

## COM 4930 Biology of Human Communication (Sect. 2758, Fall 2016)

Class meets Monday 7-9 in 211 Rolfs Hall

### COURSE CONTACT: Dr. Jade Williams

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Office Hours: T 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Email for appointments

### COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

Focuses on the interaction between body and communication behavior: how physiology affects communication, and how communication affects physiology. The first half of the course addresses basic anatomy/physiology relevant to human communication. The second half reviews studies that relate physiological processes to specific communication contexts, including love/sex, conflict, stress, emotion, parenting, and attraction.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

Our textbook is *The Biology of Human Communication* by Dr. Kory Floyd. The readings are the cornerstone of this course. Please obtain and begin to read the textbook listed below. Bring the textbook with you to class each week.

## INSTRUCTOR & STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

### INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS

You should expect that Dr. Williams will:

1. Convey knowledge and passion for course material.
2. Conduct the class in a manner that is engaging.
3. Assign meaningful work that allows you to engage the course, its content and material.
4. Provide helpful feedback in a timely manner.
5. Reply to your emails within 48 hours.

### STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

As a student enrolled in this course, you will be expected to:

1. Complete and spend time contemplating the readings before class each week.
2. Complete and submit all assignments in advance of the deadline.
3. Participate actively in discussions and classroom activities, using key terms and concepts.
4. Contribute positively to the classroom and group climates.
5. Take a self-motivated approach to the course, including personal accountability for your behavior and academic progress in the class.
6. Stay in contact with me throughout the semester. Come to me, and let me help you, any time you have questions, problems or concerns related to your mastery of course objectives.

### CANVAS REQUIREMENT

Check your UFL.edu email and our Saki course site frequently. Class functions on Canvas include: announcements and course information, submitting assignments, and viewing grades.

If you have computer/internet or Canvas-related problems or questions, you can contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-HELP [4357], or email [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu). Your instructor is unable to assist in these matters, so please contact the Help Desk directly as needed.

## ***MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS***

### Take-Home Assignments

These assignments are intended to help you better understand course material and to prepare you for your final project. THs are due and must be submitted to Canvas no later than the night before class each week.

### Class Activities

Class activities will take place during most class periods. These assignments must be completed during class time on the day assigned and cannot be made up. Your lowest score will be dropped; this allows students to miss or do poorly on one IC without penalty.

### Semester Project

Details on this assignment will be provided by your instructor.

## **POINTS & GRADES**

160 pts = 8 Take-Home (TH) assignments X 20 points each

80 pts = 8 Class (IC) assignments X 10 points each

50 pts = Exam

30 pts = 3 Quizzes X 10 points each

30 pts = Project

350 TOTAL POINTS

## **ASSIGNMENT LETTER GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

A/- = Excellent! In addition to excellent quality and performance, work that earns an “A” exceeds minimum requirements and expectations.

B+/- = Very good! A grade of “B” indicates successful completion of all assignment requirements with little room for improvement. Please note that all minimum requirements must be satisfactorily completed to earn a grade of “B” or better. Writing skills and overall performance are above average.

C+/- = Good! A grade of “C” indicates work in good standing. All minimum requirements are met, although some might need improvement. Writing skills are average to excellent.

D = Passing...but below average. The assignment’s minimum requirements are not met and/or quality of work is less than average.

E = Not passing. Minimum requirements are not met and quality of work is poor, or work displays plagiarism.

## FINAL GRADE

Below is the percentage and point break-down for each letter grade. Please be advised that final letter grades are determined by the number of points earned (to the nearest one-hundredth of a point), and I do not round up.

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93 – 100 %
A-	90 – 92.99 %
B+	87 – 89.99 %
B	83 – 86.99 %
B-	80 – 82.99 %
C+	77 – 79.99 %
C	73 – 76.99 %
C-	70 – 72.99 %
D	60 – 66.99 %
E	0 – 59.99 %

### Special Note Concerning Final Grades of Incomplete

A grade of “Incomplete” is given only to a student with extreme circumstances that prevent the student from completing course requirements during the semester in which s/he is enrolled. Please be forewarned that an “Incomplete” can only be given to a student who has completed at the 50% of the class and who is passing the course with a grade of “C” or better at the time the Incomplete is negotiated. See the University’s policy for more information.

### DEADLINES

Deadlines are absolute. All assignments that are to be submitted to Canvas are due before 11:59 p.m. EST (before midnight) on their respective due dates. ***No late work is accepted.*** Therefore, it is imperative that you plan ahead. Students are expected to submit assignments at least one day in advance of the scheduled deadline. It is your responsibility to be certain that your available computer is compatible with Canvas and has a reliable internet connection, and to do this well ahead of any online assignments being due. If an assignment is due in class, you are expected to submit it at the start of the class period in which it is due. Again, no late work is accepted, so plan to have someone submit assignments in class for you in the event of absence. Never email assignments to your instructor.

### *ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES*

#### **ATTENDANCE, UNIVERSITY-SANCTIONED EVENTS & RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

There are no excused or unexcused absences; so, there is no need to ask for my permission to miss a class. I view you as an adult who makes your own choices, including whether or not to

attend class. It is each student's responsibility to submit assignments in advance of the deadline, regardless of one's reasons for missing class. Please plan accordingly. If you will miss a class due to a university-sanctioned event or religious holiday, please see me immediately so we can arrange for a time for you to submit your work in advance of the days you will be absent.

**IMPORTANT:** Due to the importance of our in-class discussions and activities, if you will be absent from class frequently for any reason, you should withdraw from this course and enroll in another course that is scheduled on days you can attend.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

All submitted work during the course, written or oral, will be the student's personal, original work, with credit being given to sources used. If a student violates this understanding, evaluations of work must be affected accordingly and if necessary, adjudication will be processed by procedures approved by the University of Florida Honor Court.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Dial Center for Written and Oral Communication strives for a classroom climate that is comfortable for all. Students are expected to behave according to the UF student code of conduct in their classes. This means treating their instructors and fellow classmates with respect. To ensure a positive learning environment, students should not: attack the instructor or other students verbally, physically, or in written form; or express reactions in the classroom that would bring harm to others. Failure to meet the UF code of conduct can impact a student's class participation grade or result in referral to the UF judicial office. Class atmosphere can be made or broken by the approach that students take to the challenges of the course. Students that support others, show good humor in the face of obstacles, show dedication in the face of setbacks, and show grace when others are not doing as well will help to create a positive communication climate.

In a communication class, it is especially important for each of us to:

- Display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and students;
- Pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities;
- Avoid racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom;
- Avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, reading the newspaper, surfing the internet, doing work for other classes, making/receiving cell phone calls, text messaging, etc.).

### **NO COMPUTERS AND CELL PHONES**

Computer and/or cell phone use is prohibited in the classroom. Each violation of this rule is subject to a 5-point deduction from your final grade. If you must use your cell phone or computer during class time, please leave the room and return when finished.

### **DISABILITY AND SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me privately, as soon as possible, so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure a successful and educational experience. It is your

responsibility both to notify me and to make the first contact with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Additionally, you must provide written documentation from the DRC at least one week prior to the date in which you are requesting accommodations.

### **RIGHT TO PRIVACY**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ensures that your student records (for any students over 18 years of age) are kept confidential. I will not release your grades to anyone other than you or school officials who are given permission to view your progress. Anyone other than you (or an approved school official) may not request any information (beyond simple directory information) about you, your progress, or your status as a student in my class – this includes parents, partners, and other students. For more information, see the University of Florida website for The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### **ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTER SYSTEM**

As a student in this class you're subject to the Acceptable Use Policies for UF's computer systems. Anyone violating these policies will receive an automatic grade of "E" for the course and will be referred to the University for Disciplinary Action as deemed appropriate by the University of Florida Honor Court.

### **CHANGES TO COURSE SYLLABUS/CALENDAR**

I reserve the right to update or change portions of this course syllabus and calendar in order to make the class a better experience for everyone. This may be in response to suggestions from students, from my own observations, or as the result of requirements by the Department, College, or University. Changes will be posted to the course site on Canvas.

### **COURSE FEEDBACK**

I welcome feedback about the course. If we wait until university evaluations at the end of the semester, I cannot make changes that will help you. I regularly ask the class for feedback and suggestions regarding the tests and assignments. Please share your thoughts with me in an open and constructive manner during the semester. You can make suggestions in class, with me privately during office hours, or via email.

### **QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, COURSE PROBLEMS**

If you have any concerns regarding the course, contact me via e-mail immediately. I am always willing to assist you in any way that I can. However, please do NOT contact me for computer, internet and/or Canvas-related problems. Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-HELP [4357], or email to [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu) for these matters. Computers do act up, so plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time before deadlines to complete and submit your work.

### **HAVE FUN WITH IT!**

Feel free to play with the material, share your ideas, and contribute to the class. The more you engage the material and your fellow classmates, the more everyone will enjoy and benefit from the course.