

RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ACADEMIC COURSE OUTLINE
COMM 110 Interpersonal Communication

I. Basic Course Information

A. Course Number and Title: COMM 110 Interpersonal Communication

B. New or Modified Course: Modified

C. Date of Proposal: Semester: Fall Year: 2025

D. Effective Term: Fall 2026

E. Sponsoring Department: Communication and Languages

F. Semester Credit Hours: **3**

G. Weekly Contact Hours: 3

Lecture: 3

Laboratory: 0

Out of class student work per week: 6

H. Prerequisite (s): none

Corequisite (s):

I. Additional Fees: None

II. Catalog Description

This course introduces students to the principles and practices of interpersonal communication in everyday life. Students will explore how individuals create meaning, build relationships, manage conflict, and navigate diverse social and cultural contexts. Topics include perception, communication and self, bias, verbal and nonverbal communication, listening, emotions, communication climate, conflict, relationships in face-to-face and mediated contexts, the dark side of communication, and workplace communication. Emphasis is placed on developing communication competence, increasing self-awareness, and applying effective strategies to enhance the quality of interpersonal interactions. Students who complete this course will have enhanced skills and knowledge of interpersonal dynamics in personal and professional relationships.

III. Statement of Course Need

- A. This course is needed to support existing academic programs by providing foundational communication skills that are essential across disciplines. As employers consistently identify interpersonal communication, conflict management, and teamwork as key workforce competencies, the course directly addresses community and employer expectations for career-ready graduates. It also serves a broad population of students, including first-generation, undecided, and career-focused learners, who benefit from explicit instruction in navigating diverse social and cultural interactions. By developing students' communication competence, self-awareness, and ability to build effective relationships in both personal and professional settings, the course complements current offerings and strengthens pathways in communication studies, the social sciences, and workforce-aligned programs.
- B. No lab
- C. This course generally transfers as a Communication Studies course or an elective, dependent on the transfer institution.

IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

- A. Free Elective
- B. This course serves as a General Education and Communication requirement in English A.A., Digital Media/Film Studies A.S., Mathematics A.S., Computer Programming Certificate, Veterinary Technology, A.S., Medical Laboratory Technology A.A.S., Chemistry A.S., Environmental Science A.S., Physics A.S.,
- C. This course meets a program requirement for Communication Studies A.A. Liberal Arts A.A., Human Services Certificate, English as a Second Language Certificate, Computer Support Certificate, Automotive Technology, A.S., Environmental Science A.A.
- D. To see course transferability: a) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, www.njtransfer.org; b) for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual websites.

V. Outline of Course Content

- A. Introduction to Interpersonal Communication
 - a. definitions, models, needs, ethics, and tools
- B. Communication and Self
 - a. Forming the self

- b. Communicating and changing the self
- C. Perception and Communication
 - a. Person perception process
 - b. Influences
 - c. Stereotyping, microaggressions, and bias
- D. Verbal Communication
 - a. Nature of language
 - b. Language barriers
 - c. Improving verbal communication
 - d. Theory
- E. Nonverbal Communication
 - a. Definitions and role of nonverbal communication
 - b. Functions of nonverbal communication
 - c. Channels of nonverbal communication
 - d. Theory
- F. Listening
 - a. Listening process
 - b. Stages and functions of listening
 - c. Barriers to listening
 - d. Ineffective listening
 - e. Becoming a better listener
- G. Emotions
 - a. Definition and influences
 - b. Emotions and relationships
 - c. Managing emotions
 - d. Effective emotional communication
 - e. Challenging emotions
- H. Communication Climate
 - a. Confirming and disconfirming messages
 - b. Context
 - c. Supportive and defensive communication
 - d. Skills to support confirming communication
- I. Conflict
 - a. Definition
 - b. Goals and outcomes
 - c. Conflict style
 - d. Unproductive conflict
 - e. Conflict resolution
- J. Building and Maintaining Relationships
 - a. Foundations of relationships
 - b. Relationship types and stages
 - c. Self-disclosure
 - d. Couple communication
 - e. Cycle of abuse and coming apart
 - f. Theory
- K. Dark Side of Communication

- a. Deception and gaslighting
- b. Jealousy, secret tests, and gossip
- c. Communication as a weapon
- d. Dark side of social media
- e. Theory
- L. Interpersonal Communication and the Workplace
 - a. Types of workplace relationships
 - b. Communicating professionally in the workplace
 - c. Boundaries at work

VI. A. Course Learning Outcomes:

At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Apply interpersonal communication theories and concepts to various contexts and demonstrate competency in writing and speech (GE-1, GE-5,*)
2. Identify strengths and weaknesses of their own interpersonal communication style and how they influence relationships. (GE-ERA*)
3. Recognize ethical issues in interpersonal communication. (GE-ERA*)
4. Analyze how perception, self-concept, culture, and bias shape interpersonal communication and influence the meanings individuals create in relationships. (GE-5, 8*)

*embedded critical thinking

B. Assessment Instruments

1. Short papers
2. Projects
3. In-class activities
4. exams / quizzes
5. presentations
6. discussion questions
7. class participation
8. response papers

VII. Grade Determinants

- A. essays / short papers
- B. projects
- C. tests / quizzes
- D. student collaboration

Given the goals and outcomes described above, LIST the primary formats, modes, and methods for teaching and learning that may be used in the course:

- A. lecture/discussion
- B. small-group work
- C. computer-assisted instruction
- D. student oral presentations
- E. simulation/role playing
- F. student collaboration
- G. independent study

VIII. Texts and Materials

LIST which of the following types of course materials will be used. Specify title and publication information about textbooks and any other major text sources or other materials.

- A. suggested textbook
 - o [Interpersonal Communication: Context and Connection](#) by multiple authors; OER
- B. film and video
- C. audio sources
- D. web sources
- E. other computer-based sources

The following statement should be included in the outline:

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

IX. Resources

- A. Smart Classroom

X. Check One: Honors Course N/A