Northern Virginia Community College  
Annandale Campus  
Interpersonal Communication  
CST 126

*It doesn't matter where you go in life, what you do or how much you have.  
What matters is who you have beside you.*

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Spring 2013  
3 semester credits  
Class Meetings: MW, 2-3:15, CM 222  
Twitter @npeck  #CST126  
http://blogs.nvcc.edu/npeck/  
www.nvcc.edu/home/npeck

**Course Description**
This course is designed to provide you with practice communicating in everyday situations in a variety of social contexts. It focused on interpersonal communication skills for both daily living and the world of work. CST 126 topics include perception, self-concept, self-disclosure, listening and feedback, nonverbal communication, attitudes, assertiveness, conflict resolution, and other interpersonal skills.

**Course Objectives**
If you successfully complete this course, you will be more confident and more competent in your communication interaction with family, friends, and colleagues. Our course is structured for experimentation and discussion. Please be prepared to try some new things, to take some risks, and to make some mistakes. You will be rewarded for encouraging experimentation and learning from it.

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to report increased self-confidence; express your ideas with verbal fluency; apply knowledge of nonverbal communication in sending and receiving messages; demonstrate critical thinking skills in sending and receiving messages; demonstrate organizational skills; adapt messages and behaviors to different communication contexts; employ listening and responding skills adapted to different communication contexts; and demonstrate an understanding and respect for cultural and social diversity.
Required Textbook


www.cengage.com

Please get into the habit of bringing your text to class as we’ll be referencing it often.

**Business Attire** is required for all graded presentations. Failure to dress appropriately will result in an automatic 20 point deduction for that individual.

**BYOT** – Bring your own technology to class.

**Blackboard (via My NOVA)**
http://www.nvcc.edu/about-nova/mynova.html
Blackboard direct sign in: https://nvcc.my.vccs.edu/jsp/home.jsp

**GRADING RATIONALE**

Each of the following assignments is worth 0-100 points towards your final grade:

- Class Attendance and Participation
- Weekly Notes (Top Ten)
- Group Panel Discussion
- Putting to All Together Game
- Final Exam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>450-500</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>400-449</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>300-399</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>250-299</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-249</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION** (0-100 points) Communicate! You are expected to actively listen and to participate in class in a way that demonstrates that you have been reading and deliberating about interpersonal communication principles. Respect for yourself and others are mandatory. Your grade will be based upon your informed involvement in class discussions, your willingness to practice your communication competencies, and your cooperative and confirming communication attitude. Use appropriate language, dress, and deportment.

- 0-70 points for informed involvement including having your textbook
- 0-20 points for supportive communication with colleagues
- 0-10 points for willingness to take communication risks and to learn from these

In accordance with national standards of accreditation, attendance is required. Please note the following hard realities of life: There are no excused absences. Unfortunately, even serious illness or a major crisis doesn’t make up for the fact that missing class means missing
important participation. The best excuse in the world doesn’t change the fact that a person who is absent misses the content and experience of the course. Therefore, if you miss more than 25% of class sessions (i.e., 7 days), you will not be able to pass the course. Missing more than five class sessions will prevent you from earning a "B" for the course. Excessive tardiness and early departures will also be considered when determining your participation scores. Should you find yourself in a situation where you might miss significant amounts of class time should consult with me as soon as possible, and consider withdrawing from the course.

Attending each class session is not enough to earn a passing grade; you must demonstrate a willingness to practice your communication competencies in group work, class discussions, and exercises. Studying for other classes during class sessions, failing to prepare for class sessions and failing to contribute to group presentations will be factored into your grade.

Class climate is an essential ingredient for the success of this course. At various points during the semester, we may be examining sensitive and personal issues as they relate to aspects of interpersonal communication. Differences of experience, attitude and values can be discussed meaningfully as long as we agree to respect norms of civil discussion. Please use Standard American English. [Note: Some film clips shown in class contain vulgar language and inappropriate ways of managing emotions. Your instructor does not condone this type of communication but is using it to point out the effects of this communication upon relationships.]

Certain forms of classroom behavior are expressly prohibited. These include verbal attacks on the person and character of another; disparaging responses to another's group of origin or affinity, (e.g. age, gender, health status, physical or mental abilities, race, culture, sexual orientation, political philosophy, social views or religion); any form of behavior that manifests direct or implied sexual harassment; and any statement that questions the moral character or integrity of another.

You are expected to demonstrate courtesies of professional life, which includes contacting your professor via phone or e-mail if you will miss a class session.

**WEEKLY NOTES (0-100 points)**

Each Monday, when class begins, please submit a 1-page typed paper in which you reflect upon concepts, exercises, and discussions from class. You might discuss your reactions to a Communication in Everyday Life sidebar found in the textbook. Or you might discuss how you are using your communication skills in your personal life. There are a number of suggestions at the end of each chapter, “for further thought and discussion.” Use these to help focus your thinking. Each note is worth 0-10 points.

Please submit a note each week. At the end of the semester, I will calculate your ten top notes. There are NO opportunities to make up a note or to submit it late.
Your notes must be typed and submitted by 2 p.m. each Wednesday. You may submit up to three notes via email. Be sure to put CST 126 Weekly Note on the Subject line and send it to npeck@nvcc.edu.

Notes will be graded in this manner:

0 - 4 points for clear communication (including neatness, grammar, and clarity)
0 - 6 points for complexity and demonstration that you are applying the concepts from class to your daily living.

GROUP PANEL PRESENTATION (0-100 points)

With 3-4 others, develop and present a 30-minute panel discussion. Select one topic from among the choices below. Research your topic and develop five key communication recommendations or strategies to share with us.

- What communication concepts should engaged couples consider before marriage?
- What are some key advantages and disadvantages of cohabitation v. marriage?
- How can you recognize and prevent domestic violence between adult partners?
- What do we need to know about communicating with adults who have Asperger’s Syndrome?
- What are some communication challenging facing adults with ADD (ADHD) in professional relationships?
- How can we communicate well with those with Alzheimer's Disease?
- What are some special challenges facing bi-racial couples?
- What are some special challenges facing committed gay and lesbian partners?
- What are some key communication recommendations for fathers who want to communicate well with their children?
- What are some key communication recommendations for communicating well with grandparents?

Consult your textbook for related readings and talk with your instructor about other resources for information. Teach us about this topic. Consider talking with experts in the community (college or otherwise) to gather some testimonials and case studies. Conduct scholarly research and provide the class with a list of resources to learn more about the topic. Consider using visual aids, music, drama, and handouts for added interest.

Here’s how your grade will be computed:

0-50 points for the content. Teach us at least five important communication points. Cite your sources of information.
0-30 points for the organization and interest value of the presentation. Have a clear introduction, discussion, and conclusion to your talk. Present in a manner that demonstrates that you have rehearsed your talk and that you have prepared your work as
a team.  
0-20 points for your individual efforts towards the presentation. On the day of your presentation, please submit a 1-2 page paper justifying what grade you believe you and each of your group members have earned for your part in planning and practicing the presentation.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER (0-100 points)  
Together with 3-4 others, create a 20-minute communication game that helps us review for the final exam. That is, review your notes, your text, and your handouts to determine the most important theories and principles you gained from this course.

Create a game (e.g., Quiz Bowl, Buzzword, and Jeopardy) that will help your colleagues put it all together.

0-50 points for the content and complexity of the game itself  
0-30 points for engaging your audience in reviewing the principles from this course  
0-20 points for creativity and general fun

FINAL EXAM (0-100 points) Your final exam will serve to ensure that you’ve been paying attention throughout the semester. Use handouts, textbook, class notes, and exercises to help you study for this 50-question exam. Each question will be worth 0-2 points.

Please bring a 50-question scantron sheet and pencil to the exam.

You may create a 1-page cheat sheet (no larger than 9.5 x 11 hard copy) for this exam. (You must submit the cheat sheet when you submit the exam.)
## SPRING 2013 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

CST 126.02 meets Monday and Wednesday, 2-3:15 in CM 222

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Session - Date</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, Jan 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to course and colleagues</td>
<td>Complete assessment, page 10 of syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Jan 16</td>
<td></td>
<td>First ideas about communication</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Jan 21</td>
<td></td>
<td>MLK Holiday and Inauguration Day</td>
<td>Submit weekly note on Wednesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Jan 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assessing interpersonal competence</td>
<td>Submit assessment, page 10 of syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Jan 28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intrapersonal communication</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Jan 30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Perception and communication</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Feb 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Language and communication</td>
<td>Cautionary language worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Feb 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Focusing upon relational meanings</td>
<td>We’ll be using the cautionary language worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Feb 11</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nonverbal codes</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Feb 13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theories of love</td>
<td>Nan Peck’s birthday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Feb 18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Levels of communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Feb 20</td>
<td></td>
<td>Social intelligence and empathic listening</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Feb 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>Effective listening in relationships</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Feb 27</td>
<td></td>
<td>Communication climate making</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Mar 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Mar 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 11-17</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Break – no classes</td>
<td>No weekly note this week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Mar 18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Mar 20</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conflict management</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Mar 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conflict management</td>
<td>3/25 Last day to withdraw without grade penalty</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter(s)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed, Mar 27</td>
<td>Communication in romantic relationships</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Apr 1</td>
<td>Communication in romantic relationships</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>Notice the date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Apr 3</td>
<td>Virtual lecture from John Gottman</td>
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<td>Mon, Apr 8</td>
<td>Relational deterioration</td>
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<td>Wed, Apr 10</td>
<td>Mad About You</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Apr 15</td>
<td>Communication in friendship</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Apr 17</td>
<td>Family communication</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Apr 22</td>
<td>Ordinary People</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Apr 24</td>
<td>Ordinary People</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Apr 29</td>
<td>Putting it all together game</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, May 1</td>
<td>Putting it all together game</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, May 6</td>
<td>Class commendations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5/19</td>
<td>Congratulations, Graduates!</td>
<td></td>
<td>Commencement</td>
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Ms. Peck's website

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OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Creating a Positive Learning Environment

The Annandale campus community is committed to providing a learning environment that encourages the free exchange of ideas and information. To accomplish this goal, the members of the Annandale Campus Council have established the following expectations for the campus community:

1. That all backgrounds and cultures be respected.
2. That free and civil exchange of ideas takes place, so everyone in a class feels welcome to participate.
3. That all members of the class arrive on time, leave the class only on breaks or in case of emergency, and leave classrooms and all college property in good condition.
4. That distraction is kept to a minimum. Cell phones and other electronic devices are turned off in class, labs, and the library. Students remain seated throughout the class and refrain from talking with classmates while another class member or the instructor has the floor.
5. That each student submits his or her own work.
6. That consideration is given to classes in adjoining areas.

Campus Resources - http://www.nvcc.edu/campuses-and-centers/annandale/campus-resources/index.html

The Oral Communication Center (OCC) mission is to enable student success through improved speaking and presentation skills across disciplines. NOVA students can work with trained speech consultants to develop and refine their skills for individual and group presentations. The OCC offers services to students in CM 363 (by appointment). http://www.nvcc.edu/annandale/lrc/occ/index.htm

Disability Support Services ensures students with disabilities have equal access to the College’s academic programs, services and activities through the provision of reasonable accommodations. You are eligible for disability services if you have a documented physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. To qualify for disability services, you must provide clear and specific evidence that a qualified professional has established a formal diagnosis of a disability. If you have special needs or a disability that may affect your performance in this course, please inform your instructor within the first two weeks of class.


Please ensure that you are aware of the emergency evaluation procedures for this classroom. Consult the sign at the entrance of this room for more information.
For emergency notifications including college closings, sign up for NOVA Alert, http://alert.nvcc.edu  NOVA Alert is your personal connection to real-time updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, or what not to do, who to contact and other important information.

There will be automatic e-mail confirmations on all purchases and print functions for temporary permits and hangtags that are easier to identify. http://www.nvcc.edu/current-students/parking-services/
Assessing Satisfaction with Communication Skills

Instructions: Listed below are 10 communication situations. Imagine that you are involved in each situation. For each situation use the following scale to indicate how confident you are that you could communicate competently.

1. Very satisfied that I could communicate competently
2. Somewhat satisfied that I could communicate competently
3. Not sure how effectively I could communicate.
4. Somewhat dissatisfied with my ability to communicate effectively
5. Very dissatisfied with my ability to communicate effectively

_____ 1. Someone asks you personal questions that you feel uncomfortable answering. You’d like to tell the person that you don’t want to answer, but you don’t want to hurt the person’s feelings.

_____ 2. You think a friend of yours is starting to drink more alcohol than is healthy. You want to bring up the topic with your friend, but you don’t want to create a barrier in the friendship.

_____ 3. You really care about the person you’ve been dating recently, but neither of you has ever put your feelings in words. You’d like to express how you feel, but aren’t sure how your partner will respond.

_____ 4. During a heated discussion about social issues, the person with whom you are talking says, “Why won’t you hear me out fairly??!”

_____ 5. A friend shares his creative writing with you and asks if you think he has any talent. You don’t think the writing is very good, and you need to respond to his request for an opinion.

_____ 6. Your roommate’s habits are really getting on your nerves. You want to tell your roommate you’re bothered, but you don’t want to cause hurt.

_____ 7. A classmate asks you for notes for the classes he missed. You agree, but then discover he has missed nearly half of the classes and expects you to bail him out. You feel that’s exploitive.

_____ 8. You go to a party and discover that you don’t know anyone there.

_____ 9. The person you have been dating declares “I love you.” You care about the person but your feelings are not love, at least not yet. The person expects some response from you.

_____ 10. A person that you care about comes to you whenever he has problems he wants to discuss, and you give him attention and advice. When you want to talk about your problems, however, he doesn’t seem to have time. You want the friendship to continue, but you don’t like feeling it’s one-way.

_____ TOTAL (Add up the numbers you placed in each blank. Make sure that your total is between 10 and 50).