles, Competence &amp; Ethics</li> </ul>	<b>Ch. 1</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Survey</li> <li>Video Introductions</li> <li>Discussion Board #1: Communication Ethics</li> </ol>
2	4/14 – 4/18	<p><b>Module #2: Communication, Perception, &amp; the Social Construction of Identity</b></p> <p><i>Perception &amp; Communication</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perception process and subjectivity</li> <li><i>Episodes &amp; Meaning Making (Pearce)</i></li> <li>Social Construction &amp; Symbolic Interaction</li> </ul> <p><i>Communication and Personal Identity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Construction &amp; the Self</li> <li>Negotiating &amp; Performing</li> <li>Perception, Stereotypes, &amp; The Social Construction of Identity</li> <li>Self-Disclosure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ch. 3</b></p> <p><b>Pearce: Episodes &amp; Patterns of Communication (Canvas)</b></p> <p><b>Ch. 2</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz #1</li> <li>Discussion Board #2: Social Media &amp; Identity Construction</li> </ol>
3	4/21 – 4/25	<p><b>Module #3: Critical Communication - Language, Culture, &amp; Power</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Power &amp; Privilege</li> <li>Positionality, Communication, &amp; Relationship</li> </ul>	<p><b>Yep: Power, Privilege, &amp; Culture (Canvas)</b></p> <p><b>McIntosh: White Privilege (Canvas)</b></p> <p><b>Crosley-Corcoran: Explaining White Privilege (Canvas)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection Paper #1: Interpersonal Power</li> <li><b>Dear De Anza Post</b></li> </ol>
4	4/28 – 5/2	<p><b>Module #4: Listening Effectively</b></p> <p><i>Mindful Listening</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening as a process</li> <li>Distorted Listening Practices &amp; Overcoming Listening Barriers</li> <li>Listening as a Stance</li> </ul> <p><b>Listening &amp; Perception: Self disclosure</b></p>	<b>Ch. 6</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz #2</li> <li>Self-Disclosure &amp; Relationship Building Conversation</li> </ol>

5	5/5 – 5/9	<p><b>Module #5: Verbal Communication</b>  <i>The World of Words</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semiotics</li> <li>• Speech Act Theory</li> <li>• Layers of Meaning</li> <li>• Language as a Double-Edged Sword</li> <li>• Words Have History</li> <li>• Language Constructs Cultural Value &amp; Power</li> </ul>	<b>Ch. 4</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reflection Paper #2: Self Disclosure</li> <li>2. <b>Dear De Anza Advice #1</b></li> </ol>
6	5/12 – 5/16	<p><b>Module #6: Nonverbal Communication</b>  <i>The World Beyond Words</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonverbal Communication</li> <li>• Nonverbal Codes &amp; Power</li> </ul>	<b>Ch. 5</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quiz #3</li> <li>2. <b>Midterm Study Guide!!</b></li> </ol>
7	5/19 – 5/23	<p><b>Module #7: Communication for Success - Emotions, Climate, &amp; Dialectics</b>  <i>Emotions &amp; Communication</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotions as a Social Construct</li> <li>• Emotional Vocabulary</li> <li>• Emotional Intelligence &amp; Relationship Building</li> </ul>	<b>Ch. 7</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>MIDTERM EXERCISE PARTS I &amp; II</b></li> </ol>
8	<p>5/27 – 5/30</p> <p><b>MONDAY, MAY 26<sup>TH</sup> : MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY – CAMPUS CLOSED, CLASSES CANCELED</b></p> <p><b>FRIDAY, MAY 30<sup>TH</sup>: LAST DAY TO DROP WITH A “W” GRADE</b></p>	<p><b>Module #8: Communication to Navigate Conflict</b>  <i>Communication Climate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment &amp; Trust</li> <li>• Dialectics</li> <li>• Confirming &amp; Disconfirming</li> <li>• Affirmation &amp; Respect</li> </ul> <p><i>Managing Conflict in Relationships</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Conflict</li> <li>• Navigating Conflict</li> </ul>	<b>Ch. 8</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>MIDTERM EXERCISE PART III</b></li> <li>2. Discussion Board #3: Communication Climate on Social Media</li> </ol>
9	6/2 – 6/6	<p><b>Module #9: The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication - Red Flags &amp; Harm</b>  <i>The Dark Side of Interpersonal Relationships</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power Revisited</li> <li>• Red Flags</li> <li>• Psychological Harm &amp; Gaslighting</li> <li>• Physical Harm &amp; the Cycle of Abuse</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ch. 9</b></p> <p><b>Wrench, Punyanunt-Carter, &amp; Thweatt: Ch. 14</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reflection Paper #3: Conflict Navigation Strategies &amp; EQ?</li> <li>2. Quiz #4</li> </ol>

10	6/9 – 6/13	<b>Module #10: Family, Friends, &amp; Friends-That-Are-Family</b> <i>Friendships in Our Lives</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Nature &amp; Stages of Friendships</li> </ul> <i>Communication in Families</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different Family Structures</li> <li>• Chosen Families</li> <li>• Elements of Family Communication</li> </ul>	<b>Ch. 10, Ch. 12</b>	1. <b>Dear De Anza Advice #2</b>
11	6/16 – 6/20 <b>THURSDAY, JUNE 19<sup>TH</sup>:</b> Juneteenth Holiday – Campus Closed, Classes Canceled	<b>Module #11: Communication is Key to Romance - Unpacking the Monolith of Monogamy</b> <i>Committed Romantic Relationships</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Dating, Hook-Up Culture, &amp; The Paradox of Choice</li> <li>• The four “C” of relationships, the Monolith of Monogamy</li> </ul>	<b>Ch. 11</b>	1. Quiz #5 2. Discussion Board #4: Swipe Left
12	<b>Finals Week</b> <b>6/23 – 6/26</b> <b>QUARTER IS OVER</b> <b>THURSDAY, JUNE 26<sup>TH</sup>, 11:59P.</b>			1. Quiz #6 2. <b>Final Media Analysis Project</b>