

A. Heading

University of Puerto Rico
Río Piedras Campus
College of Humanities
Department of English
Undergraduate Program

B. Course Title Family Communication

Dr. Janet MacLennan, 012 Pedreira, T&TH 10-11AM

C. Code English 4145

D. Credit Hours 3

E. Prerequisites One of the following: INGL 3103-3104 OR INGL 3011-3012 OR Level 5 on the English Placement Test OR Advanced Placement in English. Either INGL 3275 (Theories of Human Communication) or INGL 3256 (Interpersonal Communication). High fluency in English language required.

F. Course Description Provides an overview of the family as a communication system, focusing on issues related to family interaction and functioning. Readings and discussions address marital, parent-child, sibling, and inter-generational interactions and relationships. Explores processes involved in family communication (managing openness, conflict, social support, intimacy, decision-making, environmental and cultural factors etc.) and issues facing families of the new millennium.

G. Course Objectives By the end of the course, students will:

1. identify major concepts and theories addressing marital formation, maintenance, and dissolution; stages of family development; differences in family communication; and family stresses and dysfunction.
2. apply family communication theory and concepts to gain greater understanding of specific family situations.
3. explore the diversity of family structures and organization.
4. develop an awareness of cultural differences in understanding family communication.
5. develop a theoretically informed perspective about what constitutes “effective and appropriate” communication at home in family units and family relationships.
6. develop ability to consume scholarly literature about family communication.

H. Course Outline

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Time</u>
I. Course introduction and overview	3 hours

II.	Conceptual foundations What is family? Understanding communication The family as a meaning-making system	9 hours
III.	Families coming together Courtship and commitment Marital reality construction	6 hours
IV.	Family patterns and processes Expanding complexity Rules Family stories Myths, metaphors, and themes Roles and family types Contextual dimensions of family communication Power Communication and family stress Managing challenging dialogues Societal influences on the family Change and growth	18 hours
V.	Group research project and presentations	6 hours
VI.	Course conclusion: Reflection and synthesis	3 hours
	Total	45 hours/3 credits

I. Teaching Strategies This course will include lectures and class and group discussion (80%) as well as student presentations of material (20%). Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de **Rehabilitación Vocacional** deben comunicarse con la profesora al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistivo necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren de algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con la profesora.

J. Required Resources Access to all UPR library facilities, electronic search, on-line access, and interlibrary loan services. In the classroom, a TV/VCR may be used for a few class sessions.

K. Methods of Evaluation

Communication analysis assignment I	30%
Communication analysis assignment II	30%

Group research project and presentation	30%
Group project peer evaluation	10%

Evaluación diferenciada a estudiantes con necesidades especiales.

L. Grading System The following grades will be used for this course: A, B, C, D, F.

M. Selected Bibliography

Braithwaite, D. O., & Baxter, L. A. (Eds.). (2006). *Engaging theories in family communication: Multiple perspectives*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Casper, L. M., & Bianchi, S. M. (2002). *Continuity and change in the American family*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cox, M. J., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (Eds.). (1999). *Conflict and cohesion in families: Causes and consequences*. Mahwah, NJ: LEA.

Fitzpatrick, M. A., & Vangelisti, A. L. (Eds.). (1995). *Explaining family interactions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Floyd, K., & Morman, M. T. (Eds.). (2006). *Widening the family circle: New research on family communication*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Galvin, K. M., Bylund, C. L., & Brommel, B. J. (2004). *Family communication: Cohesion and change* 6th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

LePoire, B. (2006). *Family communication: Nurturing and control in a changing world*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Noller, P., & Fitzpatrick, M. A. (1993). *Communication in family relationships*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Sussman, M. B., Steinmetz, S. K., & Peterson, G. W. (Eds.). (1999). *Handbook of marriage and the family*. New York: Plenum.

Turner, L. H. & West, R. (2002). *Perspectives on family communication*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Required text: Yerby, J., Buerkel-Rothfuss, N., & Bochner, A. P. (1998). *Understanding family communication* (2nd). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.