

Family Communication
University of Hawai'i – Hilo
Dr. Becker

Class meetings: T & R 2-3:15 pm in UCB 100

Office: 209 K

Office Hours: T & R 12:30-1:45 & Fridays 12:30-3:00

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email: beckerc@hawaii.edu; Please do not send me junk mail (i.e. jokes ect...)

TEXT: *Understanding Family Communication by Yerby & Bochner. Second Edition.*

CURRICULUM:

This course is worth three upper division credits and counts as an upper division communication (Humanities). It is also cross-listed as Women's Studies 420.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Family Communication utilizes social construction, family systems, dialectical process, narrative and cultural theories to analyze the ways that families function. Foundational concepts are introduced and communication dynamics within families are explored. There is a focus upon meaning centered approaches. Cultural influences and gender roles are considered. Conditions necessary for optimal family functioning are addressed.

OBJECTIVES:

After completing this course you should be able to:

- 1) Describe the characteristics of a family.
- 2) Discuss the ways that families function to provide meaning for their members.
- 3) Apply communication theories to analyze family dynamics.
- 4) Recognize cultural influences upon gender roles and communication patterns.
- 5) Identify functional and dysfunctional communication patterns in families.
- 6) Practice effective parent-child communication.
- 7) Describe an intervention.

GRADES:

Exams (3).....100%

There will be three multiple choice exams. Make ups will only be given in the case of emergencies. Documentation may be required.

Up to 30 bonus points may be added to your grade (optional):

You may earn up to 10 bonus points on each exam by submitting exam questions that connect the theories and concepts from the book and class discussions to the films we are watching. Please submit a hard and electronic copy of your exam questions.

A level questions (10 points max per exam):

Describe a scene, apply a relevant theory or concept to describe the communication that is occurring in the scene. Each acceptable question counts as 2 points. You may submit up to five questions per exam. Questions are due 2 weeks prior to the scheduled exam date.

B level questions (5 points max per exam):

Define a concept using multiple choice format. These questions are fair and challenging and the correct answer is a critical concept or term. Each acceptable question counts as 1 point. You may submit up to ten questions per exam.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION POLICY:

This course is designed to facilitate dialogue to deepen our understanding about family communication. Each week we will apply the theories and concepts we are studying to a particular family and analyze different aspects of family communication. The families that we will analyze will be introduced in class. Therefore, you will be expected to prepare by doing the required reading so that you are familiar with the vocabulary we will be using. Your preparation will enrich the experience of the whole class and enable us to spend more time applying the material to the family dynamics we are examining that session. Attendance will be taken each session. However, absences will not affect your grade directly. Attending class on a regular basis will increase your chances of understanding course concepts and your performance on exams. There may be material on exams that is covered in class that is not discussed in the text. You will be responsible for obtaining this information.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Special Needs:

Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodations should contact the University Disability Services Office - Hale Kauano'e A Wing Lounge, 933-0816 (V), 933-3334 (TTY), shirachi@hawaii.edu - as early in the semester as possible.

Advising:

Advising is a very important resource designed to help students complete the requirements of the University and their individual majors. Students should consult with their advisor at least once a semester to decide on courses, check progress towards graduation, and discuss career options and other educational opportunities provided by UH-Hilo. Although advising is a shared responsibility, be aware that students have final responsibility for meeting degree requirements.