

Interpersonal Communication Skills

SWRK 2080

Syllabus

Course description

The *Undergraduate Calendar* of The University of Manitoba describes SWRK 2080 Interpersonal Communication Skills as follows:

A basic core of interpersonal skills for communicating effectively and for establishing and maintaining relationships in one-to-one and group situations. Emphasis is on experiential learning using a variety of techniques.

Social workers are constantly engaged in communication. Interaction occurs in a variety of settings with other individuals and with groups of various sizes; and it takes place with people of various backgrounds and cultures, with people involved in change for themselves and for their environments. In facilitating the change process, social workers should possess an awareness of themselves and of ways in which they relate to others, and an awareness of others, including their background and culture.

This course focuses on the development of the knowledge and skills of basic interpersonal communication for establishing and maintaining relationships in one-on-one and group situations, and the ability to apply these communication skills in the beginning stage of the helping interview. Developing further self-knowledge and sensitivity to cross-cultural aspects of communication and helping are inherent in the learning process. Emphasis is on experiential learning and self-reflection.

Two texts will be the main guides for student learning. *LOOK, Second Canadian Edition* focuses on communication skills per se. *The Sacred Tree* guides students on a journey of personal learning and development. The path is one of reflection, discipline and service inspired by traditional Native teachings about how to have healthy individuals, families and communities. Students will learn more about themselves as individuals and more about the cultural heritage of First Nations people. Additional reading will set the context for applying knowledge and skills to the process of helping.

Some of you may find Eurocentral communication skills foreign and difficult at first, but it is nevertheless necessary to learn them and to be able to use them-as well as to be able to adapt them to use with clients of different cultures-because this course is part of a Generalist Social Work course of study.

We hope that those of you who have difficulty with reading and study skills will seek help either locally or from University sources.

We look forward to learning and working with you. We hope you will enjoy this course, learn a lot from it, and pass. Good effort, good communication, and good learning!

Learning objectives

1. To develop awareness of self and others in the interactive process:
 - a. to identify your own style of communicating.
 - b. to become aware of your self as both a sender and receiver of messages.
 - c. to become aware of conditions which inhibit or facilitate effective communication.
 - d. to recognize how the power distribution (based on gender, class, age, ethnicity, race, etc.) shapes and is shaped by communication.
2. To acquire beginning skills in communicating clearly and effectively in one to one, small group, and classroom situations:
 - a. to acquire skills in open and caring communications.
 - b. to acquire skills in giving and receiving feedback.
 - c. to acquire skills in attending, listening, and responding.
 - d. to acquire skills in initiating and developing relationships.
 - e. to acquire sensitivity and effectiveness in communicating cross-culturally.

3. To achieve beginning level ability as a helping person:
 - a. to demonstrate skills of the beginning phase of a helping interview.
 - b. to become aware of purposes, tasks, and skills of middle and ending phases of the helping process.
4. To begin the process of taking responsibility for continued professional, personal, and political development and integration:
 - a. to develop competency at self-criticism and self-affirmation.
 - b. to sustain caring for ourselves individually and collectively.
 - c. to test your ability to be a helping person.
 - d. to use participant-centered learning situations.
 - e. to demonstrate your ability for growth and change as a communicator.
 - f. to expand your range and flexibility of interpersonal communication style.
 - g. to understand communication/helping skills in the context of the social work profession (*Social Work Code of Ethics*).

Course materials

Required

Bookstore

The following required materials are available for purchase from the [University of Manitoba Bookstore](#). Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your [Distance and Online Education Student Handbook](#) for instructions on how to order your materials.

Textbook

Adler, R. B., Rolls, J. A., & Proctor II, R.F. (2015). *LOOK*, Second Canadian edition. Toronto: Nelson.

Bopp, J., Bopp, M., Brown, L., & Lane, P. (1985). *The sacred tree*. Lethbridge, AB: Four Winds Development Press.

Canadian Association of Social Workers/Association Canadienne des Travailleuses Sociaux (2005) *Code of ethics*, Ottawa: Author. Retrieved online from <http://www.casw-acts.ca/en/what-social-work/casw-code-ethics>.

Readings package

SWRK 2080 Interpersonal Communication Skills Group-Based Study, available for purchase from the University of Manitoba Bookstore.

Note: The reading for Unit 13 Moore, S. (1987). Rehearsal for contact. *The social worker*, 55(2), 66-70, is available **ON RESERVE** from [Off Campus Library Services](#). To access the article online, click on the link <http://libguides.lib.umanitoba.ca/content.php?pid=443763&sid=4534694>. You have to agree to the copyright information, then click on the PDF of the article, password is swrk2080.

Optional textbook

The following optional materials are available for purchase from the University of Manitoba Book Store. Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* for instructions on how to order your materials.

Shulman, L. (2016). *The skills of helping individuals, families, groups and communities* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Required audiotope

McIntosh, Maureen (presenter) *Interpersonal Communication Skills* University of Manitoba, available at The University of Manitoba Book Store.

The audiotope leads you through five self-reflective creative visualization exercises as a means to help you become more aware of yourself and more in tune with others.

The following chart lists the contents of the audiotape.

Module 1	Unit 1	Exercise 1.6	Tuning in to yourself
Module 1	Unit 2	Exercise 2.6	Visualizing feeling good
Module 1	Unit 4	Exercise 4.1	How does it feel?
Module 2	Unit 6	Exercise 6.2	Sensitizing your eye and ear
Module 4	Unit 13	Exercise 13.1	Tuning-in

Note: The audio lectures are available on the course website, as well as the bookstore. Check to see if you have the appropriate computer hardware, software, and communications to listen to these recordings online before purchasing the audio lectures from the bookstore.

Required audio files

The audio files that accompany David Martin's *Counselling and Therapy Skills* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 2000), 2nd ed. are available as a streamed file. The files contain interviews by Lee, Martin, Coulson, Strachan, and Henderson.

The files will provide many examples of the skills you will be learning in the course and wanting to demonstrate in your videotape assignments.

Note: The audio files are available in the course website. Check to see if you have the appropriate computer hardware, software, and communications to listen to these recordings online.

Required videotape

McIntosh, Maureen (presenter) *Interpersonal Communication Skills* University of Manitoba, available at the University of Manitoba Book Store.

The six videotape sections model the use of the key skills that you will be learning and provide an example for each of your two videotape assignments. The chart on the following page outlines the contents of the videotape:

Module 2	Unit 7	Exercise 7.5	Paraphrasing information
	Unit 8	Exercise 8.5	Paraphrasing for problem-solving / helping
Communication skills: Model for videotape assignment 1			
Module 4	Unit 13	Exercise 13.4	Greeting skills
	Unit 14		Beginning stage of the helping interview: Model for videotape assignment #2 (two sections)

Required hardware and software

You require the following items for your computer for this course:

Headset with microphone to hear audio files and to participate in scheduled web conferences. Computer microphones will not work as well, as they pick up background noise.

Access to video camera

You will also need access to a video camera for two course assignments. You should be able to submit a video recording. Please check with instructor on how to submit your recorded video.

Learning activities

The course is organized to enable you to gain knowledge in the subject, to learn more about yourself and how you communicate, and to improve your interpersonal communication and helping skills. You will do this by completing assigned readings and exercises, answering self-test questions, writing a weekly journal, listening to tapes, practising the skills, completing assignments and receiving feedback, and participating in telephone or in-person conferences with your classmates and the instructor.

It is difficult to learn, at a distance, a course which by its nature requires interaction. Communication skills are best learned by communicating and receiving immediate feedback! We have tried to compensate for “distance” by the kinds of activities mentioned above.

Given the interactive nature of many of the activities, you may find it useful to contract with two or three people to be willing to participate in the exercises with you on an on-going basis throughout the course. They, too, may gain from such interactions with you.

We hope you will benefit from this course in your personal as well as in your professional relationships. Some exercises may raise personal issues for which you need support and possibly counselling. We strongly suggest you attend to this need in ways appropriate to you, seeking help from a counsellor, elder, healing circle, or support group. We believe that a social worker can help others deal with their issues only to the extent that she or he is willing to deal with her/his own issues.

Evaluation and grading

In accordance with the Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba grading criteria, the following letter grade system will be used in this course:

Letter grade	Percentage range	Description
A+	> 93	Exceptional
A	86 – < 93	Excellent
B+	79 – < 86	Very good
B	72 – < 79	Good
C+	65 – < 72	Satisfactory
C	58 – < 65	Adequate
D	50 – < 58	Unacceptable
F	< 50	Failure

Please note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.

Criteria, guidelines, and due dates for assignments follow. The instructor will give written feedback on all assignments. When an assignment is judged to be unsatisfactory, you may be given the opportunity to redo it.

If you find you are unable to complete an assignment on time, please contact the instructor well in advance of the due date. Late assignments will be docked 10% of the assigned points.

Students are awarded a certain number of points for satisfactory completion of a task:

Distribution of marks

Item	Points
Journal: 14 satisfactory journal entries or 10–13 satisfactory journal entries or under 10 satisfactory journal entries	(15 points) or (8 points) or (0 points)
Personal assessment: self-portrait personal goals portrait of self as helper assessment of goal achievement	5 (1 point) (1 point) (1 point) (2 points)
Test #1	5
Test #2	5
Videotape assignment #1	25
Videotape assignment #2	35
Web conference attendance *	<u>10</u>
Total possible points	100

Points possible **per assignment** will be calculated out of the following totals:

Assignment	Total points possible
Assignment 1: Journal (4 points), self portrait (1 point), personal goals (1 point), test # 1 (5 points).	11
Assignment 2: Journal (4 points), videotape #1 (25 points).	29
Assignment 3: Journal (3 points), test #2 (5 points).	8
Assignment 4: Journal (4 points), videotape #2 (35 points), portrait (1 point), assessment (2 points).	42
Web conference attendance	10
Total possible points	100

*Note: If you miss more than one web conference class without prior permission from the course instructor, you will lose all 10 web conference attendance points.

Note: Instructors are required to submit, in writing, an evaluation of any student who:

1. fails this course; or
2. passes this course, but whose performance predicts problems in field instruction.

These evaluations are to be shown to the student under consideration and placed in their academic file. A student has the right to submit, in writing, his or her response to the evaluation, which will also be placed in his or her academic file.

Assignment due dates

The assignment due dates for this course are in your online course calendar.

Ideally all assignments will be received by the University on, or before, the deadline date. Please read the How to Submit document on the course website for technical instructions on submitting your assignments using the drop box.

Assignment due dates are to be discussed during the first web conference session.

Assignments

For further information on assignment preparation, click on the Guidelines for Preparing your Assignment in your course site.

Assignment #1

Journal #1
Self-portrait
Personal goals for this course
Test #1

Assignment #2

Journal #2
Videotape assignment #1

Assignment #3

Journal #3
Test #2

Assignment #4

Journal #4
Portrait of self as a helper
Videotape assignment #2
Assessment of goal achievement

Plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation

You should acquaint yourself with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar*. Note: These policies are also located in your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

Distance and Online Education (DE) Student Resources

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
- Distance and Online Student Handbook
- Distance and Online Education Website

Acknowledgments

Content specialist: Maureen McIntosh
Department of Social Work
Faculty of Arts
University of Manitoba

Maureen McIntosh has been a sessional lecturer in the Faculty of Social Work for more than ten years. She has taught Interpersonal Communication Skills, Small Group Dynamics, and Field work courses.

Maureen has a B.S.W. and M.S.W. from the University of Manitoba. Her master's practicum was entitled "Experiential Teaching/Learning in Training Volunteers for Palliative Care." Her special interests include adult teaching and learning and social work practice with women. Maureen has worked as a facilitator, trainer, counsellor, coordinator, researcher, and advocate with a variety of community groups and organizations

Desktop publisher: Lorna Allard
Distance and Online Education
University of Manitoba

Copyright © July 2011, November 2007, June 2004, June 2002, June 2000, July 1997, 1996

All rights reserved. No part of the material protected by this copyright may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior written permission from the copyright owner.

University of Manitoba, Distance and Online Education