CO 32001--Family Communication (3 credits)
Summer 2013

Instructor: Marilyn J. Matelski
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Office: Maloney Hall, Rm. 542
Office Hours: 6/24 (5:00-6:00 p.m.); 7/2 (5:00-6:00 p.m.); 7/9 (5:00-6:00 p.m.)
Telephone: 617.552.4988
Schedule (class times and days): June 24-July 11, blended online, M T W TH, 6:15-9:15 p.m.
Required attendance June 24, July 2, July 9.
Room: TBA

Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
Course focuses on the family as a framework for communication analysis, and includes theory-based discussions such as roles and relationships, conflict, commitment, aging and extended relations. A predominately on-line course, utilizing both technology and classroom attendance, students meet with the instructor three times during the summer session - one evening each week; the other times are devoted to shared journal entries, research and writing projects.

Course Objectives
This course focuses on “the family” as a framework for communication analysis, and includes theory-based discussions such as roles and relationships, conflict, commitment, aging, and extended relations. More specifically, students in this class will:

1. Expand their understanding of family dynamics within a social system, including both verbal and nonverbal communication as demonstrated by the readings and journal assignments.
2. Explore their personal family histories and backgrounds through the lens of systems theory as demonstrated in the final “life story” project.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the “typical American family” versus families across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender and age within the family context as demonstrated in lectures and readings.
4. Demonstrate ethical knowledge pertaining to difficult family issues, as demonstrated by readings and videos on health, marriage and occupational issues.

Grading
1) Electronic Journal (15-20 pages) 40%

Using both textbook readings as well as other sources, these entries will address aspects of communication within a “family” context. These topics will be assigned three times each week through e-mail correspondence, and should be due within 24 hours of the assignment. For example, if the entry is assigned on Monday, June 25, you must send your 2-3 page (double-spaced) entry (500-750 words) by Tuesday, June 26.

Each entry should include: 1) several “key terms” from the readings; and 2) application of these “key terms.” Remember, each entry should be 2-3 pages (double-spaced).

It would be nice for you to include everyone in the listserv (by choosing “Reply All”), so we can all share the journal entries...but if you'd rather not, please send them to me alone (by choosing “Reply”).

2) Life Story Project 30%

You will be asked to interview at least three family members, representing each representing a different generation. You will then compare and contrast their answers, based on age, gender, family role, etc. Be sure to include some of the concepts/theories you have learned in this class (either in lecture or through readings). This paper (8-10 pages in length) MUST BE RECEIVED BY E-MAIL NO LATER THAN THURSDAY, JULY 11th, and is worth 30% of your grade.

3) Participation in classroom activities 30%

Since this is a web-based, distance learning experience, attendance is measured by e-mail correspondence and assignments, usually occurring three days each week. You will also be expected to attend three (3) classroom sessions scheduled on Monday, June 24, Tuesday, July 2 and Tuesday, July 9. Classroom attendance and journal entries, together, will serve as your “participation” grade. MISSED ONE OF THE CLASSROOM SESSIONS WILL AUTOMATICALLY RESULT IN A ONE-GRADE REDUCTION; TWO CLASSROOM ABSENCES WILL AUTOMATICALLY FAIL YOU IN THIS COURSE. NO EXCEPTIONS.

WCAS Grading System

The undergraduate grading system consists of twelve categories: A (4.00), A- (3.67), excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67), good; C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67), satisfactory; D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (0.67), passing but unsatisfactory; F (0.0), failure; I (0.0), incomplete; F (0.0), course dropped without notifying office; W (0.0), official withdrawal from course. The graduate grading system is A (4.00), A- (3.67), Excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), good; B- (2.67), C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit; F (.00), failure.

Grade Reports. All students are required to log into the web through Agora to access their semester grades. Students must utilize their BC username and password to log on. If your username or password is not known, the Student Learning and Support Center in the O’Neill Library Computer Center will issue a new one. The SLSC requires a valid picture ID (a BC ID, driver’s license or passport) to obtain your password.

Text/Readings (Required)


2. Online readings listed in the course schedule (below).

Important Policies

http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/advstudies/guide/academicinteg.html
Written Work
Graduate and undergraduate students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough, yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA, CLA format per instructor’s decision. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling. You are encouraged to make use of campus resources for refining writing skills as needed [http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html].

Scholarship and Academic Integrity
It is expected that students will produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to reference properly is plagiarism. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on examinations or assignments, and submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work.

Request for Accommodations
If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Dr. Kathy Duggan (dugganka@bc.edu), Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or AHD) or Dean Paulette Durrett, (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for students with disabilities, (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations. For further information, you can locate the disability resources on the web at http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html.

Attendance
Class attendance is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire class period. When an occasion occurs that prevents a student from attending class, it is the student’s obligation to inform the instructor of the conflict before the class meets. The student is still expected to meet all assignment deadlines. If a student knows that he or she will be absent on a particular day, the student is responsible for seeing the instructor beforehand to obtain the assignments for that day. If a student misses a class, he or she is responsible for making up the work by obtaining a classmate's notes and handouts and turning in any assignments due. Furthermore, many instructors give points for participation in class. If you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Types of absences that are not typically excused include weddings, showers, vacations, birthday parties, graduations, etc. Additional assignments, penalties and correctives are at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

Consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to review course syllabi as soon as they are distributed and to consult the faculty member promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the obligations entailed in the observance of that particular
holiday. However, it is the responsibility of the student to complete any and all class requirements for days that are missed due to conflicts due to religious holidays.

There may be circumstances that necessitate a departure from this policy. Feel free to contact the WCAS at 617-552-3900 for consultation.

**Deadlines**
Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late assignments will be graded accordingly.

**Course Assignments** (readings, exercises and/or experiences)

Assignments via Internet will include 1) family communication awareness video/discussions; 2) comments on readings (attached to daily e-mails); and 3) e-journal entries, which will be submitted each day. You will also be given one major paper assignment: a family interview project (or “life story”).

In-class time will be spent discussing family-related case studies as well as your family research project.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**June 24**  
**CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE REQUIRED**
Introduction to the Course  
Video: MEANING OF FOOD—FAMILY AND FOOD  
Electronic Journal Assignment (EJA 1)—Cultural Identity and Food (due 6/25)  
Readings: Ch. 1; http://anthro.palomar.edu/culture/culture_1.htm;  
  http://www.travelchitaguide.com/intro/cuisine.htm;  

June 25  
(EJA 2)—Family Context and Culture (due 6/26)  
Readings: Ch. 2; http://www.aztlan.net/chicagoh.htm

June 26  
(EJA 3)—The Family as a System (due 6/27)  
Readings: Ch. 3; http://www.crvp.org/book/Series04/IVA-2/chapter_iii.htm;  
  http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/living/2002123185_divorceholidays18.html;

June 27  
(EJA 4)—Family Holidays (due 7/1)  
Readings: Ch. 5;  
  http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/Festivals/78322.htm

July 1  
(EJA 5)—Family Extensions (in-laws, out-laws and steps) (due 7/2)

**July 2**
CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE REQUIRED
Lecture: Balance Theory/Congruity Theory
Video/Discussion: ON BROADWAY
Assignment: (EJA 6) Families and Health Care (due 7/3)
Readings: Ch. 10-12;
http://www.uib.no/isf/people/doc/hovedfag/nursing/annems.htm
; http://www.kaiseredu.org/topics_im_ihs.asp?imID=4&parentID=61

July 3
(EJA 7)—Families of Mixed Race/Ethnicity (due 7/8)
Readings: Ch. 7; http://www.education.com/reference/article/facts-myths-about-blended-families;
http://www.focusonthefamily.com/marriage/marriage_challenges/marriage_in_the_melting_pot/faith_family_friends_finances_and_food.aspx;

July 4
NO CLASS—INDEPENDENCE DAY

July 8
(EJA 8)—Families and Conflict (due 7/10)
Readings: Ch. 8, 9; http://family.jrank.org/pages/315/Conflict.html

**July 9**
CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE REQUIRED
Lecture: Cognitive Dissonance
Video/Discussion: THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PAJAMAS

July 10
Work on Life Story Project

**JULY 11**
LIFE STORY PROJECT DUE (via e-mail)