

## COM 310: Nonverbal Communication

TR, 9:30 am – 10:45 pm in C 104

Department of Communication & Theatre  
Point Loma Nazarene University

**Professor:** Dr. Lisa Raser

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**Office:** Cabrillo, Rm. 205

**Office Hours:** Tues/Thurs: 11:00 am – 12:15 pm and by appointment.

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### PLNU MISSION

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

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### REQUIRED MATERIALS & RESOURCES

Remland, M. S. (2017). *Nonverbal communication in everyday life*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Additional course materials and readings located on Canvas.

\*Please read and save this syllabus. If you remain in the course after the first day of class, then you are stipulating that you will abide by the university and course policies described within this syllabus.

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course will enhance your awareness and knowledge of nonverbal communication in a variety of different contexts (relationships, organizations, cultures.) This course will help you to develop your own nonverbal communication skills and will also help grow your ability to interpret the nonverbal communication of others.

By the end of this course, a student should be able to:

- Identify and explain the major concepts and theories of nonverbal communication.
- Explain the different types and functions of nonverbal communication.
- Describe the role of nonverbal communication within specific contexts such as romantic relationships, the work place, and mediated encounters.
- Discuss how nonverbal communication affects issues such as culture, intimacy, power, gender, etc.
- Apply your understanding of nonverbal communication to everyday communication interactions and your future professional goals.
- Observe and analyze a selected form of nonverbal communication behavior and apply class learning and academic research to these observations.

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### COURSE FORMAT AND POLICIES

**Support:** I am committed to helping every student attain their best possible education.

I AM HERE TO HELP! Please do not hesitate to ask questions, or ask for help, in or out of class. I will also be available if you would like me to review your work and give you feedback before it is turned in or

presented. If you have any special needs that it would be helpful for me to be aware of, please let me know.

**Attendance:** As members of a learning community, your presence is appreciated, and your absence is noticed. The class sessions are set up to help people learn from each other (through discussions, activities, etc.) and you are expected to attend each class session. Everyone has useful and insightful information to offer to the class. Participation is the core of this work, and to help keep track of that, I take attendance.

You are allowed two (2) excused or unexcused absences in the course of the semester without penalty. The only absences excused after that will be university approved absences (see section below). It is your choice how you use these absences and it is encouraged that you use them wisely. Please note that these 2 absences DO include instances of illness and family obligations. Each absence over two will result in a 15-point deduction to your overall grade.

As noted in the University catalog: If you are absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings (3 classes), I have the option of filing a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (6 classes), you may be de-enrolled without notice. If the date of de-enrollment is past the last date to withdraw from a class, you will be assigned a grade of W or WF consistent with university policy in the grading section of the catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

**University Approved Absences:** Absences for certain events and obligations recognized by the University (i.e.: participation in sports, forensics, music tours, etc.) may be counted as “excused.” Please notify me at least one week prior to such absences with documentation and contact information from the sponsoring program/department. You are responsible for making up all work missed due to absences in a timely manner, to be worked out ahead of time with me.

**Tardies:** It is an expectation of this class community that we begin our class time *together*, and complete our class time *together* each day. Instances of habitual lateness are a distraction to our class community and may impact your ability to participate fully in the course. Therefore, I do make note when you are late to class and lateness will add up to absences.

Being absent for more than 20 minutes during any part of a class period, whether at the beginning, middle, or end, will constitute an absence. Similarly, it is expected that you remain actively engaged in the classroom activities until the entire class has been dismissed for the day. Failure to do so will result in a deduction of your participation points for the course. If you absolutely must leave early one day for an important/legitimate/emergency reason, please approve it with me at the class period prior or via email. (Please arrange any meetings with your academic adviser so that they do not conflict with your class schedule.) If you leave class early without timely notification/approval, it will negatively affect your course participation grade. Please talk to me early in the semester if you have any questions or concerns about this policy.

**Late Work/Make-Up Work:** All work is expected on the planned “due dates” - at the beginning of the class period when they are due. In general, no late or makeup written assignments/presentations will be allowed. In the event of a personal emergency with written documentation and at my discretion, make-up work *may* be accepted for half credit. If you are absent on the day of a test or a presentation, I will only consider a make-up opportunity if you have communicated with me in advance of your absence and you have written documentation of a personal emergency. Depending upon the circumstance, a make-up opportunity may not receive full credit.

**Incomplete:** Incompletes will only be granted under extreme circumstances, given reasonable justification.

**Electronic Devices:** The use of cell phones and laptops/tablets during class is prohibited unless I ask for them to be used as a specific part of a class activity. Please join me in turning off or silencing all cell phones,

laptops, and similar electronic devices and keeping them out of sight for the duration of class. This policy was influenced by two important pieces of research: 1. Faria Sana, Tina Weston, and Nicholas J. Cepeda, "Laptop Multitasking Hinders Classroom Learning for Both Users and Nearby Peers," *Computers and Education* (March 2013): "We found that participants who multitasked on a laptop during a lecture scored lower on a test compared to those who did not multitask, and participants who were in direct view of a multitasking peer scored lower on a test compared to those who were not. The results demonstrate that multitasking on a laptop poses a significant distraction to both users and fellow students and can be detrimental to comprehension of lecture content." 2. Pam A. Mueller and Daniel M. Oppenheimer, "The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking" (April 2014). In this study, the authors found that students who hand wrote their notes during lectures remembered more material than students who used laptops for notetaking because they could not write everything down verbatim. The extra processing required by the hand writers to select important over extraneous information was beneficial for their retention of the material they were learning.

**Email:** I will frequently use email to communicate with you and I do my best to respond to your emails as promptly as possible. I will respond to emails Monday-Friday from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. If you send me an email over the weekend or holiday, I will respond on the following school day.

**Written Work:** Please type, double-space and staple all written work unless instructed otherwise. It is my expectation that all writing will be clear, coherent, and free of grammatical/spelling errors. Please proof all written work – your grade will reflect both the substance and the style of your writing. When working on the computer, try to plan for the "unexpected" but predictable problems: back up files as you go and allow enough time for any printing issues that may arise.

**Student Responsibility:**

It is the student's responsibility to maintain his/her class schedule. Should the need arise to drop this course (personal emergencies, poor performance, etc.), the student has the responsibility to follow through (provided the drop date meets the stated calendar deadline established by the university), not the instructor. Simply ceasing to attend this course or failing to follow through to arrange for a change of registration (drop/add) may easily result in a grade of F on the official transcript.

**Final Exam Policy:**

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. Final exams will not be given early before our assigned date/time. Please arrange any activities or transportation for the break around this finals schedule so that you can be present to take the test at the assigned time.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As stated in the university catalog, "Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Such acts include plagiarism, copying of class assignments, and copying or other fraudulent behavior on examinations. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for a) that particular assignment or examination, and/or b) the course." See [Academic Policies](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

**Academic Accommodations:**

While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students requesting academic accommodations must file documentation with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual learning needs of

the student. This policy assists the University in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, and ADA Amendments Act of 2008, all of which prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities.

**Ferpa Policy:**

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number will be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by (each faculty member choose one strategy to use: distributing all grades and papers individually; requesting and filing written student permission; or assigning each student a unique class ID number not identifiable on the alphabetic roster.). Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the “Information Release” section of the student portal. See [Policy Statements](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

**PLNU Copyright Policy:**

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

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## CLASS ASSIGNMENTS & COURSE SCHEDULE

**Exams:** There are two exams in this course – one at the midterm and one during finals week. Exams will include material from the book and in-class discussion/activities. Exams will include a mix of objective questions (such as multiple choice) and short written responses.

**Reading Graphic Organizers:** At the end of class on select Tuesdays (and one Thursday!), you will turn in a Reading Graphic Organizer (RGO) on the week’s reading. The RGO will help you to keep track of key points, concepts, and new learning from the week’s reading as well as make applications between these concepts and your own experiences. You will be able to draw upon what you have written in your RGO during class discussions. The RGO must be complete before you come to class on Tuesdays with the exception of recording the insights that you gained from in-class discussions, videos, activities, lectures, or conversations with peers.

**Canvas Assignments:** Throughout the semester (see course schedule) you will have a variety of short assignments that correspond with a section of the reading. Many of these assignments ask you to “try out” an observation or mini experiment related to nonverbal communication and answer some reflective questions about your experience. Most of the assignment descriptions can be found in the textbook and any supplemental instructions will be provided on Canvas. Canvas assignments are due before you come to class and should be submitted on Canvas. Please come to class prepared to discuss the assignment.

**Country Group Presentation:** Working with a group of your peers, you will choose a country outside of the United States and research a variety of sources about the nonverbal communication practices common to that country. We will be using Morrison and Conaway’s “Kiss, bow, or shake hands: The bestselling guide to doing business in more than 60 countries” (on reserve in the library) as a foundational resource for this presentation. You will present your findings to the class, complete with visuals and demonstrations.

**Research Project/Paper:** A major objective that we will be working toward throughout the semester is the completion of a research project related to an aspect of nonverbal communication of your choice. You will develop a research question, draw upon relevant academic research, and study your nonverbal behavior using one of the research methods described in Appendix A of the text. You will write a 7-9 page paper that describes: your research, your method, and a discussion of your observations/findings. At the end of the semester, you will present your research findings in a formal presentation to the class.

## ASSESSMENT & GRADING

Grade Scale (% to Letter): Final grades will be calculated as follows and will not be rounded.

93-100	A	73-76.9%	C
90-92.9%	A-	70-72.9%	C-
87-89.9%	B+	67-69.9%	D+
83-86.9%	B	63-66.9%	D
80-82.9%	B-	60-62.9%	D-
77-79.9%	C+	0-59	F

### Point Distribution

COURSE REQUIREMENTS	Number of Points AVAILABLE	Number of Points I EARNED
Midterm Exam	80	
Final Exam	80	
Reading Graphic Organizers (7 x 12 pts. each)	84	
Canvas Assignments (6 x 10 pts. each)	60	
Research Paper Part 1 – Conceptual Phase	30	
Complete Research Paper	100	
Research Paper Presentation	30	
Country Group Presentation	55	
<b>TOTAL</b> <b>- Absence/Tardy penalties (15 pts. per absence after 2 absences)</b>	<b>519*</b> <b>(e.g., 3 absences = -15)</b>	

\* At the end of the course, the total point value may be slightly higher or lower than the number above. While I strive to stay close to this amount, there may be occasions where we will need to add or delete short assignments that would adjust the total point value of the course.

### Tentative Course Schedule

- Subject to change with fair notice.
- Please complete reading prior to arriving at class on the assigned due date.

WK	Date	Topic	Reading/Assignments Due
1	R 1/11	Welcome and Course Introduction	
2	T 1/16	Nature & Functions of Nonverbal Com <i>Discuss RGO's</i>	Ch. 1
	R 1/18	Nature & Functions of Nonverbal Com	<b>Canvas: Research 1.1 Due</b>
3	T 1/23	The Development of Nonverbal Com	Ch. 2 <b>RGO Due</b>
	R 1/25	The Development of Nonverbal Com <i>Discuss Research Project/Paper</i>	
4	T 1/30	The Human Body	Ch. 3 <b>RGO Due</b>
	R 2/1	The Human Body	
5	T 2/6	Personal Space, Eye Contact & Touch	Ch. 4 <b>Canvas: Exercise 4.1 Due</b>
	R 2/8	Personal Space, Eye Contact & Touch	<b>Canvas: Exercise 4.2 Due</b>
6	T 2/13	Facial Expression	Ch. 5 <b>RGO Due</b>

	R 2/15	Facial Expression	
7	T 2/20	<i>Country Group Presentations</i>	
	R 2/22	<i>Country Group Presentations</i>	
8	T 2/27	Environment and Physical Surroundings	Readings on Canvas <b>Canvas: Environmental Analysis Due</b>
	R 3/1	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>Midterm Exam*</b>
9	3/5-3/9	<b>Spring Break</b>	<b>Spring Break – Enjoy!</b>
10	T 3/13	Voice and Gesture	Ch. 6 <b>RGO Due</b>
	R 3/15	Voice and Gesture	<b>Part 1 of Research Paper Due – Conceptual Phase</b>
11	T 3/20	Nonverbal Com in Non-Intimate Encounters	Ch. 7 <b>RGO Due</b>
	R 3/22	Nonverbal Com in Non-Intimate Encounters	<b>Canvas: Exercise 7.1 Due</b>
12	T 3/27	Nonverbal Com in Intimate Encounters	Ch. 8 <b>RGO Due</b>
	R 3/29	<b>Easter Break</b>	<b>No Class</b>
13	T 4/3	Nonverbal Com in Intimate Encounters	
	R 4/5	Nonverbal Com in Workplace Encounters	10 <b>RGO Due</b>
14	T 4/10	Nonverbal Com in Workplace Encounters	<b>Canvas: Exercise 10.1 Due</b>
	R 4/12	Project Prep	Project Prep
15	T 4/17	Research Project Presentations	
	R 4/19	Research Project Presentations	
16	T 4/24	Research Project Presentations	
	R 4/26	Research Project Presentations	<b>Complete Research Paper Due</b>
17	Finals Week	<b>Final Exam</b> Tuesday, May 1 <sup>st</sup> 10:30 am – 1:00 pm	<b>Final Exam*</b>  *The midterm and final exam will not be given before or after our assigned date/time. Please arrange any activities or transportation for the break around this schedule so that you can be present to take the test at the assigned time.